



LEGENDS OF MICRONESIA

Book Two

MICRONESIAN READER SERIES

Legends of Micronesia

BOOK TWO

Text by EVE GREY

Illustrations by TAMBI LARSEN

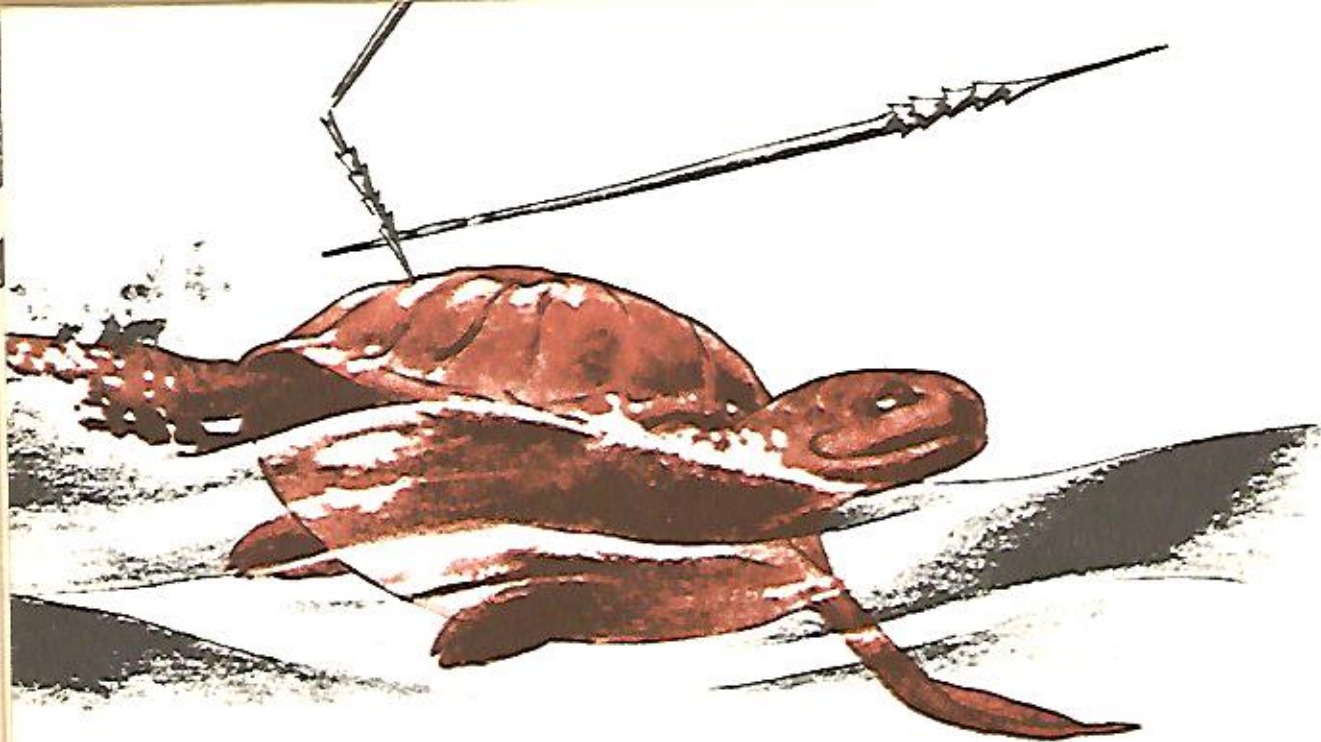
Maps by Charles A. Williams, *Journalist Third Class, USN*

1951

HIGH COMMISSIONER

Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

Department of Education



Etao And His Brother Jemeliwut

The two brothers, Etao and Jemeliwut, went by canoe to the Island of Mejuro. They stood on a path in the woods, and some men came along. They were carrying on their shoulders some heavy boards for a boat. When the two brothers didn't make room on the path fast enough, one of the men spoke some angry words.

"Very well," said Etao. "That plank will stay on your shoulders."

The plank was the heavy, thick one for the bottom of the boat. It stuck fast to the man's shoulders. He couldn't get it off, and neither could any of his friends. Jemeliwut felt sorry for him, but Etao only laughed at him.

Finally, the man said, "I'm the strongest man in the island. But I can see that here is someone even stronger."

The praise pleased Etao, and he took the curse from the man. "Very well, carry the plank away," he said. The man was surprised to find that the plank was loose from his shoulder and was also much lighter.



Jemeliwut did not like the tricks of his brother, but he could not stop them. The two brothers went into the middle of Mejuro Island and stayed awhile. There, Jemeliwut married a beautiful young woman, without letting Etao know. "I don't trust my brother," he said, and he kept his wife where Etao wouldn't see her.

Etao soon knew what had happened, and he was angry. "I'll punish my brother for that," he said to himself.

He waited until Jemeliwut sat down with important men in the community house. Then he sent a stinging bug to crawl under Jemeliwut's leaf skirt and bite him.

Jemeliwut sprang into the air, yelling and tearing off his clothes. He stood before all the men, naked. It was a great shame to him. Etao sat in a corner and laughed.

"Etao has done this to me," said Jemeliwut. "I'm tired of my younger brother and his tricks. I'll show him that I can play tricks too."

He sent the scorpion, the *ie*, to sting Etao. But Etao saw the scorpion as it came. He quickly made a little spear out of the rib of a coconut leaf and stuck it through the scorpion. Then he put the spear into his thick curly hair and went to his brother and his friends.

"I can't win against Etao," said Jemeliwut. "He's more clever than I am."

Etao tried to be friendly with his brother again. "Let's have some fun, just you and I," he said. "I'll turn us both into fish for a while. It will be pleasant to swim as they do and go where we please in the water."

Jemeliwut agreed, and they went to the water. Etao said, "I'll let you have the best time, Jemeliwut. I'll be a tortoise. I'll swim slowly, close to shore, eating small fish and clams. You will be a porpoise, large and beautiful. You will leap and swim, farther out, and catch many fish."

Very soon, there were the tortoise and the porpoise, swimming around in the lagoon waters near the coral rocks.

But Etao did not let his brother enjoy the fun very long. He saw some fishermen not far away. He struck his flipper hard upon the water. The fishermen heard the sound. They saw the tortoise and the porpoise and threw their spears at them.

The spears bounced off the hard-shell back of the tortoise, but they hurt the back of the porpoise, so that it had to swim far away. When the fishermen went home, Jemeliwut swam back to his brother. "Change me back into a man!" he said. "I'll stay that way." So Etao and his brother became men again.

"I'm through with you," said Jemeliwut. "Go back home and tell my father that I'm going to live and die, right here in Mejuro Island."

Jemeliwut walked back to a place called Loto, where he made his home. He became one of the great kings of Mejuro.