

TALE OF KEKU

By

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INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY OF KEKUHAUPI'O

FADE IN:

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

There is a dense humidity preceding the precipitation on the forestry leaves.

A FLORAL VARIETY, tropical, is spread throughout the jungle.

There are DISTANT ECHOES of chirping birds, swinging motions of primates in trees, and carnivorous beings preying discreetly through the bushes.

Outside the jungle parameters is a VOICE; a kind of MELODY.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PEAK - DAY

Outside the confines of the jungle, above the open SEA, is an old-bearded man covered with religious-tapestry garments. He is a KAHUNA (priest) chanting the KUMULIPO (Ancient Hawaiian chant) outward to the open sky; his ARMS reaching out freely.

Nearest the Kahuna (priest) is a PERCUSSIONIST playing the KILU (small drum). He is drumming the HEART BEAT of Hawaii.

CUT TO:

EXT. PA'LUA - NIGHT

MONTAGE TO THE KUMULIPO:

There is a secret CEREMONIAL GROUND (PA') with KUKUI TORCHES illuminating the small area as the surrounding land lay quietly in darkness.

A bawling of aggressive GRUNTS echo through the trees.

A group of KOA (warriors), with muscular statures in loin cloths, are paired together developing their combative skills. Various movements of parries and strikes persist.

Nearby, another group is performing a uniformed ritual, a HULA KAHIKO (ancient dance). Their arms, legs, and hips move COHESIVELY and with merciless intentions, mimicking movements of combat.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PEAK (CONTINUES) - DAY

The Kahuna continues to CHANT the Kumulipo with melodious pride, depicting the spirit of the island.

END CUT TO:

EXT. WA'ALUA (DOUBLE HULLED CANOE) / SEA - DAY

The Kahuna's (priest) chant becomes a distant whisper.

A sailing WA'ALUA (canoe) travels through the SEA of Kane', the home to the most exotic creatures in the abyss.

Sailing abroad is KEKUHAUPI'O. He is a lean, strong teenage prodigy and haumana (student) of the martial art LUA.

Alongside him is his 'Olohe Lua (mentor), KOAIA.

Koaia, an older man in his early forties, has the same ATHLETICISM as any other youth but, with a WISER disposition.

They both MIMIC one another's MOVEMENT as they row the wa'alua (canoe).

The settling of the BREEZE signals the arrival of their destination.

The wa'alua (canoe) comes to a halt.

Kekuhaupi'o and Koaia attaches a dead PUA'A (pig) at the middle of their canoe, makes a slit in its belly and allows the putrid content to slip into the sea.

There is a big blot of a deep RED HUE spreading across the sea.

Minutes pass. Kekuhaupi'o and Koaia sit in their noho (seat), breathing in the clear air and looking out at the vast ocean.

Suddenly in the distance, speedily, there is something traveling toward them underwater.

Kekuhaupi'o stands up to grab his IHE (spear), getting ready to meet with it head on. Koaia swiftly grabs his wrist.

KOAIA
(Hawaiian)
Be patient KEKU, or death waits for
you below.

(CONTINUED)

KEKU obeys as it continues to speed toward the wa'alua (canoe).

Keku prepares for a possible attack until realizing that the OCEAN BEAST is heading straight for the bait, as expected.

The MASSIVENESS of the ocean beast impresses both men as it passes by.

The ocean beast thrashes back and forth. Ripped pieces of meat from the Pua'a (pig) floats away chaotically.

KOAIA
(Hawaiian)
Your challenge is just a few feet
below. Are you ready?

The thrashing movements become less aggressive. The water is OPAQUE with BLOOD.

Keku's feet grips onto the edge of the wa'alua (canoe) as his hand grips more intensely of his ihe (spear).

KEKU
If you asked me a year ago, that
question would be significant. But
today, doubt is irrelevant.

The water settles below them.

Keku waits a few more seconds. He then proceeds to jump.

This time, Koiaia doesn't stop him.

Keku dives into the ocean with finesse.

EXT. SHAM BATTLE / HALAU - DAY

ONE YEAR PREVIOUS:

A body falls abruptly onto the muddy ground.

Determination is masked by the contusions on his face. It is KEKU.

The HALAU (arena) is encircled by highly energized KOA (warriors) chanting for their chosen practitioner.

Keku stands once more. It is a MATCH that must be won.

He turns to face his OPPONENT once more and sees him glorifying this moment with his peers. He is a brawny teenager with presumptuous eyes.

(CONTINUED)

Keku's tribe chants boisterously, hoping that their energy is the fuel for his victory.

Keku throws elbows, knees, jabs and right-crosses. His RHYTHM and TIMING is a half-beat off.

The opponent is able to COUNTER, delivering blows devastating to Keku's body.

From the crowd, there is an anonymous call for stoppage (ho'opau) as the opponent's uppercut lands on Keku's chin.

Keku drops to a knee with blurred vision and a slight loss of breath.

Both practitioners take a moment at their respected corner.

EXT. SHAM BATTLE / CORNER - DAY

Koايا gives Keku a splash of water into his mouth with a LAU (leaf).

KOAIYA
(Hawaiian)
What do we strive for in Lua?

KEKU
(Hawaiian)
A sound mind, sound body.

KOAIYA
(Hawaiian)
Then listen to the rhythms of the match.

Koايا points at their tribe.

KOAIYA
(Hawaiian)
Listen to your PO'E (people).

His tribe is performing the HAKA; a militaristic dance and chant for intimidating their enemy.

KOAIYA
(Cont. Hawaiian)
Celebrate with them, and they will live and die for you.

Koايا puts a hand on Keku's shoulder and gestures the surrounding crowd.

(CONTINUED)

KOAIA
(Hawaiian)
They all will.... win or lose, you
are meant to be an 'Olohe Lua
(Leader).

Keku feels the BEAT of his tribe. His FOOT begins to tap to the rhythm. His eyes SQUINT with focus as the adrenaline consumes him.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS:

EXT. SEA / UNDERWATER - DAY (PRESENT)

Keku floats using the rhythm of the underwater current to stay focused, his breath held steadily.

Because of the excess blood from the pua'a (pig), SIGHT is not a reliable sense. Keku allows SOUND to help dictate where his enemy may be.

EXT. SHAM BATTLE / HALAU - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The tribe's HAKA sustains Keku's motivation.

The earth beneath the tribe's FEET tremble as they STOMP.

Their FISTS COLLIDES upon their chest and arms.

Their WORDS spark inspiration.

The SOUND of Keku's heart beats COHESIVELY with the tribe's MOVEMENT as he and his opponent walk to the center of the halau (arena).

EXT. WA'ALUA(DOUBLE HULLED CANOE) / SEA - DAY

Koia is standing onto the wa'alua (canoe) gazing at the calm water below.

The remaining red hue from the bait is slightly dissolved, but it still prevents a clear vision above the surface of the ocean.

Ripples start to form in the water.

EXT. SHAM BATTLE / HALAU - DAY

The BEAT from a DRUM ascends from the last foot STOMP of the Haka.

The FIRST BLOW is thrown by the opponent.

Both combatants execute various counter-attacks exhibiting their combative talents.

EXT. WA'ALUA(DOUBLE HULLED CANOE) / SEA - DAY

The RIPPLES of the ocean become more aggressive.

EXT. SHAM BATTLE / HALAU - DAY

The INTENSITY elevates amongst the combatants, as does the crowd.

The fight transitions from standing, to the ground, and back up again.

Keku's body responds rhythmically; he moves reflexively to his opponent's movement.

The crowd is unsure who is winning, but with yells consistent of excitement, they are entertained none the less.

EXT. WA'ALUA(DOUBLE HULLED CANOE) / SEA - DAY

There is a continuance of heavy thrashing underwater.

Koaia, calmly concerned, continues to wait for his haumana (student) to rise from below.

EXT. SHAM BATTLE / HALAU - DAY

A huge blow is taken by Keku and he hesitates slightly from advancing further.

His opponent takes advantage and swarms with a barrage of attacks.

Keku, with composure, attempts to keep his defenses up.

Keku's tribe is taken aback.

EXT. WA'ALUA(DOUBLE HULLED CANOE) / SEA - DAY

A COLD BREEZE blows through. Time passes by too quickly. Koiaia's concern increases twofold.

The surface of the sea is too OPAQUE from fresh BLOOD.

The ocean surface slowly settles.

EXT. SHAM BATTLE / HALAU - DAY

The beat of the drum has ceased.

The attack has ended. BLOOD drips from his mouth. Victory is not for Keku.

Keku sits, defeated, on the dirt for a moment gazing his surroundings.

There are mixed reactions of excitement and shock amongst the crowd.

For a brief moment of admiration, Keku and his opponent lock eyes.

The opponent have swollen contusions on his face and body proving that the match was not easy.

EXT. WA'ALUA(DOUBLE HULLED CANOE) / SEA - DAY

The SILENCE is torturous.

Koiaia's feet grips the edge of the wa'alua (canoe) preparing to launch himself in the ocean, but then he hesitates.

EXT. SHAM BATTLE / HALAU - DAY

The SILENCE is interrupted by a CHANT. It is not a chant to intimidate, but instead, to celebrate their hero's fearlessness.

Keku looks back. His vision is still blurred, but he is still able to make out the approach of his men.

One of them lends a HAND to pull him from the ground.

END CUT TO:

EXT. WA'ALUA(DOUBLE HULLED CANOE) / SEA - DAY

Suddenly, a HAND appears out of the water and Koaia, without hesitation, grabs a hold of it.

Koaia pulls the body out of the water.

Keku's face is soaked, but it gleams with a satisfied smile as he presents the EYE of the ocean beast to Koaia.

Koaia settles his hand on Keku's shoulder, taking in this proud moment.

Koaia proceeds to wrap the EYE in a LAU (leaf).

EXT. PA'LUA - DAY

An EYE focuses on a SPEAR traveling quickly.

Under attack, a strongly built PRODIGY, early twenties, shifts slightly from the spear's course and is able to GRAB it, effortlessly.

More SPEARS pierces the air toward the prodigy's path. He is able to DEFLECT them with his captured spear.

A much WISER KEKU is on the sideline observing how his pupils are handling the challenge. EYES SPELLBOUND, he focuses steadily at the young man.

Minutes pass. Keku orders his pupils to cease fire. He then summons the prodigy, KAMEHAMEHA, to come over.

KEKU
(Hawaiian)
Kamehameha....I think it's time.

Relieved, Kamehameha's shoulders sink. There is a subtle smirk.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Both Keku and Kamehameha push their wa'alua (canoe) out onto the shore of the ocean and jumps in and begin their journey outward.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PEAK - DAY

Once more, the Kahuna (priest) chants, freely, the KUMULIPO while the percussionist pounds the KILU (small drum).

FADE OUT: