

NELLY · TAHITI, FRENCH POLYNESIA

Taoto, Pepe

Key: Am

~56 BPM

Guitar & Piano

VERSE 1

AmDmAm

Taoto, pepe,

DmAmE7

taoto te pepe taoto e.

(Sleep, baby - sleep, baby, sleep now.)

AmDmAm

Sleep now, baby, sleep now, sleep so sweet,

DmAmE7

mama's at the reef tonight, gathering something to eat.

VERSE 2

AmDmAm

Papa's in the valley now, picking plantains ripe and gold,

DmAmE7

to make you porridge in the morning, sleep now, don't be cold.

Am

Taoto, Pepe is a traditional Tahitian lullaby that gently describes a family's daily rhythm — mother gathering food at the reef, father searching the valley for fei, a variety of cooking banana used to make popoi, a sweet dish for the baby. In Tahitian, the word "pepe" beautifully means both "baby" and "butterfly," adding a light, tender touch to this everyday scene of family care.

Traditional Tahitian lullaby. Lyrics and translation adapted from the well-known traditional text.

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