Tabu: A Story of the South Seas

By F.W. Murnau
TABU:
A story
of the south seas
Only native-born
south sea islanders...
appear in this picture with
a few half-castes and chinese.
First chapter

PARADISE:
A LAND OF ENCHANTMENT REMORE IN THE SOUTH SEAS...
THE ISLAND OF BORA-BORA STILL
UNTouched BY THE HAND OF CIVILIZATION.
GREETING FROM THE CHIEF OF FANUMA
LORD OF ALL THE ISLANDS
TO THE CHIEF OF BORA BORA
UPON YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE
I CONFER THE HIGHEST HONOR
KNOWN TO OUR ISLANDS
THE MAIDEN SACRED TO OUR GODS
HAS PASSED AWAY AND I DECREE
THAT FROM YOUR ISLAND
SHALL COME HER SUCCESSOR
ONE I HAVE CHOSEN FOR HER BEAUTY,
FOR HER VIRTUE, FOR HER ROYAL BLOOD,
SHE WHO IS NAMED RERI
NO LAW OF THE GODS IS MORE TO BE FEARED
THAN THAT WHICH GUARDS THE CHOSEN ONE
MAN MUST NOT TOUCH HER...
OR CAST UPON HER THE EYE OF DESIRE
FOR IN HER HONOR
RESTS THE HONOR OF ALL HER PEOPLE
SACRED IS RERI FROM THIS TIME FORTH

SHE IS TABU:
TO BREAK THIS TABU MEANS DEATH

HITU:
BEARS THIS MESSAGE
AND WILL BRING THE MAID TO ME...

FOR HER SAFETY:
HE WILL ANSWER WITH HIS LIFE
The whole Island is still in an uproar.  
The girl Reri has been stolen.  
Whatever has happened, according to their law  
she is still the "Chosen one"...  
Unless she is returned  
the Tabu means death...  
She will be hunted down and sacrificed,  
Matahari will be killed old Hitu himself will die.  
I shall not leave until I learn  
what the island is going to do.  

NO LAW OF THE GODS IS MORE TO BE FEARED  
THAN THAT WHICH GUARDS THE CHOSEN MAID  
MAN MUST NOT TOUCH HER...  
OR CAST UPON HER THE EYE OF DESIRE  
TO BREAK THIS TABU MEANS DEATH  

Second chapter  

PARADISE LOST:  
FLEEING THE VENGEANCE OF THE TABU  
THE GUILTY LOVERS FOUGHT THEIR WAY...  
OVER LEAGUES OF OPEN SEA  
SEEKING SOME ISLAND OF THE PEARL TRADE...  
WHERE THE WHITE MAN RULES  
AND THE OLD GODS ARE FORGOTTEN  
IN THEIR FRAIL CANOE THROUGH STORMS  
UNDER A BURNING SKY THIRST-CRAZED AND STARVING...  
ALWAYS DRIVEN ON BY FEAR...  
FEAR OF THE AVENGING TABU.  
The couple found in their wrecked canoe,  
as already reported, recovered quickly.  
The boy, it develops, is born diver,  
the best we have ever had on the island.  
But it seems only play to him.  
He evidently does not yet realize  
what money means.  
But the girl was stolen  
before the ship left Bora-Bora  
As the Government desires above all things  
to avoid conflict between the islands under its rule,...  
it demands the arrest  
of this man and woman wherever found.  
For their arrest, the Government offers  
a reward of Five Hundred Frans.  
Et. Cadoustal.
A most unfortunate accident happened today on the Lagoon. It occurred while most of the people were ashore at one of their native feasts. There is a spot in the lagoon, the richest in pearl beds of any in the South Seas. But this spot is Tabu. Natives shun it. Today, one of our old divers defying the superstition. An enormous man-eating shark guards these pearls the native believe... Today's tragedy proves this is

no superstition:
I trust I have the Government's approval in putting up a sign forbidding further diving in this place.

TABU:
THREE DAYS I GIVE YOU
YOU RETURN WITH ME OR MATAHI DIES

THREE DAYS:

HITU:
SHIPS AGENT - TICKETS SOLD TO ALL ISLAND PORTS
The schooner Hinano is due June 24th bound for Papeete.
SCHOONER HINANO ARRIVES IN TWO DAYS (JUNE 24th)
AND LEAVES FOR PAPEETE THE FOLLOWING MORNING
PRICE OF TWO TICKETS: 130 Frans
MATAHI OWES KONG AH - BILL RENDERED
(WINES, CHAMPAGNE, Etc. - SERVED VILLAGERS AT FEAST)

TO MATAHI:

MY LOVE:
I MUST GO HITU IS HERE AND WAITS FOR ME
YOU WILL DIE IF I DO NOT OBEY
I WILL GO SO THAT YOU MAY LIVE
THE TABU IS UPON US
I HAVE BEEN SO HAPPY WITH YOU FAR MORE
THAN I DESERVED THE LOVE YOU HAVE GIVEN ME
I WILL KEEP TO THE LAST BEAT OF MY HEAR
ACROSS THE GREAT WATTERS I WILL COME TO YOU
IN YOUR DREAMS WHEN THE MOON SPREADS
ITS PATH ON THE SEA FAREWELL

TABU: