

ONDORONDO

A Papua New Guinea literary magazine

K1



Dancing yet to the Dim Dim's Beat

We are dancing
Yes, but without leaping
For the fetters of dominance
- still persist
Yes, still insist
On dominating
Holding us down

We have been dancing
Yes, but not for our own tune
For we are not immune
Yes, for our truly, our own truly
Music of life is eroding
Yes, the mystic tune holds
Us spellbound
Our independence abused

We have been dancing
Yes, we have our senses throbbing
Like an adolescent's ignorance
Yes, we have been misled
For the throbbing is a mishmash
- the mirth you hear
Yes, it is about our own
Mis-shapen rebirth

We have been dancing
Yes, our anklets and
Amulets now are
Yes, grinding into our skin
No longer are they a decor
Yes, they are our chains

We have been dancing
Yes, but the euphoria has died
It is now the dull drumming
Yes, of the flat drums -
Thud dada thud da thud dada thud
Yes, It is signalling, not the bliss,
But the impending crisis.

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PAPUA NEW GUINEA BANKING CORPORATION

ONDOBONDO

A magazine of new writing from Papua New Guinea.

Editorial

Some doubts were raised in the last issue of **Ondobondo** as to the future of this magazine. The editors are pleased to report the continuation of **Ondobondo** as a magazine by, for, and of Papua New Guinea. The Literature Department presents this issue of **Ondobondo** in conjunction with the Graphics Department, National Arts School.

Both literary and artistic talents from Melanesia are in evidence. We ask you to take note of Loujaya Kouza's review on **Ondobondo** recital nights

and we hope to encourage aspiring writers to join this literary club, for much of the material you read in this magazine was once given orally at club gatherings. In this issue we have also included material from Keravat National High School students. We hope to see more material from young writers.

Ondobondo is a Binandere word for festival or singing.

Please send contribution to the Editor, **Ondobondo** magazine, P.O.Box 320, University, N.C.D.

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Cover poem by Vincent Warakai

DAIME, THE UNBROKEN SPEAR

by John Endemogo

Daime woke up earlier than usual because of the intense heat and noises of crowded human activity. He felt for his mother's breasts, but discovered that his mother wasn't sleeping with him. He looked around in the tiny sleeping compartment to see if his sister Dine was sleeping and saw her dark figure silhouetted against the firelight. She was looking out through the left entrance of the partition leading to the main half of the lowly built round-hut. He listened and could hear a big crowd in the main room. He sat up and wondered why his mother and sister were up so early with a huge crowd of visitors.

He crawled over his pandanus sleeping mat to where his sister was and sat next to her. Dine quickly put a calming hand over her younger brother and patted him on the back lovingly without looking at him. Daime could feel that his sister's body had a sobbing rhythm. He slowly looked into her face and saw it flooding with tears. He looked over quickly at the crowd who were busy adorning themselves, but couldn't figure out exactly where his mother was because the room was filled with smoke. Finally, he noticed that the central figure dressed in valuable ceremonial gear was none other than his mother. He began to wonder why his mother would dress in such a gallant manner in the middle of the night like that. He watched his mother with great suspicion and hate.

At the age of seven, Daime was unusually strong and more or less overgrown in maturity for his age. The warrior cult society deprived him of his childhood and imposed manly characters in him early. His father Dikne-Kea, a noble warrior of the Nangenku tribe, had been killed in a major battle. Most of the other tribesmen of the Nangenku clan were forced to drown in the mighty Whagi river in their flight, and the women and children taken captive. Their land had been forfeited to the victors. It was lucky for Daime, his nine year old sister, Dine, and his mother, for they were advised by his father to move over the cane bridge to the land of his uncles before the actual day of the big battle. Very few survived.

There was no need to ask any questions. Daime could guess what



Illustrated by John Baida

was happening. His uncles had decided that it was time they sold his mother to another man for more money. That was why they were decorating her, for the re-marriage. He felt at a loss, but controlled his feeling of hollowness. Daime had learnt how to live without a father, and the mother was not necessary because women had no power whatsoever. He could bring down a sparrow with his bow, and that proved that he was a man, able to live on his own. Daime quickly realized that he was fatherless, tribeless, landless, and worst of all, a foreigner. At that very moment he decided that as soon as his mother was sold, he would return to his deserted land alone, and would no longer be called a foreigner. He stared at Dine to see if she could detect what was in his young mind. She is only a female, he thought. If only she had testicles then they would form a pair that would fight the whole enemy tribe. Nevertheless, Dine was his only sister and would have to go with him as he had decided.

Daime's mother was broken-hearted to leave her two children, but had no choice, because her cruel and greedy brothers had already made the arrangements, and in fact they had received some advance payment. She remembered how much these brothers had already taken from the deceased father of her two children. The children's father was a wealthy and

powerful man and in fact, most of her brothers had served as serfs in her deceased husband's household, but now it seemed, they were never going to appreciate his good deeds. She was sorry, for it was all past and history would not unfold itself. Daime was the replica of his father, and she knew that. People often felt that his deceased father's spirit had entered his son and acted in him. She was very certain that he'd grow up to be a legend and would one day build up the slaughtered Nangenku tribe. She shed a silent tear at the thought.

It was getting towards dawn, and Daime's mother was afraid that her son would get up and see her dressed like a young girl. It was planned that they would leave before dawn, so as not to upset the little lad. Daime's mother was partly afraid that her son might grow up to be a powerful man later, and might avenge her for what she was about to do. Women who left children flogged or buried alive by their own offspring. However, it was not her wish to forsake her children. Whatever happened was fate. Women had no voice in society; they were just slaves. She looked at where Dine, her daughter was sitting, and to her surprise saw her son staring deadly at her face. She beat her breasts and gasped "Daime....come to me." He gazed at her absently. His mother held her hands out for him, but he seemed rooted with reason. Teardrops dropped heavily down her cheeks and ploughed the fine paint tattooed on her face. Everybody in the hut stopped what they were doing and looked in her direction. The men kept their gaze, but the women quickly bowed their heads in sympathy and fear for they could never foretell the future of a male child like Daime, who was of noble origin.

"What is going on in here?" Daime broke the silence and looked his immediate uncle in the eye. It was unusual for children to speak as such, but Daime, the son of Dikne, had inherited great authority from his deceased father who was a reputable man of high standing. There was a pause.

"What is it that you people are trying to do to my mother without letting me know?" asked Daime.

His uncle, who was angered at

seeing the lack of respect he commanded, replied bluntly, "We are trying to sell your mother to another man." everybody was silent except for the sound of the fire crackling away. Daime and his uncle sized each other for the verbal battle.

Daime spoke "But my father was killed only recently, and I think Dine and I are going to need our mother for awhile."

The audience was shocked by the youth's attacks and remained silent, except for Dine's sobbing which got louder and was joined by her mother's and most of the women.

Embarrassed by the breakdown, the man snapped, "Stop this sobbing," which ended all the sobs except for Dine's whose got louder and louder. Her uncle snapped. "Dine will also be tied up and sold to one of the men for she is big enough."

At that, Daime burst out, "Dine will not be sold by you, for she is my property. Just how much have you taken from my father already? I have seen you running up to my home at the sight of rising smoke. Each time you come empty handed, and return to your home with loads of pork. You have never slaughtered one of your pigs to mark my father's death. I think you are a disgusting and a poor man

among the Giunde people." Not one among the crowd was able to question the truth for Dikne was such a wealthy man and had given out so much food and money that the recipients could never pay back in their whole lifetime.

The silence was broken by a call from the men's house atop the crest. "What is going on down there.

We are waiting for you to come so that we can take of early."

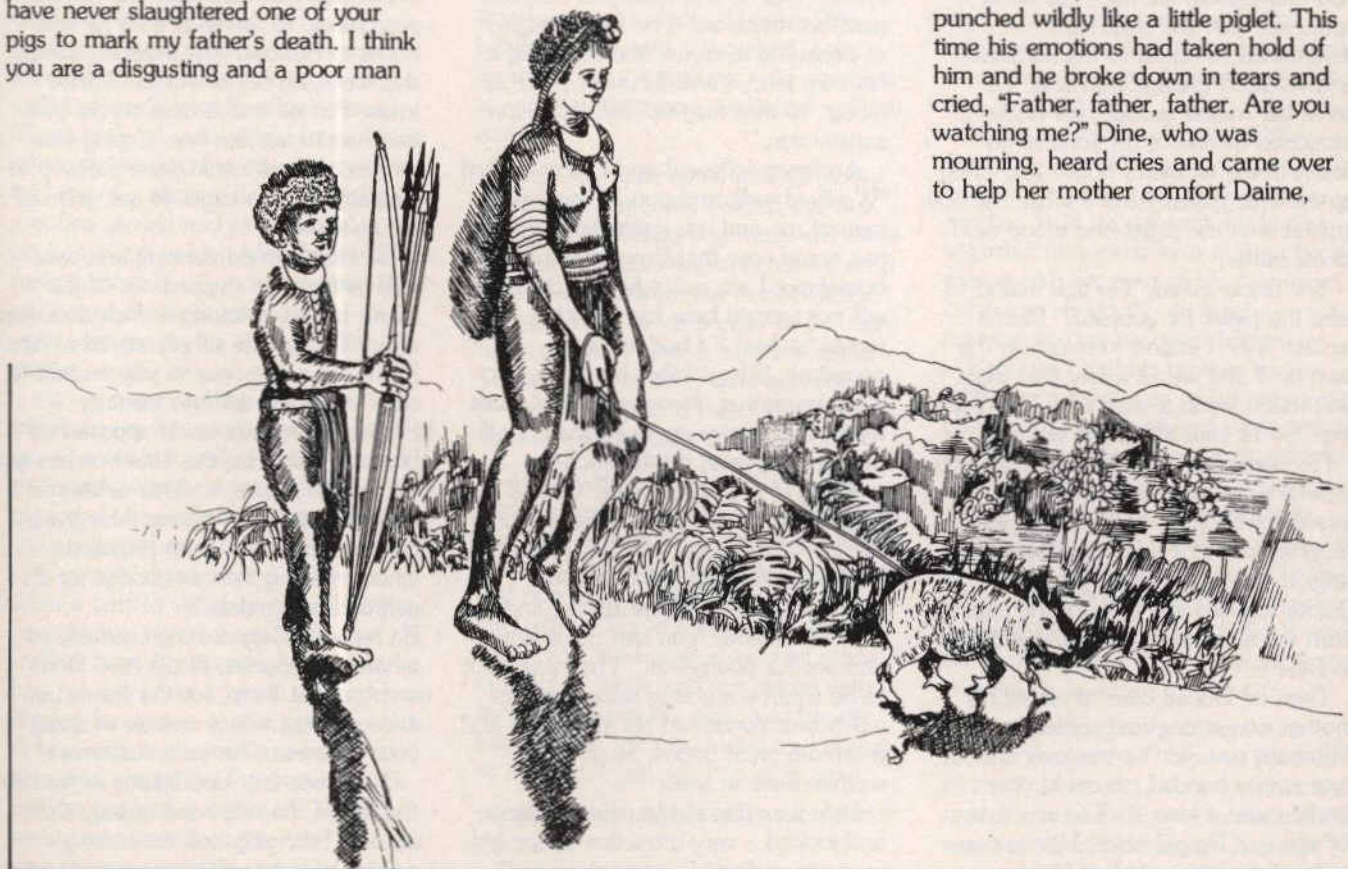
Daime's uncle, who was sweating in the little hut, brushed aside the dried banana-leaf-curtains and crawled out. The dawn was approaching. He cleared his throat and replied in a low tone, "We are moving now." The caller acknowledge and went into the men's house. Daime's uncle recalled the glorious moments he had had with his deceased brother-in-law. Dikne was indeed a great man and it was a blessing that his sister had married him, for it was this relationship that gave him, the uncle, prominence amongst his own Giunde tribesmen. He shivered in the darkness, for it was his wealthy brother-in-law that was his foundation, and now that he is no

more, he, the uncle, would no longer be respected, for he knew that he was a poor and lazy man, just as his nephew had described him. He hated his nephew so much, and in the dark, he swore in his mind that he would deal with the lad at a later date for defaming him in front of all his tribesmen.

An elder got up and spoke from within the hut. "We will have to move now before the sun streaks. As for young Daime, he is a man, and a Guinde by blood, and has every right to live here, We made a mistake by not informing him, but he will be alright. Let us move now." The men crawled out first, followed by the womenfolk. Daime's mother reached out for her son and wanted to clutch him, but he pushed her away and shook his head.

His mother cried out "Daime! I am your mother and we are both going together. Why should I leave you behind?"

But her stubborn son only shook his head and said "No, I'm not coming with you, woman." She picked him up by force and carried him out through the entrance, but Daime kicked and punched wildly like a little piglet. This time his emotions had taken hold of him and he broke down in tears and cried, "Father, father, father. Are you watching me?" Dine, who was mourning, heard cries and came over to help her mother comfort Daime,



who was rolling in the mud on the pathway.

One of the men swore at Daime's mother. "You leave that lad alone and get moving woman, for all you are trying to do is torture him." Daime's mother had no choice but to move along as ordered, for the men were known for their impatience. The people proceeded towards the men's house. The women consoled Daime's mother and escorted her behind the men.

Daime quickly recollected himself, got up, and followed the crowd, escorted by Dine and his grandmother. When he arrived at the men's house where everybody was gathered in preparation to go, Daime was all painted in mud. Everybody was silent as if they were showing sorrow for the little lad. The other people at the men's house had not known what had happened but all shared the sorrow of the young child and his sister, who would be parentless. It was indeed a tragic case.

Daime paused, took his breath and spoke calmly, "Uncle, before you sell my mother, I think you should give me my little golden-haired piglet which you had marked out for me." His uncle could see that the child was determined to return to his homeland and wouldn't change his mind. To solve the matter quickly, his uncle motioned to one of his sons to go down to the women's house and bring up the little piglet. After a while the boy arrived with the piglet and stood next to his father.

The uncle asked, "Do you intend to take the piglet for yourself?" Daime replied "Yes, I intend to return to my own land and we all know that there isn't much life in a man who hasn't got pigs. So I'll take this piglet with me."

His uncle replied "It is proper for you to take it, for your late father was feared for his herd of pigs. Pigs were his religion and if you can inherit his religion, we would all be pleased." Daime reached out and got the piglet from the small boy, and handed it over to Dine.

Then he looked over to where his mother was sitting and spoke, "Woman, you didn't cross over the river empty handed, so could you kindly spare a kina shell to my sister, for she is a big girl now." His mother replied full of tears "All of Dine's

clothings and goods are with her grandmother. How can I not care about her?" His grandmother stood up silently, and went towards the hut, accusing the greedy and cruel men as she went along. After a while, she returned with the freshly made bilum, swollen with its contents. She lay the bilum on the ground in front of Dine and disclosed the contents, as the people watched silently. A pair of newly woven fore-and-aft purpur, a fancy cane woven belt, two pairs of armbands, possums furs, necklaces, a fur hat, a brand new kina shell, some other womanly items of dress and a newly woven coil of pig-rope, made of the strongest and finest bark. The pig-rope was specially added by the grandmother, for Dine would play the role of mother and wife to her younger brother, for a woman's value depended on her success in pig-rearing and management. Dine took a quick look at the items and embraced her grandmother for she had thought of her well.

Dine deserved the expensive dressing, for her father was a man of immense wealth. The grandmother spoke, "Daime is a man and I cannot read his mind, but if he has thoughts of departing from us, and returning to his own land, I will dress his sister up nicely, so that they will farewell us in satisfaction."

A silence followed and Daime replied "We lived well, and you all took great care of me and my sister, but the time has come now that I must return to my homeland. I am not a female child and will not remain here forever, so it would be best if I had an early departure. If I get killed by those who killed my father, then we will not meet again, but if I live up to be man, I will host my pig-feast on the sacred grounds of my burial place. One of these days, if you see smoke rise on the top of the ridge, you will know that I am still alive and will make my offering to the ancestral spirits, and a feast will follow. You can come and see for yourselves." That was a lot to be said by a young fellow, but his will power confirmed his statement and promised great hopes. Most of the women were in tears.

Dine was dressed in new garments and looked a very attractive young girl, ready to perform a woman's duties.

She had her bilum on her head, and the pig-rope held the little piglet, ready to move.

Daime looked around for Ba, his personal caretaker, assigned to look after him by his father before his death. Ba was a small man but very dynamic. He knew everything and could just about do anything. His late father had always treated him as his brother and not a serf. The small man stepped in front of the people and spoke "Daime, I have got everything ready, if you want us to depart now." He handed Daime's bow to him. Ba was emotional and felt like saying something, but had no right for he was born into serfdom, and was not allowed to take part in such matters.

Daime looked westwards across the muddy brown Whagi river and saw his homeland not too far away. He motioned Dine to move forward, and he followed. He looked around to his uncle for the last time and called out "You can sell your sister now, but don't you ever cross the river to the west, for the Whagi river is filled with evil spirits and screeching vultures." He felt brave after the warning and walked on proudly.

He kept his head high and looked searchingly to the west as if he was about to discover lost treasure, solidly down-playing his emotions. Daime knew that he was a man on his own and had to act like one. Crying was womanish and would pave the way to despair. He was eager to see and feel his own soil.

Ba had finished packing and was fully armed. He stepped out of the men's house, smoking a thick dried-leaf cigar. The people simply stared at him for it was not proper to pay respect to serfs or people with no identity. However, Daime's uncle approached him and said "Ba, this little boy has got his father's spirits, and his behaviour is very abnormal. So please take great care of him. Take great precaution when crossing the cane bridge for it's guarded by vandals." Ba replied "They are my children, so whatever happens, I'll die first. Don't worry about them, for the sun is up, and you might have trouble in doing your business with your customers."

The three tiny lone figures arrived on the top of the ridge and quickly sank away. The crying and the wailing continued unheard. □

NEPATAE, MY LOST ONE

by John Job

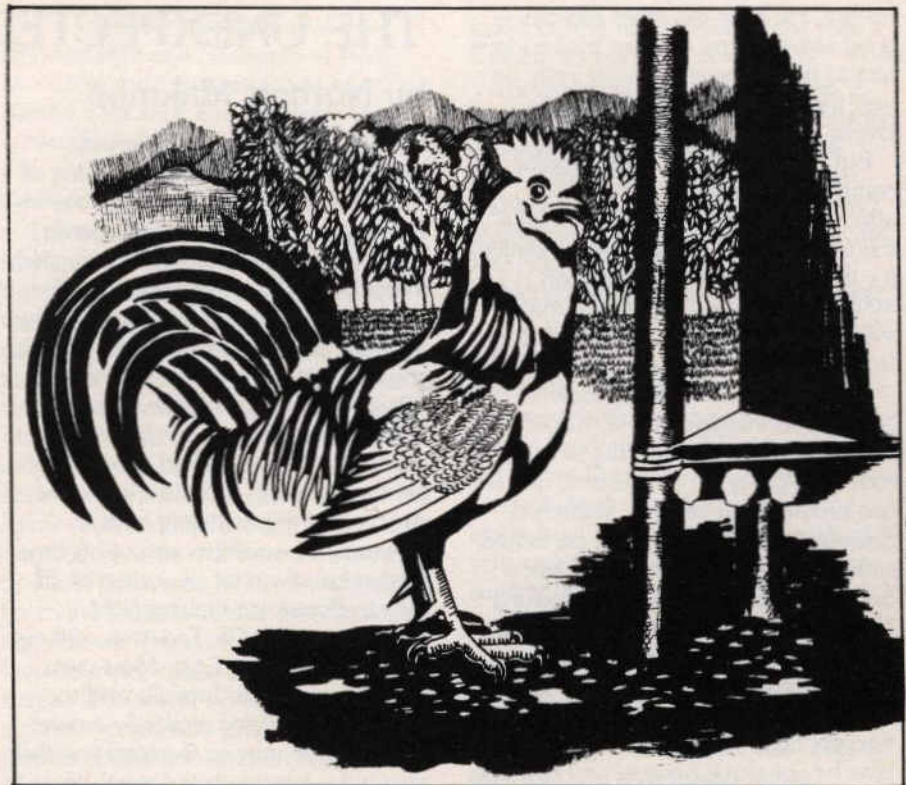
People keep all kinds of pets these days and for many reasons. Some people have pets because they are just fond of them. Others have pets as companions and for comfort.

I was about seven when I had my first and only pet. My parents had left early one morning for the mission station to get medicine for my little sister who was ill with malaria. I felt lonely at home so I decided to go to my grandmother's place, about a mile away. I took from the kitchen a small knife and a piece of kaukau my mother had left for my breakfast. About half way from grandmother's place, the path crossed a little hill. A long strip of clay half way down the hill was a favourite spot where I always stopped to rest. This time, using my knife, I started to cut all kinds of shapes and images out of the clay. The feel of the knife slicing through pieces of clay and around the curves of figures was especially pleasant to a sad and lonely child as I felt that day.

I stayed carving for about twenty minutes and then continued walking until I came to grandmother's house. There I stayed until nearly four o'clock when she said it was time to go. She told me of a shorter way home through a coffee garden and over an old kaukau patch, which brought me to the main path only a hundred metres from my house. I asked grandmother to walk with me as far as the coffee garden so she did.

As we were walking, we heard a frightening noise several yards ahead of us. The noise sounded like a mixture of flapping wings, hungry grunts of a pig, cries of panic-stricken chicks, and the rustling of dry coffee leaves.

We raced down to the noise and what a terrible sight: scattered feathers, one chicken leg and one wing of a mother hen. Apparently, a pig, who had run off when it heard us, had been digging for worms in the coffee garden. A hen with twelve or thirteen chicks was also scratching for worms in the soil the pig had overturned. The pig must have turned on the birds and we saw the remains. We searched



Illustrated by Alois Melekit Posai

diligently and found two chicks that had managed to escape. The rest were eaten by the pig. I told grandmother that I wanted to look after the little helpless birds and she agreed. I put them into my string bag, said goodbye to grandmother, and continued walking home.

I had sad and mixed feelings about what had happened. Feeling the two chicks in my string bag made me think of myself. I was imagining myself on a lone journey home, my mother killed, myself left to die of hunger in the night or be eaten by ghosts and evil spirits. These thoughts took hold and scared me terribly. I patted the chicks and then ran all the way home!

Just seven months later, my little bird was a big rooster. The other chick had died several days after I got home. I named the survivor Nepatae, meaning lost one or lonely one. He was a big bird with splendid feathers. Nepatae's wings and tail feathers were all black but bits of white and red mixed with the black down his neck and breast. His tail was thick and long and curled at the end. I can see him even now, standing with pride in all that colourful splendor.

Regarded as one of our family, we

gave him the best of all that he needed. He was fed from a plate and ate only at family mealtimes. My father built a cage nest to my bedroom window and here he slept. He woke us every morning with his crowing, just like an alarm clock.

Nepatae was a very proud bird, strutting around trying to show off. I think he regarded my mother as his mother. And myself and my family regarded him more as a human being than a bird because of his mannered behaviour. Even the visitors commented on his good behaviour.

Because I had no brother to play with, my rooster was my playmate. He came with me wherever I went, either walking behind or in front of me where the paths were narrow, or beside me if the path was wider. Sometimes I carried him on my shoulder. If we were to cross a bridge, he flew over to the other side and waited, flapping his wings eagerly as I crossed. Such were the activities and circumstances that brought us so close together.

Nepatae taught the other fowls around the yard at home to keep out of the kitchen and never to scratch near the house. Digging in the garden was strictly forbidden and Nepatae enforced this rule by ruffling many a

feather. He gave the other roosters a good hiding if any of them tried to face him to get his hens. Consequently he was the father of most of the little chicks that ran around the yard.

But my good times with Nepatae came to an abrupt end one rainy afternoon. My father decided to take the whole family to the mission station for the day. Because the mission station was a busy place with many vehicles and people, we decided to leave Nepatae at home.

My mother, who always took Nepatae to the garden with her when I was away, thought that this time my rooster might go to the garden, find no one around, and become frightened. She suggested that Nepatae be locked with the other birds inside the fence. So my father closed the gate, locking Nepatae inside. Imagined I could hear him protesting and saying, "Please don't leave me alone!" I did see him make several attempts to squeeze through holes in the fence, but each time he got stuck because of his frame. As we walked away, Nepatae was crowing and crackling his loudest, making a final plea not to be left behind. In fact, those were the last sounds I heard him make.

We returned home well into the night, shivering with cold from the rain which started just after we left the mission station. My first thoughts were to get Nepatae. I couldn't find him. I immediately sensed something was wrong. I called for my mother's help and together we searched, but there was no sign of him.

After a weary and sleepless night, we discovered in the morning that, as big and as strong as he was, Nepatae had managed to fly over the ten metre fence. Freeing himself from the fence, he had taken the road that led to our garden. Not finding my mother, he started searching, eventually getting lost, a true Nepatae. He ended up about two miles from my home where he was killed by a band of young boys, roasted and eaten. My mother and I learned of this much later. Grief and sorrow filled our days. Many times the thought of Nepatae brought tears to my eyes. I cried with as much sadness and grief as when my grandmother had died. My Nepatae, my rooster, my companion, was dead. □

THE UNEXPECTED GUEST

by Norbert Makmop

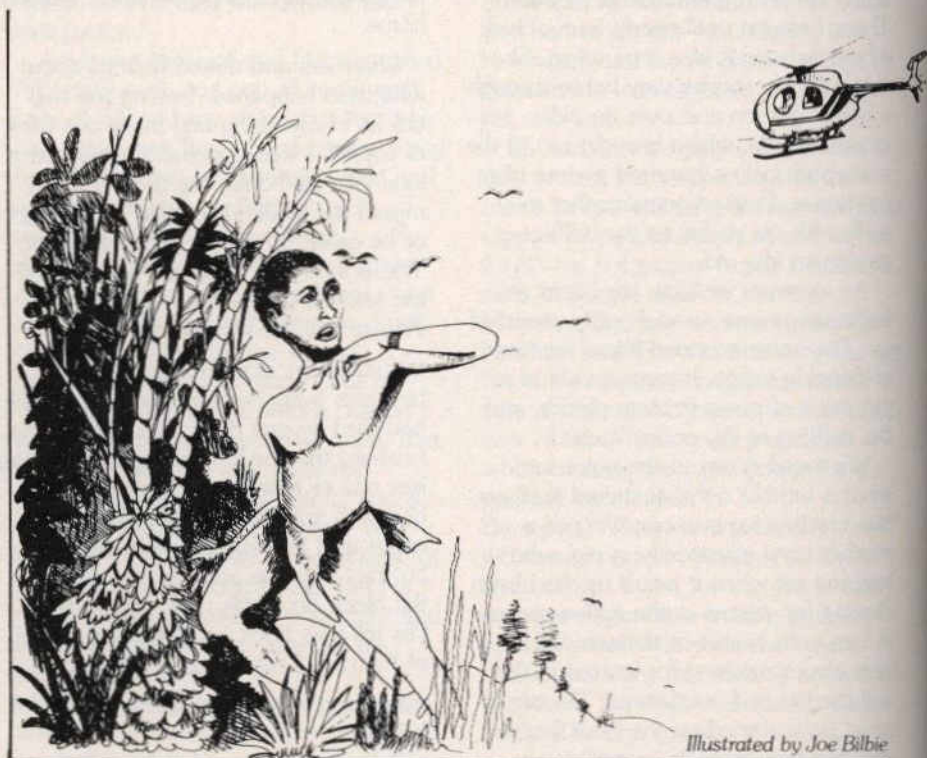
Manae's senses were deeply overpowered by the sudden squawking of the yellow crested white cockatoos in the middle of the inaccessible fertile valley surrounded by the steep rugged mountains. The violent outcry of the cockatoos filled the blue cloudless sky as if the whole village community was engaged in tearing down the virgin forest for taro subsistence crops.

"What is the matter with the cockatoos today?" asked the lonely handsome youth as he turned to the direction of the twittering birds. Towards the southern end of his taro garden he saw a lot of cockatoos fill the air. Some were taking flight upstream to the Ok Tedi river. Others were fleeing to the East. Most were taking cover in the foothills and the rest were just flying aimlessly around the lofty tree tops as if expressing their regrets for leaving their natural home in the hands of an outside invading force.

"Who is annoying these screaming birds! Watap atemiwe ... What have they seen now?" Manae further asked and stood wondering. "A masalai? A Papuan black snake? A witch people or sorcerer? Or could they just be

feasting to mark a successful crop year which had just begun?" he thought deeply.

Whatever the cause for this disturbance, Manae's superstitious mind was not convinced that a mere snake nor that people could have given these birds such a fright. Manae felt then that there may be some thing of danger approaching him. His mind grew alert. His heart became excited. His body hair stood stiff and he began to perspire and seriously thought for a moment or two about his wife and his own safety, should something happen. He strongly suspected that something dreadful might have happened in the village. Perhaps death, or perhaps his own life was at stake! "Who knows?" he asked with fear. He wished he could have known and wished he had the extra sensory perception of some genius people like his uncle Makmopsep back in the village who could predict what was going to occur and then could take precautions, like bring a helper or abandon his plans to come to the garden, or whatever. Manae deeply regretted having come to the garden. Then he mumbled, "What



Illustrated by Joe Bilbie

is the use of standing here expecting something to happen or news to come itself?"

The youth swiftly dashed to the garden hut and picked up his bow and arrows and started making his way out of the garden.

Then totally strange sound struck his ears. It grew louder and continuous. "Gee! What the hell on earth is on today?" he remarked as he caught sight of a mighty flying monster advancing upstream towards the smoke rising from his garden. He threw away his belongings and raced to the fire and tried to put out the fire which was burning the big quila tree standing in the middle of the garden. However, all was in vain. The approaching flying object caught up with him. He made to dive into the leaves and branches which he had felled, and there he found a safe spot from searchers' eyes. But not enough room to stretch his body as there were lots of stinging leaves around, that once contacted, burned skin like a bee's bite. Manae lay flat on a dead log like a lizard warming under the morning sun rays and watched the fast approaching unknown creature curiously.

A hawk? Hombill? A flying cassowary? Or is it a big strange cockatoo from a distant destination beyond the horizon? He could not think of any otheratives birds that were big enough to be compared. Manae had not seen such a one in his life time. No stories or myths claimed the existence of such a creature in all the Min world throughout its generations from the beginnings of his tribe.

The strange unexpected flying monster had an enormous body. Unlike natural birds, it did not have wings nor feathers nor eyes nor a beak. It had no legs and did not fly swiftly but hovered with a sound of flapping wings.

The strange bird had a big body with a long thin tail. On its main body it had a big spinning rod with a small spinning rod at the side of its tail. It had a white colour like a white cloud, and two yellow stripes ran in parallel on both sides from the main body to the tail. It had round smooth crystal clear water-type walls in the front, and half way from the main body to the tail

was a solid, obscure wall which reflected light rays. Beneath its body, two white rods were attached in parallel with each end bending outwards and down. The whole thing was shining like a luminous star under the blazing sun.

The noisy bird thundered past Manae towards the mountains Fubirin, the home of Manae's ancestor which the Min people, especially the Wopkai clan, adored and prayed to as their idol. The Min beliefs and cultural values were founded upon the Wopkai way of life. No one in their land dared defy the mountain's significance because so much depended upon it in terms of economic, social, political and religious systems. All were intertwined in the Wopkai way of life. People didn't go to the foothills of this mountain for any reason. The consequences could, they believed, cause them many bad things, like famine on food crops, sickness, premature death, long periodical rain and storms, high infant mortality, and frequent tribal wars towards possible eliminations of clans. Everyone had the responsibility to maintain respect and ensure that no offence was done to sacred places such as this mountain where this ignorant and mannerless creature was heading.

Manae watched disturbed, as this strange bird made a turn and came towards his location. Lower and lower it came, directly for Manae. Legs spread out, Manae's whole weight pressed against a log and both arms firmly grabbed the log - nervous system electrified. A combination of free running tears and perspiration massaged him as if to relax him forever. His mind grew weary and became heavy, stiff. Hands and legs shook like a newly head-chopped chicken. His heart jumped up and down excitedly inside its unseeable world as if preparing for the world of never return. Manae felt the invading wind of the strange bird conquering him. Dead leaves and branches were blown to scatter in all directions. Surrounding bushes and tree tops waved madly. The four month old garden food plants: sugar cane, taros, cucumbers, sweet potatoes, banana trees, and green vegetables, danced extravagantly, fancifully. The sky house landed several feet from Manae, and

stood on the two outward bent rods beneath its body.

The spinning rods reduced their thunder-like noise. When this happened the side facing Manae opened and three stange men jumped out while another two obscure figures remained seated inside behind the glittering walls. The poor scared youth watched, frightened, to see what happened next.

The three men walked smartly down the middle of the garden like very important persons inspecting the guard of honour with no respect for the garden food plants. They stopped by the fire and glanced at it for one or two seconds, and then they picked up a stone from the ground and examined it very carefully and took it back to the waiting house bird.

They stood behind Manae and started talking amongst themselves. Once in a while, they pointed their fingers at the surrounding mountains. One of them took a well-made digging stick out and dug several stones, examined them carefully and put them in the green bag and placed it in the house bird.

Manae could not make out the sound and tone of their language because of the thundering hissing sound of the resting skymaster. He could not determine whether these men were ordinary human beings from the unknown land beyond the horizon or from a supernatural world. Perhaps his dead relatives had come back to remove the bondage of death so that the Min tribe could live forever and ever amen. Manae looked more closely.

The first two men looked alike. Perhaps wantoks from the same clan. They were tall and good looking. Their faces were smooth like a woman's face with no beard. They had blue eyes with black hair like a black dog's hair with baby skin like colour-light skin. Their body was covered from legs to the neck level and to the elbows in a white coloured suit. Feet were covered too, for some mysterious reason. They looked uncertain and anxious. They tended to listen carefully to their third counterpart who was short and with colouring like Manae's. He too was well dressed like his white coloured friends. He looked simple and tended to pay special attention to his friends' conversation.

A fourth person came out to join them. He immediately walked to Manae's position. Manae tightly closed his eyes and buried his head down feeling that the moment had arrived for his slaughter.

"A premature death?" Manae protested, and tried to recall what wrongs he had done that offended his ancestors and dead relatives or even his living villagers now that the moment of eventual bondage of death was falling upon him as a punishment. From memories he recalled no offences.

Dying on his very own soil was pride and honour which every Min man held to be the highest honour a person could attain. This highest honour could only be conferred upon those men who died for their land, tribe, clan, family, and village House Tambaran in which relics of ancestors and dead relatives were kept with other objects. For this kind of death, Manae would have died. But to be killed by unknown strange visitors for no cause, was an insult and not right, he argued, as the trampling sound of the stranger's heavy footsteps came closer and closer.

Split seconds later Manae felt a heavy weight as if two fallen stone-like things had crushed his left arm against the log. At the same time he felt a very hot stinging water ooze over the back of his body. Manae thought that he was being boiled alive with his arm being broken up while alive to give extra suffering. What a tragic death!

Manae thought for one or two seconds. The death of a young teenager like himself who was late adolescent was unfair. He had not experienced and had not tasted the real life of this world, especially the sharing of love activities and child reproduction and upbringing with his wife whom he only married three days ago. To him, she was the prettiest girl in the village. He could mentally picture her friendly smiling face with twinkling and

sparkling eyes waiting anxiously for his return. He dearly loved his wife for she really cared for him and gave him everything she owned and had, with her willing free will, and with her whole heart.

Manae thought of his parents and their humble and sincere treatment of parental love. How badly he felt. He would miss all the parental blessings in terms of inheriting land, property, wealth, wisdom and his place within the community. His relations and the whole village had a high regard and high opinion for him as a prospective future leader. His caliber of talent with charismatic qualities could guide and inspire the success of expected village affairs and tribal warfares. Providing able leadership was not now a mere dream, Manae thought, and breathed in heavily and wondered what the village would be like without him.

Manae regretted that his inner instinct of courage failed to move him to stand up and fight for his death. He felt he had no chance of a victory if he fought them all. At least he could cause them some grievous bodily harm to compensate for his life. If he was killed, Manae wondered if he would dwell in the world of never return as if living in the first world of human being.

Furthermore, he thought, since he was still alive with some time remaining, he might as well shout for help, should his people be around to help him or even to witness his slaughter so that his story could be retold in Min history.

However, he wanted to see what this enemy was doing to him before he started doing anything else. Maybe the enemy was not aware that he was standing on Manae and would leave him untouched. Maybe he had not come primarily to kill him at all. Manae opened his eyes slowly without the slightest movement and saw that the bastard was pissing on him while standing on his arm and looking out at

the smoke rising to the sky from Manae's village.

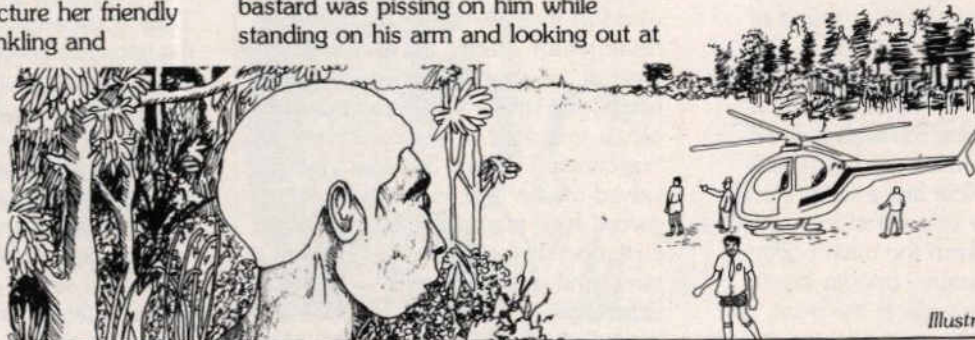
A gulp of air entered Manae's body and the level of anxiety of immediate death was reduced. But, his aggressive temper and courage were aroused due to the insult he received from this stranger's urine. According to his culture, to urinate on another man's body was a grave insult. In the Min custom it involved a fight between the offender and the offended until either of the two was killed.

So Manae didn't hesitate a minute nor did he stop to rationalize the situation. But just when he was about to move, he sensed a greater immediate danger. With the corner of his right eye, Manae saw a big Papuan black snake hissing and showing its poisonous tongue to him.

Now he was confronted with two dangers. If he dashed out of hiding and ran away, the supernatural beings would follow him either by foot or with their house bird from the air and he would be killed.

If he remained, he would die instantly by the injection of the snake poison going into the blood circulatory system and gradually attacking his heart. If this happened, his people would never find him nor would he be able to fight this stranger for his insulting behaviour.

Manae's anger was so great that in one mighty burst, he bounced upright like a basketball dancing on the court and screamed and sang a sacred song of his ancestors and threw off the stranger trotter crushing him. A fleeting face met the Papuan black snake and Manae dashed for freedom with heavy running footsteps. Amplified strangers' voices fell short behind him, and the house bird could not master his track, and so, Manae escaped. □



Illustrated by Joe Bilbie

OLI FIGHT

by Luke Puiye

The day was just dawning. The huge mountain looked like a black dragon against the brightening sky. Everything in the valley below looked dead and quiet. Not a sound or movement could be detected. In the valley, a village could be seen with smoke rising in thin columns from typical Highlands "round houses".

The sun was climbing over the mountain, Mt. Ialibu, when I lazily awoke and then suddenly jumped out of bed as I realised what day and date it was. Today was the morning of September 16, 1982, the day to celebrate the independence anniversary! Yes! Today was the day everyone had spent many back-breaking days for; the day everyone had prepared for. I quickly ran outside to get prepared.

That day there was a great crowd of people gathering at the small town of Ialibu. People from all the clans around Ialibu were there. A great number of people were taking part in the dancing or "sing-sing"; all decorated with different types of shells, leaves, ornaments, top-knotted with majestic bird-of-paradise feathers, their faces painted artistically with all sorts of colours and their bodies shining with oil. They were just magnificent! Their colours outdid the rainbow in beauty. What an amazing and unforgettable sight it was. The dance itself was even more fantastic. As the dancers stamped to the beat of the kundu drum, their bird-of-paradise feathers swayed back and forth making the bird seem as though it was really flying. The dancing and celebration continued until about three o'clock in the afternoon when it started to rain. Everybody started opening umbrellas or running for the shelter of nearby buildings. I was amongst some of the boys from my village who had taken refuge on the verandah of a government building, a bit disappointed that all the fun had stopped so abruptly. The rain stopped half-an-hour later so the people started walking home. The boys from my village, and I too, started walking home, all of us laughing, joking and splashing water at each other from the puddles made by the rain. Little did we

know that the day was not yet over for us. Little did we know that very soon we would be in the greatest mess we'd ever been in.

It all started when Torea, a youth from my village accidentally splashed water from a puddle made by the rain onto a woman and her husband who were passing by. The water was cold, as is usual in the Highlands. The woman screamed out.

"Who did that?" the husband shouted, in a voice which suggested that he was drunk as well as angry. He came forward and hit Torea in the face. He collected himself together in a posture for a second swing but forgot all about it when one of the boys from my village smashed a fist into his face. Another man, a relative of the husband saw the fighting and came forward to help his wantok but lost interest in the fighting or anything else as a punch dropped him unconscious.

The exchange of punches had not gone unnoticed, for very soon, relatives of the men we had hit came rushing towards us and received a hot welcome from some of our tribesmen who also had seen the incident. The two groups met with thuds of flesh connecting flesh. Soon there was a "free for all." Fists and legs flew everywhere. Stones went hissing through the air. The two groups separated, leaving a gap in the middle where stones, sticks, bottles or any object that could harm a man flew back and forth.

The fight was stopped half an hour later by the police force of Ialibu which was made up of 10 constables and a sergeant. Because they were not efficient enough to stop us by force, they merely stepped in between the two groups, protesting and pleading.

We were about to go home when we heard a shout from the other tribe; "We have beaten you like old women. Wipe the blood from your two brothers and go without hitting back, like women. Ha! Ha! What a lot of warriors you are!" Our blood boiled with rage when we heard the insult.

"We must do something, we must have revenge!" said one of our young men coldly.

"But how?" said another. "Do you want us to chase after them and risk getting our heads chopped off?"

"I've figured that out already," said the first young man. "I saw a man from the other tribe drive past in his truck. Soon he will be back this way to return home, so we --"

"Let's lay an ambush," we cried.

The ambush was a success. The driver was bashed and had a few broken ribs. Mercifully unconsciousness released him from terrible pain. His bright new shiny truck was reduced to a heap of broken glass and smashed metal. Mission accomplished, and angers eased, we all ran home. Our hurried departure was further prompted by the angry wail of police sirens in the distance.

I arrived home just in time for the afternoon meal. As I sat wolfing down my dinner, I couldn't help noticing the worried look on my father's face.

"So you guys got into trouble again," he sighed. "I hear you got into bad trouble this time."

"Don't you get tired of fighting like animals?" my sister said, looking at me with distaste.

"Ho, we just love it," I said mimicking her voice and grinning as I saw the disgusted look on her face.

"Well, if it's fighting you like," said my father, "you'll get a fight very soon. Go and get your bow and arrows and bring me my axe."

"Wha---What!" I exclaimed, almost choking on the kaukau I had been eating.

"Ha, young fellow, now you are surprised." He said dryly. "Don't you realise that the man you beat up is in bad condition and might die? The injured man's relatives want revenge. For all I know they might attack tonight. What makes matters worse is that we are up against the biggest tribe in this area. Eh, my boy? If it's fighting you want, you'll have one very soon, and big one at that."

"Now get your weapons!" he snapped.

"Ye---yes," I stammered, hurriedly standing up and dropping my food. Suddenly I was not hungry!

That night I slept very little. At the smallest sound I snapped awake. Although my father had assured me of no surprise attacks because of the guards posted on every possible entry into the village, he had also advised me to sleep with my bow strung and keep it near my bed. He told me also to

wake up and be ready to fight at a moment's notice.

Early the next morning all the tribesmen gathered and had a brief meeting. The other tribe had not attacked us during the night so they were sure to pay us a visit soon. It was decided that compensation would be paid to the other tribe for the damage we had done.

"But we must also bring our weapons," said the men. "We must be ready to fight if the other tribe wants a fight."

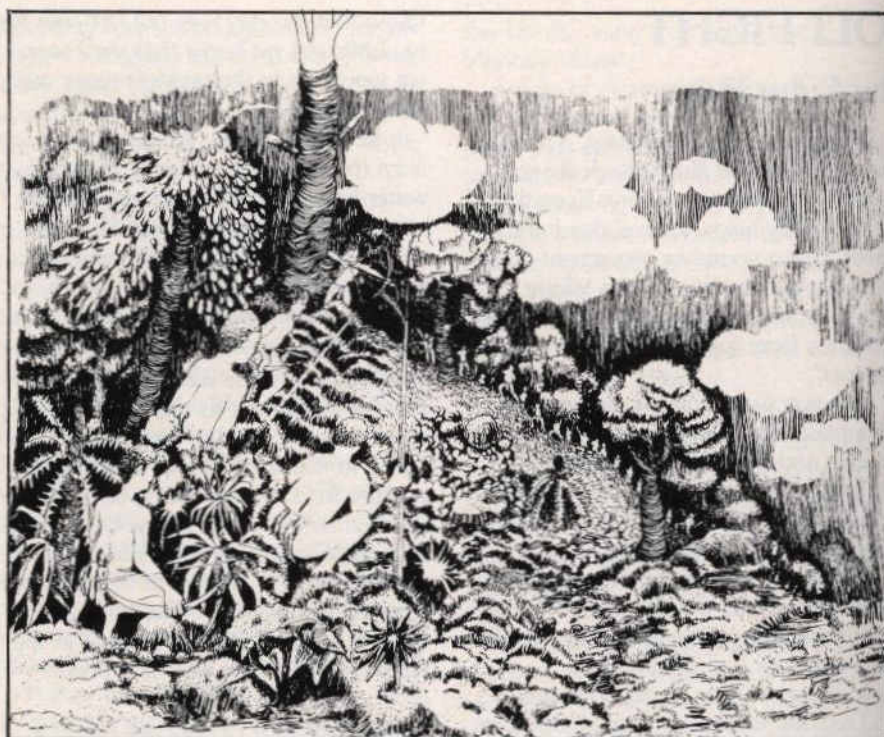
Armed men from my village were positioned around the area from which the other tribe was expected. Then we waited.

We didn't have long to wait before bloodcurdling cries of warriors in the distance told us that our expected, though uninvited 'guests' were coming. My heart beat faster as my grasp on my bow and arrows tightened. I could see wave after wave of angry enemy warriors proceed towards us, their faces painted, head adorned with black cassowary feathers and brandishing weapons. Their shouting filled the morning air. I had a sickening feeling in my gut as I realised that they outnumbered us about 7 to 1. As I watched the progress, I felt a hand on my shoulder. I looked around and saw one of the older men.

"Eh--my boy," he smiled knowingly. "The number does not matter. It's bravery and skill that matters. We will soon see if they are really warriors or just a bunch of cowards. Aiyee. There were the times before the redmen* arrived when I used to chop up men the way you chop a banana tree." He smiled grimly as he patted his sharp and well cared for axe.

Our opponents came to a stop about 200 metres away from us with the help of 11 policemen.

Our Councillor and the Headman went and told them that we were willing to compensate for the damage. We stood tense and alert, hardly daring to breathe, our eyes in the direction of our opponents as they argued over the issue. A lot of shouting, cursing, and arguing went on within the other tribe. Some yelled that they wanted a fight, while others shouted that a compensation payment would do. But at last the agreed answer came and we breathed a sigh of relief as we heard



Illustrated by John Alop

the words, "We accept." The payment would be collected the next day. We relaxed as we saw them turn around and head in the direction they had come. Only then did we break the silence we had kept for so long, with a war cry that rolled and echoed over the hills. But we stopped suddenly. We had made a big mistake. But we stopped too late. The retreating tribe stopped when its warriors heard our war cries. Though our war cry had only been meant to be cry of triumph, it had turned into a cry of challenge to the ears of our opponents.

In a matter of seconds the whole tribe came charging at us, wave after wave of yelling warriors, intoxicated by the smell of expected blood. Instinctively I started shooting arrows towards the on coming enemy, just as my tribesmen were doing. I was surprised to be charging towards the enemy frenzied by some type of madness.

Arrows darted everywhere around us or wizzed past our ears. Still we charged on and the enemy kept charging towards us. The gap between the two tribes became smaller and smaller. Energy and fury increased as the distance decreased. Suddenly the enemy stopped and then ran faster than before - but this time with backs towards us. The enemy was retreating!

Yes! The enemy was retreating! We gave chase, encouraging them to run even faster, sending a volley of arrows after them to accompany them on their retreat.

At last, exhausted and tired, our energies spent, we walked home proudly, with our heads held high. We had won!

Every time I think back to that day, a tremor of excitement runs down my spine. I sometimes wonder if I would still be alive, had the two tribes collided and it had come to hand-to-hand combat because I remember that I did not have an axe then but only my bow and arrows. I can also remember that during that tribal war, I had a feeling of excitement and even enjoyment and satisfaction. No wonder there is tribal fighting in the Highlands.

The 'numbers' had not mattered but success came from 'bravery' as the old man had said. What an experience! An experience of a lifetime. □

About the story:

This story is a true happening in Ialibu in the Southern Highlands province. The incident took place between the Nemela and Pegaiguwe tribes.

Date: September 16, 1982.

* redmen - European

Am I a Child of my People?

— by Loujaya M. Kouza

Born
deprived of love, care and attention
just another mouth to feed
like the others bound to die
or forced to live if death defy.

Struggling woman with a beautiful child
temptation to leave
and let it run wild.

The people turned their backs on them
and left them there alone
the child was all the woman had
so she gave to her, her all
in pain sorrow she loved the child
and nurtured her all the while
until at last it came of age and asked.....

Am I a child of my people?
Who am I?
What am I?

No concept of past traditions
no language
no claim to land
or relations

Although with fear
that she may lose her child
who would go in search for a bond to tie
with a heavy heart
and mournful sigh she began

When you were born
child
no one came
no one said, see here child
I am your uncle
I am your auntie
I am your namesake
no one

How can you be a child of your people?
when you hungered child
no one fed you
your cries angered the elders
your presence brought uneasiness.

And now child
what now?
Tom from my side to be given to others
Is it easy to forget the woman who harboured you
now you ask
Am I a child of my people?

Child
I am your people
what more is there to gain?

Long Tom

— by Loujaya M. Kouza

A Morobean
of stock and breed
he stood at 10 feet tall

And those he met
from day to day
were made to feel so small

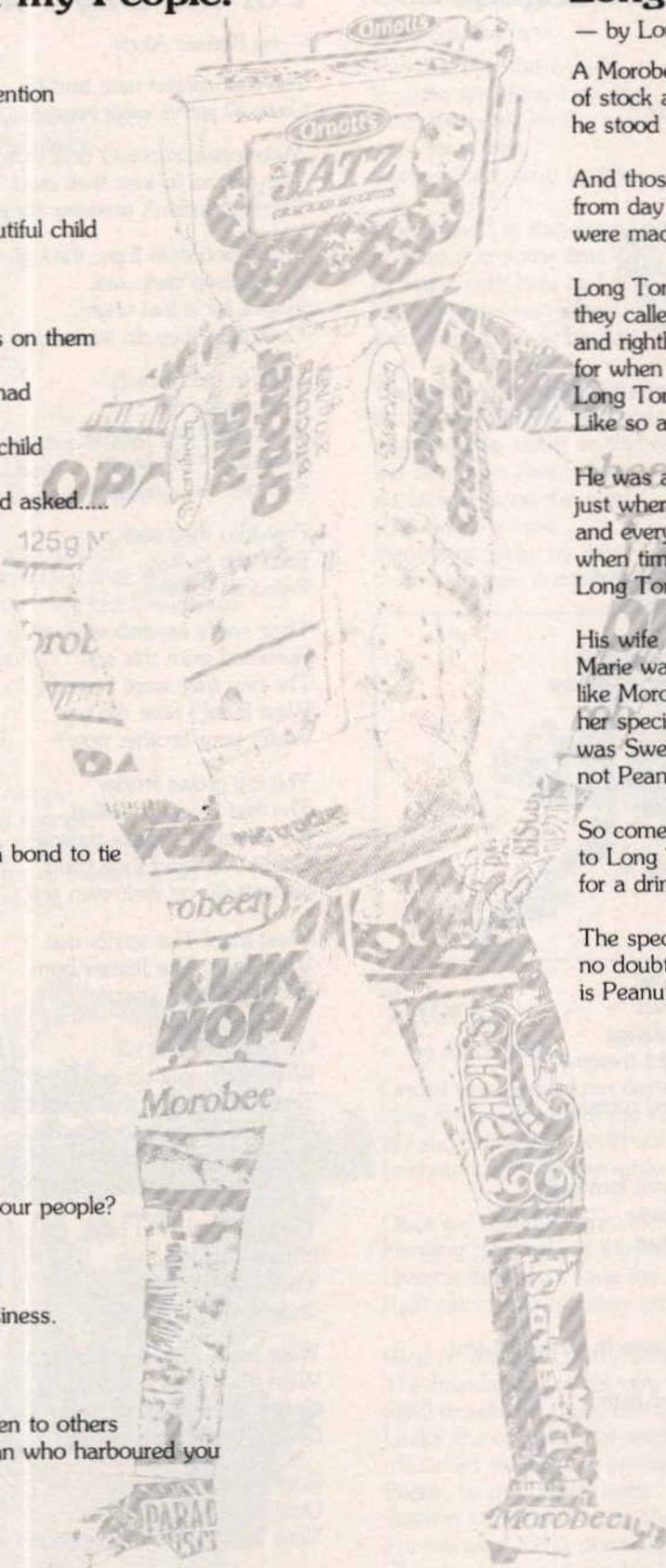
Long Tom
they called him
and rightly so
for when they lined men all in a row
Long Tom stood out
Like so and so....

He was a farmer by trade and knew
just where the peanut butter grew
and every lunch
when time to munch
Long Tom had Peanut Butter Crunch.

His wife
Marie was slim and small
like Morobean's most aren't
her specialty
was Sweet Cup Tea
not Peanut Butter Crunch

So come on home
to Long Tom's farm
for a drink or two and a yarn

The specialty
no doubt you'll see
is Peanut Butter on Sweet Cupt Tea.



Illustrated by Sibona Buna

Remember me to freedom

— by Loujaya M. Kouza.

Remember me to freedom
were the words of a dying man
his body held in captive
from his family and his land.

Yet
No chains could bind his spirit there
though gunned and trampled down
"we fight a cause", he whispered
as his members gathered round.

And all across the forest land
and on the shore where sea met sand
they moved by night
and watched by day
one false move would give them away.

West Irian! My brother cried
West Irian! The blood applied

And as they waited and they watched
the forest land they loved so much
slowly start to disappear
the cause they fought became so dear
renewed their hearts and strengthened fear
We'll fight it out
Blood, sweat and tear.

Upon their land they fought and died
hand in hand full strength applied
how many for their future cried

Remember me Oh Brother mine
Remember me to freedom
as the dying man did sigh.

Our from the West their cry arose
a people crushed by Indons blows
Melanesian-a people of dark melange
where was the peace they sought therein?

A child was brought we gathered round
yet no solution could be found
a refugee no doubt he was
we clothed and fed and harboured him nigh
but could not keep him all because
we'd gain the opposite of applause.

Remember me to freedom
A dying man's request
no impossibility to those who chose to stand the test
and what of us
the rest who sit and tend to speculate
the fear is that one day soon
we'll share the same ill fate.

So now till then
I am a friend
although I can't do much
at least I pray for their special day
and the land they love so much.

For the Day I will Die

— by Remus Aken

The fear spread near and far
Once all spirits were roused.

Melanesian in colour and race,
They stand to lose their own
Through Indon's growing domai..

From mountain tops, through forest
to the deep deep sea,
Hopes for a free reign
Over land they do so love.

Instill in their hearts
The mighty cry....
West Irian! My people!
West Irian! My land!
For that day I will die.

Freedom they seek.
Freedom to live,
Freedom to take.

Their soul's aspirations
Sprouted from this soil
The day they were born.
West Irian! I hear the cry!
Who's your brother now?

The cry grows louder.
The first blood is spilled.
No threat of Indon's muscles
Could ever bind their souls
In captivity on their own soil.

West Irian! The spirits rise.
West Irian! The flames burn
and the Cause soars!

No blind ear will kill
What we know so well
Their cause rings throughout the lands.
We here do no know much,
But play the diplomat,
For two lands we have become.

Though brother in race,
In heart we catch
Their every breath
under Indon's march.

West Irian! This is my song.
West Irian! This my call.
Gather around O brothers.
Spread you wings and fly.

Soar for that horizon
Until one day,
Your light will shine evermore.

West Irian! One people!
West Irian! One nation!

Melanesian Amnesia

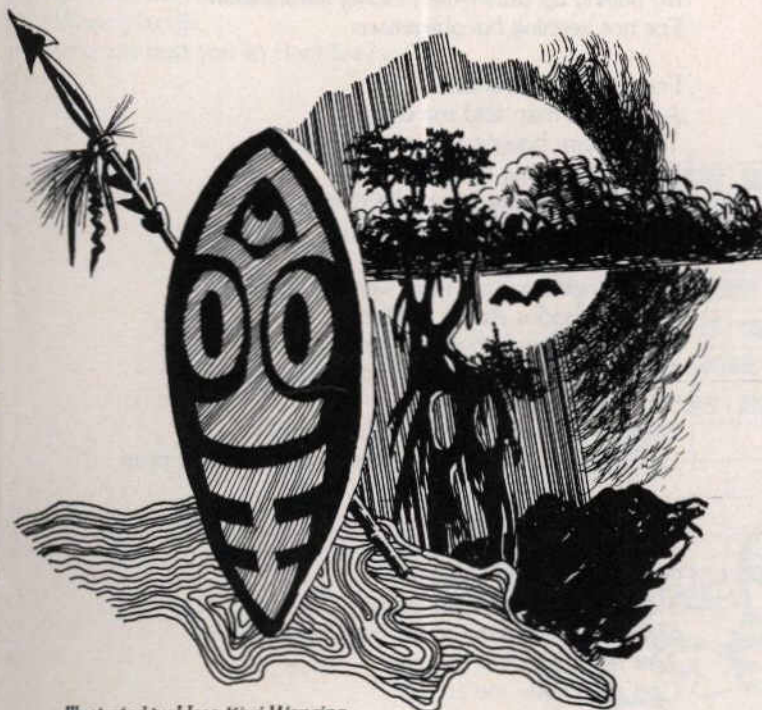
— by Jacob Harry

Heritage and tradition twined
Let no man cut asunder
Patient, wise, wizened as a child newly born
Youthful, eager, innocent as the elderly
See I purpose in ignorance
A sense in poverty
Magic in ugliness
Beauty in savagery
Divinity in loves' sacrifice
Running in bloody riverlets
across the face of each rising sun
then raining in torrents upon my I

Truth, to the heavens I plead
Only to see darkness upon darkness of lies
while the wind weeps for my cause
in the blackened ashes of the deserted hamlets

Justice, a burning thirst none can quench
Truth - Nothing but mirages in a desert of infidelity
Seek I not Justice or Truth any more but Vengeance
For my woman's sacredness, defiled
For my son's flaming eyes, snuffed
For my heritage lost in a sea of greed

Though the flies feed on my I,
In the stern glare of the sun,
A better being walks nature's ways,
lies besides the cool mountain springs,
gazing at the blue sky, rolling and mountains,
with a crown of victory won for all these virtues,
won in death; honourable and just.



Illustrated by Heso Kiwi Wangina

Changing Winds

— by Jacob Harry

Ye have trod these paths
In some time long long past
Your footprints on the sand
were for a time,
then washed away by tide

Now stand I in these very paths
I feel as if in some time past
I'd stood right here as I now stand
My footprints being for a time
then washed away by tide

The sands may shift and change
the waters rise, ebb and abate
Another may stand on this very shore
feel he's been here before
his footprints on the sand
shall be for a time
then borne away by tide
to another age, another season



Illustrated by Heso Kiwi Wangina

Taboo

— by Jacob Harry

Once I was ruler of my destiny
King in the security of my spirit house
My subject, fearful could not mutiny
Lest my wrath fall like arrows from the sky

Once my dreams were vine bound masks
Hanging gloriously in the spirit halls
Dreams that never rode the surging river
Kept me in awe, mystery and deathly fear

Woe is mild child of the sunrise
The foundations of his very being
Shall crumble in dusty demise
Under the onslaught of another's toil
Mild child shall rise in rebellion against self
Peace, he may never taste
Batting his emotions, he shall scream
For answers to his demanded soul
The mountains will remain lordly mutes
Only his echoes shall return in answer

Samarai

— by Meau Andrew

Oh Samarai Samarai, My heart's desire
My beloved island. In your young days
You were beautiful and graceful in manner
No one could resist a second glance
The pearl of the East you were
The captivator of many a young man's heart
You lived in splendour and harmony

On Samarai, Samarai
You were Queen of the China Strait
Living in a palace of crystalline waters
Crowned by puffy cumulus clouds all around
Entertained by the forever dancing evergreens
Who dance, murmur and whistle into eternity
To the forever Rock and Roll rhythm
Of waves breaking on white sandy beaches

But now, oh how my heart aches
Man has plundered you
You have lost your virginity
Man has trampled on your beauty
And has treated you as a common whore
Leaving you the pains to bear alone
Man despises and holds thee in contempt

Oh Samarai, Samarai
You no longer are rays of summer
You no longer glitter in the sun
Nor do you shimmer in the silvery moonlight
Though deeply hurt my love for you lingers
Time, let alone distance won't make me forget
Cause you're my identity

Satisfaction

— by Meau Andrew

Rivers forever flow into the oceans
And snow melts at the poles
Rain also over the sea falls
But their combined efforts are in vain
For the oceans are never full

Tens die daily
Hundreds die weekly
Thousands die monthly and millions die yearly
Still the world of the dead is never exhausted
There is always room for more

Man, likewise is an ocean of wants
Death's world of greedy ambitions
A mirror image of vague dreams
The shadowy reflections of desires, thirst and imaginations
That can never be quenched

Man will never find peace of mind
What he gains comes with new horizons
That cloud his mind with visions of gain
He works himself to death in vain
For he never had found real satisfaction



Illustrated by Heso Kiwi Wangina

Adam Paid in Gold

— by Meau Andrew

They called it tradition
That a man should pay bride price
That a man should keep his pride
By paying up rather than facing humiliation
For not keeping his obligations

For sure its all tradition
As my old man told me once
That Adam bought Eve at an auction
But paid nothing to God
Actually he wanted to pay a million in gold
But there were no other bidders

Furthermore, my old man went on to say
No-one besides Adam did bid for Eve
They all realised no riches could buy her
She was a master piece of the divine creator
She was a priceless jewel
Neither to be sold, nor bought as a doll
But cherished as a gem, either as diamonds or pearl

They call it tradition
And no wonder the young
Try to live out of tradition
The boy he doesn't like paying
The girl, she doesn't fancy been sold as a doll
And me? I kill time paying
God will create me an Eve
Cause I ain't got no kina; nor toea whatever to pay

The Good Woman of Boroko I

— by Zak Tiamon

You lie sprawled on the corner
of Alu-Signs opposite the police station.
You sit up as lights illuminate the streets of Boroko.
Dirty garments cover your body.
People say you look like a village pig in your sleep.
Drunks mount you on your dark corner
when the pub across the road closes.

Is there no one to care for you?

People walk past you and laugh at your mindless grin.
To them, you're for amusement.
People walk past you and pretend that they don't see.
To them you're "victim of society".
Others despise you for you bring shame to them.
Full of guilt, they turn their faces.
Kokoroko, is that your name?

Is there no one to care for you?

Cold nights you've slept in your dark corner,
dogs have come and sniffed over you
but you've slept on
waiting for the next day
so you could push your tongue out;
dance up and down
to Mr. Moresby's music from across the street.
From your niche you gather your garments
and waddle off in search of crumbs.

Is there no one to care for you?
Where's the social welfare?
Isn't this the Year for Disabled Persons?
When you die,
who will lead you to Paradise?

The Good Woman of Boroko II

— by Zak Tiamon

On Alu-Sign's corner
drunks had mounted her.

She stood and waddled off
like a crab at midnight.
Police Station ... Post Office ... Hugo's Plaza
Kokoroko became darkness
Spirit of Boroko.

You taught the prayer
you flew the Kumul
pretended you didn't see.
Nights she wept
rivers were in her eyes.
Nights she begged
knots were in her heart
Ancentral myths
she reached for
No one saw the torment
like a tropical ulcer
Must she be sacrificed?
Must she be the carrier
of sins of this world?

In the dark
a stranger holds her
scars on his palms
wound on his ribs.
The wounds
The wounds of Kabari.



Illustrated by Jerry Dunar

Rabaul Volcano

— Abby Yadi

On...Mother you scare us
 Daughters you give us panic
 Matupit you i itate us
 You activate our government and representatives
 Bringing the Army and Police forces for emergency service
 Seismic activity is increasing
 Increasing steadily and frighteningly
 Radios, Newspapers, Magazines and public notice boards
 Always full of volcano news

Earthquakes and tremours rumble
 Trembling the earth as if it were a canoe over a stormy sea

Volcanologists from overseas are attracted to Rabaul
 Seismographs record active build up of land formation
 under our mountains

The feared mountains

Stage 2 is declared!

On...no...! What is going to happen to our beautiful town
 The harbour, magnificent Simpson
 Our airport, the key to Port Moresby and Gurney
 What about the villagers and the people
 Where will they go?

Evacuation plans begin

Keravat and Kokopo chosen as main sites

"On-no! not my school"

"I will be disturbed"

"I won't pass my exams"

"Oh-no! not my school, 'Keravat"

But it has to be

Because the purple zones are already declared

Will we declare stage 3-4?

Will we start evacuating now?

No, lets not panic the public!

Panic will lead to disaster

Let us leave it for a few days and see how it goes

But the seismic activity begins to decrease

Declining after a near declaration of stage 3-4

People are relieved

Panic recedes

Anxiety diminishes

Fear subsides

The disaster is averted

You will not erupt, Mother volcano

Nor will you the daughters and neither will you, Matupit

You will not emit your contents

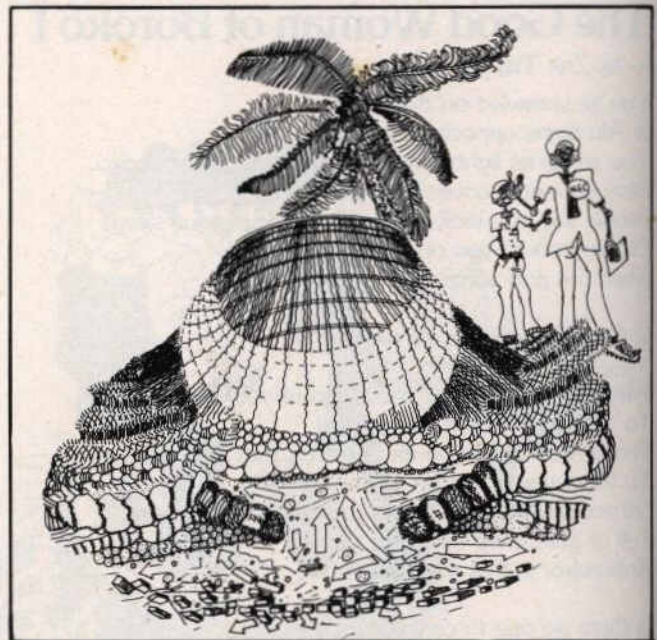
Yes, you will not erupt.

No not until '85 or '86

But who knows

Only God knows and can decide

Yes only God knows



Illustrated by Louis Palaru Warimi

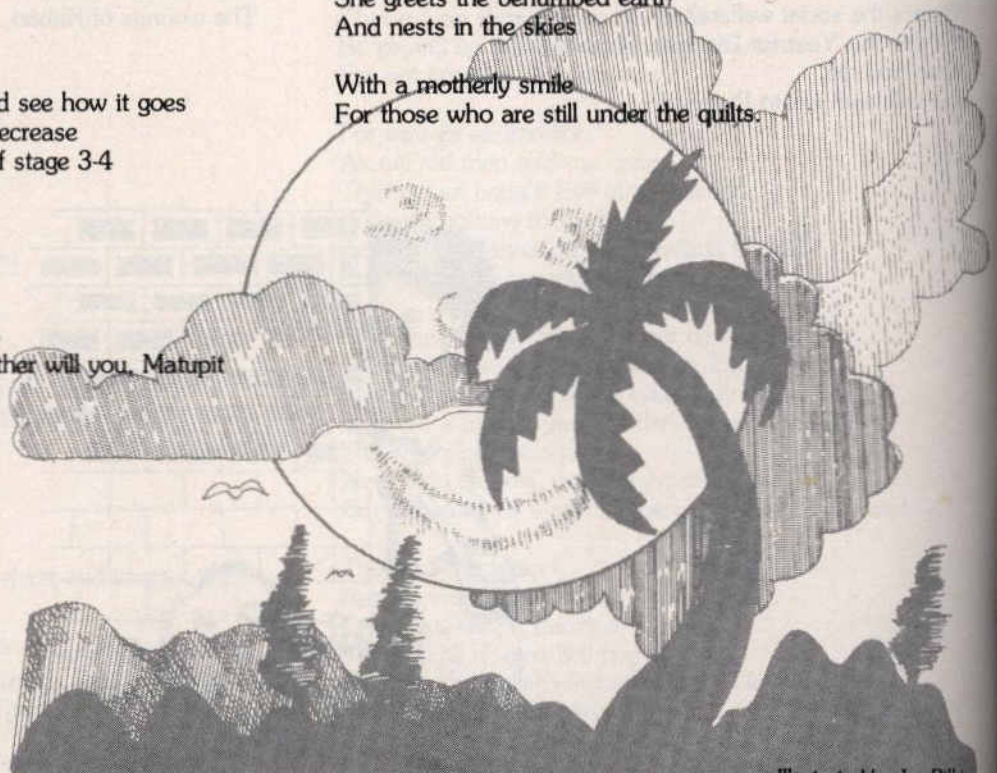
The Moon

— by Luke Puye

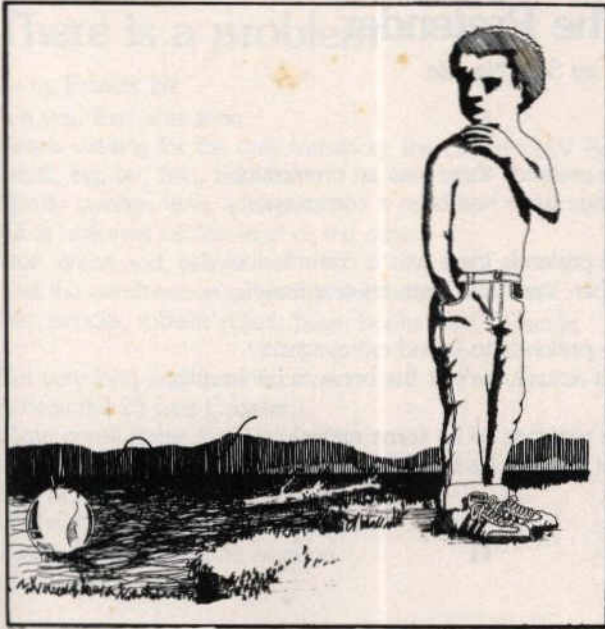
The moon, clad in white clouds
 Sails over the dwarf hills
 Along its silvery path.
 "Has the sun gone?" she soft whispers
 As she peeps over the swaying pines.

Nodding goodbye to the sinking sun
 She greets the benumbed earth
 And nests in the skies

With a motherly smile
 For those who are still under the quilts.



Illustrated by Joe Bilbie



Illustrated by Jerru Dumar

All in the Name of Development

— Luke Puye

My trees are gone
My bushes are gone
Where are the birds that filled the trees
Where are the melodies that filled the peaceful air
Where are the wonders of a living forest
The magic of a new-born chick
Now they are gone, all gone
All in the name of development

"We bring money," they said
"We bring riches," they cried
Where is the standard of living they promised us?
Where is the happiness they offered us?
Yes, our leaders have cheated us
All for one thing
All in the name of development

How I miss the cool jungle air
Air so fresh, and fragrant by beautiful mountain flowers
How I long for the luxurious clear streams
Water so cool and refreshing
Yes, the heart of paradise was mine
The rarest of precious stones I had
But now it's gone, lost for ever
All in the name of development

What a fool I've been
I've watched them rob my priceless stone
I've watched them rape my virgin land
I've watched them plunder my paradise
My heart, my very soul
My priceless treasure
All is gone, all is lost
All in the name of development.

The Boy and the River

— by Luke Puye

A little boy stood on the banks of a mighty river
The boy only five
The river over five thousands
The boy was happy and enjoying himself
The river was moody and muddy as usual

The boy has the whole world in his hands
In the shape of bright red balloon
Today nothing else mattered
Today everything he wanted was his balloon

The jealous river watched
The joyous young boy
Who never suspected how soon
His world, his happiness, his balloon would disappear

As the boy threw up the balloon
It fell, but away from the boy
And into the river
Who would listen to the prayers and pleas of a little boy
Carried away the boy's whole world on his back
Leaving a sad and tearful boy on its bank

Loneliness

— by Luke Puye

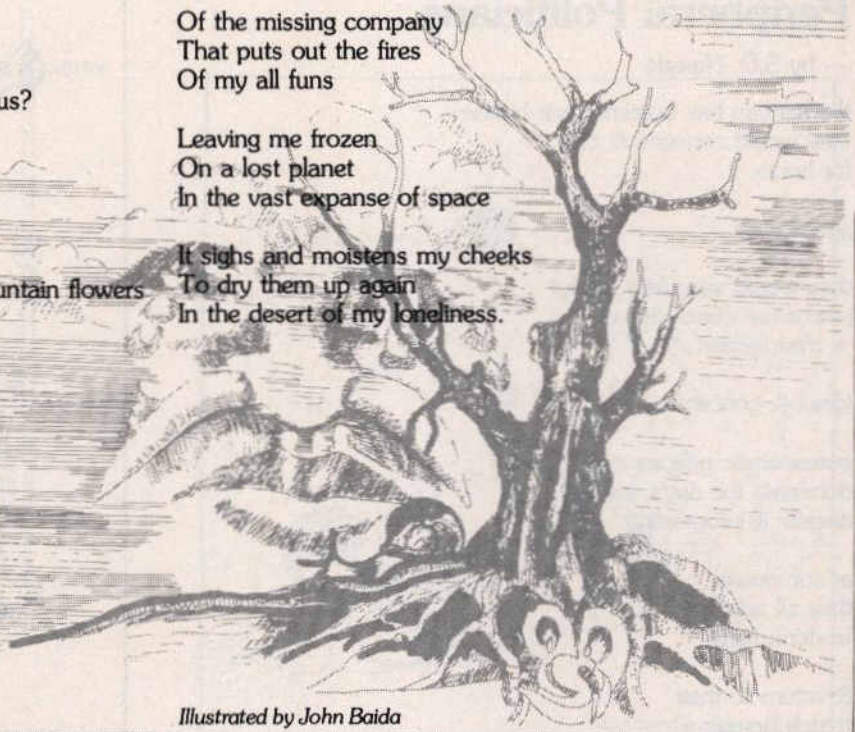
It hides me
Like a thick fog

Like a lonely leaf
On a lifeless tree
It reminds me

Of the missing company
That puts out the fires
Of my all funs

Leaving me frozen
On a lost planet
In the vast expanse of space

It sighs and moistens my cheeks
To dry them up again
In the desert of my loneliness.



Illustrated by John Baida

The Aged

— by S.D. Ngwele

His palms are lined with vast experience
His hair, greying with immemorial past
His eyes, look with accurate judgement
His mouth, speaks with ripening wisdom
He walks with an old walking stick
Along the same pathway which you & I
Must respectfully take



Illustrated by Sibona Buna

Peripheral Politicians

— by S.D. Ngwele

the banyan has become their House
they would convene & talk
for hours

agendaless

they would speculate, make
premature conclusions
or misinterpret

ideas & concepts

bureaucratic policies may
dominate the day's session
despite ill-information

at sun-down
they all adjourn
to drink Kava

& return to their
thatch houses

The Pretender

— by S.D. Ngwele

I

He pretends there was an omission
When there had been a commission

He pretends there was a commission
When there had been an omission

He pretends to spend extravagantly
But actually he's at the brink of bankruptcy

He pretends to be some expert
But actually he is a fake

II

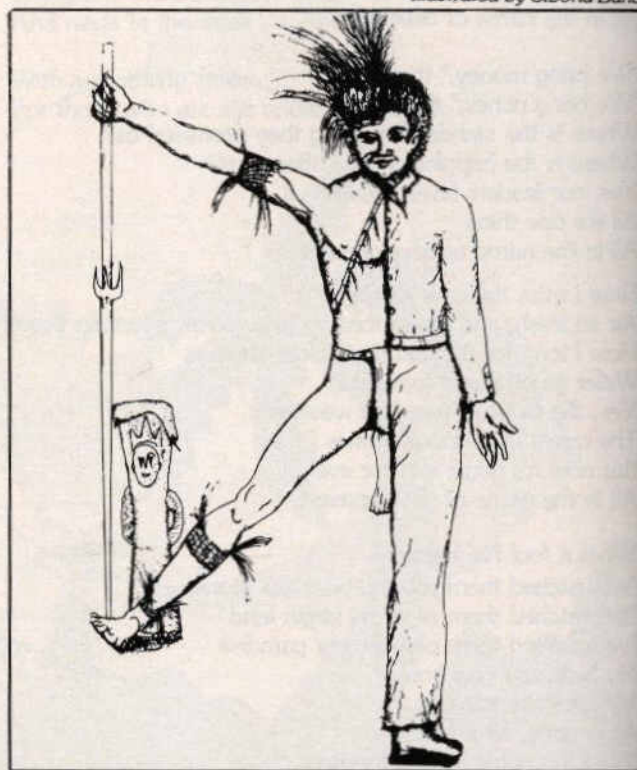
She pretends to please the face
But actually criticizes the back

She pretends not to know you
But intimately she had known you

She pretends that tinned-fish is low
But actually private consumption is high

She pretends to be some heavenly beauty
But actually it's all the new make-ups

Illustrated by Sibona Buna



There is a problem

— by Francis Nii

A-a yes, that afternoon
People waiting for the only transport, the Urban PMV Bus.
Small, big, fat, thin, tall, short.
Mostly teenage boys and girls.
All in uniforms of one kind or the other.
Blue, green, red, yellow
And the combination of orange and white,
Pen, pencils, rubber, rulers, bags, books held in hands.

Not very long and there it came.
A beautiful 25-seat Coaster.
Clean comfortable cushion seats.
Stylish, dusty bearded man at the wheel.
And next to him a man named Tarangu.
Of the driver's identity and nature.
Maybe from one mama or papa.
Who knows.

Tarangu counted everyone so as not to miss a toea.
The card-board said Gerehu.
And all the uniformed boys and girls rushed in.
Ge-e-ed-n-n Ge-e-ed-n-n roared the engine proudly.

The driver drove literally 60
Whistling the typical driver's tune:
The Highlands Highway tune
Of the Coffee Buyers.

Driver - driver givim 60 way nambiriwa
Biriwona - Biriwa Biriwona - Biriwa
Driver - driver givim 60 way nambiriwa
Ha-ha driver -driver givim 60 way nambiriwa

Hey! stop driver, two red uniformed girls called.
Off they got at Waigani, the Roots bingo marketing centre
Twenty toea each to Tarangu
"Ten toea more pilis," said Tarangu
"Mipela students," said the girls.
"You students? You tupela meri!
You no look to me to belong students.
You look to me marit 20 years before."

"My meri no school.
Stayin in the house. No like olsem you.
My meri no putim uniform.
Holim book in hand.
My meri pay 30 toea for bus repair and fuel.
You wastim time for marit
And karim pikinini
You mas pay me 10 toea more.

Oi, wire lose or lasi?
Mipela i no work for money. Mipela students.
Sorry Tarangu, you keep insisting for 10 toea.
Mipela sing out long police.

Poor Tarangu, poor uniformed people
The food price is shooting high
Great sympathy for you.

Empty Pocket

— by Francis Nii

Two yellow tops, please
Cheers baby
Two red tops, tambu
Ta - a - hurrah
Four yellow tops, man

Bottle up
Beer down
Beer in
Head sway out
Laughter echoes the discoteque inn

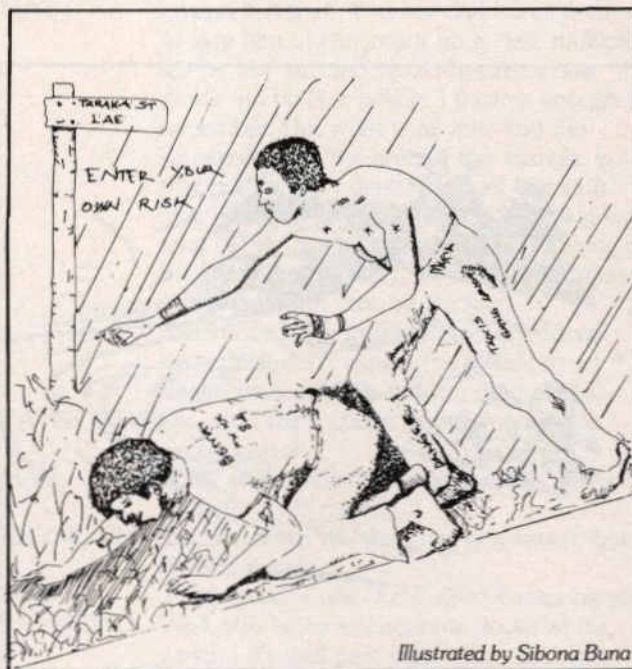
Hands in
Pocket out
Empty pocket
Break pocket
No pocket, crazy.

Kina Money

— by Francis Nii

Laden with the burden of the West
Crucified slyly and forever
on the forsaken tree.
Deterioating and smouldering in soul
yet unabated.

Kina.
Residual name.



Illustrated by Sibona Buna

Sand

— by Goru Hane

You are like a mattress,
Glittering with stars.
Twinkling. Tiny particles in countless numbers
Stretching to great distances.

Your colour differs
Black, grey, yellow, and white grandeur.
Soothing, tiny particles envelope me,
Giving me a sensational coat of paint.

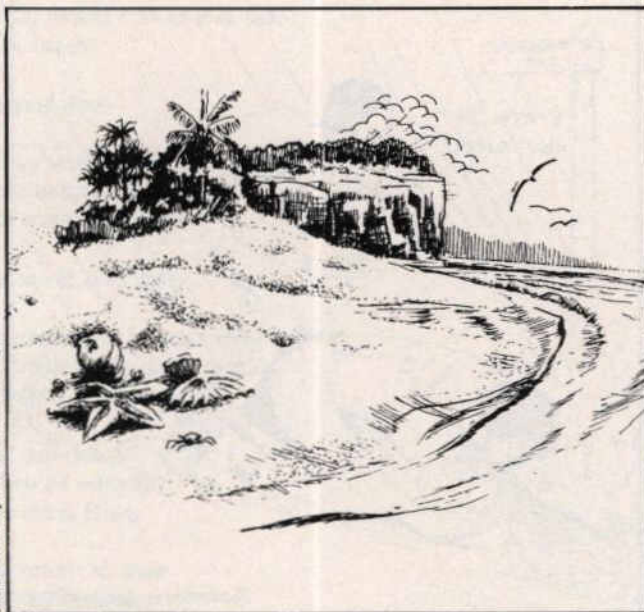
Waves pound you,
Batter your still mass one by one,
Adding or subtracting your numbers,
You are the phenomenal backbone of rocks and landscape.

Wind carries you afar, where rest assured,
It settles you, adding to your numbers.
Having taken you somewhere else,
You lose, yet you gain.

Shells gather, Different shapes, sizes, colours,
Litter on your surface.
You can form or deform landscapes,
Yet you are a source of relief and comfort.

You disarm me,
loosen up my physical strains,
my keyed up subconsciousness,
Caught up on the hub and bub of the day.

Indeed in you, the sand,
Nature works indescribably,
Subtly,
Discerning.



Illustrated by Heso Kiwi Wangina

A Friend

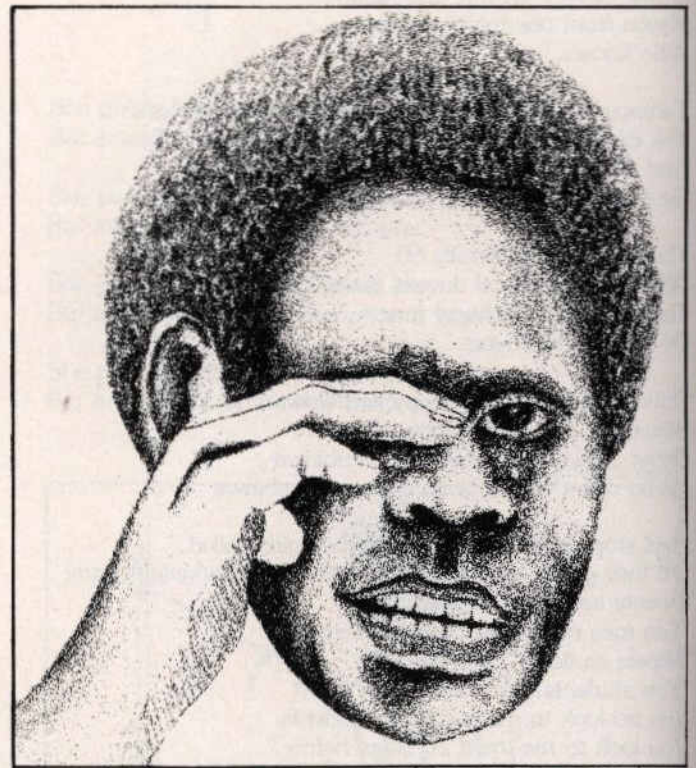
— by Goru Hane

A friend comes
Patting
Your back
The next thing
Stabbing
Your back.

Crying Child

— Hopeton Gray

Sometimes when the chips
are down,
and things are low - very low;
I feel like a crying child.
Sometimes, I wanna go home,
At home - my home, it's peaceful
And still,
I wanna go home,
Mother dear mother,
And child of the world,
Take me home,
It's been too long;
Yea - at times
I feel just like a crying child.



Illustrated by Alois Melekit Posai

Bad Luck Blues

— Hopeton Gray

Blues -
That's music.
But bad luck,
That's a nightmare.
When ones whole life-cycle
is disrupted!
Bad luck,
it hits hard
and below the belt.
Life seems no different,
because bad luck
is bad music.

The Brave

— Hopeton Gray

He lives, he fights
He runs away.
But he always comes back,
Longing, yearning
For those hungry arms
To squeeze him
No matter how tight
He chokes, he gasps
But he always comes back.
He is ... the brave.

PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY

And what is to be done

Joyce A. Kumbeli

CHARACTERS: Raymond Malaki
 Dinah (his wife)
 May (their daughter)
 Moses (a police spy)
 Nigel (another police spy)
 Barmaid
 Manager (of a club)
 1st policeman
 2nd policeman
 Sara
 Ida
 Debbie friends of May
 Ruth

SCENE 1: Evening. In the living room of a typical PNG low cost house. A table is set at one corner of the room and pictures from magazines, almost tearing down, decorate the wall. The floor is covered with pandanus mats. May, a teenage girl, sits on the mat staring at the floor while her father is talking to her.

RAYMOND. It's been a long time since I gave you a good hiding, May. Now you are too big for me or your mother to do that. We expect you to listen and do things that you know are right, and not what you think are right. And what you have done earlier today has brought a lot of shame to me and your mother. I don't want to hear or even see anything like it again, May. Do you hear me?

MAY. Yes dad (without looking up.)

RAYMOND. Well, since I began talking that is all I get back from you! Yes dad, yes dad, and yes dad. Does that mean you agree every word I said?

MAY. Yes dad.

RAYMOND. (Looks sternly at her.) Ok, so let's take it that you liked the way I talked to you and everything I have said is right. Is that right? (No response.) Well, (smoothing down his trousers) that's about all I can say, if all you can give me is 'yes dad.' Get yourself something to eat before you go to bed or whatever you want to do next. (he pulls out a cigarette to light. May leaves.) People are...are crazy sometimes, you know. Mad, I should say. Have you heard...(gets up and walks towards the audience)...have you heard that that girl fought over a boy only this morning? (Pause, expecting a reply, but gets none.) O come on, don't tell me you didn't. That's the big news floating around this whole place. When a little boy saw me at the market place this afternoon, he eagerly grabbed another and said, 'That's May's father. You know the girl who fought the other girl at the school this morning?' My daughter? No it cannot be true, I thought.

But it is. My daughter, May. My only daughter and my only child (shakes his head.) She won't be like her mother. No. No she won't be like her. That's the one thing I hate to think about. (Walks to and from the audience.) I married her mother when she was at the ripe age of twenty five. She was a village girl then. Brought up there. Of course she went to school, finished standard four. But that was something to be proud of in those days. Today, you have National High Schools, Colleges, and now Universities, to further your education. What would those words mean to a village girl at the time? Nothing! So long as she learned to write the local language, that was an achievement for the whole family. Today, the higher you go in education, the better paid job you get, and the more expensive things you want. Today you see a wedding reception taking place; you see a baby in a woman's arms; you see a little boy crying after his so-called father. And you tell me how old these parents are. Barely twenty! (May enters and settles down to work.) What are you doing now?

MAY.

RAYMOND. Maths.

MAY. How do you like it?

MAY. Not at all.

RAYMOND. What do you like then?

MAY. English and...

RAYMOND. And what?

MAY. That's all. Just English.

RAYMOND. Why don't you like maths?

MAY. I just don't like it. It makes you think a lot for nothing.

RAYMOND. (Surprised.) What do you mean it makes you think a lot for nothing?

MAY. I mean just that. You see dad (turns around to face him.) I can count up to ten; multiply ten by ten; subtract down to minus one; divide ten by five; which, I think is enough to remember. But what is all this: find the squareroot; get the area of this triangle; put this in scientific notation and all this stuff. You see what I mean? I'm not intending to take on maths or science or even thinking of becoming an architect. So why should one spend so much time on thinking mathematics for nothing. And one more thing. You don't expect me to talk to an Englishman in Mathematics, do you?

RAYMOND. Ok, ok. I think you're getting mad at the wrong person.

MAY. Sorry about that. Well, did you like maths at school?

RAYMOND. Er...(scratches his chin) not very much, but I did score well.

MAY. That's good. I wish I did. (She busies herself.)

RAYMOND. Well, you better concentrate (looks at his watch.) It's well past eight now. And you better be in bed before I collect your mother.

PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY

(After a while, May begins to collect her books.) Finish what you're doing first. There's no hurry.

MAY. That's alright. I'll do some reading in bed. Good night, dad.

(Over her shoulder as she exits.)

RAYMOND. Good night. (Looking after her.) Yea, she's spoilt alright. I made the wrong decision of not sending her back to the village for her education. That's what's wrong with these kids nowadays. Too much of everything that spoils them: (Gets up and walks about the room.) Picture shows. Comic books. Story books. Getting to know too many people. That's not all good stuff. (Pause to talk to the audience.) And this girl, my daughter, goes to a big city school. Mixes up with all sorts of people. Exchanges information that we might not know about. Of course, I'm not saying all information is bad. But some could be. Dinah, that's my wife, and I try to make sure that May goes to see shows that are educational and ones that suit a child of her age. But who knows, (waves a hand) maybe some friends transfer this type of information on to her. That's one thing we cannot stop. Things get out of hand somewhere along the system. (Shrugs.) Oh well, who can see to the smooth bringing up of a child in a growing place like this? (Looks at his watch). Gosh, this time flies alright. I'd better go and pick up my wife. She must be waiting. But, (gives an assurance) I'll see you later. (He exits.)

End of scene 1

SCENE 2: The following afternoon. Dinah is sweeping the floor after dusting the place. She hears voices outside so she casually walks over to the window, peers out, returns disgusted.

DINAH. Ah, it's those girls again. Coming back from school. (Gets back to work.) I wonder what they're up to this time. They're deep in conversation and they all seem to be talking at the same time. Something interesting must be going...(knocking on the door.) Heavens! I should have known May would be at the door shortly, and should have opened the door beforehand. (Walks towards the door, cleaning her hands with her skirt. When the door opens, May budes in with a bag of books.)

MAY. Hi mum.

DINAH. Hello dear. (Looks at her head to foot in wonder.) You are in a hurry.

MAY. Yes mum. (Rushes into the bedroom.)

DINAH. And where are you going this time.) Shouting behind her.)

MAY.
DINAH.

(From off-stage.) To a hockey practice. Maybe that's what they were conversing about out there. What is today? Let me see. (Thinks a while, then mumbles) Monday, Tuesday...That's right. It's Thursday. Hockey again. She'll never learn, this girl. (Shakes her head.) In the last season she sprained an ankle in a game, and that took one whole month to get her to walk again. Now she's in it all gain. I'm not saying she must not play any games at all. It's good exercise for a young person. But I believe there are better games than that. I bet she never gave that a second thought. Hockey is a dangerous game. It is. Some day she must give it up. (Raise her voice.) And how long will you be away?

MAY. (Enters with a hockey stick; changed into sports shorts and T-shirt.) O, the usual time. Sara's mother promised to bring us back today. (Rushes out the door.)

DINAH. (Goes to the door shouting after her.) You must be home early. I need to talk to you. (Close the door.) O dear...o dear. I can't imagine how this girl can keep up with her school work. (As she tidies the place again.) When she gets up in the morning, no time for a slice of bread. Then she's away all day at school, only to be back about four, or even as late as half past five. (Speads a cloth.) Tuesday and Thursday afternoons are hockey times. Wednesday nights are Girls Guide nights. That leaves only Monday and Friday as free afternoons. Are supposed to be, I mean. But there doesn't seem to be any free time for that daughter of mine. Ah... (Tries to make herself comfortable on a chair. After a while she walks over and turns the radio on.)

VOICE FROM RADIO....and late yesterday Mr. Buruka's lawyer was said to be preparing a case against his 3 year jail term. According to Mr. Buruka's lawyer, the briefcase containing the money could have been left at his home by anybody who called at his place. Meanwhile, he is in Bomana jail. That ends the... (Dinah quickly switches off the radio. There is the sound of car pulling in. She walks over and opens the door and sits thoughtfully, as Raymond enters.)

DINAH. Did you hear that, Ray?

RAYMOND. Hear what? (Sits on a chair to remove his shoes.)

DINAH. The news in brief.

RAYMOND. No. I didn't turn the radion on. But I read the paper if you mean....

DINAH. (Cuts in.) Yes. He is in Bomana and his lawyer is filling a case...

RAYMOND. (Getting emotional.) I expected the devil to be given more than that three years.

DAY DAY DAY DAY DAY DAY

DINAH. But how in the world did they get into his place? That's what I find hard to believe.

RAYMOND. Well, all this dirty business has to end somewhere, hasn't it? So you better believe now. It will be you next! (In a sing-song tone.)

DINAH. Ray, how can you say that? We're all in it.

RAYMOND. Damn you Dinah! (Hits the floor with a shoe.) As long as I live, I will not forgive you for getting me into this mess. Please turn the radio on loud and lock the door. May will be here any minute. And I don't want her to think we are involved in all this rotten business.

DINAH. (Gets up to turn the radio on.) She's already been here. It's hockey day, so she's out on the field again. I asked her to come home a bit early so I could talk to her. Why don't you have some coffee and go out for a while. (Getting up.) Shall I make you a cup?

RAYMOND. Just that... (Sinks into the chair.) Oh what a day. Home is not like home any more. Tell me if I'm toiling for a good cause. Day after day the same. O dear, I wish I never saw daylight.

DINAH. (Enters with a cup.) It's almost five thirty. You'd better take it and leave before she comes home. (He stares at the cup, then takes it and gulps down its contents, wipes his mouth and stands to leave.)

RAYMOND. I'll be back about nine. I'm down at Sakura's Kai Haus. (He exits, searching his pockets for his keys.)

End of scene 2

SCENE 3: Later the same evening. Dinah is doing some odd jobs around the place. A knock on the door. She walks over and opens the door. May enters.

MAY. (Exhausted.) Is dad home yet?

DINAH. Well, he came home, then he went out. Why?

MAY. Oh, nothing. (Fanning herself with a book.) Gosh it's hot. I think I'll take a bath first, then do some reading. (Hurries out.)

DINAH. May rarely asks for her father. I wonder why she did just now. I hope it's nothing to do with... O bother. I must not get myself worried unnecessarily. It could be her school work or... That's right. Perhaps she wants to ask his opinion on her job choices. She always talks about this air hostess job. I wonder why she likes that. Why can't she work in a hotel. It's just the same type of work. Oh well, you young people have all sorts of ideas these days.

MAY. (As she enters.) Mum...I... (hesitate), I mean I overheard the girls talking at the field. That's why I asked for dad.

DINAH. What is it then?

MAY. No, I don't think they were telling the truth. And I don't want to carry tales.

DINAH. What did you hear then? Is it something you are afraid to tell me?

MAY. No, not really. (Settles down with a book.) As I said, they could be making up stories to hurt me. That's all.

DINAH. Are you sure it's nothing?

MAY. O yes. For the time being, I mean.

DINAH. Don't you want to eat something first? You must be hungry.

MAY. No, I'm not. Sara's mother got us chips on the way. I'll eat when I am hungry.

DINAH. Gossiping again, I bet. May...er...I'm hoping...I mean, your father and I are hoping that you don't get into that same trouble again. And now we are trying all we can to make you stay indoors rather than go out too often.

MAY. That's good. Then what do you propose for me to do?

DINAH. Well, there's so much to do indoors.

MAY. Such as what?

DINAH. How about handcraft and...

MAY. What? Besides helping you with the dishes and cooking and my own homework and...

DINAH. You spend more time going here and there than at home, May. And you know that well enough.

MAY. Ok. I'll try to do what you want me to do. But mum, why should you try to limit my movement? You stopped me from pictures long before I went to high school. Then you tell me to read only certain books. And now this. All my friends enjoy themselves and how can I when I'm tied up in here? Sara even goes out every night.

DINAH. Her going out every night doesn't mean you can do that too. I know she does well in school. Not you. You need to do a lot more in your maths. Besides, you have enough room to move around. Now how much more do you want?

MAY. But mum, each day you bring me less freedom. You weren't brought up like that, were you?

DINAH. No, I must say I wasn't. But that was village. It was a small world. So I didn't need so many rules. Your situation is different. You are growing into a changing world.

MAY. Then we'll see when it comes to doing it. But take my word, I'm not even going to try as long as my legs are free to move about.

DINAH. How can you answer me like that? (Walks up to May and slaps her on the cheek.) Don't talk back to me like that. Nor to your father. Ever again. You hear me?

MAY. (Looks angrily at her mother who stands with hands on hips.) I hear you well and clear. And if you can hear me as clear as I

PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY

can hear you, then listen now. You can try all you can but you cannot lock me up in this damn place and let me rot here. Ok mother? (Gets up, packs all her books and exits, looking at her mother with disappointment.)

DINAH. (Sobbing.) O May. May, my daughter. I am trying to do the best for your future. (Sob, sob.) You are getting mixed up with bad people. Your father was right when he said it would be better if we sent you back to the village for your education. (Wiping her eyes.) Yes, he was right. Now...it's too late. (Covers her eyes with a hand and sinks into the chair. Lights out.)

End of scene 3

SCENE 4: Same time at Sakura's Kai Haus. Ray is playing snooker with a partner. Several men are watching while others are drinking.

MOSES. Warren is your name isn't it?

RAYMONG. Yes, that's right.

MOSES. And where do you say you live?

RAYMOND. Downtown.

MOSES. I see. And work place? (He lights a cigarette.)

RAYMOND. Mainland Agencies, Uptown. And you?

MOSES. You're lucky you have a job. I don't have one. Living with wantoks. One night with one, another night with another. Sorry. (Offering him a cigarette.) Want a smoke? (Ray shakes his head.) Gee! You don't smoke, and you don't drink. You're one of those rare men. That must be your woman's doing.

RAYMOND. No, my own choice. I had a bad car accident some years ago so I decided to stop altogether. No smoke, no grog.

MOSES. O yes, That's good. A good decision. (Nodding.) A very good one. As for me, one of these days, you'll hear news of a Moses found dead on the street, drunk, run over by a car. Something like that. (Someone coughs and men become noisier.) They're becoming impatient. Better hurry and finish this game.

NIGEL. (From among the crowd.) Come on you two. We are all waiting to have a turn. You're not the only two here tonight. Hurry up and get that game over with. (He bangs the table behind them.)

BARMAID. (From behind the counter.) Oh no, please. Don't do that. You will damage the furniture. We can't afford to keep getting the carpenters too often. It's twice in a month already.

NIGEL. (Waving his fist at the barmaid.) You shut up, ok? I'm only telling these two men to hurry with their game. We are all waiting to play you know. (More men join in support.)

MANAGER. (Ringing the bell.) Cool it, cool it please you men. We have had enough trouble here already. Before long we may as well close the whole place down for good. (Ray and Moses walk away while the rest of the men look after them. Ray is somewhat uneasy. Two other men take their places at the table.)

MOSES. Don't look worried, Warren. At least we had a good game. I mean, even though you lost the game, we had a chance to play, that's what I mean. It's only eight. Shall I buy you a coke?

RAYMOND. No, thank you. There's enough liquid in my tummy already.

MOSES. Then can we sit over there, (pointing to a corner table) and talk, to kill the time, I mean.

RAYMOND. On no, no. I'd better be leaving now. I'm supposed to collect my daughter on the way. And it's already late. (Reaches out to shake the other's hand.)

MOSES. Come on. How can you leave so early? They'll be closing up soon, so why can't we hang around for a while.

RAYMOND. No. My daughter is waiting. And I promised my wife to be back by eight. It's already past that time now. We'll see you some other time. (Exits in haste without looking back.)

MOSES. (Whistles a signal and Nigel walks over.) Did you see that?

NIGEL. You bet I did.

MOSES. And it was all my game. All because he was so nervous he couldn't concentrate. I bet he's running sixty now. He might end up at some other place tonight.

NIGEL. So what do we do now?

MOSES. We report to the boss, of course, stupid.

NIGEL. And what did he say his name was?

MOSES. Warren. Warren somebody. That I didn't quite get. And he lives downtown. Although he looked quite serious, I didn't believe all that shit.

NIGEL. O, he's used to telling lies. He makes everything look real to fools like him, I mean.

MOSES. I must have scared him away for good. You better come with somebody else next time. (Across the room, the snooker game is getting bad. Men are arguing, others are calling insulting words at no one in particular.)

MANAGER. (Ringing the bell.) Time to close up. Please remove yourselves quietly so no one gets hurt. (To the barmaid.) Get the men to clean up before we lock up for the night. (Motioning to Nigel and Moses.) Come on you two. You can talk on the way. We haven't got all night to wait for you. (He helps a man to the door.) There you are. Go right home. If you have one.

NIGEL. Excuse me sir. but....

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MANAGER. No buts. I said time to close up.
 NIGEL. Ok sir, I know that but could you spare just one second to answer a few questions? (He shows his ID card.)
 MANAGER. (In a calmer but frightened manner.) Oh yes, sure, sure.
 MOSES. Perhaps we could move up to a safer spot.
 MANAGER. This way, this way please. (Leads them up closer to the counter.) Ok gentlemen, ask the first question. (Makes faces at the barmaid and the men who have begun to mop the floor.)
 NIGEL. Thank you sir. Sorry for this in...in...how do you say it?
 BARMAID. (From behind the counter.) O you must be drunk already. It's inconvenience!
 NIGEL. That's it. (Winks at the barmaid.) Inconvenience. Sorry for the inconvenience. Please feel at ease. We are only trying to find out about a man who's been here a while ago.
 MANAGER. Yea. Which particular one?
 MOSES. The one I played with. Remember?
 MANAGER. Oh yes, I do.
 MOSES. Ok. Have you seen him here before?
 MANAGER. Let me see... No. I haven't seen him here before. (To the barmaid.) Have you Sally?
 BARMAID. Have I what? (Comes closer to them.)
 MANAGER. Have you seen the man who played with this guy (touches Moses) before?
 BARMAID. No, I haven't.
 NIGEL. Are you sure?
 BARMAID & MANAGER. Yes we are sure. (Barmaid leaves.)
 NIGEL. Please try to think back for a week, or maybe a month, sir.
 MANAGER. As I have said, I haven't seen him here before. And here, we try not to take particular interest in people coming daily. Otherwise we would be taken as favouring one and being unfair to the other. Here, we try to be fair to everyone. See what I mean?
 MOSES. Ok. Good enough, but try to keep an eye on him next time he happens to call in. Here. (Hands him a card.) Please call us when you can. And thank you for sparing your time.
 NIGEL. Thank you sir. (Turns to exit. Pauses to wink at the barmaid.)
 MANAGER. Well, well, well. (After he sees them out.) What a relief. I thought they were after me for something I never did. I'd better go home and have a good night's sleep. Sally, (to the barmaid) see if the men are ready to go.
 BARMAID. (From off-stage.) We're all waiting for you.
 MANAGER. Good. I'll be with you in a second. (When he is satisfied that the place is ok, he exits.)

End of scene 4.

SCENE 5: Later that same night. At home, Dinah sits slumped in a chair, looking wearier than ever. Raymond enters with a bunch of keys in his hand.
 RAYMOND. (Panting.) O no, no Dinah. I don't feel like going to bed tonight. (Throws himself on a chair at the table with his head on his hand, breathing heavily.)
 DINAH. (Showing no interest.) What's the matter?
 RAYMOND. Everything's the matter. (Sits up and faces her.) Dinah, I got bad company tonight. (Quietly.) There was this man I played snooker with. At first I thought he was one of those regular goers, then he went on to ask me for my name. That was quite usual I thought. But then he asked where I worked and live, so I got a bit nervy. Just as well I told him lies. But I feel insecure now that there is someone showing interest in me.
 DINAH. Do you think he's a...a cop? (Wide eyed.)
 RAYMOND. That's what I'm afraid of. I think there were others with him in there. They played rascal. Dirty looking, I mean. And the one I'm talking about said he had no work.
 DINAH. O God. (Sinks deeper into the chair.) What has come upon us this day? First May runs away from my talking to her. Then you come back with this. (Buries her head and begins to sob... After a while.) Do you think he knows who you are?
 RAYMOND. (Reassuringly.) No, I shouldn't think so. They would have got me right there if they knew. Let's keep our hearts crossed and hope that nothing happens in the hours to follow. In the meantime, I will make some arrangements. Don't mention anything to May. Clear?
 DINAH. O, that reminds me. May asked for you. She said she overheard some girls at the field talking about something or other. But she says it's all lies, so she wouldn't tell me about it.
 RAYMOND. What? (Shouts, looking more afraid than angry.) Don't tell me the kid's got the news already.
 DINAH. (Walks up to him, holds him, talking reassuringly.) Ray, I told you she thought it was a lie. Remember she's our daughter, so she's not bound to believe such a story. And anyway, we don't even know what she overheard. Don't try to ask her either. Now try to keep calm.
 RAYMOND. Ok, ok. Let's leave everything as it is. (Gets up and walks around the room. Then suddenly rushes at his wife.) You, you are the one. Why did you get me to know him? Why? You and your damn brother. The dirty game you got me involved in. Dinah, is this how I'm paid for all I have done for you and your people? We lived a peaceful life until suddenly this brother of yours appears from

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nowhere and you introduce me to him. You have used me as a tool to do all the dirty jobs he wanted done. All in order to please him, my brother-in-law. (Shakes his head.) But now, now help me, help me and save me from all this. Do you want me to go and rot in that same place where Buruka is now? Buruka! (Spits.) How I scorn his name. I bet you don't care one bit what happens to me now. Tell me if you do care. Tell me. (Shakes her.) Tell me.

DINAH. Ray. Ray. please stop it. I promise... I promise...

RAYMOND. Promise what? You promised twenty years ago to respect me, to love me for what I am. Instead, what have you been doing? The exact opposite. I kept to my promises because I loved you. I adored you, Dinah. How could I do all these things if I didn't? But now all that love has turned to hate. I hate you and I will for ever. Now, before I leave, promise me one more thing. (Holds her on the shoulders and looks into her eyes.) Promise not to mention anything to May. Promise?

DINAH. I promise...truly I promise. (Turns and throws herself into a chair. Closes her eyes, breathing heavily, while her husband stands looking at her angrily.)

RAYMOND. There! Sit there and pass away before I do. (Walks towards the audience, hands in pockets.) That's my wife. (Points to her.) Dinah is her name. She is the one who got me into all this mess. Let me tell you one thing. It was my weakness that caught me. I was a man until I tried to prove myself and see where I ended up? How I wish this tambu business never existed in this god-forsaken country of ours. What am I supposed to do? Am I forgetting myself? I'm supposed to be running. And run I must, for before long, they'll be right here at the doorstep, ordering me into their blue van. O Good Lord. (Clasps his hands and falls on his knees in prayer.) Please take me to the promised land like you did Moses and his mob of Israelities.

Please Lord I ask this in your name, Amen. (As he slowly rises, sound of siren from afar approaches.) Oh no, no. I must run. (Frantically searches for his keys. When he recovers them, he dashes out, slamming the door behind him, and leaves Dinah slumped in the chair. Light out.)

End of scene 5

SCENE 6: Same night. A few hours later. Dinah is still sitting in the same chair, when the lights come on. There are knocks on the door. As soon as she opens the door, two uniformed policemen rush in.

1ST POLICEMAN. Where is he? Where is Raymond Malaki? (As soon as she sees them she faints. 1st policeman takes no notice as he searches the place.)

2ND POLICEMAN. O the woman. She...she's on the floor. Fainted. Let's see to her first, then question her.

1ST POLICEMAN. Leave her alone. She'll come to very shortly. Help me search the place. (He disappears into the bedroom. The other man searches outside, keeping an eye on Dinah. Shortly, 1st policeman returns with May, who is struggling to free herself.)

MAY. Please let me go, let me go. I don't know what you are after.

1ST POLICEMAN. I'm not going to do you any harm, young girl. We need you to answer a few questions, that's all. Then you are free again. Sit yourself down and please don't try to do anything I wouldn't do. (Dinah stirs. 2nd policeman attends.) Where is your father, young girl? (Sits with pen and pad, ready to write.)

MAY. I don't know.

1ST POLICEMAN. When did you last see him? And where?

MAY. I don't know.

1ST POLICEMAN. Pardon me girl, please give me your name first.

MAY. I don't know. (Looking very annoyed by now.)

1ST POLICEMAN. What? Is that your name?

MAY. I don't know. (Dinah is sitting up.)

1ST POLICEMAN. For heaven's sake girl. Is that all you know? Please be sensible and answer me. (No response.) Ok, since you know nothing, Miss, I may as well let you sit there for a while. Bring her over here. (To the other man. 2nd policeman helps Dinah to a chair then returns to the door.) Your name please. (Ready to write. No reply.) I'm asking you for your name, woman. (No answer.) What do you call yourself? Boroma? Sisia? or what? (No answer.) Look, don't you speak at all? Wanem nem bilong yu? (Waits. No reply.) Jack, (to the other man) you try the other language.

2ND POLICEMAN. E kekeni, ladamu be daika? Oi diba o lasi? (No response. He makes faces at the other.)

1ST POLICEMAN. Oh well, they must all have a bad sickness. (Gets up.) They both won't talk.

2ND POLICEMAN. They're in a state of shock. Let's leave them until they've gained their senses again.

PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY PLAY

1ST POLICEMAN. Ok you two, don't try to follow what your father and husband had done. (Looks from daughter to mother.) We will come back in half an hour's time. By then you should be ready to talk. Is that all clear? (They exit.) (As soon as they are gone...)

MAY. So you think I know nothing about all this. But I tell you, I heard every word you and dad said. You expected me to be sleeping soundly in this tense situation, did you? Then afterall, what I overheard from the girls at the field is all true. I became suspicious after that brother of yours suddenly stopped coming and dad began turning up home at unusual times. Is this what you meant when you said you were doing the best for my future? Is it? so that I won't catch a word about how mean and stupid my mother and father are? (Dinah begins to sob.) You can cry as much as you like. Cry for your brother too. You wanted me to do this, do that, all in order to please you? What gabbage is all this. I have other interests. I'm a growing woman. I have a future ahead. Now what do you propose for me?

DINAH. (Crying louder.) No, no May. Please don't say anything more. Your father is not to be blamed. It was my fault. All my fault.

MAY. See what you have done now? You have divided us. Dad is running heaven knows to where. And I'm leaving. Here and now. (Rushes into the bedroom.)

DINAH. No, no. This can't happen. I will tell the authority I deserve to be punished. I ought to be where Buruka is. O God, please protect Raymond wherever he is right now. (Covers her face and sobs some more. May appears with a suitcase and a bundle of clothes.)

MAY. Ok. You can wait there for them. I'm going. (Heads for the door; her mother running after her.)

DINAH. May, May my daughter. (But May disappears, leaving her at the door staring at the darkness.) Well, she's not going far in this dark night. (As she turns back, sound of siren is heard approaching. She's thoughtfully walking around the room as the lights go out quickly.)

End of scene 6

SCENE 7: A few days later at May's home. The scene of a small party. The room, lit up with colored lights, is almost empty except for the table, which is decorated with a cake and other goodies. Music is playing, enlivening the place. There's giggling and laughter outside as May, Sara and three other girls pile in, full of excitement.

MAY. Well here we are. A home again. (Examines the scene.) Mmmm, a home once again. The real home.

SARA. Isn't this lovely.

DEBBIE. It's wonderful. (Dances to the beat of the music.) O, it's so wonderful.

IDA. Just like the end of the year party. Except that there's fewer people here. (May hands out drinks.)

MAY. We better get things moving. (To Ida.) Ida, you get the biscuits. O, wait a minute. (Thinks for a second.) Never mind, don't bother. Just help yourselves at the table. Is that ok with you all?

OTHERS IN CHORUS. That's ok. Ok. Fine. (And so on.)

MAY. What do you think about this, Debbie?

DEBBIE. A fine idea. I think it shows you're on your way to a bright future.

MAY. O come on. Don't be too optimistic.

RUTH. Well how else do you expect things to go? (Music stops.) You are independent now, isn't that right?

MAY. Yes I know that but I am just beginning a new life which means I haven't just come to a standstill to enjoy what life offers. Don't you think so? (They are silent for a while.) Come on everyone, let's finish off our party. Come closer to the table, and, who would like to cut the cake?

SARA. What do you mean who? You of course. It's your independence we're celebrating.

MAY. Alright, I'll do it then. (They gather round the table. When she cuts the cake, they all laugh and shout in unison and toast their drinks.)

IDA. May, what are you doing after you leave school?

MAY. Nothing for sure, but I hope to fly.

RUTH. And now that you're free, what is there to be done?

MAY. What is to be done? I'm free, yes, I am. But there's still a lot of work to be done.

DEBBIE. Work? What work?

MAY. Work, of course. Work, work, work and more work. Like sewing, weaving pandanus mats, and (shrugs) what about tomorrow? And before I can fly, there's plenty to be done. That's what I mean. (They're silent for a while.)

IDA. And what about your parents?

MAY. They're ok. I mean my father is still in the cell. They're waiting for my mother. She's in the hospital. As soon as she leaves there, their case will be heard. I visited my mother the other day. She looked ok and should be leaving soon. But anyway, time is running short. Let's finish off. (Music is on again and they come alive. May is in the middle, as the others hold hands in a circle and dance for a while before the curtain falls.) □

Review by Joseph Sukwianomb

When the Stars are Scattered

Developing and being able to make meaning out of the myriad of painful and glorious conditions in human aspects of living is an enormous task. The world actually is a container and sustainer of creation made out of the generalities as well as the practical and sometimes imperfect particulars of time, history and modalities.

When the Stars are Scattered is a book containing a series of events involving sex and alcohol, plus varieties of confusion and indecision. The author paints an absurdly circular picture of events of compassion and human feelings, coupled with moral bankruptcies in the characters of Richard, Sophie, Chief, and Pauline. The story centres in Mombasa and Malindi, a town about 150 kilometres north. In Mombasa, the port city of Kenya's East Africa Coast, the author takes the reader for a guided tour of the town life both during the day and during the splendid nights of boozing and sex. Sex is taxing, so Kahiga asserts through Richard, the main character, on both moral and financial grounds.

The story is about a young man from upcountry, a Kikuyu. His up-bringing and background is strongly couched in Christianity. Richard Cinda, after finishing an engineering degree from the Khartoum University in the Sudan, chose to live and work in Mombasa. Khartoum and Mombasa have two principal things in common: heat and Muslim Religion.

In Mombasa, Richard was employed in a refinery firm where he came into contact with the Swahili culture and the people of Mombasa island. In the office of the refinery, Asha Rehman came into his life, fresh from the university.

Richard developed an interest in and an emotional attachment at Asha, a Muslim girl. In the process he also came to know Sophie Rehman, Asha's younger sister. Asha was to become an object of public ridicule: pregnant out of wedlock. This was something unthinkable for a devoted Muslim. One day she killed herself, putting to rest the

gossip and public criticism caused by her loose love life.

Sophie Rehman was attracted to Richard soon after the death of Asha. Asha's physical and moral demise was never the responsibility of Richard, this at least was clear in Sophie's mind because her sister got pregnant prior to Richard's employment at the refinery and subsequent involvement with Asha.

The places of prominence in Kahiga's book are Mombasa itself and Malindi. Here European and American tourists go to sunbathe, smoke 'pot', and indulge in licentious adventures. On the Muslim holiday of Idd ul Fitr, Richard and Chief plan a holiday to Malindi. On their first day here is what they come across:

"We reached Malindi in the middle of the afternoon. The beach was packed with European tourists - swimming, water-skiing, sunbathing. A semi-tanned German lying flat on his stomach rolled over to get the glorious Kenyan sun on his fat belly as well... Richard says 'Don't smile back at the men'... only the girls. Many of these men are queers who are after black boys.' (p. 58-59)

On the other hand Kenyan women, mostly drifters from Mombasa and upcountry towns like Nairobi, Nakuru, and Kisumu, also go for rich European or American men. Richard had this to say about the situation:

"The drifters were busy operating. They were also lying on the beach with their white catch as if they also needed some tan on their already black skins. They looked through us knowing damn well we didn't have pounds sterling, deutchemarks or dollars. They too wore lovely bikinis and some even spoke German." (p. 59)

Led into the theatre of life, Richard in the end turned out to be immoral and irreligious.

In daylight, religion and sometimes public eyes impose public modesty on Sophie and Richard so they hold social distance during the day. But their night life is something else. Although married

to Salim, a Mombasa-based lawyer, Sophie has a wild craving for sexual satisfaction outside the borders of Muslim religion and the conventional marriage institution. (Women by tradition wear religious black veil (buihui) over their faces. Under the disguise of this common veil, married Muslim women appear to be more promiscuous and adulterous than others without it.) Into his shabby hotel room Sophie comes for sex with Richard. Here is his version of this event:

"Sophie and I met again. Waiting for her in my room I was very tense. All the implications were beginning to sink home. I was philanderer and adulterer. Trying to hold on to something that was already gone. Sophie was an adulteress, a mother of a child at home. Hiding sins under her buihui, the way so many other women had done before her." (p. 138)

An important conclusion can be drawn from reading the novel. There are economic conditions which often shape and dictate the moral and social behaviour of people. In Mombasa, Richard finds himself caught between being an emotional lover barred by religion and conventions, and his own weakness to uphold individual dignity by being selective in choosing friends. Richard is lost on all accounts. Mombasa, and Malindi to a certain extent, thrive on immorality, merseised by the institutions of tourism and hotel industries in Kenya.

Muslim religion divides people and oppresses women in the Muslim world. There is no exception in Mombasa. Women are restricted to the extent that there seems to exist an underground of married women from the Muslim community who practise prostitution and hence, adultery. □

Sam Kahiga: *When the Stars are Scattered*, Nairobi, Longman, 1979.

Review by Loujaya M. Kouza Ondobondo Literature Recitals

During the years of 1975-79 when writers such as John Kasaipwalova, Nora Vagi Brash, Russell Soaba, Kumalau Tawali and a few others existed on the UPNG campus, the fires of literature recitals burned brightly and flowed through the veins of the campus. After they graduated, or were sent elsewhere, the fire died with them.

In 1982 a new generation of up-and-coming writers sat together and decided to revive the old spirit of literature on campus, this time under the banner of "Ondobondo".

Ondobondo, meaning festival or singing in the Binandere language, is significant as it embraces all performing arts.

The Ondobondo club's roots were established with the assistance of Prith Chakravarti, Cathy Natera, Loujaya Kouza, William Ferea, Sampson Ngwele and Russell Soaba.

A first recital night was planned and scheduled for April 21, 1982 with Cathy Natera as compere.

Invitations were sent to known writers but whether they would accept and attend was another matter.

In fact the only established writers who attended the first Ondobondo recital night were Nora Vagi Brash, Ignatius Kilage and Teloti Kaniku. It was bit of a let down as the organizers expected older writers to encourage up-and-coming artists, not only with their presence but their works as well.

Encouragingly enough, in the place of older writers, new untapped talent was discovered. Such talent included: Benjamin Nakin, Sampson Ngwele, William Ferea, Joe Mangi and Joyce Kumbeli.

The turn-out of artists to recital nights organised towards the end of every month have been 25 to 30 people. There is a need for people in PNG to be aware and appreciate literature not only as an art form but as a means of indentifying and reflecting each others values to the world around them.

Accordingly to Kumalau Tawali, a

well known PNG writer, "Writers are people who can really see things. They are the people who speak on important issues and also preserve the rights of the people."

The well-known saying which has become a cliché is that "The pen is mightier than the sword" and rightly so. Didn't we see the power of the pen towards the end of our colonial era in Kasaipwalova's "Reluctant Flame"?

Fortunately the fighting spirit is being revived with insight by unknown writers such as Remus Aken, a student at the University of Technology and a paraplegic. His disability has not marred his insight as we can see in his poem, "For That Day I will Die". (See poetry section).

A writer is a leader, his pen mightier than the sword, his lines words of encouragement, praise, sorrow, defeat.

For a writer, money should not be the main incentive but rather a heartfelt concern and desire to reach out and touch his or her people and mirror them.

At a writers day conference in 1974, one of PNG grandfathers of literature, Allan Natachee, from Mekeo in the Central Province, penned the following lines congratulating young writers:

All you sons and daughters
who play magic with words
who turn words into love hatred
into sorrow and pity
into known and unknown
languages
I congratulate you with faith
and hope and love.

For you are the famous young
writers that heaven and earth
cannot deny but cite you as
rightful writers and rightfull
ageless and mysterious rocks, of
Papua New Guinea!

As Papua New Guinean writers we should by now have reached the point of realising that as long as we struggle as individual writers, the development of literature in our country cannot reach a level of recognition by our people nor by those from other parts of the world.

Certainly there is a need to create a Writers Union where we can work as a group to strengthen literacy and dialogue with our people through avenues such as publishing houses and awareness campaigns.

According to Mr. Joseph Sukwianomb, a lecturer in Education, "As writers we need to sit down and plan how and what we are fighting for, and if possible, in our Union. In Kenya where I studied there were associations of writers who met in local bars to discuss issues that concerned them. In our case the issue would be copyright laws."

The Ondobondo club have fulfilled some need for PNG writers. Hopefully, the next step will be a Writers Union. Perhaps then, the fires of literature will once again burn brightly and reach out and touch our people and mirror them. □

The Editors of Ondobondo congratulate Sogeri High School Students on the publication of **Kalamimi**.

Review by Percy Chatteton Colonial Sunset: The Johnson Era 1971-74

I have always thought that it was a supremely lucky moment for Papua New Guinea when, in 1970 Les Johnson was chosen by the Australian Government to be PNG's last colonial administrator. Now, having read his account of his four-year occupancy of the post, I am more sure of it than ever. He was the right man in the right job at the right time.

In this book we have a fascinating account of the to-ing and fro-ing and political in-fighting which went on both in Port Moresby and in Canberra during those four eventful years which led up to self-government and independence for Papua New Guinea.

Part of the story, that concerning events in Port Moresby, is a familiar one to those of us who lived through those years on the spot. But that part of the story which relates to events in Canberra is largely new, being revealed to us in the form of previously unpublished communications which passed between the Administrator in Port Moresby and the Department of External Territories in Canberra; and a very intriguing story it is.

Les Johnson handled the complex situation with common sense, good humour and patience. Patience he

certainly needed. I'm not sure which he must have found the more exasperating, the amateur politicians in the House of Assembly or the professional bureaucrats in Canberra. But he kept his cool. His happy personal relations with Papua New Guinean politicians on the one hand and his well-balanced reports and clear-eyed recommendations to the Canberra bureaucrats on the other steered Papua New Guinea into a comparatively trouble free transition to independence.

Sandwiched in the middle of this slice of colonial history are two very valuable chapters of analysis and evaluation entitled "Society in Transition" and "The Economy (Not in Transition)".

It is my guess that a new generation of Papua New Guineans, born into independence, won't be very interested in the story of the events which led up to it. Nor is there any particular reason why they should be. But those two chapters should be required reading for Papua New Guinean high school and university students for a long time to come. □

L.W. Johnson: Colonial Sunset. Australia and New Guinea, 1971-74. University of Queensland Press. Reviewed by Percy Chatterton.

Contributors

Aken, Remus: From Siassi. While a student at Aiyura National High School, a Rugby accident left him a paraplegic. Currently he is a student at the University of Technology.

Andrew, Meau: Keravat National High School student.

Chatterton, Sir Percy: Came to P.N.G. more than 60 years ago as a missionary. Awarded an honorary Doctorate from UPNG. Recently Knighted for his lifelong commitment to PNG. Currently writes a weekly comment in the Times newspaper.

Endemogo, John: From Kerowagi, Simbu. Attended Keravat National High School. PY Student, UPNG, 1983. Currently a Foundation Year student in Arts. This is his first publication.

Gray, Hopeton: From West Indies. Spent a few years in P.N.G. Now lives in Sydney. His poems have appeared in magazines of many countries. He was a regular participant in Ondobondo recitals in 1982.

Harry, Jacob: From Central Province. Attended Sogeri National High School. Completed Journalism Diploma, 1978. Currently a BA student at UPNG.

Hane, Goru: From Gaire Village, Central Province. His story appeared in Ondobondo 2.

Job, John: From the Highlands. Currently completing a BA in Politics. This is his first publication.

Kouza, Loujaya M.: Born in Lae. Currently working for the Times Newspaper. Published in the first issue of Ondobondo.

Kumbeli, Joyce: From Milne Bay. Won a Literature competition with the play published herein.

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Tiamon, Zak: From East New Britain. His work has appeared in the first and second issues of Ondobondo.

Warakai, Vincent: From Wewak, East Sepik. Completed degree in Social Work from UPNG, 1978 and an MA from Sussex in 1981. He currently teaches in the Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology UPNG. This is his first published creative writing.

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Illustrated by Sibona Buna

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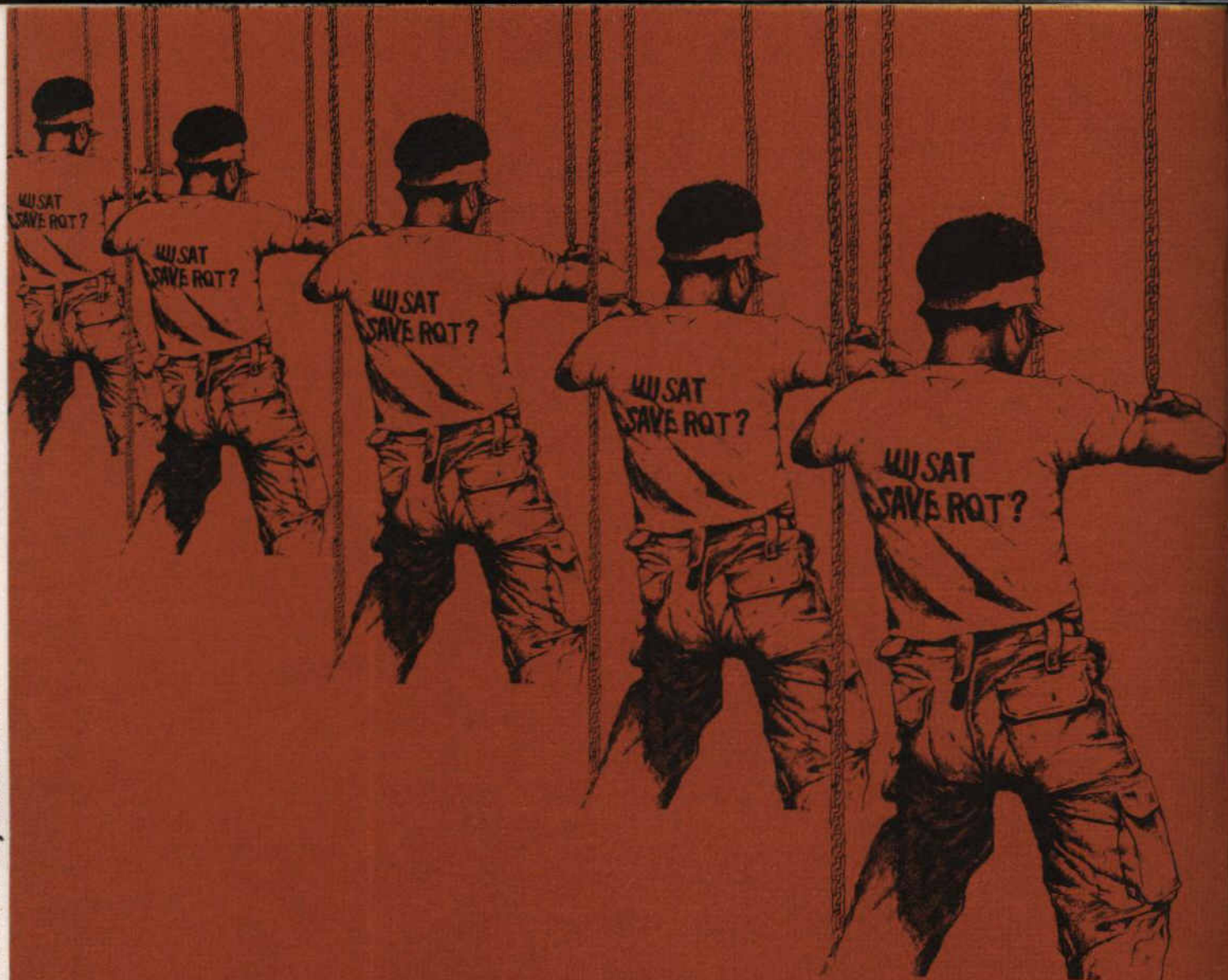


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