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A JOURNAL OF  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
AFFAIRS, IDEAS  
AND THE ARTS

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# BIKMAUS

THE THEME OF LOVE IN P.N.G. LITERATURE  
Lolo Houbein  
IMAGES - stills from Tukana  
Chris Owen  
TUKANA - HUSAT I ASUA?  
Reviews

THE NATIONAL THEATRE COMPANY AT WAIGANI ARTS THEATRE  
Review  
MANA, VOL.V, NO.2, 1980.  
Review  
MELANESIA - Thoughts and Words  
STRANGERS ARE MY PEOPLE - play  
Bernard Narokobi  
MEATA GOES A WOOLING - short story  
Momoru Tabe  
ANTHROPOLOGY AS SELF ANALYSIS: SOME REFLECTIONS  
Andrew Strathern

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AFFAIRS, IDEAS AND THE ARTS

Vol. III, No. 3, September, 1982.

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## THE THEME IN PAPUA LITERATURE

### Introduction

#### The Literature and the Theme

The emergence of a Papua New literature in English in sufficient quantity to merit the study of a special development from the late 1960s to the present of a creative writing community at the Faculty of the University of Papua New Guinea has ferretted out the existing tale of poetry, and drama, that was rooted in traditional culture in an oral form.

This concentration of new literature simultaneously in one place, and the fact that it contains some unique aspects which are fairly homogenous collection of development and intensification of themes and themes.

Some trends are clearly discernible. Apisaipwalova has handled the English language in an original way, and has broken new ground through the use of traditional idiom and metaphor. Russell Soaba is an astute poet, a scene<sup>2</sup> and interpreter of independence and its byproduct of philosophy. Kama Kerpi distinguishes himself by his lyrical poetic talent which has been powerful on the search for a new identity for his own highland society. Apisaipwalova

# THE THEME OF LOVE IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA LITERATURE TO 1976

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## Introduction

### The Literature and the Theme Lolo Houbein

The emergence of a Papua New Guinean literature in English in sufficient quantity and variety to merit the study of a special aspect is a development from the late 1960's. The establishment of a creative writing course in the Arts Faculty of the University of Papua New Guinea ferretted out the existing talent in story telling, poetry, and drama, that was inherent in the traditional culture in an oral form.

This concentration of new authors, writing simultaneously in one place, has lent the literature some unique aspects which still bind it into a fairly homogenous collection which awaits development and intensification of individual style and themes.

Some trends are clearly discernible. John Kasaipwalova has handled the medium of the English language in an original manner which has broken new ground through the combination of traditional idiom and English expression. Russell Soaba is an astute painter of the urban scene<sup>2</sup> and interpreter of independent individualism and its byproduct of philosophical enquiry. Kama Kerpi distinguishes himself through his lyrical poetic talent which he brings to bear powerfully on the search for past values in his own highland society. Apisai Enos presents a

mystical and at times metaphysical quality in poetry of a dreamlike nature. Kumalau Tawali searches for the universal and eternal through the medium of his own culture, while Arthur Jawodimbari's strength lies in producing literature from tribal lore.

Yet, the circumstances under which the literature sprang up produced many similarities. Most of the early authors were in their late teens or early twenties, male and single, were being alienated from their own culture by western education, and wrote in the turbulent times preceding self-government. Moreover, they all knew each other and some formed friendships. Recurrent themes concern colonialism, acculturation in religion and society, alienation between generations, and the projection of these problems into the future. Writing set in traditional context often concerns childhood memories, while the range of emotions expressed is dominated by themes of youthful love and its obverse hatred.

The theme of love is a universal theme, even more so than the others mentioned. Therefore it is capable of acting as a catalyst for the other themes, making them universally comprehensible, while simultaneously revealing uniquely Papua New Guinean content. As it does these two things, one becomes aware that despite its universality as a basic human emotion, love is expressed in an inherently Papua New Guinean manner which is culture-bound.

The virtual absence of women writers reflects the proportional minority of girls in educational institutions in Papua New Guinea. It also is indicative of a tradition that although women may sometimes contribute directly to public opinion, they do not customarily carry authority, making them perhaps apprehensive to resort to the finality of the written word. Their scarcity in Papua New Guinea literature is a serious drawback for the surveying of its love themes.



In view of the circumstances under which the new authors found themselves, it may be hazardous to take their portrayals of love and hatred in its diverse forms as a standard for the role these feelings play in Papua New Guinea social and individual life. Moreover, the numerous tribal societies which are now under one flag, show fundamental differences in social, cultural and emotional life. The only assumption that can be made is that each writer, no matter the degree of acculturation and alienation, has been influenced by the traditional values of his own particular culture, either directly or by but slowly disappearing group memory of these values.

The extremes of treatment can be seen in Arthur Jawodimbari's depiction of the role of sexuality in married life and its extension into a strictly traditional society on the one hand<sup>3</sup>, and on the other in Russell Soaba's idealistic notions about love in a westernized urban setting, in his play *Wilma Wait*<sup>4</sup>. This latter author's work resembles more than that of any Papua New Guinea writer, the introverted treatment of the love theme that has become the trend in modern western literature.

To establish a context in which to examine the universality as well as the uniqueness of the love theme in Papua New Guinea literature, a glance at the historical development of the theme in world literature is helpful. As all written literature has its roots in oral literature, the context is a legitimate one.

#### Context and Justification.

In world literature over the ages, the literary theme *par excellence* has been the theme of love. Homer's *Iliad* hinges on a love story which preceded the epic. Jason and Medea in Apollonius' *Argonautica* provided models for later writers. Virgil effectively used the love affair between Dido and Aeneas as an indicator how the fate of peoples and nations can change direction through this human emotion, or be consolidated by it, as in the case where Aeneas fights Turnus for the future site of Rome as well as the bride Lavinia. Yet, these are not oral and classical literature, love is treated as one aspect of several, which together shape life's reality and contribute to universal or particular truths defining the human condition.

The Greeks defined two areas of love: sacred love for divine beings and profane love between people. From the latter a third aspect of love emerged as the rarified form of deep affection and

friendship as displayed by Socrates for his followers<sup>5</sup>. In its attribution of love to the ideal of beauty which in itself was divine, this love was an intermediary between the sacred and the profane, but it remained largely an ideal, the practice of which most people were incapable of. Already in historical times, the Greeks were overtaken by romantic love, and their Roman culture-carriers by decadence.

In modern western world literature there has occurred a swing towards the love theme as a pivot around which the other aspects of life turn. In traditional and classical literature the love theme is treated subjectively - with notable exceptions such as Ovid's *Amores* - yet its ramifications are shown to be far reaching, affecting many people and causes and eliciting associated emotions of humour, pride, hatred, and social and religious obligations. Concerning the latter one can point to a rich lore of love in world mythology, where it connects with the very source of life itself, the earth. Creation myths from all parts of the world which centre on sexuality, the expression of physical love, as the primary creative force giving rise to dema-deities and the ritual love death ceremonies as the propagators of life, are numerous and analogous<sup>6</sup>.

Whereas associated emotions are present in the modern treatment of love in world literature, the emphasis in western literature is more on a few individuals placed in a priority position, through whose private concerns the reader may become acquainted with racial, cultural, social or national issues which form the protagonists' background, or are treated as a secondary theme. The works of D.H. Lawrence and Henry James may be quoted as examples of this method, which I shall call 'introverted' for the purpose of this discussion, which may bring out aspects of alternatives. Whereas popular literature in the west is fairly exclusively concerned with the introverted examination of love between individuals, that of the greater rest of the world is, despite widespread western influence, still largely based in traditional mythology and community concern as they come to pass<sup>7</sup>.

Although this discussion will incorporate aspects of love which may be termed 'non-physical', i.e. for life, nature, humanity at large, etc., it seems natural to take the physical love nature of man as a point of departure. I shall take this in a wide sense by including blood relationships, affinal ties, and the bonds of culture and locality.

Having pointed to a difference in the love theme in general between the western and non-western world, it is necessary to point out certain characteristics of the love theme in the races as conceptualized by the western world, and 'schematized' by S. Their list is purposely one of the view point of literature in dealing with Papua New Guinea. The concepts have comparative value in interpreting the schema juxtaposition of the black and white races in the modern world. emotion *versus* reason, intuition *versus* rationality, concrete conceptions & *versus* abstractions, subjectivism *versus* objectivism, a leaning towards literature and music (the expressive) and a leaning towards mathematics. Emotional energy and violence, are all attributed to the black race. summing up closes with the statement 'therefore I am' for the black race. Descartes' 'I think therefore I am'.

The picture which emerges of the black people and coldness in the modern world. It must be taken into account that the black people are from confrontations between selected whites, during the process of colonization by the white race. up a case for other sections of the world possessing a far greater emotional energy, warmth, vitality, and violence, than displayed by the white race. tionality. Such are for instance the slum dwellers of big cities, ecstatic religious groups, etc. alternative society adheres to those characteristics or a desire to develop them. determine how ingrained are the characteristics. At the same time it must be noted that the white groups are deviant from western society's norms or pass for it, or have been raised on the basis of non-possessions. But their numbers are large and their appearance and re-grouping is enough - to warrant the view that the black or coldness are not necessarily inferior, but rather a by-product of the modern world.



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Having pointed to a difference in treatment of the love theme in general between the western and non-western world, it is useful to look at certain characteristics of the black and white races as conceptualized by Leopold Sedar Senghor, and 'schematized' by S. Okechukwu Mezu<sup>8</sup>. Their list is purposely one of extremes, and from the view point of literature leaves out contributing races such as the Jews and the Chinese. But in dealing with Papua New Guinea these concepts have comparative value. Briefly reinterpreted the schema juxtaposes characteristics for the black and white races respectively as:

emotion *versus* reason  
intuition *versus* rationality  
concrete conceptions & anthropomorphism  
*versus* abstractions  
subjectivism *versus* objectivity<sup>9</sup>  
a leaning towards literature and the arts,  
dance and music (the expressive arts), *versus*  
a leaning towards mathematics and science.  
Emotional energy and warmth, vitality, and  
violence, are all attributed to the black races. The  
summing up closes with the statement 'I feel  
therefore I am' for the black races, as against  
Descartes' 'I think therefore I am' for the whites.

The picture which emerges is one of warmth in black people and coldness in the whites. It should be taken into account that the schema resulted from confrontations between *all* blacks and *selected* whites, during the centuries of exploitation and colonization by the latter. One can put up a case for other sections of the white races as possessing a far greater store of emotional energy, warmth, vitality, and the accompanying violence, than displayed cold reason and rationality. Such are for instance the traditional slum-dwellers of big cities, artists, members of ecstatic religious groups, etc. Social drop-outs and alternative society adherers also profess to possess those characteristics (minus the violence) or a desire to develop them, but it is too early to determine how ingrained and lasting they will be. At the same time it must be underlined that these white groups are deviants who have rejected western society's norms of rationality or what passes for it, or have been rejected by that society on the basis of non-possession of such norms. But their numbers are large enough - and their appearance and re-grouping patterns persistent enough - to warrant the view-point that warmth or coldness are not necessarily racial characteristics, but rather a by-product of certain accidents

of history, the most notable one being the scientific revolution in the western world<sup>10</sup> and its material consequences as they play on human greed on an individual level. Greed, or the less noxious desire to accumulate wealth in order to enhance living, when seen as an individual quest, the fruits of which are to remain with the begetter, undermines the conditions under which the expression of compassion and the consideration of fellow humans is simultaneously an expression of a need for self-preservation. If the latter are more or less balanced, an individual has less tendency to deviate from the norms of his society, but will rather choose to express his individuality within these, so that his needs to receive and to give are catered for within the same arena<sup>11</sup>. Where this is impossible because of the changing structure of the society, the individual needs to separate himself and become deviant with other deviants, or live a lopsided existence within the society. Such a lopsided existence produces an excess of reason and rationality, abstractions and so-called objectivity, and a leaning towards a scientific world view as a distancing device, all of which must grow at the expense of the warmer qualities mankind is capable of such as love, humility, faith and generosity. Erich Fromm, in a treatise on individual love, states about modern man:

"... that all his attempts for love are bound to fail, unless he tries most actively to develop his total personality, so as to achieve a productive orientation; that satisfaction in individual love cannot be attained without the capacity to love one's neighbour, without true humility, courage, faith and discipline. In a culture in which these qualities are rare, the attainment of the capacity to love must remain a rare achievement<sup>12</sup>."

The reasons why the western world is producing as many deviants as it has integrated members, while it continues to preach that its vital concerns are for the benefits of all mankind, remains a problem for sociologists to clarify. But it may be that Fromm has a clue in his term 'productive orientation'. He also says:

"In the most general way, the active character of love can be described by stating that love is primarily *giving*, not receiving<sup>13</sup>."

He clarifies his point most satisfactorily thus:

"The most widespread misunderstanding is that which assumes that giving is 'giving up' something, being deprived of, sacrificing<sup>14</sup>."



Here he approaches the nature of giving in a traditionally reciprocal society, where the expectations of reimbursement in due proportion - in kind or in devices-underlines the gift. The west in its abstract idealism terms this 'pragmatic', and perhaps this is the right word, though not with the attached connotations of cold calculation. It has to do with the sense of incorporality that underscores individual life in a traditional society, and regrettably we see this best in those disappearing societies which had attained a state of ecological balance with their environment so that basic needs were not challenged. Members of such societies have an astute awareness that the ecological balance must be regarded as a law, the breaking of which endangers the whole community and is therefore punishable. Within this law, productivity is then geared towards the community in exchange for that basic security for every individual that the west has been groping for in vain. But Fromm could have been describing the traditional 'big man' of the highland societies in Papua New Guinea when he wrote:

"For the productive character, giving has an entirely different meaning. Giving is the highest expression of potency. In the very act of giving, I experience my strength, my wealth, my power. This experience of heightened vitality and potency fills me with joy. I experience myself as overflowing, spending, alive, hence as joyous. Giving is more joyous than receiving, not because it is a deprivation, but because in the act of giving lies the expression of my aliveness<sup>15</sup>."

Even though Papua New Guinea writers come from societies which have been infiltrated by western ideas, the traditional structure is still strong in many areas, and Fromm's theorem 'love = productivity = giving = joy = being alive', fits the ideal of the reciprocal society.

#### 'Passion Logic' versus the 'Cold Seed'.

Literature as the reflection of not only the inherent assets of a society, but of the changes that take place within it, has already produced examples in non-western modern literature which support the view that western cultural influences produce some quaint benefactors of mankind<sup>16</sup>. In Papua New Guinea literature it has been John Kasaipwalova who expressed most vividly the infiltration of the 'cold seed',

which caused his social and personal sense of impotence, thus:

Cold bloodless masks stare me, not for my colour but for my empty wealth house and passion logic<sup>17</sup>.

The wearers of these masks have been cut off from the source of life and love, the earth. They are therefore 'leafless rootless logs' who:

Have no giving roots to intercourse the humus of humanity. No leaves to quiver the living joy in the timeless wind<sup>18</sup>.

They may seduce the black people, but intercourse is not to follow. They leave much behind when they go, but not the fertilizer which collects in profusion amongst the living, rooted trees which alone can keep the scattered seeds of love warm to make them grow and continue the cycle of life. They have brought the cold seed of greed which adapts to the soils, uses up its nutrients, but produces ice to cover 'the humus of humanity' which breeds the 'passion logic'. Only the new reluctant flame of 'passion logic' - reduced by contamination from the spread of the cold seed - can destroy the latter:

Burn burn burn burn burn  
Burn away my weight ice  
Burn into my heart a dancing flame<sup>19</sup>  
Frame<sup>19</sup>

Bernard Narokobi, after six years of residence in Sydney, and using the same tree-image as did John Kasaipwalova, exclaimed in an unpublished poem:

The People!  
What people?  
They are like logs  
Drifting on the ocean  
No children sucking  
And none crying  
No dogs are barking  
Laughter is hidden  
And mourning is socialized<sup>20</sup>.

The last lines are a devastating condemnation of the introversions of western public and private life.

If such contrasts are observed by Papua New Guinea writers, what made them expect otherwise? And what is the nature of their 'passion logic'? Answers may perhaps be found in the broader spectrum of Papua New Guinea literature, for which a great deal of inspiration has come from authors' village environments and upbringing, as the few cities are recent developments, while Port Moresby is mostly an immi-

grant community of only

#### The Pebble in the Pond

The literature to be written in English as some translated traditional material in the area background evidence.

Love remains an experience of which being from his glands of it, flowing from person's life. Thus it is frequency of the verbal the material as follows. Firstly I look at love or at love between the sex of what we might non-physical love, and love for the self, the other as summing up in conclusion.

Successively these to indicate widening both its physical and much like the proverb pond produces ever wider counter feelings such as to where the contrast

#### The Bonds of Blood.

##### For the Love of Children

Children are proof a continue, more particularly Life is the most cherished kind, but in tradition overshadowed by attachment of life is increasing affair. The lifecycle of prolonged at the expectation of children many individual lives, and various civilized and room for the vigorous forth.

In traditional, and ties, the individual is separate entity, but a of life which horizontal living and vertically early the recently deceased sense the west und



grant community of only a few generations back.

### The Pebble in the Pond.

The literature to be scanned for Papua New Guinean interpretations of the love theme is that written in English as a second language, with some translated traditional verse, and ethnographic material in the areas of love and marriage for background evidence.

Love remains an undivided entity, the experience of which engages the whole human being from his glands to his final verbal definitions of it, flowing from one to other aspects of a person's life. Thus it is only in order to detect the frequency of the verbal definitions, that I order the material as follows:

Firstly I look at love on the family level, secondly at love between the sexes, next I survey expression of what we might - with reservations - call non-physical love, and lastly I briefly examine love for the self, the other and humanity, as well as summing up in conclusion.

Successively these overlapping sections intend to indicate widening circles of love's influence in both its physical and non-physical expression, much like the proverbial pebble thrown into a pond produces ever widening circles. Evidence of counter feelings such as hatred shall be referred to where the contrast balances the picture.

### The Bonds of Blood.

#### For the Love of Children

Children are proof and promise that life shall continue, more particularly ones own, by proxy. Life is the most cherished possession of all mankind, but in traditional societies this fact is less overshadowed by attachments to other possession of life is increasingly seen as an individual affair. The lifecycle of the individual is protected or prolonged at the expense of other lives. Conception of children may be avoided to improve individual lives, and old people abandoned in various civilized and economical ways to make room for the vigorous individuals they brought forth.

In traditional, and especially subsistence societies, the individual is not primarily seen as a separate entity, but as a link in the double chain of life which horizontally consists of the presently living and vertically of the ancestors, particularly the recently dead. Pure individual life in the sense the west understands it, is held to be

impossible. One is part of a clan, incorporating the ancestors, which makes the living of ones life possible in the material and spiritual sense. The idea of not conceiving children to preserve ones individuality is a contradiction only found sporadically in sections of the minority city population, although contraceptives and abortive methods of indigenous nature have been used in villages in the interest of ecological balance or in special circumstances. Disruption of village existence and migration to towns may have shifted the emphasis from the former to the latter. In the play *Voices From The Ridge*, this conversation takes place:

Mother: I have heard people say that you are going to bring death to a child in a young girl's womb.

Witch- You have good ears. It is true. It's Doctor Kamb's daughter who returned from the town with child forming in her. The young girl wants to bring death upon it. She does not want to stay here. She says she must return to the town.

If I don't she promises to kill herself<sup>21</sup>. But the normal expectation of young people in Papua New Guinea is to have children<sup>22</sup>. In Kama Kerpi's story of a Chimbu courting ceremony, he writes triumphantly:

"Living memory cannot recall a ridge girl failing to give birth to a male in her first pregnancy. And there was never a miscarriage<sup>23</sup>".

Offspring ensure the continuation of the clan, contribute to it in adulthood and see to parent's needs in old age, until they become elders themselves who guide the young, before they join the spirit world from where they exercise varying degrees of influence upon the living. This long-established worldview has been disturbed by acculturation, but is still the warp of society's fabric, and the life expectations connected with it still largely hold. With it has remained the sense of wonder:

Little baby sitting  
On that house's steps,  
Its face and skin like mine,  
O when I see it, I feel shy<sup>24</sup>!

In the west, that personal sense of wonder at being reproduced in front of ones eyes, has been undermined by the distancing scientific curiosity about genes and chromosomes, re-



sulting in attempts at childraising in the spirit of science and psychological experiment. Western and non-western spontaneous emotions about children differ also, as shown by Motu poet Jack Lahui in this excerpt from his long poem 'Poem to my son, Lahui Lahui':

My son, my beloved and first born son  
You are my duplicate and future multiplier  
You are my carbon copy  
A trace of my warm blood flows in you  
Nature robbed me to put a part of myself  
In you, performing the greatest miracle

.....  
You are my conscience  
Let your hunger be my hunger  
Let your pains be my pains<sup>25</sup>.

This poem is an exercise in fatherhood while the child is still young. The father speaks his advice for coming years, emphasizing the need for education and the 'law of nature' which decrees that all life returns to the soil. He movingly warns his son to be compassionate when the parents' powers start to fail:

Let you carry me just as I had once, in my arms  
Carry me to my soul's resting place  
You could do countless memorable deeds  
You could build a mountain memorial to my name  
You could put a million dollars in my coffin to take away  
But if you hadn't carried me to my grave, you have forsaken me  
And the worth of my investment had been all for nothing<sup>26</sup>.

The investment of physical effort, money, education and parental guidance, is an investment of love that hopes for an interest paid in love. Yet it would be an error to think that the word 'investment' represents mere poetical licence. It does not. It means literally 'putting in' and 'receiving back when needed'. In Vincent Eri's novel *The Crocodile*, Hoiri treasures the savings bank book of his beloved only son by his dead wife:

"It was his son's second heart - the heart that would help the real heart to beat contentedly when Sevese became a man<sup>27</sup>".

Hoiri hopes that the money shall buy for his son an education and eventually a salary, (such) "... as the whites pay themselves" ... "In which case I won't have to work in the gardens anymore. He could buy my tobacco and tea and sugar<sup>28</sup>".

Children are aware of these obligations and it is sometimes referred to obliquely in the literature<sup>29</sup>. Reciprocity is the weft of the fabric underlying Papua New Guinea society. It rules all relationships, from the parent and child tie to the bond between the living and the ancestors. The various levels of obligations and legitimate expectations cross-cut different interest spheres of one person's life as well as his total lifespan, i.e. the breadth and length of life.

This tradition from the depths of the past thus contains the values and therefore the morals of society. These values and morals combined give rise to love, loyalty, affection and hostility, as well as regulating and restricting them. In the material sense the system produces life-long continuing commitments. In the non-material sense, where pride, prestige and honour are involved, repayment may be sought earlier, and can involve an entire community in tribal warfare. Another means of satisfaction obtained, is vividly sketched in *How I Wiped Away My Daughter's Footsteps*<sup>30</sup>. This is the true story of an old man whose loving daughter committed adultery. Ostracized by her husband she soon announces that she will die for the shame she has brought upon him. She lies down and expires, while full of her eighth pregnancy. But the old father cannot live on with the shame until he has wiped her footprints from the soil. Possessing hereditary magical powers over the waves of the sea he invites the water to enter the village. When the village people hear this, they move their houses one by one:

"They were sad, but they did not fight me, because they knew that I had been shamed in public and that my daughter had died, and that I had to wash her footprints away."

The waves came, swallowed the road and the village site, "and they wiped away the painful memories and they made me calm."<sup>31</sup>. All the old man desires then is that the villagers will kill the seducer of his daughter who caused their collective plight. Then justice will have been done and injured love will have been vindicated. Although this story carries uniquely Papua New Guinea overtones, it is analogous to situations where the parent puts out of sight all that reminds him of a child that has wronged him. Yet, there is here no indication that the old man cut off his love for his daughter.

Perhaps, this man may still be less troubled as a father than the one bereaved of his first-

born son. The outcast *the Ridge* — is adopted by the and punishment by the and his and his wife's father in death and when the weeping wife, Boma s pone the grief he kno

My son? My flesh to take in what yo

... Only yesterday I co you. I was thrilled Now your infant memory<sup>32</sup>.

The paternal wrong and his wife pay the lack of worship of the to be expected at son strikes the entire com cance and the death The play therefore en slow dance of grief, a blow.

'Flesh and blood' is in dramatic moments tested fact. Youngste generally are not sho physically expressed lo the growing child. Be

"Koima and his m to sleep. When his bosom. Koima felt the wings of its night."<sup>33</sup>

The same child, "... jumped at his f master and clung to leaf."<sup>34</sup>

Many instances lik confirm that in Papua are perhaps best love

## The Vicissitudes of Society.

Whether a society is child in Papua New parents who see to his young Jawo wants to

"I ran over to my I then asked him: would happen if.. In John Kaniku's



born son. The outcast Boma — *In Voices from the Ridge* — is adopted into his wife's tribe, yet punishment by the ancestral spirits for the sins of his and his wife's fathers. The spirits take the child in death and when the body is brought in by his weeping wife, Boma shouts his unbelief to postpone the grief he knows will assail him:

My son? My flesh and blood? My ears refuse to take in what you said...

Only yesterday I could feel the young breath in you. I was thrilled when you kicked my arms. Now your infant voice will become a bitter memory<sup>32</sup>.

The paternal wrong doings for which Boma and his wife pay the price, were fratricide and lack of worship of the ancestors. Retribution was to be expected at some time, so when calamity strikes the entire community realises its significance and the death of the child is not queried. The play therefore ends simply in a tortuously slow dance of grief, as Boma accepts the cruel blow.

'Flesh and blood' is not just a figure of speech in dramatic moments; it is a daily touched and tested fact. Youngsters in Papua New Guinea generally are not short changed in the type of physically expressed love which builds security in the growing child. Benjamin Umba writes:

"Koima and his mother went to the bedroom to sleep. When his mother took him into her bosom. Koima felt like a little chicken under the wings of its mother during a storm night."<sup>33</sup>

The same child,

"...jumped at his father as a dog jumps at his master and clung to him like a green frog on a leaf."<sup>34</sup>

Many instances like this in the literature confirm that in Papua New Guinea the children are perhaps best loved of all.

#### The Vicissitudes of Parenthood in a Changing Society.

Whether a society is matrilineal or patrilineal, a child in Papua New Guinea has more than two parents who see to his welfare. In *Spare that Bird*, young Jawo wants to escape his teasing cousins:

"I ran over to my uncle and sat on his lap.

I then asked him: "Father, tell me what would happen if..."<sup>35</sup>

In John Kaniku's play *Cry of the Cassowary*

the childless sister-in-law of the heartless mother Sela, predicts that if the latter doesn't change her attitudes, her children will walk out on her when they grow up:

"And you will be left here sad and alone.

If you chase them away, I won't let my face be seen in this house again."<sup>36</sup>

Even though children can benefit from such interference and affection by affinal parents, and many are raised by relatives on death or inability of the real parent, or even by personal preference, there are strong natural bonds between parents and children, especially when the latter are young. In the literature as in real life, children fall asleep with their heads in mother's lap or are carried on father's shoulders. Physical contact and fondling expresses the pride and love felt, as much as words, or actions taken for the material welfare of the children.

In John Kadiba's autobiographical story *Growing Up In Mailu*, the kindly mother invents a myth on the spot to explain the strange white dust that one morning covers the ground. She does not know it comes from a volcanic eruption, but her love for her children is evident from the touching little lie she tells the children at home, that the white dust is beach sand, blown into the wind from the hands of the eldest son who is holidaying near the sea, because he wants his brothers and sisters<sup>37</sup> to see it. They gratefully respond:

"He is a good brother, isn't he?"

"Yes" mother said and started to cook rice for our breakfast."<sup>38</sup>

Life in this family is so secure that John and his brother Jimmy run away from the mission school, deeply hurting their father, although he takes them back home:

"Father looked at me and said: "It was that silly John. He could not stay away."

My mother abused me thoroughly — then she sat down on the mat beside father on the verandah. They were very silent that day. I could not understand, of course, that I had shattered their simple dream."<sup>39</sup>

When John was about ten his mother died after an illness and the birth of twins. Before she dies she calls out the names of her children except the unnamed babies. The long agony of her suffering and the mounting awareness in father and children that she has left, is drawn tightly in the son's memory of her:

"When mother's grave had been levelled and



we walked back to the village we felt even sadder than when her body was still with us. I looked back at the grave. I thought that the dark patches of clouds in the sky were sheltering mother from the heat of the sun. I could picture her vividly in my mind; her small face and bright eyes, her thick dark hair. Her complexion was light and whenever she wanted to look bright she rubbed herself with coconut oil. She parted her hair in the centre, brushing it to both sides. She moved in quick steps and never gave the impression of being tired.<sup>40</sup>

A village woman's life is hard, and life expectancy not among her fondest meditations. In the highlands, a subsistence economy is maintained mainly by women, who are producers of foodcrops, raisers of pigs and children, and in general the community's carriers:

"My back is aching from yesterday's load. Each new day the loads get heavier. I won't live long. The colour of my hair is already grey with age."

Old Kegeriai was carried away with self-pity and pride. "Each new day is a nightmare for me. I think of you, my pigs, my daughters and sons, and for that matter the whole village folk. Yes, I won't live long. Death is just around the corner for a woman like me."<sup>41</sup>

Such a woman's only joy may lie in her expectations for her children. Most Papua New Guinea authors have experienced the wrench of leaving parents and kin in order to be educated. There is no more poignant description of the last night spent in the safety of the only known home, than John Kasaipwalova's poem *Parting Words*, with its moving opening stanza:

We sat three of us in our house  
Our kerosene lamp burning long  
Blackened glass around the top  
My nine brothers and sisters heavily dreaming  
On their mats in our one room  
The baby had cried its wetting  
But had gone back to its hazy floating world  
In the hollow of my father's lap and elbow.<sup>42</sup>

Kasaipwalova's inventive use of English verbs express here the directness and palpability of the parents' grieving love:

She tight my head to her sobbing breasts  
And washed me with her tears  
"Please, my son, my egg

I want to touch you alive in the end"

The father must express himself differently, according to the relationship in which he stands

to his son:

"Your eye your eye  
Your arms your arms  
Your uncles will give you riches  
They will show you ways of fame  
I know few words and these I give to you:  
The world will shape you, it will come at you  
like an attacking boar  
Do not turn to climb a tree, do not run  
Look not at its standing bristles  
Do not size its size nor its goring tusks  
Let your eyes catch the light of its eyes  
You will see its fright, its hunger  
Its pain, its happiness, its anger  
Plant your feet firm, the boar will not give you  
fear  
Then can you ride the attacker boar by its  
tusks."<sup>43</sup>

Especially the mother's words remind us of Senghor's 'emotion' and 'subjectivism' in the sense that the purpose of the leave-taking is forgotten, and the concrete conceptualising of the latter. The power of the father's message, given to a young boy on the eve of entry into a world which would arouse much hostility in him, is significantly echoed in Kasaipwalova's career, in which he has already shown that he was indeed brought up 'to ride the attacker boar by its tusks'. That such strength from the source to battle the adversities of life can be counterbalanced by the love with which it was imbued, will be seen when this author's other poetry is discussed in later sections.

A mother's anxiety about her child intensifies when the latter has gone, sometimes to the point where she may speak to it with her mind's voice. In Henginike Riyong's poem *The Last Call*, a mother who sheds tears for the young days of her son, terminated by the white missionaries who took him away, laments:

Give me your head  
I will fill it up with little words  
Lend me your tongue  
I will lay on it the words of love  
Pass me your heart  
And I will nurse it  
With seeds of truth  
Your very heart  
The heart that I started.<sup>44</sup>

These lines call up shades of the blessing the giving of the sacrament and the communication of spiritual truth, as they occur in some of the foreign religions introduced in Papua New

Guinea.

Mothers with lesser suffer greater doubts w  
in their children's' abse  
But my sons, forget  
Are like fruit borne  
I see the sons of oth  
Returning. What is  
Let them keep the p  
But their eyes are m  
I have little breath l  
To wait for them.

...  
Already I sway like  
I see with my hands  
Oh tell Polin and M  
And come to my de

She does not desire  
attention. She does not  
she closes her eyes, but  
joins the ancestors aft  
been performed. A  
mother's exultation whe  
airport after a long abs  
stark, lyrical, profane a  
idiom a highland villag  
with the accumulated en  
in August Kituai's *The*  
doubt there were surpr  
but any westerner — wh  
language or not — wh  
land woman throw hers  
or joy, reaching not one  
after another, trailing  
wail, knows that he has  
in its purest rendering.

When children retur  
both sides need to draw  
to overcome disappoint  
welcome. The new kno  
children fits awkwardly  
tence, or not at all, as  
from East New Britain.  
ask their father whether  
the moon as the rumor  
what the school going so

"I didn't argue with  
some other things."<sup>45</sup>  
When his mother  
results, which have not y  
"It should be all right",  
want a straight answer  
English is an embarrass



Guinea.

Mothers with lesser evocative powers may suffer greater doubts when their end draws near in their childrens' absence:

But my sons, forgetful of me,  
Are like fruit borne by birds,  
I see the sons of other women  
Returning. What is in their minds?  
Let them keep the price of their labour  
But their eyes are mine.  
I have little breath left  
To wait for them.

—  
Already I sway like a dry falling leaf  
I see with my hands —  
Oh tell Polin and Manuai to hurry  
And come to my death-feast.<sup>45</sup>

She does not desire their wages, but their attention. She does not ask that they come before she closes her eyes, but to be present when she joins the ancestors after the proper rites have been performed. A realistic example of a mother's exultation when she meets her son at the airport after a long absence, is portrayed in the stark, lyrical, profane and profound emotional idiom a highland village woman can pour out with the accumulated energy from stored up love, in August Kituai's *The Flight of a Villager*<sup>46</sup>. No doubt there were surprised eyes in the terminal, but any westerner — whether he understands the language or not — who ever witnessed a highland woman throw herself into a tirade for grief or joy, reaching not one pitch or climax, but one after another, trailing out into a heartrending wail, knows that he has heard the 'scream of life' in its purest rendering.

When children return to find parents alive, both sides need to draw on long harboured love to overcome disappointments after the tearful welcome. The new knowledge of the educated children fits awkwardly into the traditional existence, or not at all, as related by Paul Arnold from East New Britain. When the young children ask their father whether a man really landed on the moon as the rumour says, the reply is not what the school going son would have given. But:

"I didn't argue with him. We talked about some other things."<sup>47</sup>

When his mother enquires about exam results, which have not yet come out, he answers: "It should be all right", to which she retorts: "I want a straight answer."<sup>48</sup> His knowledge of English is an embarrassment as he mixes it

inadvertently into the vernacular, which he does not know well. He feels his parents are either bored with his talk or think he pulls their leg. At night the father, while chewing much betel-nut to fortify himself, does his parental duty by catching up on a year's traditional education for his son. He instructs him on behaviour, use of liquor, social structure, which girls he should avoid<sup>49</sup>, and sex:

"I knew that he must have gathered up himself to speak about it. I almost felt sorry for him."<sup>50</sup> After the lecture the boy walks out to urinate before going to sleep:

"A cock further up the village crowed three times — then another, then another — nearer and nearer. Soon cocks were crowing all around me."<sup>51</sup>

Did his mission education make him think he was about to forsake his father as Peter did Jesus? It seems indicated in the ending when the son goes to sleep on the unaccustomed hard bed, to dream of 'better things'.

Yet, there is no trace here of the self-assertion displayed by western youths who, having obtained another type of education than their parents<sup>52</sup>, reduce the latter in status at the first opportunity. Instead the son carefully preserves the respect he feels for his father, for reasons he knows to be less explicable but of greater superiority than the authority of his new educators, and he admits his own failures in the estranged tradition.

In a delightful character sketch by John Kasaipwalova we meet Moses, a father like fathers everywhere when he abuses his brood for not living up to his expectations:

"You are schoolchildren now — NOT just village children, yet you still have your mother's bad manners. When will the teacher make you educated."<sup>53</sup>

to which Salome<sup>54</sup> retorts, as would any wife:

"Ahh! You are their father."

Here the estrangement lies in the father with his mission upbringing — he is a lay preacher — while his wife may hold to traditional ways, and the children are too young to see the difference.

Lest the impression is given that all traditional parents are singularly loving, I record two cases of the opposite. In *The Fires of Dawn* a 'big man' forcibly strikes a young boy for wrongly tending a fire in the men's house. A clansman speaks up for the child, but the author rounds off the episode by stating that 'fortunately' the victim



was the big man's own son:

"He was used to such merciless heatings, so he took it all without a word of complaint..."<sup>55</sup> That a 'big man' can act thus without losing the respect of his people is a weakness in a system where dependency on one who is powerful prevents serious challenge. In any community this may lead to excesses in the name of reciprocity as well.

In *Kulpu's Daughter* by Kama Kerpi, Mark's mother, who senses her son's rebellious though unspoken resistance to his father's command to marry Kulpu's daughter:

"... remained silent, silent now, only to tear him apart later at the right moment."<sup>56</sup>

Again, even though this episode concerns a marriage to be arranged traditionally, the attitude of the mother is analogous to that of many a mother elsewhere.

There is however a multitude of evidence in Papua New Guinea literature that love for parents remains strong even at long distances, space and timewise. There seems less desire to escape the parental 'pull' than to give in to it. It may be that in matrilineal societies the pull comes from the mother and her relatives, and in the patriarchal ones from the father and his clan, but this is not specifically borne out by the literature. In either case the parent stands also for the home community, whose spiritual comforts are missed, and for the obligations felt for it and the ancestors. To represent as much as possible of this complex of feelings, I let Kama Kerpi imitate his father's voice:

I suffer the burning desire  
To educate you,  
Cast you into wildness,  
Unknown road,  
Where I nor your grandfather trodded."

.....  
Son;  
Before I depart,  
During your occasional visits,  
To recall your good old days,  
Trim the grass

Around my grave.<sup>57</sup>

Whatever the son becomes has still issued from the loins, the wishes and designs of the parent, who reminds the son of his reciprocal obligations. And the son, powerless to fulfil them as naturally as he would if he lived in the village, translates his undeserved guilt in a confirmation

that he still is and shall remain his father's son:  
Call me the ungrateful son

.....

Do you not call me  
'The stormy flashes' ?  
Have you not labeled me  
'The seasonal homecomings  
Of the kingfishers'?  
Father!  
Your black blood runs fresh  
In my white veins..."<sup>58</sup>

The white veins belong to the western-groomed man, the black blood to the tribe which bore him. The veins are but vessels for the blood, which here expresses poignantly the 'passion logic' which still guides the young man's love and loyalty.

#### Physical Love.

#### The Test of Reciprocity : Love Between the Sexes.

Papua New Guinea literature testifies to its universality in that the bulk of its poetry is concerned with love between men and women. There is much less in the prose material, and most of what there is functions in a supporting role, with Russell Soaba's work as the outstanding exception. In oral literature love is expressed in song rather than stories. In the written literature prose is used by preference to express attitudes and reactions to the new society, or to revive the old. An interesting example of how the evils of a social situation are expounded through a framework situation involving a man and a girl, is found in Leo Hannek's *The Ungrateful Daughter*<sup>59</sup>. The adopted Papua New Guinean daughter of a white couple is to be married to a white man she does not desire. In her refusal — at the altar — she rejects the white colonial values of her upbringing. By tearing of her bridal veil she symbolizes the coming to awareness of her suppressed and brainwashed countrymen and women, and returns to her origins by breaking out in a wild tribal dance. Shades of Virgil and Homer in the way the theme is used, but Ebonita and Sydney's story is hardly a love story, and perhaps not even plausible in its details.

On the whole then, it is the poetry — traditional and modern — to which we turn for a record of the range of emotions that love between the sexes generates.

The rules which govern the awakening years, values which make up the children are betrothed at an early age. In other are made during late politics, or even as a

"We marry those  
An example is  
Daughter:

"Although Kulpu's father is friendly with a better plan. Kulpu recently. My son, blow if you bring tribe."<sup>61</sup>

The insulted tribe prevent Kulpu's tribe military action.<sup>62</sup>

A variation on this perhaps be taken with from the mouth of a

"I tell you our men fearlessly that even other villages ran to marry our men example."<sup>63</sup>

In some areas the matter of choosing wishes are considered regulations, while else acts quite independent husband<sup>64</sup>. These so the freedom and rest sex relations and control of a Villager is about village because he is and fears the girl punishment would hand, Leo Hannek Bougainville, recent collections:

"The most popular seek, which we would invariably and even intercor adults. There were children, and on kept separate and pertaining to women together to learn This custom caused



ther's son:

The rules which guide boys and girls in their awakening years, vary widely in the societies which make up the nation. In some areas children are betrothed or girl children promised at an early age. In others, marriage arrangements are made during late puberty, as part of clan politics, or even as a tribe's peace offerings:

"We marry those whom we fight."<sup>60</sup>

An example is described in *Kulpu's Daughter*:

"Although Kulpu has hurt our feelings, your father is friendly with him because he has a better plan. Kulpu's daughter saw the moon recently. My son, you will strike a deadly blow if you bring his daughter into the tribe."<sup>61</sup>

The insulted tribe plans a social strategy to prevent Kulpu's tribe from turning hostility into military action.<sup>62</sup>

A variation on this theme — which should perhaps be taken with a grain of salt — comes from the mouth of a village story teller:

"I tell you our men fought so bravely and fearlessly that even married women from other villages ran away from their husbands to marry our men. My own wife is just an example."<sup>63</sup>

In some areas couples have no say in the matter of choosing a partner. In others their wishes are considered within the limits of clan regulations, while elsewhere the girl for instance, acts quite independently in the choice of a husband<sup>64</sup>. These social patterns are reflected in the freedom and restrictions placed on premarital sex relations and courting procedures. *The Flight of a Villager* is about a young man who fled his village because he had enjoyed premarital sex and fears the girl is pregnant, for which his punishment would be death<sup>65</sup>. On the other hand, Leo Hannek from Nissan Island near Bougainville, records from his childhood recollections:

"The most popular game though was hide and seek, which we played with the girls. This would invariably lead to children's sex games and even intercourse, which was tolerated by adults. There was complete freedom among children, and only at puberty the girls were kept separate and were instructed in the things pertaining to women, while the boys gathered together to learn about fishing."<sup>66</sup>

This custom caused him problems in first

confession in church, and elsewhere he adds this justification:

"To our people there is nothing better than love and they would not think of blaming small children when they played that sort of game."<sup>67</sup>

When childhood was over,

"After puberty, some of the girls might continue to play around with the younger boys, but they were strictly forbidden to have intercourse with older boys and men."<sup>68</sup>

That the prohibition was circumvented appears from Hannek's further remarks about contraceptives<sup>69</sup>, occasional abortion, and that:

"Virginity was merely prized theoretically: that is, a husband would readily accept a wife who had had intercourse during adolescence, provided this had not been made public."<sup>70</sup>

In the highland societies courting is done ceremoniously on specific occasions. Yet, proof of fertility is not necessarily a deterrent for participation. It can make a Bena Bena girl<sup>71</sup> more valuable in marriage negotiations. Babies born of a courting session are "raised by the girl's parents as a sibling."<sup>72</sup> In the Chimbu, girls between 14 and 19 years age spend most of their time courting and inviting men between 17 and 30 years old, married and unmarried.<sup>73</sup> One *karim-lek* story relates how a Chimbu girl goes about her own interests in matters of the heart.<sup>74</sup> In some areas monogamy is the norm, in others polygny.

These brief references must suffice as a background to certain turns of phrase in the love poetry that follows. In a literary survey, as compared to an anthropological one, it is more important to detect the genuine human feeling for the occasion, and this appears by no means restricted by the more pragmatic considerations ruling society.

Uncertainty and doubt marks the beginning of falling in love:

Then suddenly  
He held my hand  
It was warm  
The touch was tender and comforting  
I said no word  
But watched him with affection  
Knowing  
Tomorrow the wind would change its  
course — we know that well.<sup>75</sup>

A boy who suddenly realises that playing with



his brightly coloured canoe as a child, constituted happiness, sang this song:

You pulled me with happiness  
I pulled you with happiness  
We were happy.  
On the morrow we fought  
And were sad  
My happiness is not like the colour of my canoe.<sup>76</sup>

As for those who can't make up their minds:  
She said in the house, she said in the house,  
She said in the bush, she said in the bush,  
She said in the house, she said in the house,  
She said in the bush, she said in the bush.<sup>77</sup>

And for those who are frantically worried:  
O girl from Anona you are standing on the beach

You are standing on the beach  
Your pants are white  
I am not worrying, I am not looking.<sup>78</sup>

Requited love brings its torment and anguish:  
Never come back!  
Sorrow is my sorrow  
Grief is my grief  
Sorrow is my sorrow<sup>79</sup>

Even suicidal notions appear in poetry:

You are hidden behind the mist  
Go seek your own happiness  
My name is dirt to you

So let me follow the waves.

When I step across the waters  
I'll play in the porpoise's teeth.<sup>80</sup>

Or the worm of resentment may be awakened:

Deep inside love  
There is hate  
Sometimes we love  
A girl for more than she's worth  
But it costs no more to hate than to love;  
The over-ripe guava  
Bursts in our stomach  
The worm wriggles  
Pain grows  
In the sweetness.<sup>81</sup>

But love can also give rise to compromise:

My friend  
You are still my friend  
All the time I remember you  
I eat a new vegetable  
But I remember old vegetable.<sup>82</sup>

Mark, the son of the tribal elder who is admonished to marry Kulpu's daughter of the enemy tribe, goes for an evening walk in the cold

mountains near his village, to think about his university sweetheart whom he wants to marry. Her image evoked, he is transported by his love for her, only to plunge to his death:

"Carol, mother of all the fish in the seas... my love, let me touch the warmth of your body... I will keep that promise I made... I will." And as he said that, he felt his foot in the air. So he lifted the other, thinking that he was flying up by the help of some sweet forces in the environment.<sup>83</sup>

So far, the examples cited, certainly proclaim the universality of the woes and joys of love. The Melanesian imagery — the overripe guava and the worm, the new vegetable, and 'mother of all fish in the seas' — are used aptly enough as poetical metaphors to strike a chord in non-Melanesian audiences. The samples are mixedly objective and subjective, while 'Rovana', 'Hate-love' and Mark's meditations, show signs of introversion. The latter excerpt especially treats of love as experienced by one schooled in western literature. Later I shall refer to other examples of the love conflicts of the educated. But first a look at courtship as preceding marriage.

### Courtship Ceremonies.

Traditional courtship ceremonies abound in the highlands. The Melpa have *tanim her*<sup>84</sup>, the Chimbus the *karim-lek*<sup>85</sup>, and the Enga the *meri-singsing*<sup>86</sup>.

Love magic is part of these ceremonies, but is practised everywhere, whether ceremonies are held or not. In New Britain the practice of love magic is a cult among Tolai initiated men. On the other hand, Vincent Eri reveals that in the Gulf province a man can simply reverse his pillow after he has had a sexual dream, so that the girl will dream the dream also.<sup>87</sup>

Courting ceremonies usually last from dusk till dawn, taxing the energy of the participants:

Don't sleep too heavily,  
Open your eyes a bit, and then  
Let the two of us go.  
My fine big girl,  
Take it slowly and we shall  
Turn head the night through.<sup>88</sup>

The traditional context is touched upon in the song of a lover worried about raising the bride price:

Here at Konde I see  
How the mist spreads out at Wande.

I'm looking for pigs,  
I'm looking for shells  
My girl, as I look at  
It makes me so sorry  
A man enticed to attend  
to be rewarded:  
So, I have obeyed.  
Tell me, then, what you  
That you promised me  
tions.<sup>90</sup>

Most of these ceremonies deal with sexual issues. Where people meeting freely or exchange of gifts is the starting point is at all allowed. At short courtship ceremonies, preceding the actual marriage and complete the entire ceremony, result in marriage at the time of the annual *singsing*. Head describes such a ceremony in traditional style.<sup>91</sup>

As marriage is the result of the courtship, and as under the custom a girl may want to try out her partner before making up her mind to settle with him, the place to settle such a decision is from the Enga *Meri Singsing*. A young man reminds the girl of her and her 'old boyfriend':

And if you can't solve it  
Carry it up into my sister's house  
However you convey it  
If you find it unsolvable  
experience,  
Then present it out in the open  
By saying that it was  
And at the corner of the  
rose.<sup>92</sup>

This song forcibly converts the courtship ceremonies to win a girl's hand, as well as the elimination of logical tactics, magic and sexual attraction alone.

Tolai young men and women are free to mix freely, nor have traditional courtship ceremonies. Young men and women in these societies, where they learn to mix freely, which enable them to approach their desires. This may indeed be the case, but as with the Enga, the approach is to follow. In



I'm looking for pigs,  
I'm looking for shells,  
My girl, as I look at you,  
It makes me so sorry.<sup>89</sup>

A man enticed to attend a ceremony, expects to be rewarded:

So, I have obeyed.  
Tell me, then, what you have for me,  
That you promised me, by your facial invitations.<sup>90</sup>

Most of these ceremonial songs emphasize sexual issues. Where restrictions prevent young people meeting freely or privately, sexual attraction is the starting point if personal preference is at all allowed. At short series of *tanim-hetceremonies*, preceding the annual *sing-sing* may start and complete the entire courtship of a couple and result in marriage at the mass wedding ceremony during the annual *sing-sing*. The story *Turnim Head* describes such a lightning courtship in traditional style.<sup>91</sup>

As marriage is the goal of courting ceremonies, and as under restricted marriage rules a girl may want to try out the available candidates before making up her mind, the ceremony is also the place to settle such matters. In an example from the Enga *Meri Singing* song cycle, the young man reminds the girl of the gossip about her and her 'old boyfriend' and a 'temporary fiancé':

And if you can't solve it there  
Carry it up into my skies  
However you convey and reveal the message,  
If you find it unsolvable due to your inexperience,  
Then present it out in public,  
By saying that it was at my side  
And at the corner of this house that this issue rose.<sup>92</sup>

This song forcibly conveys that men attend the ceremonies to win a girl. It is the battle of the sexes as well as the elimination of rivals. Psychological tactics, magic and coercion are called in if sexual attraction alone fails.

Tolai young men and women are not allowed to mix freely, nor have they communal courting ceremonies. Young men are initiated into secret societies, where they learn love-magic rituals, which enable them to approach the girl of their desires. This may indeed be called a disembodied approach, but as with all such, an embodied approach is to follow. In fact, although the love-

magic is made without the girl being present, it is meant to enter her body and mind, and disturb her sleep, until she wakes up crying and even in bodily pain. If the distant love-magic music has thus aroused her, she should leave her bed, and crying because she is moved beyond her understanding, she then starts her compelled walk to where the men are luring her. There she shares the night with the man who called her, or with several. Some daytime *badinage* follows in the village, leading to continuing *warbat*<sup>93</sup> sessions, which end when the desired matches have been made and marriages can be discussed. Although sessions and visits take place in secret, they must of course be condoned by society as the only approved means to lead to an acquaintance preceding marriage.

The attributes of *warbat* love-magic are reminiscent of certain esoteric yoga practices<sup>94</sup>. The secret sessions are held when there are no disturbing influences, the concentration of the participants is totally centred on the girls — even when pausing between songs they discuss them — and mindpower is directed with full cooperation of the bodily reflexes. The song texts are laced with symbolic images which have gained power from repetition by others in pursuit of the same goal, as have yoga mantras.

The persuasiveness of *warbat* songs may be imagined from this one:

Wriggling restless tonight  
Poor darling  
During tomorrow's sing-sing  
You'll watch me to the end  
While I dance with my jasmin blossom  
Tonight the charm is hot.  
Wurmagit stand up  
Receive me now  
receive me now  
While you cry with joy.<sup>95</sup>

Apisai Enos' poem *Love Magic* <sup>96</sup>, which loses meaning if quoted in part, gives an impression of how love-magic travels to the girl and affects her. There is another reference in his poem *Meditation*<sup>97</sup>, a title which curiously ties in with yoga phraseology.

#### The afflictions of the Educated Lover.

Reference has been made to the breakdown with tradition which occurs when young people leave home to be educated. Their removal from tribal environment estranges them dramatically from



the context in which they would have combined growing up with courting the traditional approved partners. Although in their new environment they may meet some *wantoks*<sup>98</sup> of suitable sex and clan, they more likely must associate with people from societies as different as a Greek fishing village and a Spanish hamlet. *Kulpu's Daughter* contains a discussion between Mark and his friend Luke, university students home on holiday. It is revealing as to the changes which have taken place in the thinking and attitudes of such young men in connection with marriage and women<sup>99</sup>. They discuss Kulpu's daughter who passes by while they attend a wedding feast. Luke displays his knowledge of girls and sex rather brashly:

Luke: "To me they are merely sex objects... sex starved, if I may put it that way."

Mark: "If they are sex hungry, they are humans and naturally have desires to satisfy their tensions. But women want to be praised in other ways. Some want to be told they are beautiful, honest, kind, understanding and all those praiseworthy things. I think you have come across the wrong type of girls."

They are interrupted, but continue the conversation later on:

Luke: "Mark! There is one strange discovery I have made. Now if Kulpu's daughter was an educated girl dressed in a mini we would have run our big eyeballs from her legs to her groin in a contaminating way. But dressed in her traditional wear I tend to run my eyes from her face downwards. It's her beauty and not so much her sex appeal that I admire."

This view — excluding breasts as having sex appeal, as it does — contradicts the impression gained from the courting ceremonies where sexual attraction makes the first impact. This may be the emergence of a view born from seeing two sides of an issue, and settling for the first one known, but with a new and deeper appreciation. Mark takes it further:

Mark: "... as for beauty, she has got that. But beauty will wear out like paint. My mother tells me it is after the first childbirth. I will go for an educated girl with a good character."

Luke: "But subordinating the value of a girl's sexual technique to beauty and education would be a foolish idea."

Mark points out that Kulpu's daughter will not fit into his life nor in the strange environment where he plans to lead it.

Luke: "It seems you have not been told that an educated girl is very dangerous."

"They want to feel the manhood of many secret lovers."

"They always have an eye for another woman's husband."

Mark: "This is purely hypocritical belief. In any case, we all have secret lovers. You know what? I have always kept an eye on your Tolai girlfriend. Forgive me if I am affronting you, but it simply goes to show you that we keep an eye on our friends' women. So be a little open-minded with what you are saying."

Luke: "Well, there is more to say than merely having secret lovers. I have taken advantage of several educated girls and discovered that they all put up an act in bed. They make believe they are innocent... that they knew no other men before... It becomes rather an act of retaining their boyfriend's love. A village girl is fair to you and to herself."

At this inopportune moment Maria, Luke's latest educated girlfriend, joins them, and Mark quickly switches the topic to the conflict of educated men who have assimilated with western life and start to reject the ways of the fathers. The final remark made by Maria, fittingly comments on the foregoing conversation about women and sex, to which she was not a participant:

"I think the conflict occurs in the mind. We are trained to question things rather than accept them."

Mark feels that the discussion was like throwing off a cover to reveal the hard landscape of reality and his mind goes back to his mother's sarcastic reaction when he first told his parents about Carol. But he also remembers that it was no better when he accompanied Carol on a visit to her parents:

"At first they could not accept the idea that their daughter was making friends with a Highlander. But a Highlander studying at the university...ha...that was different. Their

reactions had angered dealing with fishing anger."<sup>100</sup>

We find an elaboration of this theme in *Let Her Blood Enter the Earth*. The elders had decided on a bride and the subject of the bride had having sinned against his own choice for a wife.

In the poem *The Night* the two major aspects of the going through such a process of sense of direction is lost in a changing nation who a forked roads in the night the dawn, which must choose a direction to take:

Accept this trophy for me  
She will not dance for me  
Nor sing the songs of me  
She will not lament for me  
In the stagnant water of me  
Where the pigs left their  
Like the village girls of me  
Nor besmear her body for me  
When death visits you  
I pray fathers of wisdom  
And understanding  
Let her strange blood

Carolyn and me,  
The two of us,  
On the road to now

.....  
In the night walk with me  
A living part of the  
And we shall walk together  
To reveal our mystery  
What is not clear to me  
through alienation and  
will be revealed when the  
truly breaks and they finally  
belong in a new way.

Returning to Mark's account the obvious difference between the two, we can perceive a growing out of the contradictions as pertaining to the investigation of the possibilities of a traditional alternative, and a new appreciation of fertility. He will become a victim. The village girl will affirm his



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dealing with fishing folk, so he controlled his  
anger."<sup>100</sup>

We find an elaboration in Kama Kerpi's poem  
*Let Her Blood Enter the Tribe*<sup>101</sup>. The council of  
elders had decided on Koima's daughter for a  
bride and the subject pleads forgiveness for  
having sinned against their laws by bringing  
home his own choice for a wife:

In the poem *The Night Walk*, Kama Kerpi ties  
the two major aspects of the conflict: a society  
going through such penetrating changes that all  
sense of direction is lost, and the people of that  
changing nation who are caught out along the  
dark roads in the night. Both can only reach for  
the dawn, which must surely shed light on the  
direction to take:

Accept this trophy from the towns  
She will not dance like Koima's daughter  
Nor sing the songs of the valley youths.  
She will not lament  
In the stagnant waters  
Where the pigs left their waste  
Like the village girls  
Nor besmear her body with clay  
When death visits you in your old age.  
I pray fathers of wisdom  
And understanding  
Let her strange blood enter the tribe.

Carolyn and me,  
The two of us,  
On the road to nowhere.

.....  
In the night walk we have become  
A living part of the night.  
And we shall walk till dawn,  
To reveal our mysteries.<sup>102</sup>

What is not clear to them while they live  
through alienation and assimilation processes,  
will be revealed when the dawn of the new society  
truly breaks and they find that they identify and  
belong in a new way.

Returning to Mark and Luke, and taking into  
account the obvious difference in character of  
the two, we can perceive two opposing attitudes  
growing out of the confrontation with western  
ideas as pertaining to love and sex. Luke has  
investigated the possibilities of the non-tradi-  
tional alternative, and although he has gained a  
new appreciation of female beauty, he feels that  
he will become a victim of town girls, while a  
village girl will affirm his manhood and give him

mental security. Perhaps it should be mentioned  
that Luke criticizes the bride-price tradition,  
while Mark defends it; so that Luke could be  
suspected of wanting to have his cake and eat it  
too. Mark on the other hand, has come to see  
beyond sex and beauty and settles for character  
and compatibility of mind. His road to fulfil-  
ment will be longer and strewn with thorns, and  
he may even live past the age of appreciation  
before dawn breaks and the mysteries of the long  
night are revealed.

However, compatibility of mind on some  
issues the educated discuss, can also lead one  
astray in matters of love. In sixteen lines, Arthur  
Jawodimbari vividly sketches a situation in  
which many an idealist who has prided himself  
that he is concerned with humanity's sufferings,  
has found himself led by his innermost private  
longings, only to find that they did not meet in  
the one person:

You stirred the sleeping snake<sup>103</sup> in me,  
Teasingly at first  
With a stick that you picked from the ground  
Then you fattened it  
With your beliefs, propaganda and love,  
Till I believed we were one.  
One and the same,  
You and I.  
After the game had been played,  
You went home.  
I stood under the darkening sky,  
Gazing at the horizon.  
The hopes were pinned on fancy papers  
Which fluttered gaily in the breeze.  
Came the wind, tearing,  
And dissolving my dream in the rain.<sup>104</sup>

Kama Kerpi points to one cause of such  
disillusion:

I have fallen in the milky pit head-on  
and blindfolded,  
forgetting to make love with simplicity.<sup>105</sup>

This leads us to examine the writings of  
Russell Soaba, the outstanding individualist-  
by-conviction amongst Papua New Guinea  
writers. Soaba writes about the transitional  
society of Papua New Guinea cities, especially  
Port Moresby. His characters are of two worlds,  
and so far are losing at both ends. He establishes  
his dominating theme, which runs through all his  
writings, in his first published story *A Portrait  
Of The Odd Man Out*. The protagonist Gwadi  
rejects the advances of a girl who recognizes him



as being different and admits that she herself feels she stands apart from the normal run of people. After a student brawl, Gwadi wakes up in hospital. He is abused by a nurse who puts him on one line with all men as drinkers and brawlers. Running his eyes down her anatomy, Gwadi says:

"Not the odd man out, mind you, sister. I mean there are other reasons why men are born."<sup>106</sup>

In *The Victims*<sup>107</sup>, Soaba's protagonist Stephen is seduced and actually lies down with a girl, surprising himself:

"The meeting. That strange meeting when one experiences a taste of human flesh. The warmth that is there. — the unwritten laws that break up this meeting — the animation that is there when the laws are broken — the liberty that one has to enjoy this meeting — the life which is of flesh and blood in all human beings — the nearness of one warm human being to the other..."

The 'unwritten laws' may refer to clan laws — the girl is a distant relative of Stephen's uncle — but perhaps Soaba had in mind the unwritten laws of sexual behaviour: that which a man is expected to do when he lies down with a woman. These laws prevent a meeting at a deeper level, the intenser animation of bodies floating towards approaching liberated joy because of the very oneness of all human life.

Stephen senses the approaching experience at this deeper level, while the girl urges him to follow the unwritten laws of sexual behaviour which he wants to break in order to reach the depths he envisages (one hesitates to speak of 'heights' when discussing Soaba's writing). He breaks them in another way:

"No! No, I won't do it. I'll spoil myself." Yet, he moans to himself,

"What haven't I got that other human beings got. I'm getting out of this, the squalor of it, the conflict there is in all this."

Stephen's problem is of course not what he hasn't got, but what he has got over and above other people. Like his creator, he *appears* recalcitrant because he must put everything in a wider context, understand it and approve of it, before he turns to action. The bewildered girl gets the last strand of his internal monologue, which amounts to a desire to destroy this society that harbours squalor and conflict, but first he must

escape from it himself:

"He is running back into the silence and ignorance from whence he came — into the darkness of his own being only to return later to do nothing but destroy... He will see his mother again, tell her about the evils of the white society and that will convince her to accept her son once more as a villager."

Here Soaba blames white society for having degraded the love experience: the society which has contaminated him and the people he writes about and all those who have sucked the milk of education from the western world's white breast.

In *Natives Under The Sun*<sup>108</sup> the student Jim 'goes out to sin' on 'an ordinary Friday night'. He has a heated argument about it with the wind acting as his conscience. The wind loses that evening, although Jim does not as yet know with whom he shall sin. Characteristically it turns out to be a girl he does not know, though she is of his people, his brother's newly arrived girlfriend, and the nearest available.

There is in this story a long and very beautiful poem, the authorship of which Soaba credits to Jim's brother. However, it does not fit the brother's character as depicted, and as Jim quotes the entire poem it obviously conveys his thoughts of what the love-making shall confirm. Together with Soaba's too inconclusive plots, the placing of this poem as a creation of someone other than his protagonist, is one of the structural defects characteristic of his early work. Soaba's protagonists are always so clearly himself, that he may have attempted to distance the effect of his self-examinations here. Like Stephen, Soaba is apparently a plodder who can't take anything for granted, loses himself on side tracks or gets lost in the universal framework he wants to grasp in its totality. Yet, for this last reason, he should be regarded as one of the potentially great writers who could elevate Papua New Guinea literature in all its particularity to a universal level.

The first, fourth and sixth stanzas of the fore-mentioned poem depict in exquisite metaphor the first experience of physical love, the sense of void which follows, the search for meaning and the final admittance that the love he has come to know has left him more lonely than ever:

Ah! Body!

I heard her cry

Once in her lifetime and mine.

It was like rain pouring down

The empty gutters  
We were lost, gone  
Then I heard my  
And hers just behind  
Following me into  
Of the earth.  
I've seen a life  
But she, like the re  
Hurt me, pierced

—  
To me, sky's sky  
Earth's earth  
All nothings  
And when I hear  
And when I see h  
I only wonder  
If she really know

—  
She still does not  
She brings home  
Even though she  
Down the naked,  
And she cried: At  
And now that she  
All my insides stil  
When I dream of  
Ah! body!

In a later play, *Wil* ters are more clearly bourgeois Alban, while his wife and young parents. His non-cor who loves Wilma in catalyst for the acti depicted as an intel takes seriously, he le tion of some of his love.

Three supporting stereotype attitudes to occasional lover who takes love — or wh crosses his path. He 'philosophy' to issue who is far too sensitiv thus swap love's sor has chosen religion which is ever short of is the rejected lover liquor and selfpity. approaches to lov evasion, blame wor



The empty gutters of the naked, virgin earth;  
 We were lost, gone low down;  
 Then I heard my own voice  
 And hers just behind me  
 Following me into the dark tunnels  
 Of the earth.  
 I've seen a life  
 But she, like the rest of shes  
 Hurt me, pierced me, killed me.

—  
 To me, sky's sky  
 Earth's earth  
 All nothings — man's man  
 And when I hear her cry  
 And when I see her laugh at me  
 I only wonder  
 If she really knows where we were born

—  
 She still does not know me!  
 She brings home her white lovers  
 Even though she knows we went low down  
 Down the naked, virgin earth  
 And she cried: Ah! body!  
 And now that she's been robbed from me  
 All my insides still bleed  
 When I dream of her cry  
 Ah! body!

In a later play, *Wilma Wait*, the male characters are more clearly type-cast, especially the bourgeois Alban, who seduces the girl Wilma while his wife and young children are visiting her parents. His non-conformist halfbrother Pagigi, who loves Wilma in his own way, functions as catalyst for the action. Although he is initially depicted as an intellectual half-wit whom nobody takes seriously, he leads the others to a recognition of some of his values concerning life and love.

Three supporting male characters present stereotype attitudes to love. Mana is the passive, occasional lover who has 'come to his senses' and takes love — or what passes for it — when it crosses his path. He feels secure enough in his 'philosophy' to issue ponderous advice to Pagigi, who is far too sensitively alive and imaginative to thus swap love's sorrow for indifference. Gojo has chosen religion to take the place of love which is ever short of change. Gojo's brother Len is the rejected lover who immerses himself in liquor and selfpity. All three show negative approaches to love, prefer substitutes and evasion, blame women, and omit examining

themselves.

Alban stands apart as the one who believes in his callousness that he is fully living and that no one can stop him from doing so. The others agree that he suffers from chronic dissatisfaction and immaturity. Pagigi, the poet-philosopher, influences to a degree the passivity, rejection, and agony of love as personified in Mana, Gojo and Len:

Pagigi: "... Love, my fellow *husman*<sup>109</sup>, is one of those numerous stages in life that is reached. It comes and goes as you grow up and die. Thus... thus it does not last. It's what you show in love that matters. So what matters more than love is I. I am born... I live... I die... I have everything... I have nothing..."

Gojo: "Very good, cousin Pagigi. So that when you turn forty you forget to love and hate instead!"

Pagigi: "No cousin Gojo, there are all kinds of love in this world. Right now we are talking about that love which stimulates a man to look at a woman twice instead of once; that love which spurs on man's greed in exploiting other worthy human beings; that love which makes man forget his responsibilities. ... it's — it's only a minor part of life, really."

Gojo: "If you say that love is only a minor part of life, why then, do you take Wilma so seriously?"

Pagigi: "Because she is human, just as you think you are!"

When Alban's house of cards collapses around him<sup>110</sup>, the now pregnant Wilma leaves his house on tired feet, after a long self-explanation in front of the entire cast, in which she bares her confusion, guilt, and sense of being lost. It is then that Pagigi, the humanist, calls out 'Wilma! Wait!' The unspoken conclusion seems likely to be that Pagigi shall find in Wilma's plight a ground to exercise the wider love that he feels he is capable of, and the belief in which has kept him from stopping short where the others did. By taking care of Wilma he will not only put his own ideas into deeds, but shoulder the traditional responsibility of looking after his brother's child. It is in this projected extension of Soaba's play that we see this writer's ability to be true to his racial and cultural essence, as well as mankind as a whole. There is no doubt about the universal



appeal of a play such as *Wilma Wait*. The philosophical parts fit better into the plot than in Soaba's earlier work. His future writings on the same theme should show a greater measure of consolidation of his ideas.

Erich Fromm's argument that self-love is conditional to love of others, supports Soaba's individualistic search for love's roots in society as in the self's innermost being. I summarize Fromm's argument in the following brief quotations:

"Is love for oneself the same phenomenon as selfishness, or are they opposites? Furthermore, is the selfishness of modern man really a concern for himself as an individual, with all his intellectual, emotional and sensual potentialities? Has 'he' not become an appendage of his socio-economic role? Is his selfishness identical with self-love or is it not caused by the very lack of it?"

"... not only others, but we ourselves are the 'object' of our feelings and attitudes; the attitudes towards others and towards ourselves, far from being contradictory, are basically conjunctive."

"... love of others and love of ourselves are not alternatives. On the contrary, an attitude of love toward themselves will be found in all those who are capable of loving others. Love, in principle, is indivisible as far as the connection between 'objects' and one's own self is concerned."

"Genuine love is an expression of productiveness and implies care, respect, responsibility and knowledge."

"Love of man is not, as is frequently supposed, an abstraction coming after the love for a specific person, but it is its premise, although genetically it is acquired in loving specific individuals."

"Selfishness and self-love, far from being identical, are actually opposites. The selfish person does not love himself too much but too little; in fact he hates himself. This lack of fondness and care for himself, which is only one expression of his lack of productiveness, leaves him empty and frustrated. He is necessarily unhappy and anxiously concerned to snatch from life the satisfactions which he blocks himself from attaining. He seems to care too much for himself, but actually he only makes an unsuccessful attempt to cover up

and compensate for his failure to care for his real self."<sup>111</sup>

### Marriage.

Two white birds  
Fly fly together  
Sit sit together  
One fruit on a tree  
Steal steal together  
Eat eat together  
Swallow swallow together  
Take off take off together  
Fly fly away together  
Sit sit together<sup>112</sup>

Such duality in unison is the ideal of a good marriage, and the origin of the poem proves that the ideal exists in Papua New Guinea, as elsewhere. No matter what external motivations brought on a marriage, few people go into it without hoping that it will improve their human condition. Some even dream of romance and happiness. Yet, from anthropological investigations into the external reasons, it appears that in Papua New Guinea the men may harbour the better hopes, albeit with perhaps as little chance of fulfilment as the women can expect.

The socio-political motivations for marriage in Papua New Guinea can relate to the welfare of the tribe or clan, as we saw in *Kulpu's Daughter*, or to the siphoning of wealth from one house to another, as in John Kasaipwalova's *Kanaka's Dream*<sup>113</sup>, in the matriarchal Trobriands.

References to brideprice are legion in the literature.

Tali, in Jim Baital's story<sup>114</sup> pays only \$20 to gain his bride Maria and her illegitimate son whom he adopts. One of the more amusing comments is found in Jack Lahui's poem *Bride Price*<sup>115</sup> which closes with the significant lines:

I could afford no more  
Nor could I afford any less.

The excesses to which high bride-price can lead are described in a story from the Southern Highlands, *Over The Cliff*, in which a stranger<sup>116</sup> without means rapes the handsome daughter of a big man, and while he stands aside unrecognized, sees a whole village being razed in retaliation. The story gives a good idea of the procedure for marriage proposal in that area, as well as a graphic description of the actual rape, complete with the accompanying thoughts of the rapist, which are by no means confused or blank, but firmly centred on obtaining free that which he

cannot pay for.

Ignorance of custom in *Awakening Birds*<sup>117</sup> alludes to a newly married couple, young husband Kusa this wife, but worries about 'awakening birds', which thing to do with making

He was ashamed to say  
that was small his father had  
even now they didn't  
And his mother? His  
woman be to discuss  
son."

Kusa's father has no brother  
functioned as 'fathers', and  
have died. Desperate, he  
called Yako, who seems  
about married life. He is  
the worst kind, who tells  
hurl his wife to the ground  
they meet, so that her  
birds. When he follows  
bride rushes off in pain.  
"Oh! my father! What do  
leaves for her old home  
parents is able to reticent  
returning of the bride-price  
divorce.

It may perhaps be assumed  
ness with which the Papuans  
the subject of sex, allows  
remain aloof from it, if not  
to enlighten him. Worries  
similar stories, and not all  
damsels.

In *Kupu's Daughter*  
become victim of clan politics  
woman:

O mother, o father  
What tail am I holding  
Python's tail is sticky,  
Phthon's tail is slippery  
Daughter of a chief  
A gift to the python.

But perhaps the most  
information on a courtship  
fit into other aspects of  
Vincent Eri's novel *The*  
matter of fact account. The  
Hoiri and Mitoro is a section  
the strings are plucked in



are for his

cannot pay for.

Ignorance of custom can also cause calamity. *Awakening Birds*<sup>117</sup> alludes to the first meeting of a newly married couple in Mendi area. The young husband Kusa thinks fondly of his beautiful wife, but worries about the meaning of 'awakening birds', which he suspects has something to do with making love:

He was ashamed to ask his father. When he was small his father had beaten him a lot, and even now they didn't discuss things, really. ... And his mother? How reluctant would a woman be to discuss such things with her son."

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Kusa's father has no brothers who could have functioned as 'fathers', and his maternal uncles have died. Desperate, he turns to a single man called Yako, who seems to know and talk a lot about married life. He is also a practical joker of the worst kind, who tells poor Kusa that he must hurl his wife to the ground as hard as he can when they meet, so that her cries shall wake up the birds. When he follows his friend's advice, the bride rushes off in pain and anger. Kusa cries: "Oh! my father! What does it mean?" The wife leaves for her old home and neither pair of parents is able to reticent her with Kusa. The returning of the bride-price eventually signals divorce.

It may perhaps be assumed that the naturalness with which the Papua New Guinean regards the subject of sex, allows a reticent youngster to remain aloof from it, if no relatives are available to enlighten him. World literature contains similar stories, and not all about Victorian young damsels.

In *Kupu's Daughter* we saw a young man become victim of clan politics. More often it is a woman:

O mother, o father  
What tail am I holding?  
Python's tail is sticky,  
Phthon's tail is slippery.  
Daughter of a chief  
A gift to the python.<sup>118</sup>

But perhaps the most consistently detailed information on a courtship and marriage as they fit into other aspects of life is to be found in Vincent Eri's novel *The Crocodile*. It is a rather matter of fact account. The relationship between Hoiri and Mitoro is a secondary theme of which the strings are plucked in interludes provided by

the main theme of Hoiri's life as a Papuan native under white domination. However, *The Crocodile* is a good introduction to Papua New Guinea literature for a western reader, as it acquaints him with the crude frankness with which sexual matters are discussed or joked about, privately and publicly. One finds this frankness throughout the literature, yet to my mind it is never so crude as in *The Stolen Land*<sup>119</sup>, a novel written by an expatriate about modern Papua New Guineans which attracted a good deal of attention when it first appeared. Another expatriate example is *The Wire Classroom*<sup>120</sup> which is not without merit, but its descriptions of sexual events do not stand favourable comparison with most of those written by Papua New Guineans. The western notion that no book sells without a sauce of sex, has something to do with it. Whether the two expatriate writers would have felt happier if they could have left the sauce out and just added spice where needed, cannot be assumed either. What is clear, is that their descriptions of sexual behaviour produce the shock effects which are the stock in trade of popular western writers, while in the Papua New Guinea literature they fit naturally, one might say organically, although in themselves they may shock individual readers. An integrated lifestyle, lack of privacy, and an 'organic' worldview, speak from the literature.

In Eri's novel, feelings of love and emotion in the sense that they affect Hoiri's outlook on life, do not occur until Mitoro is dead, and even then they flicker but poorly:

"Hoiri had now realized that his feelings for Mitoro were much deeper than the mere husband and wife relationship."

"The tragedy helped to open up the inner part of his heart and made him see for the first time that he loved the woman dearly."<sup>121</sup>

The 'mere husband and wife relationship' was the expectation, while the love was the unexpected property of marriage, and perhaps therefore realized too late in this case.

Anthropological theses show that most marriages in Papua New Guinea still take place on socio-economic grounds as relating to clan interests, reinforced by sexual preference as expressed by traditional means<sup>122</sup>. But in our case — taking our evidence from literature — the information about one marriage in Papua New Guinea's only full-length novel so



far, must be supplemented with excerpts from slimmer sources, in order to see what the authors have chosen as important.

One comes across but few romantic notions, and these are not encouraged:

"Koteni," he called gently...

"What were you thinking about?"

"Nothing," she smiled. Then she added 'I was thinking back to that first night, when I came to you and asked you for betel nut.'

'Forget those past moonlit nights. We are already living together. I have been thinking and worrying about... the tax payment next moon.'<sup>123</sup>

This is a good and tender marriage relationship. So is the one in the next example:

"As she was about to doze off to sleep she felt him stirring and moving closer. Sensing the warmth of his flesh, she shifted herself closer as if she were a child longing for her mother's comfort. Their bodies' heat travelled to and fro from one flesh to the other, as they faded into a deep sleep."<sup>124</sup>

But this husband wakes his wife less tenderly when he finds that by sleeping so close to her a harvest taboo has been broken:

"He looked down at his sleeping wife for the last time and kicked her in the stomach, shouting 'Passport to fear and punishment. Wake up. It is a morning after a night before harvest.'"<sup>125</sup>

Here economic interest wins from love, while the words 'for the last time' could mean ominous implications which however are not explained. The status of highland women is aptly summed up in August Kituai's *The Flight of a Villager*:

"They talked too much, complained too much, and worked too hard, but their complaints and grievances were seldom brought to the notice of their respective husbands. Only among themselves had they the audacity to curse their husbands to hell."<sup>126</sup>

In John Kaniku's play *Cry of the Cassowary* we find verbal violence between the couple Wasa and Sela. Wasa has tried to persuade his wife to take pity on their crippled son, and accept changes that are taking place as their schoolgoing children are learning new ways:

Wasa: Sela, let us listen to them. Let us respect them. And in return they'll respect us. If we keep on like this, they'll go away from us and won't return to care for even our dead bodies."<sup>127</sup>

But Wasa and Sela show a healthy self-interest by mending their differences. Later in the play they meet with such grief that certainly no stranger could have consoled them, had they each sought new partners as they threatened.

Self-interest also speaks from a tribesman's plea to an angry spirit who has made his wife ill:

"... our family will not generate

The fire will die, the bamboo torch will break, Our village, our gardens and our hunting grounds will be empty.

Then people will call us a bad spirit

Which you and I don't want.

Hence I beg you my good spirit,

Come, bring new blood and breath into my wife.

Lift her up, nurse her so she may live and work,

Her children may feed and flourish,

Then our clan will be the height of tree tops

And our name will be heard in Saure."<sup>128</sup>

Note how the spirit is appeased by being identified with the petitioner. The social and economic value of a good wife is clearly realized here, and in a subsistence society can become quite an emotional matter, rather than one of calculated commodity. As in other subsistence societies — or on the equivalent workers' level in towns — economic concerns are the breath of daily life, and they can cause disagreements, or strengthen the emotional ties between a couple. Add to that the strong belief in the clan bonds, and we find that in old age a couple expresses a mutual tenderness which has grown through the sharing of common perils, as the aging parents in *The Fires of Dawn* do:

"She fell on her knees and ran one of her hands along the old man's waist. 'Den nei'<sup>129</sup> she cried in greeting."<sup>130</sup>

The wife eagerly waits for her husband's news about their faraway son, who has aroused the clan's wrath and whom her husband visited without her knowledge. He explains his secretiveness thus:

"I am sorry I didn't let you know before I left here. But I wasn't in a good mood and you yourself saw that. Of course, it wasn't your fault but I really felt that night's humiliation weighing me down. I didn't have the courage to break the news to you. This is why I didn't let you know that I was leaving and where I was going."<sup>131</sup>

One of the most touching from the Chimbu: *The Wauwu Degoba*.<sup>132</sup> Sopane, a 'cornerstone', the wise man to bright-eyed Sukure. After being raided by a hostile tribe, Sopane is wounded and taken prisoner. Sopane is wounded, all he wants is to find his tribe broods on revenge, he is a man of magic he wants to bring her back. His voice of incantations reaches Sukure, courage to escape, his voice. They meet on the shore where Sopane performed the magic. They embrace, and return to the village to celebrate:

"It was his celebration of his beloved woman. Truly he was a man of magic. Truly he was a man of magic. He was the center of the village. He was the center of the village. He was the center of the village."

In Pidgin, which derives its idiom from the local language, a building are called 'ma' the supporting posts 'me'. Neither can pretend to structure when the other moving mourning songs when death ends a marriage.

To conclude this section a female author who has some insights into the feelings according to custom. Some few women writers, with their stories about arranged marriages, cluttered, easy style revealing. In these we meet the fate each in a different way.

Kiri, in *Regret Not*, at the age of 16 she left Moresby to marry a Moresby, her boyfriend sings

Regret not what you  
Your childhood dream  
Your childhood love,  
Regret not the pains  
Not the pains you will  
Just regret not, regret  
With this philosophy  
arrives at Hanuabada a



One of the most touching love stories comes from the Chimbu: *The Wife Who Came Back* by Wauru Degoba.<sup>132</sup> Sopane, 'the philosopher, the cornerstone', the wise man of the tribe, is married to bright-eyed Sukure. After a feast the village is raided by a hostile tribe and Sukure is taken prisoner. Sopane is wounded but does not care, all he wants is to find his beloved wife. While the tribe broods on revenge, Sopane decides that as he is a man of magic he will use his powers to bring her back. His voice bearing the magical incantations reaches Sukure and she gathers the courage to escape, his voice guiding and calling her. They meet on the summit of a mountain where Sopane performed his fire ritual as part of the magic. They embrace, are blessed by the sun, and return to the village where Sopane kills a pig to celebrate:

"It was his celebration for the return of the beloved woman. Truly he was a great man of magic. Truly he was the corner stone of the tribe. He was the centre post and the oldest sugar cane. He was the Man."

In Pidgin, which derives much of its colourful idiom from the local languages, the main posts of a building are called 'man pos' (man posts) and the supporting posts 'meri pos' (woman posts). Neither can pretend to hold up the entire structure when the other falls away. Some moving mourning songs are witness to grief felt when death ends a marriage.<sup>133</sup>

To conclude this section on marriage I refer to a female author who has thankfully provided some insights into the feelings of girls who marry according to custom. Sally Ann Pipi, one of the few women writers, wrote two prize winning stories about arranged marriages, in an uncluttered, easy style reminiscent of oral story telling. In these we meet two girls, who meet their fate each in a different manner.

Kiri, in *Regret Not*, obeys her parents. When at the age of 16 she leaves by ship for Port Moresby to marry a Motu man she has never seen, her boyfriend sings this song on the beach:

Regret not what you are leaving behind  
Your childhood dreams,  
Your childhood love,  
Regret not the pains I am suffering  
Not the pains you will bear  
Just regret not, regret not..<sup>134</sup>

With this philosophy ringing in her ears, Kiri arrives at Hanuabada and finds that things are

not too bad. The marriage turns out to be happy, a son is born, and when he is 6 months old the bride-price is paid up. Then an ex-fiance of the husband turns up, he resumes the old affair and eventually leaves Kiri to live with the woman. When it seems that he will not 'cool down', Kiri and her baby return by ship to her parents' village, while the parents-in-law weep on the beach. The story ends with a little surprise twist, when Kiri hears from a radio on board the same song her boyfriend sang two years ago. From this we may assume that she will recover her balance as she did then, and that life must go on.

In the second story, *The Reluctant Bride*,<sup>135</sup> Ikena objects to the husband chosen for her, for no apparent reason. She calls him bad names but her mother and others regard him as a gentle man. She spoils the day for the wedding guests by her morosity. Her husband offers to sleep out on the verandah, but she remains unwilling and depressed. Eventually she is called home by her relatives and her brothers literally try to beat sense into her. She runs away and hides in a cave, living of fish and vegetables she finds, while pondering on her situation and admitting that she does not understand herself. One day she hears a distant car stop and footsteps approaching. She hides and hears her husband call her name. Eventually she faces him and he hands her some clothes, tells her to get dressed and he will bring her to the Y.W.C.A. where she can start anew as a free woman. Although filled with self-pity, he says: "What you need is happiness. And happiness is all that matters." Ikena dresses in the cave, then joins him to walk to the car. And again, Sally Ann Pipi gives her story that unexpected ending that is yet so fitting to the situation as it has developed thus far:

"Ikena wiped away a tear and slid her hand in his.

"I don't want to go to the Y," she said.

Comparing these stories then, we see that a girl who obeyed custom gained unhappiness, and one who did not was offered freedom and rejected it at last. I do not think that Sally Ann Pipi prefers the self-assertive approach. It seems that she merely wanted to portray how different individuals reacted and coped with a situation which is dictated to them by custom. Moreover, she sketches not only the difficulties of the women, but the problems of the men. Ikena is less sympathetic than her slighted husband. And



even the belatedly unfaithful Morea is never unkind. After all he also married a person he had never seen and when his young bride arrived he took her aside and told her gently that he wanted to make a bargain: that she shall look after his aging parents and the house, and he will look after her and make her happy. And until the old flame turns up his kept his end of the bargain. So that Sally Ann Pipi really does not take sides, but concerns herself with the breadth of human suffering, including relatives, in-laws and her friends. It is to be hoped that she will put her quiet wisdom into more stories like these.

NANSEI<sup>136</sup>

All the provisions society can make and the rules it will lay down, do not ever cater fully for people's spontaneously aroused passions. When these do not fit into approved patterns, society's sanction is withheld and punishment may range from scorn to death. In Papua New Guinea, polygyny exists in many areas, but polyandry does not. It perhaps follows that promiscuity for men is condoned more easily than for women, although there are exceptions either way in particular areas. A characteristic example appears in *The Flight of a Villager*. Iso has fled his village to escape certain death because he may have made a girl pregnant.

He makes his motto: "hit and run. Women are a burden once you own one."<sup>137</sup> He flees to Goroka and comes to appreciate town life for its comforts, amongst which he counts 'cheap girls' who will for two dollars 'relieve him and others of their urges'. Yet, when he is fooled by two town girls who beckon him, his blood boils and he calls them bitches and whores, as if the latter was not exactly what he expected them to be. When he spots a white woman in her backyard, he thinks "Why in the name of good fortune does God create pretty ladies like her who drive a man as a ferocious bull?"<sup>138</sup>

It is only by considering the consequences of the contemplated rape, that he moves on. The episode has been foreshadowed by a pornographic movie and some confused men's talk about the sex habits of white people, fed by magazine pictures of nude couples, which Iso's *wantok* explains thus:

"... they don't speak ... and all the time are silently giving" ...

"Oh yes, they are silently giving, exchanging energy and love and all the other things that

married people do."<sup>139</sup>

But the general impression is that women are the cause for men feeling the way they do in their lesser moments. Another denouncement of a promiscuous girl by a seduced young man, is belaboured in a poem *To a Girl: Pamuk Meri*<sup>140</sup>:

O, pamuk meri<sup>141</sup> that demoralizes boys

.....

O, what dehumanization! ... I cannot pity you  
Enough.

.....

Though weak his nature be, though confused  
By circumstance his mind may be

He knows what principle to follow:

Sex without love he rejects

Human exploitation he hates

Unconventionality he does not want

And immorality he suspects.

.....

Pamuk meri that mental plunder on the  
youths of men perpetrates ...

The 'principles' are a mixed cultural bag, for sex without love is generally not condemned in Papua New Guinea, nor regarded as exploitation. The 'unconventionality' here rejected, may possibly have been tried first. The immorality has unspecified but implied Christian overtones, rather than traditional ones.

Poems about loose women abound<sup>142</sup>, but occasionally there is an attempt to reconcile the parties in this perpetual situation of conflict. Dus Mapun's poem *Limits of Liberty* should, for its honest simplicity, have the last say:

Freedom for me

May be

Death for you,

My food

May be

Your poison

Your joy

Might be

My sadness,

.....

Liberty of some

Must depend on

The restraint of others,

Harmonizing compromise

Must exist between

You and me for heaven-sake,

Will you reap happiness

Of your actions?

For every doing

Think twice,  
And beyond "ME" and

# Non-Physical Love. The Bonds with the Earth

Papua New Guinea cre  
origins of staple foods suc  
wild game, often do so  
turning into the plant or  
or her sacrificial death wh  
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Narokobi's play *Death of*  
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to her cassowary identity,  
she finds the skirt back,  
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shows signs of cruelty, le  
while he feasts elsewhere.  
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Kama Kerpi is a p  
ancestry and tradition. In  
yard<sup>146</sup> he invokes the cor  
dispel loneliness, steel the  
ness for battle, lend ferti  
prosperity, and children.  
whole of a hillsman's life's  
university educated hills



Think twice,  
And beyond "ME" and "I".<sup>143</sup>

#### Non-Physical Love.

##### The Bonds with the Earth and the Ancestors.

Papua New Guinea creation myths explaining origins of staple foods such as yams, coconuts or wild game, often do so through an ancestor turning into the plant or animal, or through his or her sacrificial death which fertilizes the burial spot so that miraculous growth occurs. Examples of transformation stages are numerous in the literature. One example is found in Bernard Narokobi's play *Death of a Muruk*<sup>144</sup>. It is fitting since the transformations take place because of love, first for a man, than for offspring. A young village man meets a cassowary at a jungle pool where she had taken off her featherskirt to have a swim. He hides the skirt, preventing her to return to her cassowary identity, and marries her. Later she finds the skirt back, but remains with her husband, producing six children. In later years he shows signs of cruelty, leaving a hungry family while he feasts elsewhere. Muruk<sup>145</sup> then puts on her featherskirt to go as a cassowary into the jungle and dig forest yams for her children, because cassowaries have the knowledge to find wild yams. Eventually she transforms four of her children into swallows, remaining a cassowary herself, and they leave. When he realizes the featherskirt is missing the husband sends the two remaining sons to capture their mother. She comes to them in a dream and tells them she will return to them as yams. The boys catch a cassowary, put her bones on growing yams and these grow profusely, so that they need never be hungry again.

The tie with the ancestors is contained and maintained by the earth. Those ancestors who are recently dead, that is, still listed in genealogies which the living recall, have a strong personal influence on those alive. Any calamity or misfortune, individual or collective can be explained as a consequence of having displeased the ancestors.

Kama Kerpi is a penetrating writer on ancestry and tradition. In *Prayer at the Graveyard*<sup>146</sup> he invokes the company of dead kin who dispel loneliness, steel the nerves and give boldness for battle, lend fertility to gardens, general prosperity, and children. That encompasses the whole of a hillman's life's desires. Except that the university educated hillman has added to that

the 'new desires' of 'new struggles' and of 'new seasons', and the result is once more conflict and the looming breakdown of the clan system and its culture:

Who will lead the next initiation ceremony?  
Who will discuss the next Feast?  
Who will wrestle for our village?  
Who will bring them home  
To pray at the graves,  
Lovers of unknown desires?<sup>147</sup>

A very lyrical expression of love for the ancestors is expressed in his *Song of Lament*<sup>148</sup>. It is outstandingly original in its metaphors and powerfully charged with the agonized emotion of one who wants to model his life on the ancestors, yet sees their world and therefore his own undermined by the termites of the western world:

Uchimakona.  
My digging stick,  
My red shell  
Cream of love dream,  
Pride of Ochimakona.

.....  
Aia! uchimakona  
Aia! Bitter spear wound

.....  
Uchimakona  
Last warrior.  
Uchimakona.  
Last cream of love dream,  
The last true descendant of Ochimakona.

An ancestor of formidable greatness has his counterpart among the living in the 'big man'. These days the living big man has a chance to establish his reputation in both the traditional and contemporary world, as he is often the most likely person to win elections.<sup>149</sup> However, whereas his big man reputation was built up by traditional means, i.e. the accumulation of wealth and astute manipulation of the reciprocity principle, he may sometimes find that democracy is not the scene where he can consolidate his image. His physical absence in the case of one elected to national parliament, does diminish his direct hold over his followers. Traditionally, physical presence is imperative for a leader. The charisma and magnetism must be visibly exercised in order to elicit love and loyalty.

The estimated 700 languages of Papua New Guinea indicate isolation of tribes, either geographically, or maintained by inter-tribal warfare. Isolation creates a dependency on clan land



which in turn gives rise to a recycling process that stretches well beyond the agricultural and animal-husbandry realms. In a very real sense man becomes the product of the clan soil which his parents fed from, which feeds him, where he will spill his blood defending it and where his bones will fertilize what life comes after him. In the non-physical sense the cycle is no different. As soon as a child comprehends stories, the ancestor tales feed his imagination, he will undergo ancestral rites, pledge himself to the ancestors, i.e. the clan land and clan members, and draw his inner strength from them:

"Thus, that clannish feeling was like an invisible shadow, above which the clan with its distinct hierarchal structure loomed united like a silent hill."<sup>150</sup>

All this is an outcome of the two-way, physical bond between members of a clan and clan land. The power of the clan is omnipresent, and when its interests have been damaged by one member, exile can be the punishment; a fate worse than death because it means spiritual death. A case in point is the life of Tali<sup>151</sup>, a modern boy who on his return to his father's clan breaks a taboo and finds not only himself exiled but his immediate relatives ostracized until their miserable deaths release them. Elsewhere, a father who tears his ears in mourning over his son, is reaping the consequences of inter-tribal payback:

Those ears had compelled him  
To spy and kill.

Now the son was the victim

For the deeds of his father.<sup>152</sup>

Arthur Jawodimbari's play *The Sun*<sup>153</sup> gives a convincing example of clan bonds and power showing simultaneously that the love for the clan can restore the balance when the swing is too much towards power, and selfdestruction is imminent.

#### The Pebble in the Village.

In *The Crocodile*, Hoiri and his cousin spend several years away from their village, as members of an army labour force. When at last they turn towards home, Hoiri is asked why he looks back: has he left a woman behind?

"No — the place. Don't you feel sorry for a place where you've lived so long?"

But his cousin can only think of being back home:

"... on the soil that our mothers have coloured

with their blood when they brought us into the world."<sup>154</sup>

An absence of years is sadly analysed in the following poem:

There were greetings from the living  
And handshakes from the dead.  
Familiar faces all, but remote.  
The sounds were strange  
The scene not remembered.

.....

Was I cut off to put roots in the air?

And expected to grow fruit thereon?<sup>155</sup>

The last two lines are specifically significant. The expectations of relatives about their absent kin who are being educated or earning money, sometimes border on the unreal. Yet often the student or worker finds that his years outside the clan amount to exile and he dreams as longingly about going back to the source of his soul's food as his kin dream about the benefits of their sacrifices for him. Thus, on the homecoming, their priorities may clash, and the returned son may well feel truly and doubly exiled. The grief of people in their thousands, who must choose between the two exiles created by new expectations fed by western educators, is a truly lamentable growth which undermines the mental security the people of this country possessed for so long.

From the village and the familiar landscape the rings of affection may extend themselves over the land unseen, or partly known: the country of Papua New Guinea. Nowadays this incorporates automatically the idea of nationhood and the people who make up the population.

Nigel Krauth drew a comparison between Papua New Guinea poets and romantic western poets to show that the former inherited a natural poetic vision that sees man as within nature, linked all around, while the latter had to 'unclutter their minds' to gain what I think may be called the phenomenological approach. He states that the Papua New Guinean poetic vision,

"... arose out of a situation where man's imaginative life and the life in the physical universe were manifestations of the same process."<sup>156</sup>

Examined in detail, this situation affords surprising insights. A primary extension of love to creatures in the immediate environment, is the affection shown to pigs in areas where they are also an economic asset, i.e. in the highlands. In

*Flight of a Villager*, Iso's the action, carrying indiv known for personal id *Wife Who Came Back*<sup>157</sup> is accompanied by the c couples, whose first pigs

A rugged landscape s allow man for centuries t like a giant will tolerate The land is the mightie cyclically. But when brought in, suddenly, un turn defenceless and be

On the hilltop

I stand in agony

Tears dripping

From my eyes

As I watch the sea

Red

Like killer's

Hand stained with bl

On the hilltop

Stand I in agony

My heart burning wi

Hate, like the man

Whose wife is raped

As I see the Steel

Cutting deep

Into the belly of the

And trees uprooted

In the name of

Progress<sup>159</sup>

Wherever man lives clo mother, the fertile womb sacred one. Kumalau Ta that was his in his mo early years of drifting o when life's storms rise a around, he must paddle

Yet, in this battle I g

I win fame

I Grow a name

The true essence of i

One day I will reach

There at my beginni

Another place

Will welcome me. <sup>160</sup>

No fame or name or pull harder than this poe as much his piece of ear or even more so. Begin forced in a T'chani cere



*Flight of a Villager*, Iso's mother's pigs are part of the action, carrying individual names, and each is known for personal idiosyncrasies.<sup>157</sup> In *The Wife Who Came Back*<sup>158</sup>, a pig-killing for a feast is accompanied by the crying of young childless couples, whose first pigs are now to die.

A rugged landscape such as the highlands, will allow man for centuries to scratch a living from it, like a giant will tolerate some lice in his beard. The land is the mightier one and gets restored cyclically. But when western technology is brought in, suddenly, unbelievably, the land may turn defenceless and be defeated:

On the hilltop  
I stand in agony  
Tears dripping  
From my eyes  
As I watch the sea  
Red  
Like killer's  
Hand stained with blood  
On the hilltop  
Stand I in agony  
My heart burning with  
Hate, like the man  
Whose wife is raped before him  
As I see the Steel  
Cutting deep  
Into the belly of the hills  
And trees uprooted  
In the name of  
Progress<sup>159</sup>

Wherever man lives close to the earth she is the mother, the fertile womb, the source of all life, the sacred one. Kumalau Tawali speaks of the peace that was his in his mother's womb during the early years of drifting on the stream of life. But when life's storms rise and his canoe has swung around, he must paddle against the stream:

Yet, in this battle I gain glory  
I win fame  
I Grow a name  
The true essence of it.  
One day I will reach the source again.  
There at my beginnings  
Another place  
Will welcome me.<sup>160</sup>

No fame or name or worldly glory will ever pull harder than this poet's beginnings, which are as much his piece of earth as his mother's womb, or even more so. Beginnings which were reinforced in a T'chani ceremony as held on Manus:

Oh! you great ancestors  
This night I am giving your taro to him!  
I am giving taro to the son of Tawali

.....

Eat it, that you may have their greatness.<sup>161</sup>  
Here again, the link from living man to ancestor, from future imminent to past immemorial, passes through the earth by means of its fruit.

### Nationhood.

When the concept of nationhood appears in the literature the imagery remains basically the same, although the value judgements may be inverted as in the following example which portrays the country as a slowly developing infant:

*Niu*

You are the baby that crawls too long.  
All the others are walking —  
What has your mother been doing with you?  
Have you been carried too long?  
Have you been fed to much?<sup>162</sup>

However, the infant role does not ring true for such an ancient land, while its mother image evokes a sense of reality that relates to the landscape. Apisai Enos calls the tribes the children of the mother, who have scattered over her body, each claiming a part and contesting each other. The ancient mother must resume her parent role in new times to rescue her children from self-destruction:

Awake mother  
From the coma of birth  
And as your clouded eyes regain vision  
And your trembling hands steady  
Pull them back by their navel cords  
Into the warmth of your bilum<sup>163</sup>  
Keep them safe under your tapa cloth  
Let them recognise each other at last  
On your breasts.<sup>164</sup>

In Apisai Enos the country has also its word-painter of natural beauty. His poetry stands close to the romantics, yet closer to nature than they. While western poets in their multitudes have described nature's beauty, Papua New Guinean poets largely abstain from it, because they are still *within* nature and therefore do not see it romantically as in the western tradition where it was externalised until recent times. In the poem *High Water*<sup>165</sup> ones interpretation may range from an individual to a national bias, but the surrealist imagery ties one to the inner



experience of nature as being one's own nature:

...and in the sudden warmth now  
you mate with the dragon fly  
and on you must flow...

In the yet clearly nationalistic poem *New Guinea*<sup>166</sup>, the outsiders' evaluation of the country is set against that of the poet:

New Guinea, beloved New Guinea  
What do they say about you?

.....

the waste land  
the hot island  
the tomb of death

.....

land of killers and cannibals and sacred  
corpses

of mountain raiders and mangrove snipers  
land of fevers and dreaded diseases

.....

New Guinea, dazzling with diversity  
wild, rugged, yet tender.

New Guinea, whispering with love  
murmuring, dove-like and gentle.

Land of swaying palms

frangipani

orchids

hibiscus

rock mosses and water lilies

beautiful like a bride

with a veil of bird of paradise plumes.

In this poem Papua New Guinea is directly called beautiful. Few writers externalize the landscape to the extent that they judge it according to standards for beauty applicable elsewhere. It lives so deeply inside them and they in it, that this may only come after travel overseas has provided a frame for comparison.

The same applies to beauty in general. It is only realised when an alternative presents itself. *Kulpu's Daughter* presents a sophisticated discussion of feminine beauty by two western educated men. But when such a description is fitted into a traditional story based on legend, the result seems out of place:

"Mop had a very beautiful wife"<sup>167</sup>

That is as far as a traditional story teller might go, if the fact has a bearing on the proceedings. Yet, Mop's wife Sim is given extended treatment:

"Sim was known as the Lily of the Wodaten Lakes.

She was five feet seven inches tall, with dark Brown eyes."

As the legend is set in the early days, the measurements come as a surprise. Neither is it clear what is special about Sim's dark brown eyes. But things get better:

"Her slim waist swung about when she walked. Long black curly locks hung down by her face and over her shoulders. When she bathed her soft body was covered with her hair, like the stone covered with moss. The two shining bright stars on her slim narrow chest danced away when she moved about."

Long flowing locks are unknown in the Sepik province where the story is placed, so here at least we have a distinctive feature of Sim's beauty, but the others may well have been borrowed from imported aesthetics.

Siuras Kavani has made a conscious effort to relate the beauty of the women of his race to that of the country, setting norms for Papua New Guinea beauty, which however fight a losing battle:

The colour of ash,

The colour of burnt wood

Colour of the dark soil

Had made you beautiful

woman.<sup>168</sup>

Against these traditional means of decoration he sets the imported clothes, lipstick and other western paraphernalia of the feminine mystique, but claims they rob the black woman of her beauty and mystery.

The elusiveness of any constant standard of beauty is hesitantly expressed in the following excerpt:

Once you inhale the incense

of beauty

you long to see it

And possess it

Beauty remains

Misinterpreted

By your naked eyes<sup>169</sup>

A more comprehensive appreciation of love for beauty comes again from Apisai Enos, in his poem *Ingal*<sup>170</sup>

elusive spirit

meek and mild

you dissolve between my hands

all to nothing like wind to nowhere

yet perfect like love...

*Ingal* is the spirit of beauty, and although she may appear in a woman, she is present in the sunrise, in flowers, in the midnight breeze, in

everything. *Ingal* is a spirit when beauty is present in no one could ever make for hatred has flown the source of love and From the same poet wistful and lyrical expression itself, as an abstract physical force in the physical universe a *Rainbow*<sup>171</sup>:

Rainbow

you make me surly

to tenderness

cobweb splendour

my heart is captured

by distant mirage

in evening vapour

.....

Even now you lifted

with pulse of joy

now dark sheets

are drawn across

hiding you from sight

.....

Behind the blackness

I still imagine you

illusory rainbow

still you echo in my

still giving me faded

like a song to sing

in a minor key.

This is the sort of poem but absorb.

**From the Edges of the Love as a means to self**

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Independence year brings

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to some, as its two halves

wings in the air.<sup>172</sup> This



everything. Ingal is a spirit of the fleeting moment when beauty is present in its essence, and, no one could ever make you hate for hatred has flown out of your heart the source of love and peace.

From the same poet comes also the most wiseful and lyrical expression of love for love itself, as an abstract phenomenon, present as a force in the physical universe, in the poem *Love is a Rainbow*<sup>171</sup>:

Rainbow

you make me surrender  
to tenderness  
cobweb splendour  
my heart is captured  
by distant mirage  
in evening vapours

Even now you lifted me  
with pulse of joy and honey  
now dark sheets of cloud  
are drawn across the sky  
hiding you from sight

Behind the blackness in the sky  
I still imagine your brightness  
illusory rainbow  
still you echo in my mind  
still giving me faded pleasure  
like a song to sing  
in a minor key.

This is the sort of poetry one doesn't interpret, but absorb.

**From the Edges of the World the rings return.  
Love as a means to self-identification.**

Overseas travel has enabled some Papua New Guinea writers to return with a new awareness about their own culture. Sometimes a stay in Port Moresby or other centres of semi-western civilization has a similar effect, on those who return home to the village. In either case, self-identification is one of the processes the writer has to go through, and the range of anchoring points stretches from the people of the nation to the closest available *wantok*, or a newly beloved person.

Independence year brought forth some writings conveying aspects of self-identification. The new national flag was a symbol of a united people to some, as its two halves flapped like a bird's wings in the air.<sup>172</sup> This may have inspired poems

such as *Come Under My Wings*.<sup>173</sup> Two poems by Makeu Opa present the sweeping circuit of the independence concept from village hut to nation-wide brotherhood:

...

In the evening I retire to my kunai-hut  
with firm conviction in my mind  
"I'll give you my life  
I will give you my time  
I will be with you  
with your golden sands  
forever."<sup>174</sup>

and:

As you struggle  
in your paradise  
I make my thought  
bear with you

.....

O, Bro; don't count me out  
'cause I stand beside you  
in thoughts and desire.<sup>175</sup>

The *wantok* system which originally referred to people who spoke the same language and therefore were usually related, no matter how remotely, has expanded considerably under changing conditions. Two nationals from opposite points of the compass may call each other *wantok* in the presence of a foreigner, even though in order to communicate with each other they must use the latter's language or a *lingua franca*. People who have grown bonds of friendship in an institution become *wantoks*, as for instance university graduates. In future this may well prove to be the Melanesian equivalent of the British 'old boy' system. A national who has a personal relationship with a foreigner will call the latter his *wantok* also. At its highest level the *wantok* system honours the obligation of mutual care and concern, materially and otherwise. Sadly, the real bloodbond *wantok* relationship is often rigidly exploited for its material benefits. Some foreigners have taken it in a purely spiritual sense, which is also not in accordance with the *wantok* essence. Then again, it has universal dimensions for instance in the world of crime. The fictitious Rascal Brothers who terrorise Port Moresby, will hug each other before they disperse to put their plans into action<sup>176</sup>. In *tali*<sup>177</sup> two strangers find they are *wantoks* and subsequently that they are real brothers, separated in youth. The story of their lives and its continuation in the home village is an example of the sense



of loss which can occur when identification with ones background has weakened. Later, Tali tries to identify with other soldiers when he joins the army after breaking off with his *wantoks* on the death of his parents:

"Why should he be so shy, when all around him beamed the same picture painted by the same artist with the same brush and black paint... why should he feel inferior to these men — these soldiers who were going to do the same things and eat the same food. No. No it's not a question of feeling inferior, he thought to himself. It's just that I have got to get used to things first, and only then can I relate to the situation I find myself in."<sup>178</sup>

The last slice of western psychology is thoroughly untypical, but there must indeed be instances where local concepts do simply not cater for a feeling of alienation of the magnitude that Tali experiences. The first part of the paragraph puts it rather well how foreign a Papua New Guinean national can feel amongst other nationals who come from different tribes and don't speak his language, thus are not *wantoks* and have no reciprocal obligations to him until they become *wantoks* in another sense in a wider context.

Self-identification can be obtained from a dream, as John Kasaipwalova's poem *Hanuabada*<sup>179</sup> shows:

Hanuabada,<sup>180</sup> I saw and dreamt you long before my eyes felt you

They told me you were civilized; your iron roofs, timber floors, electricity and all...

Its beautiful girls and smart young men are said to be clean, educated, rich, new and white. White in the sense an African writer meant it when he wrote:

"The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich."<sup>181</sup>

Blinded by the lustre of Moresby, the 'white man's town', the new arrival does not find Hanuabada for a while. When he finally sees it, its appearance shatters the long cherished dream:

Can this really be the punishment of my dreams?

.....

Why are you not what I had always believed you to be...

But away from his native islands, and holding a shattered dream in a hostile town, he has no

choice. Fragments of the dream are recovered, identification with the village follows, then with its people, lastly with the cause of its derelict existence which he sees as pretending and hiding its misery in role playing:

Locking your birthing violence

Into pious sentimental goodness...

But in the next stanza he turns to himself, finding the same symptoms:

A grey statue with a fixed sad smile

Unmoving lifeless to keep constancy...

*Reluctant Flame*<sup>182</sup> by the same author has gained renown as a poem of hatred against the white colonials, materialism, western values, and the 'cold seed of greed'. But it also states what makes the white masks and the cold seed appear so wooden and chill. The writer identifies with the other people of Papua New Guinea who have come to live in white man's town and who, because of *this* context, become *wantoks*:

I go past the Palm Tavern

Wantoks dancing one another to the drums

.....

Music is

People meeting, laughing at Koki<sup>183</sup>

The wind tickling my hair on the back of passenger truck

My smile to you, we say no words, we know

I offer you one betel nut, they talk for us

Wantok we eat our rice and meat together<sup>184</sup>

Yet, the cold seed brought socio-political and personal impotence, which he translates into love symbolism and a plea not to give up on love as yet:

Please, my black woman, please do not weep your hate against us

You were not satisfied, please my love do not cry

See my tears of shame and anger, please you, do not cry

Impossible for me to say sorry without seeing my lies

.....

I cannot in honest clarity show us the way out of our grave

But take my hand and let our fingers make one flesh...

Such identification on a racial level but expressed in personal love language, is as yet rare. Kasaipwalova's other work is supporting evidence for the wider affinities he is capable of. The poem *Cow Boy*<sup>185</sup> is a moving penetration of

the character of a street n  
*Strangers No Strangers*  
human being is instant a  
centuries:

I feel the tomorrow v  
there will be no quest  
no glints of uncertain  
we know each other  
that once Strangers n  
Individualism in Papua  
strongly developed trend  
group demands exist. I  
mentioned, and if it is, it

Deep deep in the hea  
he sat on his naked b  
longing for happiness  
but locked up in him  
feeling far away, out  
Low low into the gra  
he sank

terrified by the dark  
afraid, blinded

He wept for his tiny  
When morning came

he did not see the da  
and the sun could no

Mark, in *Kulpu's Dau*  
duality during his despe

before he lies dead at tl

"Deep inside he shon  
ness, stars above and  
behind the hills, I sw

the master of my sou  
those who deny this

Gwadi, in the *The Odd*  
students who dislike his

but when he lies defeate  
vision of 'millions of pe

"Some were clad ir  
long haired, bearded

He saw a Homer too  
... singing a song ab

He saw a hairy you  
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the banners which th  
read. He saw old vill

their gardens... Th  
human beings, with

itself. And he could  
his eyes closed."



the character of a street musician in Moresby. In *Strangers No Strangers* recognition of another human being is instant and spans countries and centuries:

I feel the tomorrow when we shall meet  
there will be no questions asked  
no glints of uncertain shields  
we know each other a thousand years  
that once Strangers now no more Strangers  
Individualism in Papua New Guinea is not a strongly developed trend, although resistance to group demands exist. Love for self is seldom mentioned, and if it is, it leads to selfdestruction:

Deep deep in the heart of silence  
he sat on his naked bottom  
longing for happiness  
but locked up in himself  
feeling far away, out of reach.  
Low low into the graves of his ancestors  
he sank  
terrified by the darkness  
afraid, blinded  
He wept for his tiny life.  
When morning came  
he did not see the dawn  
and the sun could not warm his heart<sup>186</sup>

Mark, in *Kulpu's Daughter* asserts his individuality during his desperate night walk, minutes before he lies dead at the foot of the cliff:

"Deep inside he shouted: spirits of the darkness, stars above and the moon there peeping behind the hills, I swear before you that I am the master of my soul and body. And I curse those who deny this God-given freedom."<sup>187</sup>  
Gwadi, in the *The Odd Man Out*, is beaten up by students who dislike his blatant nonconformism, but when he lies defeated on the ground he has a vision of 'millions of people, human beings':

"Some were clad in rough-looking clothes, long haired, bearded Jesus Christs they were. He saw a Homer too, a blind one with a guitar ... singing a song about the other side of life. He saw a hairy young man ... a wild-looking young woman ... taking drugs ... He saw discontented youngsters marching up a non-inhabited street with illegible inscriptions on the banners which they held high for no one to read. He saw old villagers coming home from their gardens... These were people, true human beings, with their own stories of life itself. And he could see them all lucidly, with his eyes closed."

He can also see the 'moral teaching maniacs' and the 'black bourgeois copyists', and he cries out:

"Lordy, I looked down the line, and damned me, not one life was mine!"  
Then he shouts at the 'blind conformists', whom he thinks must make up the whole of humanity:

"I hate you! Yeah, that's me, Gwadi! All humanity stinks!"<sup>188</sup>

Russell Soaba is the only writer who has seriously pursued the individual's fight for self-preservation outside the group. But Durkheim's 'society is prior to the individual' could well be Papua New Guinea's national motto, and therefore Soaba's struggle may well bear mainly bitter fruit, as his work testifies so far.

Although they may not survive in their traditional character, the bonds of love and affection that bind the people of Papua New Guinea to each other through the clan, the *wantok* system and the principle of reciprocity, are capable of projection into the world, reaching out to all humanity. John Kasaipwalova already visualised a brotherhood of black people in his *Reluctant Flame*:

Let the lunatics meet on the lunacy, we will use  
the soil to grow our brotherly flame  
Our reluctant dream flame is burning disconnected like a bush fire

But one day, one day... one day...<sup>189</sup>  
Kasaipwalova dedicated his volume *Hanua-bada* to his future wife and four friends: "the lovely people with whom I share, create and live." His concern with the ungraspable phenomenon in this wider sense, earns him the last word in this brief survey of the love theme in Papua New Guinea literature; this time from his poem *My Soul Music*:

soul soul music the openness  
of human joys and pains  
the false language of words  
is shabby coat for my feel  
language  
.....  
fountaining loving  
beyond gains and power  
daring daring to live love  
against barriers of pretentious death.<sup>190</sup>

### Conclusion.

I had hoped to argue that the pebble of love



thrown into the pond of Papua New Guinea, produced ripples in ever widening circles until it included humanity as a whole. Thanks to the writings of John Kasaipwalova, Apisai Enos and Russell Soaba, it has been possible at a pinch. Next I hoped to argue that unless love returns to its origins before it goes out again, like the ripples come back to where the pebble pierced the surface of the water, it does not amount to a complete experience. Due to the writings of Kama Kerpi, Kumalau Tawli and Arthur Jawodimburi I could show that some ripples reach the source again. But on the whole the pond is in too much turmoil to argue convincingly. Beneath the surface the clays of origin and tradition are being stirred up, while the winds of change lash the waters from above. The cult of individualism lurks amongst the reeds, as yet uncertain whether to dive to the depths and lose itself, or attempt to ride the waves.

I am satisfied that the universality of the Greek models of love are at least mirrored in Papua New Guinea's literature. The love for the ancestors amounts to divine love, while the *wantok* system within the reciprocal principle as the ideal, represents an intermediary between it and profane love, although its strength is being eroded by social change and its ideal is becoming more difficult in practice. If the *wantok* system is Papua New Guinea's expression of Platonic love, i.e. affection and friendship, we can point also to what an African writer has called 'Platonic sex'<sup>191</sup>, i.e. sex without love. From the literature an impression is gained that love can be deep, passionate, and longlasting when it comes to children, parents, the clan, the ancestors and even the nation, but that where it should be reinforced by physical love as sexuality, love leaves the arena almost entirely to the 'physical discussion'<sup>192</sup>. In public daily life in Papua New Guinea one can observe expressions of affection between men and men, women and women, old and young and vice versa. But no show of affection between men and women takes place. The only public evidence that they are interested in one another are the exploratory joking relationships in town as well as village, which are common all over the world. The semi-public courting procedures amount to western wooing of the 'dinner-a show-and afterwards' type, while love magic is equivalent to passionate romanticism of a necessarily temporary nature. All these

allude to sexual attraction primarily, rather than love. In marriage, mainly loyalty to its functions is expected.

From the literature as it stands, i.e. mainly written by men, it appears as if the physical discussion is more accurately a monologue from the side of the male. Women are there to listen, receive, and execute instructions. Not that a woman always complies. But if she doesn't she risks physical violence as we saw in Sally Ann Pipi's story *The Reluctant Bride*. Vincent Eri's description of that practice confirms it as a common practice:

"It was a woman's crying. Somebody was beating his wife, he thought. Let him beat her up. It only becomes exciting when the husband throws the poor wife down from the house to the ground... that is when it is worth having a closer look at the spectacle."<sup>193</sup>

Love between the sexes is not bound to sway the fate of this nation for some time to come. There is not nearly so strong a connection between love for a woman and pride and honour, as there is in the case of clan and ancestors. This doesn't accommodate a Helen, or even a diverting Dido, so that Josephine's aggression is perhaps the obvious line of action.

The values and morals which regulate and restrict love between the sexes — or sex between the sexes — appear similarly one-eyed. Promiscuity seems to be recognized only in women, a male simply 'relieves his urges', as Luke in *Kulpu's Daughter* and Iso in *The Flight of a Villager* testify. Adultery in men must simply be accepted as shown in *Regret Not*, but in women it is a deadly disgrace, as in *How I Wiped Away My Daughter's Footprints*. A man is only punishable if the pride and honour of another man is damaged, or a bride-price prospect put in jeopardy. The further emergence of Papua New Guinea women writers must be eagerly awaited to complete the picture.

From Indian mythology, via medieval times, to modern ideas of 'negritude', the legend that darkly pigmented people are sexually more passionate, has carried on. Here Senghor's black characteristics may be applicable. Emotion, intuition, concrete conceptualizing and subjectivism are more clearly discernable in the literature's references to love, than reason, rationality, abstraction and objectivity. But the emotional energy, warmth and some of the

vitality, seem to be more those areas of love where part of the relationship, literature in general. He occur in the writings of Soaba. The characters highly westernized i examinations and remi introversion in western that seems to disappear ceases, is that of the threat of it. The words o gentleness which starkl difference of their coun women. To these coun to be a blindly organic the facts that Mark ' pBitek's *Song of Lawi* the responsibility for l mistress and child, are New Guineans can ext western introversion in accepting the underly that Fromm also rejec former to the traditior are embodied in the far world and the reciproc

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reality, seem to be more obviously spread over those areas of love where sexual intercourse is not part of the relationship, if we must believe the literature in general. However, major exceptions occur in the writings of Kama Kerpi and Russell Soaba. The characters Mark and Pagigi are highly westernized in their introspective examinations and reminiscent of examples of introversion in western literature. The element that seems to disappear when introversion increases, is that of the physical violence or the threat of it. The words of Mark and Pagigi have a gentleness which starkly contrasts with the indifference of their counterparts when discussing women. To these counterparts sexual life seems to be a blindly organic aspect of life. However, the facts that Mark was influenced by Okot Bitek's *Song of Lawino*<sup>194</sup> and Pagigi assumes the responsibility for his half-brother's rejected mistress and child, are hopeful signs that Papua New Guineans can extract the better aspects of western introversion in the area of love, without accepting the underlying selfish individualism that Fromm also rejects, but rather welding the former to the traditional aspects of love as they are embodied in the family, the clan, the ancestral world and the reciprocity of the *wantok* system.

The directness of physical life in the non-west is apparent from the literature in the aspects of birth, love, violence and death. The west has developed distancing devices for all these, without removing thereby the associated sufferings, although some may argue that this has heightened the brief joys. Against the preservation of individual physical life in the west, stands the sacrifice of the individual in the non-west when the operating principles of life as a whole and its continuity are threatened. For a man, the preservation of his spiritual identity seems of as much or greater necessity than that of his physical life, as the double exile problems of the educated minority indicate.

The situation where the imaginative and the physical life are manifestations of the same process — as Nigel Krauth pointed out — is now being broken up by the materialism of the west, but also by its idealism. The two western poles may hopefully turn out to be a necessary but temporary phase only in the development of mankind as a whole, as is the foregoing.

The amalgamation at its best might then produce in the future a view of human life and

love that truly combines Senghor's black and white characteristics, to produce a universal 'passion logic'.

#### Footnotes

1. An exception is Allan Natachee, who has published in English since 1952.
2. A modern and alien development in Papua New Guinea.
3. Jawodimbari, Arthur, 'The Bird Calls', in *The Night Warrior* ed. Ulli Beier (Pacific Writers Series, Jacaranda Press, Brisbane, 1972).
4. Soaba, Russell, *Wilma Wait*, unpublished play, New Guinea Collection, Library of the University of Papua New Guinea.
5. Described by Plato and subsequently known as Platonic Love.
6. See: Campbell, Joseph, *The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology* (Souvenir Press (Educational and Academic) Ltd., London 1973) Chapter V.
7. A fascinating development of introverted love literature developed in Nigeria. See: Obiechina, Emmanuel, *An African Popular Literature, 'A Study of Onitsha Market Pamphlets'* (Cambridge University Press, 1973).
8. Mezu, S, Okdehknwu *The Poetry of Leopold Sedar Senghor*, (Heinemann, London, 1973), p. 87.  
For the direct perceptor the love for nature is as much a physical experiences as love for people can be.
9. An ambivalent concept in the opinion of this writer (LH). I cannot conceive of an observation made at such a distance from the object that it could be the opposite of subjectivism. At the most objectivity could be seen as an attempt to move away from total subjectivism.
10. Non-western civilizations in the Middle-East, Africa, Asia and the Americas evolved scientific concepts in the past. Although the Greek theorists provided the feeding ground for the western scientific revolution. This development took place after a lapse of nearly 2000 years and was not predominantly triggered off by pure analytical reasoning. See: Koestler, Arthur *The Sleepwalkers*, (Hutchinson, London 1959), on the accidental nature of some of



- the most revolutionary scientific discoveries; and:
- Kuhn, Thomas, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (The University Press, Chicago, 1970), on the inhibiting nature of accepted scientific paradigms for further progress and their application in times of stagnation.
11. Most pronounced in hunters-and-gatherers societies, this overlapping of self-love with love for fellow humans finds its expression in Papua New Guinea in the various forms of ceremonial reciprocity. See:  
Malinowski, Bronislaw, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (Routledge and Sons Ltd., London, 1922), on the Kula Ring;  
Strathern, Andrew, *The Rope of Moka* (Cambridge U.P., 1971), on exchange ceremonies in the Western Highlands;  
Meggitt, M.J., "Patterns of Leadership among the Mae Enga of New Guinea" in *Anthropological Forum*, Vol.II, 1967, pp. 20-35;
  12. Fromm, Erich, *The Art of Loving* (Unwin, London, 1971) Preface.
  13. *Ibid.*, p. 22
  14. Fromm, *ibid.*, p. 22
  15. *Ibid.*, p. 23
  16. See for instance the character of the dictator Kongi, in Soyinka, Wole, *Kongi's Harvest* (O.U.P., 1967)
  17. Kasaipwalova, John, *Reluctant Flame* (Papua Pocket Poets, Vol. 29, Port Moresby, 1971), p. 1.
  18. *Ibid.*, p. 1/
  19. Kasaipwalova, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
  20. Narokobi, Bernard, '6 a.m. Alarm', in *Poems*, unpublished ms. in New Guinea Collection, Library of the University of Papua New Guinea, p. 28.
  21. Kerpi, Kama, *Voices from the Ridge* (Centre for the Creative Arts. Port Moresby, 1974), p. 17.
  22. In Nora Vagi Brash's retold Motu Legend "Kurai" (Kovave, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1973) a witch does away with a young mother in order to possess her baby and be a wife.
  23. Kerpi, Kama, 'In the Next World They Avenge', in *Kovave*, Vol. 4, No. 2 1973), p.27.
  24. Traditional song from Kar-Kar Island, in Helfert, R., and Holdsworth D., *Songs of Papua New Guinea*, (Jacaranda Press, Queensland, 1974), p. 27.
  25. Lahui, Jack, 'Poem to my son, Lahui, Lahui' in *Gamblers Niugini Style* (P.P.P., Vol. 44, Part Moresby, 1975), p. 15.
  26. Lahui, *op. cit.* p. 17.
  27. Eri, Vincent, *The Crocodile*, (Jacaranda Press, Queensland, 1970), p. 176.
  28. *Ibid.*, p. 176.
  29. Kasaipwalova, Linda, 'Out of Place' in *Papua New Guinea Writing*, No. 6, June 1972, p. 81.
  30. Maiu Oa (told on tape and transcribed by Albert Maori Kiki), 'How I wiped away my daughter's footprints', in *Kovave*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1970 pp. 38.
  31. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
  32. Kerpi, Kama, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
  33. Umba, Benjamin, 'The Fires of Dawn' in *Three Short Novels from Papua New Guinea*, ed. Mike Greicus (Longman Paul, Auckland, New Zealand, 1976), p. 27
  34. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
  35. Jawodimbari, Arthur, 'Spare that bird', in *Black Writing from New Guinea*, ed. Ulli Beier, (Uni. of Queensland Press, 1973), p. 27.
  36. Kaniku, John Wills, 'Cry of the Cassowary' in *Two Plays from New Guinea* (Heinemann Education Australia Pty. Ltd., Melbourne, 1970), p. 27.
  37. Or, 'Cousin-brothers' as it is expressed in English.
  38. Kadiba, John, 'Growing up in Mailu', in *Black Writing from New Guinea*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
  39. *Ibid.*, p. 6
  40. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
  41. Kituai, August, 'The Flight of a Villager' in *Three Short Novels from Papua New Guinea*, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
  42. Kasaipwalova, John, 'Parting Words' in *Hanuabada*, (P.P.P. Vol. 31 Port Moresby, 1972).
  43. John Kasaipwalova comes from the Trobriands; a matrilineal society.
  44. Riyong, Henginike, 'The Last Call' in *Nema Namba* (P.P.P., Vol. 43, Port Moresby, 1974), p. 30-31.
  45. Tawali, Kumalau, 'The Old Woman's Message', in *Kovave* Vol. 2, No. 1, 1970, p. 11.
  46. Kituai, *op. cit.* pp. 64-65.

47. Arnold, Paul, 'The Stories', eds. M. (Centre for the Creative Arts, Port Moresby, 1973), p. 47.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
49. Those that belong to the future
50. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
52. I refrain from writing as such value judgments as future evaluators will have fallen into the history and into the for the continuing
53. Kasaipwalova, John, 'Confessional', a poem No. 2, 1971. p. 43
54. Yes indeed! Influence as school. Probably
55. Umba, *op. cit.*, p. 27
56. Kerpi, Kama, 'Kulpu's Lament', Vol. 5, No. 1, 1971
57. Kerpi, Kama, 'Occasional Call of a Midnight Bird', Port Moresby, 1971
58. Kerpi, Kama, 'Fatigue a Midnight Bird', Port Moresby, 1971
59. Hannet, Leo, 'The Five New Guinea', Port Moresby, 1971 Press, Queensland
60. Meggitt, M.J., 'The New Guinea Highland', 1958, p. 278. This marriages and of quoted Enga statue
61. Kerpi, *Kulpu's Lament*, This means she has and is now of marriage
62. The same custom Australian Aborigine Lazarus (Rev.), 'The Kovave', Vol. 1, 1970
63. Kituai, *op. cit.*, p. 64
64. See Rappaport, 'The Maring' in *Women*, eds. R. Meggitt (Prentice Hall, p. 43.
65. Kituai, *op. cit.*, p. 64
66. Hannet, Leo, 'Rai Lives' (Jacaranda Press, p. 48.



47. Arnold, Paul, 'The Arrival', in *Niugini Stories*, eds. M. Greicus and E. Brash (Centre for the Creative Arts, Port Moresby, 1973), p. 47.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
49. Those that belong to his own society.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
52. I refrain from writing 'a better education', as such value judgements are best left to future evaluators when the results of each system have fallen through the sieve of history and into the perspective of what was for the continuing good of mankind.
53. Kasaipwalova, John, 'Rooster in the Confessional', a play, in *Kovave*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1971, p. 43.
54. Yes indeed! Influence from mission as well as school. Probably the two were one.
55. Umba, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
56. Kerpi, Kama, 'Kulpu's Daughter' in *Kovave*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1974 p. 12.
57. Kerpi, Kama, 'Occasional Home Visits' in *Call of a Midnight Bird* (P.P.P., Vol 37, Port Moresby, 1973), p. 13.
58. Kerpi, Kama, 'Father Your Face', in *Call of a Midnight Bird op. cit.*, p. 37.
59. Hannet, Leo, 'The Ungrateful Daughter', in *Five New Guinea Plays* (Jacaranda Press, Queensland, 1971, pp. 33-46.)
60. Meggitt, M.J. 'The Enga of the New Guinea Highlands', in *Oceania*, Vol. 28, 1958, p. 278. This writer correlates rates of marriages and of killings to support the quoted Enga statement.
61. Kerpi, *Kulpu's Daughter*, *op. cit.*, p. 12. This means she has started to menstruate and is now of marriageable age.
62. The same custom is recorded amongst Australian Aborigines. See Lami Lami, Lazarus (Rev.), 'I Become a Minister', in *Kovave*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1970, p. 23.
63. Kituai, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
64. See Rappaport, Roy A 'Marriage Among the Maring' in *Pigs, Pearls, and Women*, eds. R.M. Glasse and M. J. Meggitt (Prentice Hall, N. Jersey, 1969), p. 43.
65. Kituai, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
66. Hannet, Leo, 'Rainmaker's Child' in *Niugini Lives* (Jacaranda Press, Queensland, 1974), p. 48.
67. Hannet, Leo, 'Disillusionment with the Priesthood' in *Kovave*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1970, p. 22.
68. Hannet, 'Rainmaker's Child', *op. cit.*, p. 48.
69. Leaves, or tree juices that 'shut the Womb'. Eastern Highlands.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
71. Langness, L.L., 'Marriage in Bena Bena', in Glasse and Meggitt.
72. *Op. cit.*, p. 43.
73. See: Brown, Paula, 'Enemies and Affines', in *Ethnology* Vol. III. No. 4, Oct, 1964, p. 339.
74. Wena, Bruno, 'Carry-leg' in *Papua New Guinea Writing*, No. 6, June 1972 pp. 6-7.
75. Lovai, Bessie, 'We stood out there', in *Kovave*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1974. p. 45.
76. Siti, Robert, 'Labu', in *Love Poems of Papua New Guinea*, (P.P.P., Vol. 8, Port Moresby, 1968).
77. Maino, Charles, 'Reluctant Girl', Mekeo Love Song, in *Love Poems of Papua New Guinea, op. cit.*
78. Opis, E. Roy (Transl.) 'Embarrassed Lover', Kainantu Love Song, in *Kovave*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1970, p. 22.
79. Kamir, John, 'Farewell Song', in *Love Poems of Papua New Guinea, op. cit.*
80. Beti, G., 'Rovana' in *Love Poems of Papua New Guinea, op. cit.*
81. Enos, Apisai, 'Hate-Love', in *High Water* (P.P.P., Vol. 24, Port Moresby, 1971)
82. Katumapula, Stephen (transl.) 'Lost Girl Friend', Kiriwina Love Song, in *Kovave*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1970, p. 20.
83. Kerpi, Kama, 'Kulpu's Daughter', *op. cit.*, p. 13.
84. Pidgin: 'the turning of the heads'
85. Pidgin: 'carry-leg' ceremony.
86. Pidgin: Women's song evening. Held in the women's house, when boys and girls meet and sing love poetry together.
87. Eri, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-89.
88. Strathern, Andrew (transl.) *Melpa Amb Kenan* (Inst. of Papua New Guinea Studies, Port Moresby, 1974), p. 29.
89. Strathern, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
90. Talyaga, Kundapen, *Enga Eda Nemago* (P.P.P., Vol. 40, Port Moresby, 1973) p. 9.
91. Timbi, Benedict, 'Turnim Head', (*Papua New Guinean Writing*, No. 7, Sept. 1972, pp. 4-5.



92. Talyaga, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
93. The name of Tolai love-magic ceremonies.
94. Tantric Yoga.
95. Enos, Apisai, (transl.) *Warbat* (P.P.P., Vol. 23, Port Moresby, 1971).
96. Enos, Apisai, 'Love Magic' in *High Water*, *op. cit.*
97. 'Meditation, *Ibid.*
98. Pidgin: a *wantok* (one talk) is literally a person who speaks ones language. In P.N.G. that usually denotes a bloodbond.
99. Quotes following, from *Kulpu's Daughter* *op. cit.*, pp. 7-9.
100. *Kulpu's Daughter*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
101. Kerpi, *Call of a Midnight Bird*, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
102. Kerpi, *Call of a Midnight Bird*, *op. cit.*, I quote the first lines and the conclusion.
103. The snake is a phallic symbol, stands for intercourse, etc.
104. Jawodimbari, Arthur, 'After Stirring the Sleeping Snake', in *Return to My Land* (P.P.P., Vol. 41, Port Moresby, 1974).
105. Kerpi, 'Public Confession' in *Call of a Midnight Bird*, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
106. Soaba, Russell, 'A Portrait of the Odd Man Out', in *Kovave* Vol. 2, 1971, pp. 11.
107. Soaba, Russell, 'The Victims', in *Kovave*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1972, pp. 16-20.
108. Soaba, Russell, 'Natives Under the Sun' in *Black Writing from New Guinea*, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-94.
109. *Lusman*, a concept in Pidgin of one who stands apart from the norm, a non-conformist in a negative sense, who may prefer unemployment to gross materialism which he rejects.
110. A counter-theme of a symbolic card game runs through the play, with implications of winning and losing.
111. Fromm, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-47.
112. Numbaru, James, a song from Yuo Island, in *Love Poems of Papua New Guinea*, *op. cit.*
113. Kasaipwalova, John, 'Kanaka's Dream', a play, in *Kovave*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1971, p. 53.
114. Baital, Jim, 'Tali', in *Greicus*, *op. cit.*
115. Lahui, *op. cit.*
116. Mapun, Bede Dus, 'Over the Cliff', *Kovave*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1972, pp. 35-38.
117. Mapun, Bede Dus, 'Awakening Birds', *Kovave*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1971, pp. 38-40.
118. Sabadi, Lahui, Rigo Love song 'The Snake Bride', in *Love Poems from Papua New Guinea*, *op. cit.*
119. Downs, Ian, F.G., *The Stolen Land* (Wren, Melbourne, 1972).
120. Bailey, John, *The Wire Classroom* (Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1972).
121. Eri, *op. cit.*, p. 107.
122. See the quoted anthology by Classe and Meggitt, *op. cit.*
123. Kadiba, John, 'Tax', *Kovave*, Vol. 1, 1969, p. 9.
124. Kavani, S.R., 'A Night Before the Flood Harvest', *Kovave*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1972, p. 48.
125. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
126. Kituai, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
127. The author told me this play contains pieces of dialogue not by his hand but inserted without his knowledge by an editor. Such passages occur on pp. 20-22, from which this quotation comes, but this one is by the author himself.
128. Wohinangu, Joseph S. (transl.) 'Your name will be heard in Saure', in *Traditional Poetry of Papua New Guinea* (P.P.P., Vol. 38, Port Moresby 1973, p. 16.
129. 'Feel Welcome'.
130. Umba, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
131. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
132. Degoba, Wauru, 'The Wife Who Came Back', *Kovave*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1971, pp. 35-38.
133. See i.e. 'My Polupiri Brother' in *Traditional Poetry of Papua New Guinea*, *op. cit.*
134. Pipi, Sally Ann, 'Regret Not', in *Papua New Guinea Writing*, No. 11, Sept. 1973, pp. 4-6.
135. Pipi, Sally Ann, 'The Reluctant Bride', *Papua New Guinea Writing*, No. 15, Sept. 1974, pp. 4-5.
136. Pidgin: an exclamation with sexual connotations applied to the sighting or thought of a goodlooking woman.
137. Kituai, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
138. *Ibid.* pp. 62-63
139. Kituai *op. cit.*, p. 83
140. Peta, Nicholas, 'To a Girl: Pamuk Meri', *Kovave*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1973, p. 30.
141. Pidgin: Pamuk-prostitute, meri-woman.
142. A selection:  
Titus, Elijah, 'Loose Woman', in *Love Poetry*, etc., *op. cit.*  
Jawodimbari, Arthur, 'My Wicked Eye', in *Wicked Eye* (P.P.P., Vol. 41, Port Moresby, 1973).
143. Mapun, Dus, 'Limits of the Wicked Eye', *ibid.*
144. Narokobi, Bernard, unpublished ms. New Guinea Library of University of Papua New Guinea.
145. Pidgin for cassowary.
146. Kerpi, *Call of a Midnight Bird*, pp. 4-6.
147. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
148. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-20
149. See: Tawali, Kumalau, 'The Night Warrior', *op. cit.*, pp. 27-31.
150. Kerpi, 'Kulpu's Daughter', *op. cit.*
151. Baital, *op. cit.*
152. Kavani, Siuras, 'Torment', (P.P.P., Vol. 34, Port Moresby, 1970, p. 11.
153. Jawodimbari, Arthur, 'The Night Warrior', Vol. 2, No. 1, 1970, p. 11.
154. Eri, *op. cit.*, pp. 165.
155. Kale, Pokwari, 'Homage to the Night Warrior', *Traditional Poetry from Papua New Guinea*, Vol. 30 Port Moresby, 1970, p. 11.
156. Krauth, Nigel, 'Introductory', *Kovave*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1971, p. 11.
157. Kituai, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39
158. Degoba, *op. cit.*, p. 31
159. Opa, Meakoro, 'My Wicked Eye', Vol. 3, No. 2, 1972, p. 5.
160. Tawali, Kumalau, 'The Night Warrior', *Modern Poetry from Papua New Guinea*, *op. cit.*
161. Tawali, Kamalau, 'The Night Warrior', *Words of Paradise*, Books, Melbourne, 1973, p. 11.
162. Tawali, Kumalau, 'The Night Warrior', etc. *op. cit.*
163. Bilum - a string net for catching fish and babies.
164. Enos Apisai, 'Unity', *Modern Poetry, op. cit.*
165. *Ibid.*



- g 'The Snake  
Papua New  
Land' (Wren,  
oom (Angus  
).  
Classe and  
Vol. 1, 1969,  
re the Flood  
2, 1972, p. 48.  
contains pieces  
l but inserted  
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, from which  
s one is by the  
l.) 'Your name  
n *Traditional  
inea* (P.P.P.,  
, p. 16.  
e Who Came  
1971, pp. 35-38.  
'in *Traditional  
inea*, op. cit.  
ot', in *Papua  
11, Sept. 1973,  
luctant Bride',  
g, No. 15, Sept.  
with sexual  
he sighting or  
woman.  
Pamuk Meri',  
73, p. 30.  
meri-woman.  
oman', in *Love  
Wicked Eye*, in*
- Wicked Eye* (P.P.P., Vol. 38, Port Moresby, 1973).  
Jawodimbari, Arthur, 'Sin Remained Sin', in *Return To My Land*, op. cit.  
Strathern, Andrew (transl.) Song No 32. in *Melpa Amb Kenan*, op. cit. Laycock, Don, (transl.) Two Buin Songs: 'Frustrated Warrior' and 'The Fickle Woman', *Kovave* Vol. 3, No. 2, 1972, pp. 23-24.  
143. Mapun, Dus, 'Limits of Liberty' in *Wicked Eye*, ibid.  
144. Narokobi, Bernard, *Death of a Muruk*, unpublished ms. New Guinea Collection, Library of University of Papua New Guinea.  
145. Pidgin for cassowary.  
146. Kerpi, *Call of a Midnight Bird*, op. cit., pp. 4-6.  
147. *Ibid.*, p. 11.  
148. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-20  
149. See: Tawali, Kumalau, 'Our Mouth', in *The Night Warrior*, ed. Ulli Beier, op. cit., pp. 27-31.  
150. Kerpi, 'Kulpu's Daughter', op. cit., p. 10.  
151. Baital, op. cit.  
152. Kavani, Siuras, 'Torn Ears', in *Bastard*, (P.P.P., Vol. 34, Port Moresby, 1973).  
153. Jawodimbari, Arthur, 'The Sun', *Kovave*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1970, pp. 46-57.  
154. Eri, op. cit., pp. 165.  
155. Kale, Pokwari, 'Homecoming', in *Modern Poetry from Papua New Guinea*, (P.P.P., Vol. 30 Port Moresby, 1972), p.7.  
156. Krauth, Nigel, 'Interpreting the Signs', *Kovave*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1971, p. 43.  
157. Kituai, op. cit., 38-39, 48-49.  
158. Degoba, op. cit., p. 35.  
159. Opa, Meakoro, 'My Agony', *Kovave*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1972, p. 5.  
160. Tawali, Kumalau, 'The River Flows', in *Modern Poetry from Papua New Guinea*, op. cit.  
161. Tawali, Kamalau, 'T'chani Ceremony' in *Words of Paradise* ed. Ulli Beier (Sun Books, Melbourne, 1972), pp. 24-25.  
162. Tawali, Kumalau, 'Niu' in *Modern Poetry*, etc. op. cit.  
163. Bilum - a string netbag to carry produce and babies.  
164. Enos Apisai, 'Unity' in *High Water and Modern Poetry*, op. cit.  
165. *Ibid.*

166. *Ibid.*  
167. Japhlom, Paul, 'Mop's Wife and Gai, The Stone Axe', *Kovave*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1974, p. 53.  
168. Kavani, Sirua, 'Black Woman' in *Bastard*, op. cit.  
169. Riyong, Henginike, 'Beauty', in *Nema Namba*, op. cit.  
170. Enos, Apisai, 'Ingal', in *High Water and Modern Poetry*, op. cit.  
171. Enos, Apisai, 'Love is a Rainbow', in *High Water and Modern Poetry*, etc. op. cit.  
172. Lamo, Gapi, 'Our Flag' in *Siboda Henari* (P.P.P., Vol. 45. Port Moresby, 1975).  
173. Riyong, Henginike, 'Come Under My Wings' in *Siboda Henari*, op. cit.  
174. Opa, Makeu, 'My Island,' *ibid.*  
175. Opa, Makeu, 'Solidarity', *ibid.*  
176. Jawodimbari, Arthur, 'Joe the Rascal', *Kovave*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1973, p. 23.  
177. Baital, op. cit., pp. 102-103 cf.  
178. Baital, op. cit., p. 125  
179. Kasaipwalova, John Hanuabada (P.P.P., Vol. 31, Port Moresby, 1972.).  
180. Hanua-village, bada-big. Motu language.  
181. Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*, (Penguin, 1973), p. 31.  
182. Kasaipwalova, *Reluctant Flame*, op. cit.  
183. Koki is the main marketplace near Port Moresby.  
184. Kasaipwalova, *Hanuabada*, op. cit.  
185. *Ibid.*  
186. Lamo, Gapi, 'Lonely Heart', *Kovave*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1973, p. 22.  
187. Kerpi, *Kulpu's Daughter*, op. cit., p. 13  
188. Soaba, Russell, *Portrait of the Odd Man Out*, op. cit., p. 11.  
189. Kasaipwalova, *Reluctant Flame*, op. cit.  
190. Kasaipwalova, *Hanuabada*, op. cit.  
191. Mazrui, Ali 'Political Sex', in *Transition*, Vol. 4, No. 17, 1964, p. 19.  
192. This term by courtesy of Adrian Rowe-Evans, from his article 'Love is Touching', *Transition*, Vol. 4, No. 17. 1964, p. 11.  
193. Eri, op. cit., pp. 22-23.  
194. See Kerpi, *Kulpu's Daughters*, op. cit., p. 13.

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# REVIEWS TUKANA - Husat i Asua?

## THE ARAWA BULLETIN

One Monday, Papua New Guinea's third feature film with full national participation was launched at the Paraka Tavern.

The Premier, Mr Leo Hannett, opened the proceedings and welcomed those present including several people who had parts in the film and thanked those who had made donations towards the making of the film. He said the film marked a very successful collaboration between the Provincial Government and the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies and he thanked all those who had given their co-operation and worked very hard to complete TUKANA.

The idea of making a film came about as the result of research carried out in the North Solomons by the Education Research Unit. During this research project many people in villages around the Province expressed strong views about the social problems and changes which were affecting their lives. It was felt that one of the best ways of encouraging people to think about and understand these problems was to make a film which looked at some of the aspects of life in the North Solomons today. Thus TUKANA is not just an entertainment, but has social and educational purposes as well and judging from the reactions of these present on Monday night, it should be an astounding success.

TUKANA can be looked at on many levels but essentially it examines conflict; particularly between the traditional versus the modern way of life; old values versus the new. This conflict is expressed for example by Tukana's romance with Lucy in defiance of his parents' plans for an arranged marriage. However I would not like to give an impression that the film concentrates solely on ideas: it moves swiftly and is laced with witty and humorous moments (some of which

may pass over the head of the non-Pidgin speaker), as we follow Tukana through a series of experiences in his village and in Panguna where he works for BCL.

The role of the young man Tukana, is played by Albert Toro, who is a member of the National Theatre Company and also wrote the script and was Co-Director (a tall order!) His performance was outstanding and profoundly moving in many scenes. He was ably supported by a cast of talented actresses and actors none of whom had any precious acting experience. They seemed to take to their roles with amazing ease; a fine achievement for them and the Director Chris Owen. I am sure that many people will be surprised and delighted to see fellow workers, relations as well as well-known figures around the Province taking on new roles with such enthusiasm. Special mention must go to Timothy Hamanin and Emily Beani, who played Tukana's father and mother, and Regina Tulsa, Francesca Samosa and Wenceslas Noruke. The latter two were grade 10 high school students when TUKANA was filmed and they both displayed considerable maturity in their large roles.

The film was made in a variety of locations including Buka, Togorau, Buin, Panguna and Arawa and the photography is sensitive and very beautiful. Technically the film is a great achievement. It is very rare that a full length feature film of this quality is made for K80, 000 and with such a small technical crew. Chris Owen, who is the film maker for the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, manned the only camera used for the film and the rest of the crew comprised the editor and sound technician, Les McLaren, a make-up and costume technician, Ann Stiven, Co-Director Albert Toro and Executive Producer Graeme Kemelfield.

The film does have faults—any film has—and many of the faults could probably be righted in future productions. Given the restrictions of time, budget and the inexperience of the cast a remarkable job has been done and everyone connected with TUKANA and the people of the Province and PNG should be very proud of it. The Premier said on Monday night, "if TUKANA achieves its social and educational aims and is also a financial success, other films will hopefully follow" - let's hope so. Don't miss it!

## TUKANA

The film Tukana is a joint production of the North Solomons Education Research Unit at the University of the South Pacific, Honiara, and the National Government. The aim is to provide education in the North Solomons and to serve the needs of the people and reflects their culture and traditions.

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Parents worried about the future of their children, educated in the custom of the community, or disoriented by the modern school. One area of concern was when the customary lives with the modern. The damaging effects of the modern life also provoked strong reactions in North Solomons. The film is a joint production of the North Solomons Education Research Unit at the University of the South Pacific, Honiara, and the National Government. The aim is to provide education in the North Solomons and to serve the needs of the people and reflects their culture and traditions.

Other events made the film a joint production of the North Solomons Education Research Unit at the University of the South Pacific, Honiara, and the National Government. The aim is to provide education in the North Solomons and to serve the needs of the people and reflects their culture and traditions.



## TUKANA

Graeme Kemelfield

The film *Tukana* has been produced for the North Solomons Education Research Project.

This is a joint project of the Educational Research Unit at the University of Papua New Guinea, and the North Solomons Provincial Government. The aim of the project is to develop education in the North Solomons so that it truly serves the needs of the people of the province, and reflects their culture. In 1979 a group of 10 North Solomons students and graduates from the University interviewed parents and community leaders across the province as part of the project. They recorded the strong feelings which many rural people had about what was happening in their community life. They spoke with much concern about conflicts between older and younger community members, and between modern and traditional life styles. Worries about the behaviour of young people were expressed by community government officials.

Parents worried that children were not educated in the custom and culture of their community, or disregarded it after going to school. One area of conflict which caused a lot of anxiety was when children married outside customary lives without consulting their parents. The damaging effects of alcohol on community life also provoked strong feelings. These tensions in North Solomons Society have to be seen against the background of the dramatic changes which began to take place in the province in the 1960s and 1970s as the huge Bougainville Copper and Gold Mine was carved out of the mountain known as the Crown Prince Range in central Bougainville. This brought the development of Arawa town, and the arrival in the province of thousands of workers from Australia and also from other parts of Papua New Guinea into what had been a relatively remote part of the country with its own distinct and proud ways of life.

Other events made their impact too — the widespread development of the island's cash crops especially cocoa, the spread of modern education with many young people travelling out of the province for further studies and employment. The rural communities which largely make up North Solomons Society have had their culture shaken by the heavy intrusion of the outside world and other values beliefs and ways of life. How could people be helped to gain

greater understanding of the changes and conflicts these events have provoked?

For the provincial government, this was an important educational task: to create social and political awareness, so that the people of the province could be active in shaping their own future rather than being passive victims of social change.

As co-ordinator of the North Solomons Education Research Project, I proposed to the Provincial Government that one way of making a direct impact on people's minds would be to dramatize some of the issues and conflicts troubling North Solomons society in the form of a story and I proposed the medium of film for this.

My suggestion for making a film came out of research I had done several years before on the film 'WOKABAUT BILONG TONTEN' in a rural community. I was impressed with the fact that people not only enjoyed the film, but that they gained a very clear and vivid understanding of the message of the film which stayed in their memory. In addition, a film could be played many times to audiences across the province and in other parts of Papua New Guinea. It seemed the right medium to use.

These arguments were discussed by the Provincial secretarial and the Provincial Executive Council, and the idea was accepted. It was agreed that the purpose of the film would be to stimulate debate and discussion about the concerns which the people of the province had expressed — conflict between older and younger generations and modern and traditional ways of life. An important decision was that showings of the film should be followed by community forums so that it could really do its task of community education. The Provincial Government hoped by this means to set up a real dialogue within communities and between the Provincial Government and the people of the province. I therefore set about initiating the film project as part of the North Solomons Education Research Project. My first task was to find a script writer and a story. I approached a small group of North Solomons writers living in Port Moresby, and invited them to submit a story line.

Several ideas were proposed but there was general agreement that the script should be developed by Albert Toro, a member of the National Theatre Company. The purpose of the film was explained to him and the broad themes



which should be included in the story. He was given some of the statements made by parents and community leaders talking in their own words about their worries and concerns. A further suggestion was that he should include some historical background showing the events and experience North Solomons people had lived through. Albert quickly prepared an original story called 'Tukana' and turned it into a full dialogue script. This was to be revised as many as six times before the film was finally shot. In order to gain an understanding of what kind of messages audiences were likely to get from the film, we decided to organise a study session on the script with a group of mature education students at the University. First of all they looked at an earlier film scripted by Albert Toro, 'THE FOURTH CHILD', so that they were familiar with Albert's style of writing and creating characters. Then they did a play reading of the script of 'TUKANA', first looking at the kinds of characters he had created. They noted, for example, that he had a tendency to idealise the women in his scripts and that often his male characters tended to be shown as inferior or rascals. They also had valuable comments to make about the kind of message the script put across to an audience and this analysis was fed to the scriptwriters.

This process of improving the screenplay was then continued between Albert Toro and the Director of the film, Chris Owen, so that it was reworked as many as six times even during the shooting of the film.

The choice of Director was also a critical matter for the success of TUKANA. Discussions about the film were held with possible directors in Australia as well as Papua New Guinea. Finally Chris Owen, film maker for the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies was invited to direct TUKANA. It was some of the scenes from Chris's documentary film *The RED BOWMEN* set in the West Sepik which suddenly made me sure in my mind that Chris was the film-maker we needed to create TUKANA. His films seem to come alive with his inner feeling for Papua New Guinean people and landscapes. It was felt certain that he could realise the dramatic potential of Albert Toro's script. In fact, the intense working relationship which developed between Chris Owen and Albert was what gave life to TUKANA as the written screenplay was trans-

lated into drama on film.

The other memorable thing during the production was the interaction between the actors as they lived and worked together. During the period when the film was being rehearsed, one of the actors, a village man, said one night in Buka what an important experience it was in his life. He said, "for years I used to sit at home in the village and think about things like problems of drop-outs, but my thoughts just went into my head and out again. Here we all sit and discuss the ideas which are in the film for half the night, and I feel I am really learning and understanding what is happening to us. I am very glad about it".

Another actor said, "it has all been like a dream to me. It is wonderful to think we can make something like this."

How were the actors and actresses selected for TUKANA? It was decided to audition in four of the provincial high schools, inviting people from villages or people working with Bougainville Copper or in town to take part, as well as Grade 9 and 10 high school students. Those people who came to auditions were given lines to learn and then were recorded on videotape, so that the production team could compare their acting ability and what sort of personality they would project on film.

Other actors and actresses were recommended. Some were well-known actors in village *tumbuna* plays, like Nohang who does a brilliant imitation of Japanese soldiers during the war. Timothy Hamanin who plays Tukana's father in the film has previously acted in a performance of a play by Leo Hannett in Arawa. Of all the actors in TUKANA, only Albert Toro had any real, professional acting experience. It is stunning what a depth of acting ability there is in the province and what powerful performances can be drawn from people who will continue to lead a normal village life or industrial working life.

Before production could begin, however, guaranteed sources of finance for the film had to be found. The cost of TUKANA was estimated at K79,000 by the Director, Chris Owen. The Provincial Government Executive Council voted K25,000 as its contribution to the film. As Executive Producer I then worked with the help of the Provincial Planner and Research Officer to raise the remaining funds. The first big break came with the donation of K20,000 by the Panguna Development Foundation. This was

followed by a grant from the Papua New Guinea Biological Foundation. The Institute of Education contributed to the formal Education Studies. Funds were received from private business concerns in the Solomons. The co-producer and contributor both in terms of money and resources was the Institute of Education Studies.

The sum of around K100,000 was the budget for making the film. Nevertheless, it is not a justification for the film. TUKANA has been made for the first purpose is as a film for people in their communities to raise awareness. Dramatic impact on people because of the emotions they can raise about conflicts between young people and traditional life style: police, alcohol abuse, and the impact of industry on people's lives so that people's lives so that the film is about what is happening to their society affecting their human rights. The film should encourage them to make choices they can make for their society. By doing this the film is about the passive victims of the Pacific war, as well as the developments in the Pacific.



followed by a grant of K12,500 from the New Guinea Biological Foundation. The Department of Education contributed K5,000 from its Non-formal Education Section, and other donations were received from public corporations and private business companies in the North Solomons. The co-producer and the other major contributor both in technical and financial resources was the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies.

The sum of around K80,000 is a very small budget for making a dramatic feature film. Nevertheless, it is necessary to ask what the real justification is for this kind of investment in a film. TUKANA has two important purposes. The first purpose is as a tool for the education of people in their communities to educate them in awareness. Dramatic films are able to have great impact on people because of the feelings and emotions they can raise. TUKANA deals with conflicts between youth and older people in the community, and between modern and traditional life style: problems of marriage, and alcohol abuse, and the impact of towns and industry on people's lives. It holds up a mirror to people's lives so that they can see what is happening to their society, and reflect on how it is affecting their human relations and values. It should encourage them to think hard about the choices they can make about the future of their society. By doing this they will no longer be passive victims of their history, which has included the intrusion of blackbirding and the Pacific war, as well as recent mining developments in the province. The Provincial

Government will encourage community leaders to seriously debate the issues which TUKANA raises.

The Premier of the North Solomons, Leo Hannett, had said that TUKANA is an important step in the development of people's lives in the province, because they can see through the film what they are capable of achieving as people and be proud of it, as well as gaining maturity by facing their social problems.

The other vital purpose of TUKANA is a cultural one. It is to show that the North Solomons and other parts of Papua New Guinea do not have to be dependent on a diet of films, often rubbish film - from Western world or Asia, illustrating Western or Asian cultures, for their entertainment. The cinema at Panguna is filled nightly with Bougainville Copper workers watching films from overseas.

TUKANA is a professional production which is both serious and entertaining. It shows many aspects of PNG Culture and daily life, and makes a serious comment on it. It should also be greatly appreciated as popular TUKANA. If it is a commercial success, then the Provincial Government would like to continue the very fruitful collaboration it has had with the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies to produce more films, and to contribute to the development of a small local film industry. The cost of this might prove small compared to the social and educational impact such films are able to have. As the North Solomons Premier said at the first showing of TUKANA in Arawa, "perhaps this will be the beginning of great things to come".



## NIUGINI NEWS

John Kolia

In his previous films, the ethnographic film-maker Chris Owen has had to wait for hours and days for the right scene to occur naturally. In his feature film, TUKANA, he has had to set up every scene and no doubt 'bully' actors and actresses into giving performances, and a lot more.

The film demonstrates that a considerable pool of acting and writing talent exists. Almost the entire cast is non-professional. We can now see that with limited financial resources, it is possible to produce a film of professional quality; a fact that should be borne in mind by future programmers of the proposed television service in this country. This film will be shown commercially in all areas of Papua New Guinea.

On the surface, the film tells the story of a young man with a not unfamiliar problem. He wants to marry one girl, his parents want him to marry another. But the script by Albert Toro and the interpretation of the script by the film-maker tells us more than that. It carries the social message that excessive drinking does not help to solve problems. However, it does not beat you over the head with the message; it still has high entertainment value.

The idea of making a film for community education was originally proposed by Graeme Kemelfield of the North Solomons Education

Research Project. It is jointly produced by the North Solomons Government and the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies. Albert Toro of the National Theatre Company, also appears in the leading part. His Pidgin carries every nuance and was picked up delightedly by the audience on the night I saw the film. Francesca Semoso, who plays the part of the *other* girl with convincing bitchiness, is now at the Theatre Company but was then a school girl. Other convincing performances were given by Regina Talsa as the *respectable* girl, Emily Beani as the mother, and particular Wenceslas Noruke as the friend. Noruke's scenes with Albert Toro are among the most natural in the film for all that they were often low-key ones.

Visually the film is most impressive; one remembers the interesting village scenes, the beautiful beach, the dramatic taverns and the outstanding shot of machinery at the copper mine. The behaviour of the unpaid extras, the 'street-people' is surprisingly natural. Almost nobody turns around to see the film being made around them, and yet there are some complicated scenes with large numbers of bodies in view. This way not so; in fact in the brawl scene, some of the onlookers tried to join in, but we do not see this in the finished film.

The film carries the additional bonus for those of us who have not been to the North Solomons by showing us what such places as Arawa and Buka look like.

## TIMES OF PAPUA

The Educational Research Unit of Papua New Guinea Provincial Government, New Guinea Studies, Foundation and other support for the project was only K80,000; this is shoestring film making.

TUKANA tells the story of a young man returning to his home village, Passage, North Solomons, to marry Josephine, and settle down. He takes up with Josephine, who drops out of his life long and hard. But Josephine when his bride price exchange while Lucy has remained, but her *wan* Tukana and they Josephine. In the succumbs, and she is truck driver. Tukan to drop back in and

Such is the bar doesn't in fact have influenced morality with life and energy not only the director of PNG Studies, a of the National Theatre Company (Tukana), but the writer of the film. Graeme Kemelfield of the Research Unit, forward from an interest out of UPNG students people subject to in post - copper focus of the film generations, between new philosophies. and a grant of government. It is



## TIMES OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Peter King

The Educational Research Unit at the University of Papua New Guinea, the North Solomons Provincial Government, the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, the Panguna Development Foundation and other groups besides have had a hand in TUKANA. Despite widespread support for the project, however the final budget was only K80,000; tiny by world standards. This is shoestring film making - but excellent all the same.

TUKANA tells the story of a university dropout returning to his native village in Buka Passage, North Solomons. His parents want Tukana to marry a *tokples* school teacher, Josephine, and settle down. But he secretly slips away to Panguna and a driving job with BCL. He takes up with Lucy, a high school student who drops out herself later on and he also drinks long and hard. But he returns home to marry Josephine when his parents actually begin the bride price exchange and summon him. Meanwhile Lucy has resumed an affair with another man, but her *wantoks* favour marriage with Tukana and they organise sorcery against Josephine. In the climactic scene Josephine succumbs, and she is killed by a drunken hit-run truck driver. Tukana is left alone but he decides to drop back in and become a school teacher.

Such is the bare plot of TUKANA, but it doesn't in fact have the feel of a mission-influenced morality-tale. Indeed it is bursting with life and energy for which we must thank not only the director, Chris Owen of the Institute of PNG Studies, and writer actor Albet Toro of the National Theatre Company (who plays Tukana), but the whole genesis and gestation of the film. Graeme Kemelfield of the Educational Research Unit, UPNG, carries the project forward from an initial idea in 1979 which grew out of UPNG student interviews with local people subject to the pressure of social change in post-copper North Solomons. Hence the focus of the film on conflict - between generations, between life-styles, between old and new philosophies. The project had full support and a grant of K25,000 from the provincial government. It has already been released to

North Solomons audiences and screenings are being followed by community forums on the issues raised in the film. Premier Leo Hannett is reported very pleased, and there is talk of more film projects. Some of the participants are ecstatic about their experience of the film, and it is easy to understand why.

Albert Toro has used his *tok pisin* script to bring alive not just the conflicts in North Solomons society but its characters and personalities as well. The cast - all amateurs save Albert himself - has performed with great dignity and distinction, especially Francesca Samosa and Regina Tulsa who play the two girls competing for Tukana, and Wenceslas Noruke who plays Tukana's side-kick, Tohiana. The casting was carefully done by auditions well in advance, and there was also some rehearsal, although the film crew was too small to sustain the effort. Lack of rehearsal - and of a full shooting script - scarcely shows. Most scenes carry conviction effortlessly. There is no camera shyness and little awkwardness.

The crew was tiny. Director Chris Owen doubled - or rather trebled as camera operator and lighting specialist. Les McLaren of Nomad Films as sound recordist mixed many of his tracks on the spot, and later edited and soundmixed the film, while Ann Stiven did makeup and costumes. Albert Toro added co-director to his other roles of writer and reading actor. The technical virtuosity of this crew must be applauded. They were lucky to have a prince of cameras, a French Aaton, and their Nagra sound recorder had the benefit of three input channels hooked up for many scenes to three radio microphones pinned on the leading actors. But most of the shooting had to be hand held, and the not-so-athletic looking Chris Owen has performed wonders with his tracking shots. His lighting and non-lighting also deserve a word. A few of the more ravishing interiors have light streaming up into the frame from slats in the floor. And the dazzling hues and textures, the jungle, the skies, the reef waters of North Solomons are made palpable for ever.

And then there are the people and the life. There have been a few complaints about the Buin bikies who drink while riding, and there may be others about the shot of the homicidal truck driver downing his SP. The torrid drinking scenes in and around the tavern at the Panguna



mines are also controversial. But all of these incidents and episodes can be easily verified by Bougainville watchers. TUKANA holds a mirror up to society, and the tavern brawl was so realistic and the drinkers so disturbed by the unwanted silence of the juke box that the real life Albert Toro was punched to the ground, a case of life imitating art.

TUKANA was shot in four interrupted months during 1980-81, but it's not really finished now, a year later. K10,000 would buy an English subtitled version for release abroad and perhaps relieve the IPNGS of distribution anxieties. Are there any benefactors out there?

"Yu wanpela dropaut" and "Yu spakman,

tasol" will lose something in translation, but the world will learn a lot from TUKANA in an English version. At one kina per seat TUKANA will make no fortune in PNG, and all its financiers have in fact generously written off their investments. Profits if any will go to a trust fund for a North Solomons media centre or another film. But before the profits are spent, TUKANA should be given a chance of getting on world television screens and the festival circuit.

TUKANA will have its Port Moresby premiere at the Waigani Arts Centre on 1 March, and will be showing at the Main lecture Theatre and the Open Air Theatre, UPNG in the following week.

## THE POST COUR

TUKANA, Papua length feature film PNG's main lectu it's best that you go certainly find much probably find some are tuned in to the you'll recognise the what this film as a

Conceived and Solomons this film in that province. financed by the Government to do it says belongs to t (played by Albert T North Solomons without gaining a c village. His paren failure and distre village - he won't v for his elders...he their plans to ma 'escapes' to Pang noise of the mine interest and absor

There's a girl t miss - the kind th audiences will w selfconfident and village and she's beautiful, but to n village way of life



## Elton Brash

TUKANA, Papua New Guinea's second full-length feature film opens at the University of PNG's main lecture theatre on Tuesday and it's best that you go and see it for yourself. You'll certainly find much to interest you. You'll also probably find something to criticise and, if you're tuned in to the contemporary PNG scene, you'll recognise the validity and importance of what this film is all about.

Conceived and produced in the North Solomons this film dramatizes important issues in that province. Indeed it was planned and financed by the North Solomons Provincial Government to do just that. But much of what it says belongs to the nation as a whole. Tukana (played by Albert Toro) is a young man from the North Solomons who drops out of University without gaining a degree and returns to his home village. His parents are disappointed at his failure and distressed by his behavior in the village - he won't work...he doesn't show respect for his elders...he drinks too much. He rejects their plans to marry him to a village girl and 'escapes' to Panguna. The pace, swagger and noise of the mine and the mining town holds his interest and absorbs his energies for a while.

There's a girl too- Lucy, much the modern miss - the kind that predominantly male PNG audiences will want to leer at. She's lively, self-confident and apparently liberated from the village and she's beautiful. Josephine is also beautiful, but to marry her is to marry the whole village way of life.

The dramatic action of this film takes place in a field of tension between the opposing attractions and forces of the village and the town, the traditional and the modern between Josephine and Lucy. It is in this field that Tukana the hero proud, defiant, is ill at ease. His encounters with parents, villagers, shopkeepers, fellow drinkers in the tavern, generate feeling and humour. His preferred language is *tok pisin* and the dialogue of the film is lively and colloquial. As Albert Toro was the script writer, full credit for this achievement must go to him. Through his work this film once again demonstrates that *tok pisin*, well used, in the best medium for mass communication in this nation.

The film offers some noticeable achievements in characterisation and acting. Apart from Albert Toro's lead role which he carries easily and confidently, the viewers will find portrayal of Tukana's mother (Emily Beani) consistently strong. Josephine (Francesca Samoso) and Lucy (Regina Talsa) are contrasting types, successfully characterised and portrayed. Chris Owen's camera work is first rate. As the eye of the film he offers an intimate and clear view of what is happening. I was also impressed by the artistry of many of the shots, although on occasions I was aware they were extraneous.

The pace and rhythm of this film is not that of the popular modern imported feature film. MARABE was slow and so to a degree, is TUKANA. But audience reaction shows that Papua New Guineans do go along with that kind of pace. As Papua New Guinean scripwriters and producers continue to work they will have to judge how fast or slow should be the pace and rhythm of their work.



## UNI TAVUR

Loujaya Kouza

It's Monday, the time is 7.45 pm and I'm in the Waigani Arts Theatre drinking a glass of Orchy.

The film TUKANA is to begin at 8.00 pm.

I look and feel inconspicuous among the Government ministers, and Archbishop, private secretaries, actors, film makers and many others.

They all mingled together drinking Orchy or wine in the foyer.

A speech of welcome breaks the hum and buzz of gossip and excitement.

The Culture Minister, Mr. Steven Tago thanks the people responsible for making TUKANA. He was followed by his North Solomons counterpart, Mrs. Leonie Onsa, who received a hearty round of applause, when she told Mr. Tago to concentrate more on the peoples' culture.

This mood of heartiness was changed when John Kasaipwalova, the director of the National Cultural Council reminded everyone of the late Seg Putahu, a camera man in his mid-20's from the Mortlock Islands who was sent to London to attend an international film school.

He hoped to produce a film about the Mortlocks on his return but unfortunately died in 1980 in a terrorist explosion in London.

Mr. Putahu had written poems which were

published in BIKMAUS, he acted in the FOURTH CHILD and worked for a time with puppets in the National Theatre Company.

Mr. Kasaipwalova reminded the audience what Putahu would have been and done.

With his final words the premiere was opened, applause broke out and people surged through the door into that theatre.

The lights dimmed in the small packed auditorium. A hush fell over the audience ... TUKANA, HUSAT I ASUA?

TUKANA, in Pidgin, was ideal for a Papua New Guinea audience. Those who did not suffer from the communication problem, of not understanding, were engulfed in the story.

Tukana, a young university student who flunked his course only to return home to a planned marriage....

.... his parents, their expectations, his girlfriend, Lucy, the sophisticated elite living in Panguna.

.... Josephine, the girl his parents chose for him, his drinking mates at BCL.

These and a lot more all add up to the reality of PNG life. The tone of seriousness and humour are expressed perfectly in Pidgin.

Important aspects of social life are portrayed, the planned marriage system, drinking and sorcery.

TUKANA—it was made to make us think.

## TUKANA

The school dropout theme in Papua New Guinea is a decade now. One comes to mind in Paul THE SCHOOL DROP is a dropout from the with a band of class the hope of securing a long before Aimbe seekers discovered th because they were Quickly, hunger, insul before long members village pride and w respect. Quite a few different crimes and

TUKANA is a dro It begins in the same out stories with your search for education soft job in a prestigio difference is that T University level. Tuk he was home during Though the news m wardly, on the surfac disappointment at a cousin in Papua Ne rously shared the nev fishing. It was the fat disappointment and working hard enoug New Guinea traditi began to make enqu Josephine, a girl fr parents were conduct modern way was co letter and exchang Tukana did not wa this was one reaso village.

In Panguna Tuka the work habits and I a successful bulldoze in establishing hims close bond of poroi captured very well i the pub in Panguna number of his cliqu Panguna he easily vi in Kieta at weekend



## TUKANA

Bernard Minol

The school dropout problem has been a major theme in Papua New Guinea literature well over a decade now. One major attempt that directly comes to mind in Paulias Matane's novel, *AIMBE, THE SCHOOL DROPOUT*. Matane's Aimbe is a dropout from the village primary school who with a band of class mates, walked into town in the hope of securing employment. It did not take long before Aimbe and his group of fortunate-makers discovered that they could not get a job because they were not sufficiently qualified. Quickly, hunger, insult and desperation set in and before long members of the group had lost their village pride and with it their personal self-respect. Quite a few of them were caught for different crimes and found themselves in jail.

*TUKANA* is a dropout story with a difference. It begins in the same manner as our other dropout stories with young Tukana leaving home in search for education, with it perhaps a future job in a prestigious public service office. The difference is that Tukana drops out at the University level. Tukana learnt of his fate while he was home during the Christmas vacation. Though the news must have shocked him inwardly, on the surface Tukana did not show any disappointment at all. In fact, he and a close cousin in Papua New Guinea fashion, humorously shared the news as they were on their way fishing. It was the father who showed the greatest disappointment and reproved Tukana for not working hard enough. Again in typical Papua New Guinea tradition the father immediately began to make enquiries to have Tukana marry Josephine, a girl from the village. While the parents were conducting enquiries, Tukana in the modern way was corresponding with Lucy by letter and exchanging photographs. Initially Tukana did not want to marry Josephine and this was one reason behind him leaving the village.

In Panguna Tukana quickly adapts himself to the work habits and life rhythm of the mine. He is a successful bulldozer driver and also successful in establishing himself as a member of a very close bond of *poromans*. This comradeship is captured very well in the scene of the brawl at the pub in Panguna where during the punch-up a number of his clique come to his rescue. From Panguna he easily visits Lucy who was studying in Kieta at weekends. While all this is going on,

Tukana is troubled by developments taking place in his village and the standing request for him to return home to finalise marriage arrangements.

While Tukana is having a good time in Panguna, the parents continue to prepare for his marriage with Josephine. As required by tradition, Josephine was ritually brought to live with Tukana's parents. Eventually when Tukana came home, he discovered that his sweetheart Lucy had left him for another boy. At the same time he found that Josephine had become part of his parents' household. Tukana accordingly marries Josephine, the village girl. This symbolises the fact that Tukana accepted the village way of life.

Though the film highlighted the problems faced by dropouts, it is made in such a way that members of the audience laughed rather than cried. As the full title of the film asks, *TUKANA — HUSAI I ASUA?* or whose problem is it? From the audience point of view Tukana had no problems, he fitted very well into the Panguna life and after minor adjustments he was beginning to settle down into the village life. The general reaction of the audience was more for enjoyment than following the fate of the dropout. After all the aim of every film is to entertain. This is exactly what *TUKANA* has successfully done.

For a serious film critic the story of the success and failures of the school dropout was clear but the ordinary film-goer was more engrossed with the entertaining way the characters presented their Tok Pisin lines. The naturalness of the actors and actresses is enough evidence that there is quite a lot of natural talent in Papua New Guinea. I refer in particular to Tukana himself, Lucy and Tukana's parents. The film *Tukana* has clearly demonstrated that Papua New Guinean films bring out more responses from Papua New Guineans than films from outside.

The success of the film *Tukana* lies in the use of Tok Pisin. Constantly the audience would yell in laughter as Tukana or Lucy or Tukana's father comes out with a funny Tok Pisin line. For instance at one point some of Tukana's mates were saying that the parents have already marked a wife for him. Tukana in his usual humorous ways, "Sapos ol i passim, ol yet i maritim." Other Tok Pisin expressions which brought great applause from Papua New Guinea audience were: "Lucy, tinging blong mi i pas tru long yu" (Tukana). "Wari long wanem samting"



(Tukana), "Nogut hand blong mi i deti" (Lucy). The film has demonstrated emphatically that to get more out of Papua New Guinea (both actors/actress and audience) one must use their language. Tok Pisin is the language of Papua New Guineans and more of our artists should utilise it.

Tukana is a film that must go to all the provinces in the country because it is one film that all Papua New Guineans will enjoy. With the success of Tukana behind them I am sure Chris Owen and his colleagues will go onto greater things for the Papua New Guinea screens.

## TUKANA - FOOD FOR

Black Feiva (Favour) words you hear in and a Usually these phrases refer write this in a beautiful way like to sound like a racist

Early in March, Port Moresby flocked into well-known first time TUKANA, a film from the Solomons, also written by Mr Albert Toro. Waigani University of Papua New Guinea Theatre and Open Air Theatre

Two weeks before the film went around like fire and all newspapers ran descriptive publications.

I felt enlightened because Bougainville very much a (1982) to take up further thoughts, 'now is the chance to glimpse at some of the old film I left behind a few months were also shared by a fellow from Buka. For him to see the heart of his village told me, "I feel like going

The day came. Students toea, which was not too much K11.00 pocket allowance fortnight. When we took lecture room was already number of people had to sit. Lights were switched off at silence. The audience listened intently.

Then the first roar of laughter seeing TUKANA at the time where people were drinking Reuben Tokome official that belonged to some Western people.

All in all, TUKANA is an enjoyable and humorous Pidgin, with some mixture perfect film for PNG audience, sure, it has brought reality to students.

Tukana is a University



## TUKANA - FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Kali. L. Sete.

Black Feiva (Favour) or Black Beautiful are words you hear in and around Port Moresby. Usually these phrases refer to Bougainvilleans. I write this in a beautiful way and in no way would like to sound like a racist. Far from it.

Early in March, Port Moresby residents flocked into well-known theatres to see for the first time TUKANA, a film made in the North Solomons, also written by a Bougainvillean, Mr Albert Toro. Waigani Theatre and the University of Papua New Guinea's Main Lecture Theatre and Open Air Theatre were the venues.

Two weeks before the screening dates, word went around like fire about this film. Major newspapers ran descriptions about it in their publications.

I felt enlightened because somehow I missed Bougainville very much after leaving in January (1982) to take up further studies here at UPNG. I thought, 'now is the chance for me to have a glimpse at some of the old faces and the environment I left behind a few months ago'. My feelings were also shared by a fellow student who hails from Buka. For him to see the film made him see the heart of his village. So after the show, he told me, "I feel like going home!"

The day came. Students had to pay only 50 toea, which was not too much to save from our K11.00 pocket allowance that we receive every fortnight. When we took our seats, the large lecture room was already crowded. A large number of people had to stand view TUKANA. Lights were switched off and there was complete silence. The audience listened and watched intently.

Then the first roar of laughter came. It was for seeing TUKANA at the background of a scene where people were dancing after politician Reuben Tokome officially opening a building that belonged to some Wakunai business-minded people.

All in all, TUKANA-HUSAT I ASUA, was an enjoyable and humorous film. Expressed in Pidgin, with some mixture of English, it was a perfect film for PNG audience. One thing for sure, it has brought reality to a lot of University students.

Tukana is a University drop-out. Contrary to

this, I know of a student who graduated in February (1982) and is still waiting to hear from potential employers.

'Greetings na Electric Love,' a phrase often used by Radio North Solomons - Maus Long Sankamap, was used in the film. This brought giggles to girls sitting next to their sweethearts in the audience. The old man who recalled the Second World War with his comedy on machine guns stole the show. He was just great. People were surprised to see an aeroplane like Bougain's Sky Van still in operation. Good old plane, faithful plane, still serving the province. Tukana did not like it because it flew him to the wrong destination. It was his fault. He turned up at the *ples bahus* still drunk. Famous Buin town came into view. A town with no policeman? As Joseph Numuki put it, "Buin anytime. Mipela nogat lo na oda". Oh, the scene earlier on about the Arawa Supermarket. I thought that was fantastic. It outclassed some of the shops we have here in the Capital, except for the price of goods .....well I think I would rather shop around here than across there.

Back in the village, idling and doing a fair day's work with satisfaction is quite obvious. Today, young people cause more headaches for the older folks than they are used to. TUKANA portrays that reality of PNG life quite well. Village leaders are trying their best to solve problems brought about by what we call 'civilization'. For a village leader to tell his rebellious elite daughter, Lucy, about single girls getting pregnant at universities is not to be laughed at. The audience here clapped and laughed at this striking fact because they know it is a fact of life here at the Campus. Fortunately it did not happen to Lucy, who brought a lot of mixed feelings to the audience. Josephine should be admired for hidden obedience to her culture. Unfortunately she received the wrong end of the stick and this brought a sad ending but new hope for Tukana. The traditional marriage arrangement with today's young people's desire to choose their life partners, and drinking while trying to talk about sensitive matters such as land, are all part of our changing PNG society.

Remember those beautiful and colourful shots in the film. Are we changing for better or worse?

Three cheers for TUKANA, an eye opener.



# REVIEW

John Kolia

## THE NATIONAL THEATRE COMPANY AT THE WAIGANI ARTS THEATRE.

Albert Toro has renamed his play *A MAN TO BE HEIR* as *A STEP FURTHER*. The original won the prize for the English section of the International Year of the Disabled competition, and because of its five scene changes might be thought of as more suitable to the radio than stage. These changes however, are handled efficiently by Toro and his staff, especially the office and house scenes where a reversible screen sets the location. The village house too, is effective. Domba Galang directs competently and also plays a small part, looking quite different, in the office scene as well as a main part as the village cripple's sister. Joe Mararos plays the grandfather with more humour, one suspects, than the playwright intended in his script. But the audience recognised this type immediately and it has already been suggested early in the play that he spends most of his time away from his grandchildren, perhaps even visiting a widow.

The hero of the play has to be Markham Galut who, while crawling about with one leg bent under him and a stiff arm, has simultaneously to look much younger than he is. Other parts were played by Ivan Kesa, Doreen Karpo, Arthur Jawodimbari, Paul Geru, Justin Somi and Norman Toru.

The second half of the evening was taken up by three dances. In *INDAI* (dying) by Michael Tavit, the leading dancer arrives down a rope and at the end of the two main energetic sequences, the five dancers are climbing up ropes into the "unknown" as the stage curtain closes. Tero Sifuyuo makes a welcome return to top form in this ballet and is the choreographer for *KUMUL* (Bird of Paradise) in which the only female dancer on the programme, Francesca Semosa makes the first of her two appearances, to considerable effect.

The last ballet on the programme is Pengau Nengo's expertly-choreographed *TULAIT* (dawn) in which four dancers, including the amazing Suean Kitemoung who dances in all three, perform writhing acrobatics in slow motion on the top and sides of a sculpture of welded steel drums before leaping into life as the sun rises. All the ballets had a cleverly-painted backdrop by Oliver Sublette. The other dancers who participated were Rodney Kove and David Noxy. The audience's appreciation of the four items would be heightened by curtain calls after each.

MANA: a South Pacific  
and Literature  
Vol 5 No 2 1980

Mana is published by the  
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Dear old man  
you're a wrinkled  
your skin is sagg  
your fingers are  
there's corn on y  
Dear wrinkled o  
yet you still have  
the strength of y  
Dear wrinkled o  
may you pass on  
onto our rapidly

Nora Vagi Brash's  
Babe Race With the D  
it is not really a very  
Melenaita Taumoefo  
trees; Vaine Rasmus  
destruction of a pec  
Verma has a second po  
a menacing dog; other  
Palau, a youth alienate  
grandmother and free  
several poems in the s  
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page 19 is his because  
there. Here is his d  
AMEN.

Seated Brown  
Entered White  
Said White  
"Nails for Sale"  
Asked Brown  
"How much, W  
Replied White  
"Only your moti  
Said Brown



John Kolia

MANA: a South Pacific Journal of Language  
and Literature  
Vol 5 No 2 1980

Mana is published by the South Pacific Creative  
Arts Society and is edited by Pio Manoa.

This issue consists of poems, short stories and  
articles. The poems consist mainly of interesting  
poetic ideas arranged inexplicably in lines and  
remarkably enough this is most noticeable in the  
poems by the foreign writer Des Peterson whose  
first language, presumably, is English. His  
subject matter also is of no apparent relevance to  
the Pacific. The other poems are rather more  
interesting and melodic. Here is Barbara Verma's  
poem called, "Dear Wrinkled Old Man".

Dear old man  
you're a wrinkled old man  
your skin is sagging  
your fingers are calloused  
there's corn on your toes.  
Dear wrinkled old man  
yet you still have  
the strength of youth-  
Dear wrinkled old man  
may you pass on your strength  
onto our rapidly ageing youth.

Nora Vagi Brash's poster poem, "Come on  
Babe Race With the Devil" is reprinted here but  
it is not really a very good example of its type.  
Melenaita Taumoeofolau writes of poetry and  
trees; Vaine Rasmussen protests about the  
destruction of a people's way of life; Barbara  
Verma has a second poem, a very vivid one about  
a menacing dog; others of the poets write about  
Palau, a youth alienated from his village, a dead  
grandmother and freedom. Taumoeofolau tries  
several poems in the style of the theatre of the  
absurd; we have to guess that RUNGALK on  
page 19 is his because he is not acknowledged  
there. Here is his deliberately absurd poem  
AMEN.

Seated Brown  
Entered White  
Said White  
"Nails for Sale"  
Asked Brown  
"How much, White?"  
Replied White  
"Only your mother cents"  
Said Brown

"Here then"  
Smiled White  
"Let there be light  
(Aside) for White"  
Said Brown  
"Amen"  
And there was light  
for white  
Smiled White  
Smiled Brown  
Giggled White  
Gurgled Brown  
Exit Brown  
Drank White  
Entered Brown  
"How much is my mother?"  
Replied White  
"Only your head cents"  
Said Brown  
"Here then"  
Smiled White  
"Let there be more light  
(Aside) for White"  
Said Brown  
"Amen"  
And there was more light - for White  
Smiled White  
Gurgled Brown  
Laughed White  
Frowned Brown  
Giggled White  
Reddened Brown  
Drank Brown  
Stared Brown  
Then lo and behold  
Bowed Brown  
And whispered "Amen" three times.

The poet then gives the stage direction, "Fell  
see-through curtain." The word "aside" is twice  
repeated in the poem and is also a stage direction,  
but we are meant to say it aloud with the other  
words in the poem. Presumably we shall be  
hearing more of this interesting poet. Hopefully  
he will not dry up as so many of our own writers  
have done. Mr Taumoeofolau works for the  
Ministry of Education in Tonga.

The short stories in this issue are AN ACT OF  
LOVE by Som Prakash and UNWANTED by  
Vaine Rasmussen. AN ACT OF LOVE is some  
degrees of sophistication ahead of the second  
story but the author of the first is a lecturer in  
English. Som Prakash writes of Fijian Indians



and their friends during a Hindu Festival night. Vaine Rasmussen tells us about an undergraduate with unwanted pregnancy.

Of the articles, Lolo Houbein, writes about the craft of writing and the writer's philosophical background, Ilima Piianaia discusses the honour given to specific sites in Hawaiian folk songs, Cecil Abrahams writes on Aesthetics and Protest in South African Literature and Marjorie Cro-

combe gives a long report about the South Pacific Creative Arts Society.

Although the latest issue of MANA is full of interest, with an attractive cover. In Moresby it can be obtained from the Institute of P.N.G. Studies Bookshop or subscriptions can be paid to the Secretary, S.P.C.A.S., Box 5083, Raiwaqa, FIJI.

## Melanesia - Thoughts and Andrew Strathern

The title of this collection of poems, some careful thought by some of the contents are in verse form, would fall within the category of poetry. Hence they are 'songs' and words" The corpus of poems as editor was the 1981 Poetry Competition run by the Institute of Guinea Studies. A few poems, separate entries printed, two, and to most readers, just names, but among them of obvious strength and

What are the thoughts writers have had and expressed, delightful to discover the personal, and lively as most, mostly the products of imagination, although again we cannot see themselves. There is a romanticism throughout, desire, loss, dreams; the because expressed so simply. HOW I ENTERED E

I only stretch out  
But she pushed it  
I let her be and lay  
I waited her to turn  
And hug me to her  
But she didn't.

There are short pieces, some of which look as though they are modelled, on some traditional. These epics, usually sung in this country, but not many. John Kasaipwalova's *SUN* is based on Trobriand the epic of Imdeduya, innovative. This is *SIMBUS* by G.M. Siune. Repetition up to a grand finale:

When night falls  
have something to talk  
Money; business;  
pay;  
Compensation; be  
When the sun pe  
The Simbus begin  
Notice the same; s  
Motifs make themselv



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# Melanesia - Thoughts and Words reviewed by Andrew Strathern

The title of this collection is itself a product of some careful thought by John Kolia. All of its contents are in verse form, although not all would fall within the orthodox definition of poetry. Hence they are simply called "thoughts and words" The corpus on which Dr. Kolia drew as editor was the 1980 Annual Literary Competition run by the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies. A few writers have many separate entries printed, some have only one or two, and to most readers they will probably be just names, but among them there are two poets of obvious strength and potential.

What are the thoughts then, which these writers have had and express in words? It is delightful to discover that they are as various personal, and lively as might be. Surely, they are mostly the products of young minds and eyes, although again we cannot tell from the names themselves. There is a strong, prevailing romanticism throughout - expressions of love, desire, loss, dreams; the more poignant at times because expressed so simply. For example, as in HOW I ENTERED EDEN by K. Buakoa.

I only stretch out my hand to her breast,  
But she pushed it away.  
I let her be and lay beside her.  
I waited her to turn round me,  
And hug me to her,  
But she didn't.

There are short pieces and longer, sustained ones, which look as though they might have been modelled, on some traditional epic forms. .... These epics, usually sung, are quite common in this country, but not many have been published. John Kasaipwalova's SAIL THE MIDNIGHT SUN is based on Trobriand epics, particularly the epic of Imdeduya .....One appears very innovative. This is SIMBU COFFEE SEASON by G.M. Siune. Repetitive in structure, it builds up to a grand finale:

When night falls gradually, the Simbus  
have something to talk about,

Money; business; party; bride price; head  
pay;

Compensation; beer and gambling .....

When the sun peeps over Elibali Range

The Simbus begin all over

Notice the same; see the same ....

Motifs make themselves known by turning

up in more than one place. The green or yellow-topped lady, for instance, is found in THE BOTTLE MERI by Francis and in WHAT AM I? by M. Kosie. Francis writes .....

What a beautiful girl I am.

With a yellow top and green mini-skirt  
written S.P.

People think I am a skin putter but

Actually they are putting skin on me.

From time to time one can also pick up the echoes of folklore and myth, tantalisingly delineated, as in KWARA'S DEATH by G. Haracca.

He laughed the laugh of yesterday's  
creations.

Mourns today like a child

Drank from the Daha

Meiumatama.

A. Inia, in A STONE ONCE A MAN refers more clearly to a myth of how a person turned into a stone:

Day by day he stood high at the beach

Night by night fireflies visit him

Month after month he witnessed the yams  
growing

But he couldn't move, just as he was.  
From myth to history. Just a few of the pieces make a powerful statement about contemporary life and its problems. ENGA FROM YOUR SON - I by P. Walrus, speaks of tribal conflict ....

Smoke rises forever from

Where once my hut stood

Barren slopes fill my sight

Till they flood with tears

Another moving statement in the same vein is by Y.T. Kupis in LAND DISPUTE.

Men against men,

Fighting for food land.

Other writers take up their pen on the advantages of development. Notable is the piece by L.H. Sariva, EDUCATION, A KEY IN LIFE, in which he looks on both sides of the much-prized coin. The most powerfully sustained and consistently deft pieces are by L. Koussa and by Sorariba. Here is Koussa on FORTNIGHT FRIDAYS, when .....

You just can't move around

Anywhere in Port Moresby.....

There they are the people, pay packets,

Kina bills, toea coins, pushing, shoving,

Cramming themselves tightly into Super-

markets. ....



markets .....  
 Sorariba's twenty-one poems are the most sustained of all. He too has one on war, but seen more mythically than historically. Indeed, Sorariba moves right across from primal mythology to today in Tabari Place, where he admires the girls.....

O pilis - I whistle at them,  
 Smile at them - but there ain't a way.  
 they seem too good and sophisticated.  
 Beat it, you penniless punk!

They say - O, sorio-o  
 Then back to a celebration of MELANESIAN NIGHT MUSIC.....

The waves giggle and splutter in joy,  
 An owl huffs excitedly:  
 For the night dance to begin with the  
 Drums of eternity.

This is a fine and moving collection. Its thoughts and words are fitting as Melanesian music for either night or day.

STRANGE  
 ARE MY

#### SCENE ONE:

*Yohologo<sup>P</sup> is bathing in the stream. He hears a splash. He comes from a woman. He comes down the stream.*

YOHOLOGOL: O  
 Yohologol. I am refreshed.

*Same whistle and a splash. A woman appears behind a rock. She squats in the water to her knees. Only is above the water.*

YOHOLOGOL: I  
 prised me. What do you think?

DJINABAU: (teasing)  
 Inde-e-ed! What do you think of this handsome man who is so handsome? Do you think I want?

YOHOLOGOL: (laughing)  
 stream. Drink from it.

DJINABAU: (smiling)  
 fetch the water from the stream. Come on! (and she turns and goes down the stream).

YOHOLOGOL: (laughing)  
 Go! Your vessel is there. and eat. I cannot turn back. Do not try my manhood.

DJINABAU: (murmuring)  
 and eat from a vessel? T... Hah! Since when has a fair woman? Someth...



ELANESIAN

plutter in joy,

begin with the

on. Its thoughts  
esian music for

# STRANGERS ARE MY PEOPLE<sup>1</sup>

B.M. Narokobi

## SCENE ONE:

*Yohologol<sup>2</sup> is bathing alone and naked in a stream. He hears a sharp whistle. It appears to come from a woman. Then he sees a leaf boat down the stream.*

YOHOLOGOL: Ohoi? Who are you? It's me, Yohologol. I am refreshing myself. Who are you?

*Same whistle and a female voice of Djinabau, appearing behind a rock. Yohologol sees her and squats in the water to hide his nakedness. His face only is above the water.*

YOHOLOGOL: Djinabau! Oh! You surprised me. What do you want, my elder sister?<sup>3</sup>

DJINABAU: *(teasing)* What do I want? Inde-e-ed! What does a woman want of a handsome man who is alone and naked? What do you think I want? A snake? I want a drink!<sup>4</sup>

YOHOLOGOL: *(embarrassed)* There's the stream. Drink from it and go! I am naked!

DJINABAU: *(smiling and giggling)* No! You fetch the water from me! Here's my coconut shell!<sup>5</sup> Come on! *(and she throws the shell by the bank of the stream).*

YOHOLOGOL: *(adamant and angry)* No! Go! Your vessel is the one from which I drink and eat. I cannot turn it upside down.<sup>6</sup> Go away! Do not try my manhood.

DJINABAU: *(more assured)* Hah! You drink and eat from a vessel? Then take it. Me to go away? Hah! Since when has a naked man turned away a fair woman? Something wrong with you? Try

your manhood indeed! *(Stern)* Has a dog ever refused a bone?<sup>7</sup>

YOHOLOGOL: *(angry)* Go now or I will stone you. You cannot make me break my brother's bowl.<sup>8</sup> Let the dogs feast on bare bones<sup>9</sup> and man go free! Now, go! *(collects pebbles and throws them at her).*

DJINABAU: *(half annoyed, half teasing)* You coward! You are insulting! *(She disappears. Yohologol appears from the stream, puts on his loin cloth, collects his bilum and disappears).*

## SCENE TWO:

*(Yohologol is seen working in the garden with his brother, Suonu. Suonu's wife, Djinabau is some distance away; she is also working in the garden. A dog's bark is heard and all stop to listen to the bark).*

SUONU: Oh how powerful my dog, Jieruboh's voice sounds! I wonder what animal it must be hunting? *(After a short silence, they continue to work and again the dog's bark is heard. This time it is repeated and rapid).*

YOHOLOGOL: *(concerned)* M-m-h? It sounds like a pig or a wallaby. I must follow the dog.

SUONU: *(standing upright and speaking softly)* Yes! Go down by the stream. I will chase the pig down by the stream. Spear it when it tries to ford the stream. *(Both disappear, leaving Djinabau alone in the garden).*

DJINABAU: *(has an idea)* The stream! That's where the pig will cross. That's where Yohologol is! I must go! *(and she leaves).* *(Yohologol is again refreshing himself when Djinabau appears).*

DJINABAU: Ehei, young brother.<sup>10</sup> Here I am. Take me.

YOHOLOGOL: Take you? No! I'll beat you if you insist!

DJINABAU: Yes, beat me *(shows her tongue at him)* You are a child; a baby. You coward. Don't you have any arrows?<sup>11</sup> Are you half made?

YOHOLOGOL: *(anxious, worried)* Take you now?

DJINABAU: Yes! Now! Here, come!



YOHOLOGOL: And bring shame to myself and my brother? Arrows are fired only to kill the enemy. And you are not one.<sup>12</sup>

DJINABAU: (*most determined, takes her grass skirt off*) Here, take me or I'll tell my husband you have taken me!!

YOHOLOGOL: (*very angry*) You evil snake, take your fat to the dogs. And let men go free.

DJANABAU: (*insulted*) You useless infant. You insulted my womanhood. I shall tell my husband you tried to strip me. No! You stripped me. You did!! (*Djinabau walks off. Yohologol is confused, embarrassed, also walks off. Both are seen in the garden. Yohologol sits on a log some distance away from his brother's wife. His head hangs low. Suonu's voice is heard, cutting through the stillness and the loneliness.*)

SUONU: Ohoi! ohoi? Yohologol? Ohoi? Djinabau?

DJINABAU: (*faltering voice*) Ohoi! We are here! Are your hands clasped?<sup>13</sup>

SUONU: (*happy*) Yes, a piglet. The dog killed it (*enters carrying the piglet; notices and senses the strange stillness.*) Yohologol? (*Yohologol makes no move.*) Yohologol? (*noticing no change, he turns to his wife*) Djinabau? Have you been using your sharp tongue again? (*Suonu notices discord, throws the piglet down*) What is it?

DJINABAU: (*quite angry*) Me? (*looking up.*) You! Your brother! His tongue! It wanders<sup>14</sup> through deep forest like a flying fox<sup>15</sup>, stealing breadfruit as it goes or a pretty parrot eating your green bananas as it goes. (*emphasizing "your". Yohologol hears this and is very embarrassed. He does not know what to do or say. Suonu is also perplexed.*)

SUONU: Mh? (*shakes his head*) There is something hanging in the air (*looks sharply into the air*) what could it be? (*scared messenger birds, the sebiten,<sup>16</sup> twitters twice on his left side.*) Mh? Djinabau? Yohologol? What is this I smell?

YOHOLOGOL: (*standing some distance away*) My elder brother. Flying foxes do not eat green fruits nor do parrots eat sacred seeds, and brothers certainly do not empty their brother's bilums. Bones lie bare for dogs to devour, but

man observes sacred laws. He eats some meat, but not all, certainly not his brother's share. Your wife is vile. She begged me twice to take her, but I had the power to refuse.<sup>17</sup>

DJINABAU: You slippery snake. You lying cockatoo.

SUONU: (*turning on his wife*). Tell me what you did. What did he do? (*he chases her off the garden stage.*)

### SCENE THREE

A village (*Yomunihi*)<sup>18</sup> scene in the evening, a restless, cool and windy evening. Suonu is sitting outside, beside the fire, his bananas over an open fire. Some distance away is a long men's house.<sup>19</sup> Laughter is heard coming from there.

DJINABAU: This pig you killed. Are we going to give some of it to other villagers? (*she hears the laughter and changes her subject*) Eh? this laughter coming from the men's house! What is it all about?

SUONU: (*annoyed and still deeply hurt, collects a piece of fire and throws it at her; sparks fly about. She avoids it.*) You! You! You cause all this trouble. (*Then, changes his mood*) Yohologol? Yohologol?

YOHOLOGOL'S VOICE: Ohoi? What is it?

SUONU: What is it? Why are you laughing so much?

ANOTHER MALE VOICE: No, no! It has nothing to do with you.

SUONU: Nothing to do with me? (*raises voice.*) It has everything to do with me. Come out and tell me. (*silence for a while*)

DJINABAU: And for so long too! I smell something. I feel blood running through my thumb.<sup>20</sup>

SUONU: These evil young men. They sit, sleep and gossip like women.

DJINABAU: No, not like women. We always busy ourselves feeding babies and weaving or cooking. These young men are like twittering, senseless starlings.

SUONU: Whatever they are! They are a shame to our proud, feasting village. Now, listen,

Djinabau, wait until it's dark. I'll go outside the men's house. (*Djinabau walks to the men's house and puts her ears against the door.*)

A MAN'S VOICE: Tell me, Djinabau, would you be warmer to share it with me?

ANOTHER MALE VOICE: I would like you!<sup>21</sup>

THIRD VOICE: Yohologol, she is nice. (*closer.*)

YOHOLOGOL: She is so nice, so tempting outside. You must be her wife.

THIRD VOICE: No, no! I am not your brother's pretty plump wife.

SECOND VOICE: I am not much of a man. He is a man of bearing age. Why did you marry her?

YOHOLOGOL: (*annoyed*) I married her for him. He works hard for his village. It was his dancing that attracted me. I would have married him if I had wanted him.

FIRST VOICE: You have blunt arrows.<sup>25</sup>

YOHOLOGOL: Yohologol. Djinabau. There is no more to it. She asked me to take her. I was so childish. Oh, it's so foolish. I should go out and get some firewood. (*Djinabau goes out, Djinabau Yohologol sees her back house.*)

DJINABAU: (*pause alone.*) Will I tell my husband? Yes, I will - No - (*mind*) How dreadful. At the midst of it all! (*she goes fast. Her husband looks at her.*)

SUONU: Yes?

DJINABAU: Yes, yes, I planned to take me away from you. The others were to take my skirt off in the free.



Djinabau, wait until it's dark. Then go, and stand outside the men's house and hear what they say. *(Djinabau walks to the men's house, stands outside and puts her ears against the wall to listen.)*

A MAN'S VOICE: This windy night. I would be warmer to share it with a woman.

ANOTHER MALE VOICE: No woman would like you!<sup>21</sup>

THIRD VOICE: Your brother's wife, Yohologol, she is nice. *(Djinabau puts her ear closer.)*

YOHOLOGOL: Sh-sh-sh! She might be listening outside. You must not envy my brother's wife.

THIRD VOICE: Not envy, just appreciating your brother's pretty plumage!<sup>22</sup>

SECOND VOICE: Suonu! Hah! He is not much of a man. He is old and beyond child-bearing age. Why did the elders choose him this wife?

YOHOLOGOL: *(annoyed)* No one chose this woman for him. He won her heart from another village. It was his dancing. She could have been mine if I had wanted her.<sup>23</sup>

FIRST VOICE: Yours? Not you, mate!<sup>24</sup> You have blunt arrows.<sup>25</sup>

YOHOLOGOL: You men must desire Djinabau. There is no shame in your tongues. She asked me to take her, but I refused. Now stop this childish talk. Oh, it's cold. *(changes mood)* I'll go out and get some firewood to light the fire. *(He goes out, Djinabau walks quietly away. Yohologol sees her back as she steps into her house.)*

DJINABAU: *(pauses and thinks aloud and alone)* Will I tell my husband? What will I tell him? Yes, I will - No - No, I won't - *(changes mind)* How dreadful. And, Suonu's brother is in the midst of it all! *(she goes in, her heart beating fast. Her husband looks up inquiringly)*.

SUONU: Yes?

DJINABAU: Yes, your brother. He has it planned to take me away from you and marry me. The others were to help him.<sup>26</sup> He tried to take my skirt off in the garden, but I set myself free.

SUONU: He shall know who is free. He shall meet me where our spirits feed by the berry tree.<sup>27</sup> *(Suonu collects his stone adze, his stone sharpener and starts to sharpen his adze.)* These single men. They feast, and they gossip. Now they plot death.

DJINABAU: *(stirring her husband)* They say you are old and of no value.

SUONU: They will know who has no worth. Even the dead has value. It commands tears. But their bodies shall have flies breed upon them.<sup>28</sup>

*(Suonu tests the sharpness of his size by shaving the hair on his thigh)*

DJINABAU: *(Anxious and for the first time she becomes aware of what could happen.)* Oh Suonu! What is in your mind. Don't do anything bad. I did not mean that *(she slips out and speaks alone)*. Oh, Yohologol! May the spirits save you. I apologize for my lies. *(Suonu calls her and she returns.)*

SUONU: Djinabau! What are you doing? Bring some wood in. It's dark and cold.

*(Djinabau brings the wood in. They light fire and sleep on opposite sides. Suonu gets up, tests the blade of his adze, his hands nervous. He goes out, with the adze, into the cold air. He goes to the men's house, puts a foot on the steps, but fear defeats him. He walks back and talks alone.)*

Oh my Yohologol, my brother. You are the second shoot of the family's yam seed. My river of anger is too high to ebb now.<sup>29</sup> Oh, my brother! I nursed you on my knees. I see you sleep peacefully. I feel the cold air *(shivers)*. My trouble and fouled breeze must blow.<sup>30</sup> Sleep peacefully. The spirits do redeem. The living dead do meet<sup>31</sup> *(walks back to men's house, takes two steps, but is again overwhelmed by his own fear and sorrow and returns to his wife)*.

DJINABAU: *(terrified when he returns.)* What have you done? Don't kill your brother. It's my shame.

SUONU: *(holding his adze tightly)* Pack what you can. Wait with what you collect at the edge of the village.

DJINABAU: *(realizing the seriousness of the*



situation, tries to hold the adze). Don't kill your brother.

SUONU: (*angry to the extreme*) Hold me and I'll kill you! (*Djinabau lets her hands go, and starts putting valuable items into her bilums. Night falls.*) The blood stream is high. It must run its course.<sup>32</sup> Man must do what he must do! (*Suonu walks out and goes straight into the men's house. He peers through the darkness with a small piece of fire. He sees Yohologol, fast asleep, his neck resting on the "Koruk" a wooden pillow. The piece of fire falls off his hand and the adze strikes three times upon his brothers neck. Suonu walks out and goes to Djinabau.*)

DJINABAU: Speak?

SUONU: (*shows her the adze*).

DJINABAU: Who?

SUONU: Who? Let the sleeping snakes lie and we must go.

DJINABAU: Where?

SUONU: Your brother's village. But for now let us hide beside the village until dawn.

DJINABAU: No, we cannot wait. We must move through the darkness. (*They move on. Back in the village, voices inside the men's house.*)

FIRST VOICE: Oh its cold! (*stretches and folds arms and legs inside himself*). Where is the fire? Rain! Rain? I touch water. No! Oh, blood! blood! (*all awake*).

ALL: Yohologol! Yohologol! Who did it? Suonu? Su-onu? (*no reply*) Oh Suonu! Terror and tragedy.

A WOMAN'S VOICE: I saw Djinabau standing near the men's house.

MAN: No! Its a man's deed. It's Suonu. (*much sobbing*)

A MAN: It's so sad that one yam shoot should sever another yam shoot from the same parent yam.

A WOMAN: Oh, it's sad that one limb should cut off another limb when both belong to the same body.

ANOTHER WOMAN: Oh!!! And one feather pluck another from the same bird.

A VILLAGE CHIEF: (*angry with sorrow*) Enough! This is a dead, ordained by Ujaing<sup>33</sup>, a supernatural, magical thing, beyond man's control. The deed is done. The living dead cannot be taken from the burial. The dead must honour the dead. We must bury Yohologol. Suonu and his wife have fled. One arm has severed another arm. We the legs and the shoulders must share the pain.

HIS WIFE: Yes, share the pain and not add more pain. The dead should be buried and the living spirits live. It's hard to weep. The man was not sick. There is no pain.

A MAN: (*a close companion of Yohologol*) Yohologol and I were like twin brothers. Yohologol was a strong handsome man, brave in times of danger and need and gentle in times of peace. His own goodness has finished his breath. But no earth shall burn his body. (*touches the body and weeps.*) I shall tie<sup>34</sup> his body against the post in the men's house. He shall live; and live nearest to me.

CHIEF'S WIFE: The dead has crossed the living line. But they live on it.

THE CHIEF: Now listen, all you young men and all women. It was the woman who brought death. The jealousy over a woman is worse than the poison of the deadly snake. I will tie Yohologol's body against the post of the men's house, let his waters collect under a bowl. (*The body is beautifully adorned and tied against a post, with a big wooden bowl placed under his feet. People weep and move out into the dawn.*)

#### SCENE FOUR

Suonu and his wife are seen beside a stream, sweating and exhausted.

SUONU: (*shakes with fear*) Where are we going? My brother! Why did I kill him? Yohologol, my brother! He lies dead on Yumunihi. Flies enter his mouth like bats entering an open cave. It's you Djinabau! You! You made me separate myself from my brother.

DJINABAU: It's not me. It's your own self-respect, your manhood, your pride you sought to protect. You went too far. Let the flies feast on the dead and gossipers bury the bones. As for you, you are much too old for me. But I wanted

the strength of the mourner with your brother's burden move on<sup>35</sup>. (*Djinabau rests. Suonu moves forward, cuts a goragoro plant, chants into it and steps, throws it into the running*

SUONU: There! Go, and lighten my burden. I will not hold it against me. (*his wife Djinabau picks up the bird, the sebiten, twitters side, once, then twice and is joined by many others.*)

DJINABAU: Yes. But my burden. We must go. (*Suonu demands*) Don't follow us, curse on us. Go elsewhere, dew.

SUONU: (*Finally, he collapses, embraces the ground, sounds of his sobbing mixed with sounds of the birds in the distance clearly in his ears. They move on. The people, the forest, the mourning for the dead. Then, he sits up.*) My shadow stood between me and the sun, shine to cast the shadow

DJINABAU: The shadow, mother-maker, made my shadow is your brother's shadow and me.

SUONU: Yes, he tried. Fences only stand between the wild marauding pigs. You are the fence. (*very close, strikes her once, twice.*) your mother's broad lip, tongue, sharper than the sun. If it was not for you, my shadow, (*overcome with sorrow and while he stands straight, collects himself together*) too late. I do not know what my brother, I know you are (*They move on*).

DJINABAU: Here's a



the strength of the mountain you have. Now part with your brother's burdensome spirit and let us move on.<sup>35</sup> (*Djinabau unpacks her bilums and rests. Suonu moves further up the stream, and cuts a goragoro plant, opens it up. He utters chants into it and steps into it, pulls it open and throws it into the running stream, saying*)

SUONU: There! Go, my brother. I must live and lighten my burden. If I have been wrong, do not hold it against me. Protect me. (*Returns to his wife Djinabau picks up her bilums and they make their way through the forest. A messenger bird, the sebiten, twitters in the trees on their left side, once, then twice and then incessantly. It is joined by many others.*)

DJINABAU: Yes. But the dead must bear the burden. We must go. (*She turns to the birds and demands*) Don't follow us! You cannot cast your curse on us. Go elsewhere and feed on morning dew.

SUONU: (*Finally, unable to bear it all, collapses, embraces the ground and weeps. The sounds of his sobbing mingle with the numerous sounds of the birds in the trees. Garamuts<sup>36</sup> ring clearly in his ears. They come from Yomunihi. The people, the forest, the birds and all join in the mourning for the death of Yohologol. Then, he sits up.*) My precious yam shoot. A shadow stood between us.<sup>37</sup> The sun did not time to cast the shadow aside.

DJINABAU: The shadow? the Chokek<sup>38</sup> mother-maker, made man and woman, the shadow is your brother's. It stood between you and me.

SUONU: Yes, he tried, to build a fence.<sup>39</sup> Fences only stand between man's gardens and the wild marauding pigs. And you, djinabau? You are the fence. (*very angry, stands up and strikes her once, twice*). You, you inheritor of your mother's broad lips. You inheritor of a tongue, sharper than the edge of a bamboo slice. It was not for you, my brother would still li.... overcome with sorrow and weeps again. After a while he stands straight, chews a piece of a bark, collects himself together and speaks.) Now! It's too late. I do not know where we are going. My brother, I know you are near us. Protect us. (*They move on*).

DJINABAU: Here's a spot to settle on. Let's

build our home here. (*They put their things down*).

SUONU: Here's a hill. It's far enough. I see a pool of water there. Let's settle here. (*They put their things down*).

DJINABAU: (*exclaims in terror*) Oh!

SUONU: (*grabs his spear*). What is it?

DJINABAU: Snake! A big deadly rohuin. It won't move. It does not want us to settle here.<sup>40</sup>

SUONU: (*see the snake*). You may rest here. We will not disturb you. (*They pick up their bilums and move on*).

DJINABAU: Now, my brother's village is over there.<sup>41</sup> (*points to it*) We can go and settle there.

SUONU: No! No. I do not want to settle with your brothers<sup>42</sup>. They planned the curse and I was a mere fool of their plan. (*They move on*)

DJINABAU: Here! Here at last. There's a breadfruit tree. It bears well. And here's a taun tree. It's branches are laden with juicy fruit, and the valley is wide. Good yams will grow here. And water?

SUONU: Here's a hill. It's far enough. I see a ground. (*He gets a stick and throws it into the ground. Water splashes into his face.*) Yes, let's settle here. (*Suonu moves about*). The wide and open valley. We'll settle here and build a new village. (*He sees hills around, thinks for a while and turns to his wife.*) No! Not here! You see those hills? It's not safe here. We can be attacked from the hills. Let's settle on the hills. (*Doggedly they collect their bilums and move onto the hills*).

DJINABAU: I am tired. The sun is beneath the tree tops.

SUONU: Yes, we shall settle here. There are lots of tangu<sup>43</sup> here. We'll call this place tangu pupua bamboo hill. There are Wantog<sup>44</sup> here. We shall call our new village, Wantogig. It shall be as strong as the Wantong or the Kwila trees.

DJINABAU: Yes, Now, let us for the last time part with the burden of your brother's spirit and settle her. (*she picks up a stone, speaks into it, spins it around her head and passes it backwards to her legs and throws it backwards into the gully*)<sup>45</sup>



## SCENE FIVE

*(A man, Kenim and his hunting dog Narogiuo are seen in the deep forest with little sunlight.*

<sup>46</sup> *The dog is moving excitedly in front, sniffing at a tree trunk, barking up a dead log, moving left, and right, sometimes picking up from behind, sees a clearing ahead where there is more sunlight than there is elsewhere. He moves closer. A huge lizard slips through.*

KENIM: *(excited)* Moish! Moish! Here! Narogiuo! There, the lizard! Go after it. *(The dog picks up the scent and chases after it, barking and howling. Kenim runs after, following the dog's barking, shouting and urging the dog to capture the lizard. He stops and waits behind a tree. A huge crocodile-like lizard crawls nearby. His dog jumps on it. Kenim hurls a spear and misses it. He throws another. The lizard turns upon Kenim, he hides behind a tree trunk and flees. A savage fight between the dog and lizard ensues. Kenim runs away, calling his dog as he goes. He sits on a huge boulder while he calls his dog to him.)* Narogiuo! Narogiuo! Moish! Moish! Come on! Come home! Moish, moish, moish!!! *(Just then a thick black cloud passes across the sky, leaving Kenim in darkness. Lightning flashes across his face and he dives into the shelter of the hanging boulder. The lightning flashes again and again. Thunder follows and rain falls in sudden streams. As quickly as it falls, it stops. The cloud clears. The sun shines strongly again. Then another flash of lightning passes across the sky followed by a deep voice from a faceless figure with very long black hair falling apparently from nowhere and touching the thighs of the figure. From shoulders upwards, the figure is a mere apparition as shapeless as the sky. It is the masalai).*

MASALAI: *(growling)*. How dare you and your beast hunt my companion dog?

KENIM: Your dog? I know nothing of it. My dog chased a lizard. *(trembles in fear.)*

MASALAI: The lizard? Your dog? It is no more *(and a desperate howl from the dog is heard)*. That's your dog? And as for you I shall spare you now. But tonight all your people will meet me.

KENIM: *(shaking)* Meet you?

MASALAI: Yes, meet me, by the passing

cloud. You go home when I leave. Tell your people to hold your last feast. Make your last love with your women. Dance and sing your last songs. I shall meet you at the passing of the day and the night. *(curtain).*

## SCENE SIX

*(A typical village scene. Kenim is seen, asleep, unconscious, near the edge of the village, surrounded by the village people.)*

A MAN: *(shaking Kenim)* Get up! get up! Did a snake bite you *(Kenim lies speechless, there is foam in his mouth).*

A WOMAN: Is he dead?

SECOND MAN: No, not dead. It looks as if he has been beaten up by the spirits.

ANOTHER MAN: Now, step aside. I'll cure him. *(People step aside. The man pulls out a piece of bark, chews it and puts it into Kenim's mouth, and then blows into his ears. After a while, Kenim, moves gets a drink and sits up.)*

IST MAN: Speak, Kenim, what happened.

KENIM: What is it that I should tell you? I am a dead man. I should be dead. Tell you? No, it is too late. Beat the drums. Sound despair. My dog encountered the Masalai. It is dead. I am spared. We are to feast for the last time, we shall all perish tonight *(and he falls down again and lies in the ground.)*

*(Death and despair strikes every face.)*

A VILLAGER. We must escape.

ANOTHER VILLAGER: Dispel the Masalai's anger. Hurry! Line up some pigs, offer them for the consumption!

ANOTHER VILLAGER: No! Hand Kenim over and save us all.

KENIM: *(Shakes his head)*. No! That's of no use. He could have killed me and saved you all. Beat the drums. When a coconut falls, it must fall. You cannot force it back into the palm.<sup>47</sup> *(Drums beat. Some people cry. Some people find it impossible to believe it and go on as if nothing is to happen. People from gardens, hunting and sago-making return, learn the sad tale and proceed with cooking and preparation of the feast<sup>48</sup>. No orders are given. Darkness falls. A thick*

*black cloud passes across thinly over the fading moon and a blast of wind blows. Everyone is sent into confusion. Vivid flashes of lightning. Thunder strikes, and blood running everywhere.*

*Every man, woman and child.*

MASALAI: Yes! How left. Now I must burn all of them all.) There! There's a not struck it yet? Kenim? Kenim cannot see your body!

KENIM: *(Kenim has safety in his wife's choke where his wife is labouring. Masalai flashes lightning child-bearing hut. The adze handle and slips into the hut. It up and sits on it, destroys it.)*

MASALAI: Kenim? Kenim blade, my blunt adze, my

KENIM: You killed us all your adze and all your people. *(The Masalai flashes<sup>57</sup> a adze and when he is not in village, surrounded with death.)*

KENIM'S WIFE:<sup>53</sup> I! You go out and see what and our people. *(Kenim goes his village and returns to his wife.)*

KENIM: All dead des must go to Banagi, the be can stay with your brother.

KENIM'S WIFE: *(very)* I am pregnant. I should bear some yams. We can eat the child is born. We have the cannot attack us. *(Kenim returns, he hears a baby's voice. His wife is labouring to bear.)*

KENIM: Is it a boy or a baby crying and he goes in. cuts the umbilical cord and noticing it is a boy, he smiles and the baby.) It's sad that sad that my son should be but he is welcome and we



black cloud passes across the sky, and hangs thinly over the fading moonlight. It passes on and a blast of wind blows into the village. Everyone is sent into confusion. Consecutive vivid flashes of lightning illuminate the village. Thunder strikes, and bodies fall confusedly, blood running everywhere. Every house is struck. Every man, woman and child is struck.<sup>49</sup>

MASALAI: Yes! How pleasing. Not a soul left. Now I must burn all the houses. (He burns them all.) There! There's a small choker<sup>50</sup> I have not struck it yet? Kenim? Kenim? Where are you? I cannot see your body! There, in that hut.

KENIM: (Kenim has run off and finds safety in his wife's choker, child-bearing hut, where his wife is labouring to bear a child.) The Masalai flashes lightning and strikes the small child-bearing hut. The adze comes loose from its handle and slips into the hut.<sup>51</sup> Kenim's wife picks it up and sits on it, destroying its power.<sup>52</sup>

MASALAI: Kenim? Kenim? My adze, my blade, my blunt adze, my blunt blade!

KENIM: You killed us all. Now you have lost your adze and all your power.

(The Masalai flashes<sup>57</sup> a lightning, calls for his adze and when he is not given it, he leaves the village, surrounded with death and destruction.)

KENIM'S WIFE:<sup>53</sup> I shall sit on this adze. You go out and see what became of our village and our people. (Kenim goes, sees the views of his village and returns to his wife.)

KENIM: All dead destroyed. Prepare! We must go to Banagi, the beach village where we can stay with your brothers.

KENIM'S WIFE: (very heavy) I am pregnant. I should bear soon. Go and bring some yams. We can eat them and wait until the child is born. We have the Masalai's power. He cannot attack us. (Kenim goes out. When he returns, he hears a baby's voice and gasps deeply. His wife is labouring to bear the child.)

KENIM: Is it a boy or a girl (No reply except baby crying and he goes in. Kenim helps his wife, cuts the umbilical cord and cleans the baby; noticing it is a boy, he smiles and hugs his wife and the baby.) It's sad to see the ruins. It's sad that my son should be born into loneliness, but he is welcome and we shall build something

new, something beautiful.

KENIM'S WIFE: I'll need only a day's rest. Then we can go. (smiles). We'll go to my brothers. Our boy will grow up there. There is the sea. There is the sago and the fish are in great numbers. He'll grow up with his cousins.

KENIM: (a little worried) I am going to be a forest snake living in a shark's home. I'll be a stranger.

WIFE: Don't worry. My brothers will help us. (CURTAIN)

## SCENE SEVEN

(Banak village Scene, enter Kenim, in front and his wife and the baby in her arms, following. Both carrying loads.)

KENIM: Ohoi! My brother-in-law (his voice falters and he cries. His wife joins in crying).

FIRST VILLAGER: (brother-in-law) M-m-m ? You have come!

(After Kenim and his wife stop crying, they explain the tragedy that fell on their village.)

KENIM: Our village and our people are destroyed. We are like dead leaves floating in the air.

KENIM'S WIFE: (directly) We will have to live with you.

ALL THE VILLAGERS: (showing sympathy) Oh! That is very sad. Was everyone destroyed?

KENIM: Yes all of them.

KENIM'S WIFE: Not even a dog survived. (more sympathy)

BROTHER-IN-LAW: Here, here's our house. You can live with us until you build yourselves a house. (Takes them to his house and all disperse). (CURTAIN or LIGHTS)

(As the lights come on again, Kenim is sitting beside the fire. His son, Kule comes running in.<sup>54</sup>

KULE: Father! Who is my mother? What is her name? (no answer from father.) Ehi father, where is my mother? (touching his father's shoulders.)

KENIM: (looking up, tears in his eyes) My



son, I was hoping to tell you some day. You were hardly two when your mother and I came here. Our village was destroyed.

KULE: Destroyed! By whom?

KENIM: Masalai! Now your mother is dead?

KULE: How did she die, father?

KENIM: *(tears and anger)* Her brothers, your uncles. They planned to kill me. They made a mistake and killed her.

KULE: Why? What with? A spear?

KENIM: No! Poison<sup>55</sup>. They got her cigar butt!

KULE: *(Shaking his head)* Bad<sup>56</sup> Oh, father, I am hungry.

KENIM: So am I! Since your mother's death, your uncles have turned their backs on us.

KULE: Ehi, father, why did my uncles want to kill you?

KENIM: *(shaking head)* Who knows? Land? Maybe perhaps they were afraid more sons might be born to her; you might claim all the land.

KULE: But why? We could not get land through our mother, could we? We have your land to eat from.

KENIM: Yes, and no. You see, I am a stranger. I come from another village and so are all your uncles. They are adopted boys. Your mother is the only survivor and she could at any day, claim all her father's land.

KULE: Even though she is a woman?

KENIM: Yes. And that's why they killed her so that she couldn't claim land.

KULE: Never mind, father, I am hungry!

KENIM: There is some sago here, your uncles brought. Have some. *(He opens a parcel of sago, both eat and spit out simultaneously)*

BOTH: Sand! Mud!

KENIM: O-o-o-oha! *(spits)* Sons of bitches! Shameless pits! They killed my wife. They turn their backs on us! Now they offer us sand! *(shout aloud!)* Ohoi! Sons of Snakes! *(Takes the parcel of sago and throws it towards the end of the village.)*

A MALE VOICE: Ohoi! There is nothing for you and your son here. Pack your loin cloth and go! Go where you can live.

KENIM: You coward! I curse you and your children. May you live for selfishness and die in loneliness. Come here! I'll hold you by your tongue and strike the sand with your legs. *(Man comes out, scuffle, other men come and break up the fight. All disperse except Kenim and his son. After much mumbling restlessness, they settle down to sleep.)*

KULE: Father! Father!

KENIM: Mmmm! *(asleep)*

KULE: *(insists)* Father? Why did they give us sandy sago?

KENIM: You remember that huge parcel of sago your uncle brought yesterday?

KULE: Yes! It was very big and my uncle said it was to make peace for his selfishness.

KENIM: Yes, but what peace! There was very little sago in it. Most of it was sand.

KULE: Sand?

KENIM: Yes, sand, mud.<sup>57</sup>

KULE: Yes, sand and mud. I remember. It was made that day I went out with them. They sent me to collect leaves. Then they quickly wrapped, sand, mud and some sago. Yes, I remember. They called me. When I went, my uncle said, I was too slow and they had found other leaves and wrapped the sago.

KENIM: And did you notice anything?

KULE: No! Why should I? It was sago to me! Oh, no; yes, I did. I said the sago was much too big for two mouths.

KENIM: Did your uncle say anything?

KULE: Yes, that I always complain. He also asked me to carry it, but it was too heavy.

KENIM: Never mind son! Snakes are born snakes. Man is born from man and should be honoured. We have not. Let's sleep.

*(They lie down to sleep. After a while Kule starts to itch all over his body and scratches himself.)*

KULE: *(softly)* Father! Father!

KENIM: Sh-sh-

KULE: *(insists)*

KENIM: Mh?

KULE: My bod  
my shoulder, my sh

KENIM: Move  
*(Kule moves over a*  
Your mother! She i  
She stood there.

KULE: *(Frighte*  
father.) Saw her?

KENIM: Yes, h  
nothing for us here

KULE: *(Seeking*  
where father? I kno

KENIM: Nor I.  
*(turning sorrowfull*  
nests in the air. You  
in a home. We mus

KULE: What ab  
buried here? I have

KENIM: No, no  
We shall take her w  
*(shows it to Kule w*  
is tied to a string.  
seagull hovers in thi  
perch in their trees.  
Now we must take  
rise early to make c

## SCENE EIGHT

*(A forest scene on  
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gives way and he j  
crash and turns aro  
rise again. There are*

KULE: *(almost*  
Father! Where are v  
frightened. I am lon

KENIM: *(also fr*  
shout his fear.) We

KULE: Who are

KENIM: My gra



KENIM: Sh-sh-sh! I am sleepy!

KULE: (*insists*) Father?

KENIM: Mh?

KULE: My body itches! All over, my back, my shoulder, my skin!

KENIM: Move over here and I'll scratch you! (*Kule moves over and his father scratches him.*) Your mother! She is waking you up. I saw her<sup>58</sup>. She stood there.

KULE: (*Frightened and moves closer to his father.*) Saw her?

KENIM: Yes, her spirit! She said there was nothing for us here. We must go.

KULE: (*Seeking safety with his father*) Go where father? I know no other place.

KENIM: Nor I. My village was destroyed. (*turning sorrowfully and sitting up.*) No bird<sup>59</sup> nests in the air. You and I must nest somewhere in a home. We must be safe and sheltered.

KULE: What about mother? Aren't her bones buried here? I have to watch over them!

KENIM: No, not watch over her dead bones. We shall take her with us. I have her jaw bone<sup>60</sup> (*shows it to Kule who is frightened. The bone is tied to a string.*) The eagle glides and the seagull hovers in thin air. They always return to perch in their trees. We must also find our tree. Now we must take some sleep. Tomorrow we rise early to make our way. (*CURTAIN*)

## SCENE EIGHT

(*A forest scene on a mountain top. Father and son are both very tired and exhausted. Father is going ahead, son leaning against a dead tree. It gives way and he falls over. Father hears the crash and turns around to see his son, struggling rise again. There are some rocks about the place.*)

KULE: (*almost crying, picks himself up.*) Father! Where are we going? I am hungry. I am frightened. I am lonely!

KENIM: (*also frightened, but not wishing to show his fear.*) We are going inland.

KULE: Who are we going to see?

KENIM: My grandfather's people. They are

Bukip speakers. We are Sausa speakers.<sup>61</sup>

KULE: Will they know you? I hope that will be our nest. I don't want to move again.

KENIM: Yes, son. When I announce my grandfather's name, they'll all know me.

KULE: (*More comfortable*) How much longer will it take us? The sun is behind the trees, the night birds and the fireflies will soon be out. I am frightened.<sup>62</sup>

KENIM: (*comforting his son; by this time they are sitting on rocks, resting.*) We are on land I do not know. The spirits of this land do not know us. Don't ask how long the road is or it will have no end.<sup>63</sup> The sun never sinks if you think of tomorrow and it's tomorrow and the tomorrow's tomorrow. The sun sinks only to shine again, but a day always has an end and a road will always have an end. We shall get there.

KULE: (*more relaxed, gasps*) Father! Look! See these rocks? We sit on familiar rocks. They are coral reef, like the reef at Banagi.

KENIM: (*examines the rocks with his eyes and looks beyond.*) Sh-sh-sh-sh! Don't speak.

KULE: (*noticing his father is not watching the rocks, Kule asks again.*) What is it? Do you see the rocks?

KENIM: (*little worried*) Sh-sh-sh! People! Smoke! Do you see smoke? The rocks? yes, the sea once surrounded these mountains. (*pointing to coral reef on the mountain*)

KULE: Smoke? Yes, there! (*points*) Someone must live here. Perhaps it's your grandfather's people. They must be on their way to the beach to exchange their clay pots and bilums for the sea water and the shells.

KENIM: (*softly*) Sh! Don't talk aloud. They might be friends! They might be enemies. We do not know!

KULE: (*smiling*) Should we find out?

KENIM: No! You stay here. I'll go and find our. Hide under these rocks. (*starts to go.*)

KULE: What about mother?

KENIM: (*stops*) Yes! Let's know from her.<sup>64</sup> (*Kenim searches in his bilum and digs out a parcel. he unwraps it. An old, woman's jaw, with*



some teeth still hanging on the jaw falls out. He holds it tightly against his two hands and questions it).

The smoke, the smoke, friends or enemies.  
The smoke, the smoke, friends or enemies.  
The smoke, the smoke, friends or enemies.  
The smoke, the smoke, friends or enemies.  
The smoke, the smoke, friends or enemies.  
The smoke, the smoke, friends or enemies.  
The smoke, the smoke, friends or enemies.  
The smoke, the smoke, friends or enemies.  
The smoke, the smoke, friends or enemies.  
The smoke, the smoke, friends or enemies.

Friends, friends, friends, friends, friends.

*(The string shakes vigorously, under the old man's palms. Kule watches on pleased. This is sufficient by divination that the strange people would be friendly.)*

KULE: *(looking pleased)* Ah, good mother. I know you will guide us.

KENIM: *(stands up)*. Son? You hide here while I go and check.

KULE: No, father, We must go together or we don't go!

KENIM: Hide here, son. If I don't come back, go back to Banagi. Here, your mother's jaws. If I should die, that is good. You are my only son. I want you to inherit all I own. Now wait here for me. I'll be back. *(Kule hides behind the rocks while his father Kenim disappears.)*

## SCENE NINE

*(Another part of the forest.<sup>65</sup> Kenim hides behind some bushes and bamboo clumps. He can see some kwila or wantog trees in the distance. He hears a river flowing far down on his right. Birds and insects make a lot of noise. A distinct and regular tap, tap is heard, nature's music). Smoke? (he moves closer) Yes, there he is! A man! He is strong and powerful! He looks kindly. I wonder who he is? Will he attack me? Should I kill him? (he inspects his spears. The carver is deeply occupied with his plate carving, stopping every now and then to turn the tree yams around to enable balanced cooking. The carver hears a sharp bird's whistle break the earth's stillness. He sits up and looks about. He*

*returns to his art, but is disturbed again, this time by repeated tunes of the bird's whistle)*

SOUNU: Ma? The last time I heard this whistle was when my brother lay dead. Who could it be now? Ohoi? *(The bird's whistles disappears and the carver returns to his work again. After a while, the bird's whistle sound again and again until the carver becomes agitated and frightened.)*

SOUNU: *(Carver)* Ohoi? The air smells strange. Either a stranger and friend is watching over me or some sad tragedy must be awaiting one of my family. Djinabau? Ohoi? Djinabau? u-u-u-u-u? where are you? Come home! At once!!

*(Kenim hides behind the bushes. He sees everything. He decides to take the risk and disclose himself. Suonu is sitting under a rough, make-shift hut, carving plates. There is a fire burning. The wood chips from the carving and some coconut shells burn. Suonu stops carving regularly to turn over the tree yams. In the background, not too far away is a more lasting, typical village house.) Who are you? (By this time Suonu is back to his carving. Kenim still wonders what to do. Eventually he decides to appear. He breaks his spear and throws it in front of Suonu. Suonu is surprised. He picks his bow and arrows and aims at every bush around him. He sees the spear and shifts it with his arrow. he notices it is broken. A Palpal leaf peace tree is tied around his spear. He looks around. There is no peace tree nearby.)*

SOUNU: Ohoi? Who are you? Are you a spirit? Yohologol, my brother? *(When he hears and sees nothing, he calls his wife louder.)* D-j-i-n-a-b-a-u-u-u ?? Where are you? Come home! At once !!! *(he does so giving his back to Kenim).*

KENIM: *(Comes out, breaks his lime gourd and spreads his lime, a sign of peace.)* I have no weapons. I am alone and lonely, hungry and thirsty. *(making the necessary signs.)*

SOUNU: *(Nervously, he looks around for space to escape. Looks at his bow and arrows, but Kenim offers him a parcel of tobacco<sup>66</sup> and a bamboo of seawater.)* Who are you? What do you want? Where do you come from? *(Making the necessary signs.)*

KENIM: *(offering some tobacco)* the coast *(pointing se)* *(puts his hands on his)* water *(puts his thumb i*

SOUNU: *(points the)* goes ahead.) Come! *(T* some tree yams, scrapes Kenim. Kenim eats one in his bilum. Suonu no Anyone else with you

KENIM: *(Shakes eating.)* No! *(Suonu n more yams into his bilu asks again.)*

SOUNU: There is su him here.

KENIM: *(smiles)* Ne signs.)

SOUNU: Dogs don Here, bring your friend. breaks his arrows, to in

KENIM: *(Smiles, m son! A small boy!*

SOUNU: Go and bri In the meantime, Suon come home, carrying lor bilums. Suonu tells ther are standing around, ta his son, Kule enter. Suo his wife Djinabau, ar Djinabau, my wife. It is son will stay here toni and pretends to rest his h

KENIM: *(to his son,*

KULE: Yes, I am Suonu's daughter. Keni meet Suonu and Djinab understanding between

KENIM: Yes! We'll light the next day. *(The when the morning dew i firewood and some bet and sit in silence as ne language. Bowls of foo suspicion Suonu sample then offers them to Kule food and return to long:*



KENIM: (offering some shells) I come from the coast (pointing seawards). I am hungry (puts his hands on his stomach). I need some water (puts his thumb in the throat.)

SUONU: (points the way to the fireplace and goes ahead.) Come! (They go. Suonu digs out some tree yams, scrapes them and offers them to Kenim. Kenim eats one and put every second one in his bilum. Suonu notices this and inquires.) Anyone else with you? (asks by hand sign.)

KENIM: (Shakes his head and goes on eating.) No! (Suonu notices Kenim is putting more yams into his bilum, becomes sensitive and asks again.)

SUONU: There is someone you hide; bring him here.

KENIM: (smiles) No! My little dog (makes signs.)

SUONU: Dogs don't eat too many yams. Here, bring your friend. I will not harm you (he breaks his arrows, to indicate peace.)

KENIM: (Smiles, more confidently) It's my son! A small boy!

SUONU: Go and bring him. (Kenim goes out. In the meantime, Suonu's wife and a small girl come home, carrying long bamboos of water and bilums. Suonu tells them what happened. They are standing around, talking, when Kenim and his son, Kule enter. Suonu is standing in front of his wife Djinabau, and small girl.) This is Djinabau, my wife. It is dark now. You and your son will stay here tonight (showing the house and pretends to rest his head with his open palm.)<sup>67</sup>

KENIM: (to his son) Should we stay?

KULE: Yes, I am tired. (Kule's eyes sees Suonu's daughter. Kenim looks up and his eyes meet Suonu and Djinabau's eyes. There is secret understanding between the two families.)

KENIM: Yes! We'll make our way at the first light the next day. (They settle by the fireplace) when the morning dew is still on the grass. Bring firewood and some betel nuts. (They light a fire and sit in silence as neither knows the other's language. Bowls of food are brought. To avoid suspicion Suonu samples all the soup bowls and then offers them to Kule and his father. They eat food and return to long silence. Though they feel

close to each other, they are separated by language. After a while Kule falls asleep beside the fire; Kenim sits on. Djinabau and Kenim are standing close to each other near their only house in the village.)

DJINABAU: (annoyed) Why do you hold this stranger and his son? Where are they from? What are their names?

SUONU: (after deep thought). I don't know. But this much know. There are many fish in a stream. There are many birds in a tree. There are also many people on the land. It is true, we do not know these men, but we need men. I need men to carve drums, to make masks and to build houses, to make feasts and to defend our village. We are alone. We need people!

DJINABAU: I am not arguing about our need for men. I also need a young man for my daughter. I want to know if these men are not enemies. You know betel nuts don't grow on sago palms. Sharks are not born from snakes.

SUONU: Well said, my wife. But man is born only from man and these are men. We can accept strangers. They are my people. I killed my brother. I can accept strangers.

DJINABAU: (a little at ease, but still uncertain) What are you going to do now? Give them our daughter? Or offer them our house?

SUONU: (smiling) House for a start. We don't know their plans. We'll test their honesty. (turning to Djinabau). Go inside the house. Line up all our yams and other treasures. We'll ask them to sleep in the house, among the treasures. We'll sleep outside. Go and tell them where to sleep.<sup>68</sup>

DJINABAU: Tell them? No? They will think we are going to trick them They can sleep outside, under the pig's shed.

SUONU: No, that is not the way to treat guests. If our treasures are not disturbed, we will trust them and they can live among us.

DJINABAU: No! You go and tell them. Shiver as you speak. Tell them you need to sleep by the fire, and you can't light fire near the treasures. I'll go in and line up the yams, shell money, and other valuable items. (Djinabau goes into the house. Suonu goes to Kenim and his son).



SUONU: *(softly, shivering.)* Here -e-e! I am sick and have to sleep by the fire with my family. You sleep in the yam house, over there. Don't go in the morning until we cook you some yams. Come with me. *(Kenim wakes Kule. They collect their bilums. Suonu helps them, and goes into the house. Djinabau come out too.)* Here is my utterly impoverished house. Take rest. Nothing will disturb you. Good night. *(By word and by hand signs as well; Suonu and wife walk out.)*

KENIM: Good night! *(Kenim and Kule walk in.)* It's all right.

KULE: *(restless and sleepy, dozes.)* Father, I am so tired. Let us sleep.

KENIM: *(sees yams, shell money, wooden plates and other treasure and is very cautious.)* Oh, be careful. Sleep like a log when you sleep. Do not touch one thing. Now, go out and urinate. It is not often that guests offer shelter to visitors in their house filled with yams and other treasures. *(Kule goes out and Kenim goes with him. Both stand beside the house, urinate and return to the house and fall asleep, beside each other.)*

KULE: *(wakes up, hears a lot of birds singing but does not hear any sea splash. The birds' continuous sounds reminds him of his Banak village.)* Father, father *(wakes his father)* Wake up, its morning. It is so much like home, with these birds singing I hear no sea. We must go before dew drops dry.

KENIM: *(still sound asleep.)* M-m-m-m- Go back to sleep. It's too early.

KULE: *(Quiet for a while, then shakes his father again.)* No father! It is not too early. The birds of the early morning dew have dispersed, their sounds have subsided. We cannot wait much longer.

KENIM: *(sits up).* What a lovely night. So cool and fresh. No mosquitoes, no sandflies. And such sweet songs of the birds. This place is homely, so like my own, destroyed village *(cries when he recalls memories of his destroyed village)*. I had a dream, a sad and beautiful dream. We were in a stranger's garden. We were hungry. The owners came. They saw us and seized the garden, to kill us but a big cassowary flew into the garden, and we rode safely out of it.

KULE: That is my mother. She saved us. She has saved us.

KENIM: *(looking into his son's eyes)* Son? Let us stay another day. We need rest. We do not know these people but they are kindly.

KULE: All right you speak, and we shall act. When I am grown up, I will speak and we shall act. *(a knock is heard on the wall.)*

KENIM: *(looking into the wall.)* Wah? Who are you?

SUONU: It's me Suonu; good morning! Come out and eat some sago.

KENIM: We are coming *(Kenim and his son, stand up and walk out.)* Oh, you are so early. You did not have to feed us so well.

DJINABAU: *(By this time all have gone to sit around the fire.)* Our daughter, Suajo, she fetched water and killed prawns *(show these items.)* She is so good. *(Kenim agrees and touches her cheek. They settle to eat sago. More than half way through their sago, Suonu touches Kenim by his shoulder, Kenim gets a big surprise.)*

SUONU: You two must stay here. Don't go! *(hand signs)* *(Djinabau disappears, goes into the house and counts the treasures and returns and tell her husband that everything is in order. He smiles with satisfaction and extends his invitation again.)* Stay! *(he suggests with hand sign.)* You two must stay here. Don't go! *(Both nod their heads in agreement. Suonu, his wife daughter disappear for a while and Kenim and his son are alone.)*

KENIM: *(to his son.)* Tonight, we will sleep outside. But we must test these people's sincerity. We will display our treasures in the house. They tried to see if we would steal. Now, we shall see how true they are.

KULE: Yes father! Your speak, we act. *(Suonu returns with some of his own tobacco and offers it to Kenim.)*

SUONU: You caught us by surprise yesterday. *(smiles)* Our village is not clean. Today, we will rest in the village. My wife and daughter will weed and sweep the village. I will show you my pigs, my wooden plates and let you have some rest. *(They pass the rest of the day,*

*seeing plates, watch remarking at different interrupted with m sitting beside the fi*

KENIM: *(to Su day yesterday. We a sleep outside, besid and daughter cou*

SUONU: *(unea tonight. (Shakes h nod in agreement. name? (hand signs,*

KENIM: *(after question.) Kenim! (hit his chest) Ku-l (all shake heads, S*

SUONU: And w My wife is D-j daughter is - S-u-a smile.) Suonu and h go into the house. fireplace inside the house. They see a tortoise shells, lo bamboos for seawa seeds, smoked fish

DJINABAU: *(e These shells, these t men. (she goes to p shell, but Suonu st*

KULE: Suajo daughter and that mountain moon an They match. We'll will marry Suajo. household and whe marry.

SUONU: *(a little One river doesn't The flow into ea touch one item. G urinate. Otherwise, and step on these p make themselves c fall down to sleep. parents.)*

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village. I will

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t of the day,

seeing plates, watching Suonu make plates, and remarking at different pigs' owners. The day is interrupted with meals. By evening, they are all sitting beside the fire.)

KENIM: (to Suonu) My son and I walked all day yesterday. We are cold and tired. We need to sleep outside, beside the fire. You and your wife and daughter could sleep inside the house.

SUONU: (uneasy) Why? No! It might rain tonight. (Shakes his head. Until, Suonu's head nod in agreement. Suonu smiles.) What is your name? (hand signs) Your son's name?

KENIM: (after a while understands the question.) Kenim! K-e-n-i-m-m-m! Ken-i-m! Me; (hit his chest) Ku-le! (Hit his son's back) Kule! (all shake heads, Suonu and all repeat names.)

SUONU: And we are; I am S-u-o-n-u Suonu; My wife is D-j-i-n-a-b-a-u- Djinabau. My daughter is - S-u-a-j-o- Suajo. (all repeat and smile, Suonu and his family bid good night and go into the house. They light a small fire on the fireplace inside the house and look around the house. They see a heap of rare trochusshells, tortoise shells, long strings of dogs' teeth, bamboos for seawater, wooden bowls, rare yam seeds, smoked fish and other treasures.

DJINABAU: (excited) Oh! How precious! These shells, these treasures! We must hold these men. (she goes to pick one spoon made of pearl-shell, but Suonu stops her and she pats it only.)

KULE: Suajo? Yes! Here's our lovely daughter and that handsome boy of theirs. Our mountain moon and their morning seaweed star. They match. We'll own all these treasures. Kule will marry Suajo. They can grow up, in one household and when they are old enough they'll marry.

SUONU: (a little angry.) It is too early to plan. One river doesn't stop before another begins. The flow into each other.<sup>69</sup> But first, don't touch one item. Go out now both of you and urinate. Otherwise, you will wake in your sleep and step on these precious pearls! (Both go out, make themselves comfortable and come in and fall down to sleep. Suajo sleeps between her parents.)

(Next day, in the same village, after Suonu and his family have come out of the house, Kenim

and his son go in and count all their wealth. Nothing is lost, nothing is destroyed. They come out.)

KENIM: (confident and smiles fully, for the first time since he parted with the Masalai. He is talking to his son when the lights are on.) I am happy! These people are good. We need a home. These people need men. We can live here.

KULE: (unsure) Yes, true! (changes his mood.) But wait, father! No! This is not our tree to perch on.<sup>70</sup> This is not our rock to harbour under.

KENIM. Birds travel. And fish are often washed downstream. Fish find strange rocks to shelter under and the birds find new trees to nest in. We have a home, a tree, a rock the winds and the tides have swept us away. This place, these people can be our new tree and new rock. Let's live there.<sup>71</sup>

KULE: (accepting) If you say so, father. I know nowhere else to go. Djinabau, she is like a mother to me.

KENIM: Yes, and Suajo, you can grow up together. (Suonu and his family come in.)

SUONU: (still unsure of what to say, but more confident.) Kenim! You are my brother (offers him his arm band and his hair band). You and your son, must live here. Suajo, my daughter will marry your son. Now, we must all grow up together here, in one household. Here! Here is a coconut seedling. Take it, plant it. It will take root here, you will love here. The palm tree binds us to the same soil, its sweet fruits and its bitter berries. (Kenim receives the bands. Suonu helps him put them on. He receives the coconut seedling. They move onto one edge of the village and Kenim digs a hole, Kule puts the coconut in, and all put more earth to bury it in. They do so and go off.)

(Months later, same village, Suonu is sitting with Kenim; Kule and Suajo and Djinabau are together, at another fireplace.)

KENIM: (searching for the starting words.) Kule and Saujo (Suonu looks up) I have to give you some gifts to formally join each other. They can grow up as brother and sister until they are old enough to marry.

SUONU: (happy) I have been waiting for you to make the move. Suajo will grow



breasts. And Kule will grow hair on his arm-pits. (*Suonu turns around to Djinabau's direction*) Ohoi. Djinabau? Come here! (*Djinabau comes.*) Here, Kenim, tell my wife your sister-in-law, that you and I are brothers.

KENIM: Nothing! I have nothing to say. I was saying, I should give you one or two pearl shells as a mark to end the shame, and the walls that exist between you and I.

DJINABAU: (*eyes gliter, but pretends to be unaffected*) Between us?

KENIM: Yes, Kule and Suajo!

DJINABAU: Oh, yes, of course! When?

KENIM: In two months' time.

SUONU: Yes, that's good. We'll have time to fatten the pigs and dig the yams to cook for you.

KENIM: Yes. I also have other news; for you; recently I was out hunting.<sup>72</sup> I sat beside Urieb River. A dog, not ours, chased a yeibon<sup>73</sup> wallaby. I killed it when it crossed the river. The dog's owner came. I ran away but he stopped me. We talked. He gave me the wallaby.

SUAJO: Oh yes, that big wallaby you brought a few days ago, eh? (*Both Suajo and Kule are looking inquiringly.*)

KENIM: Yes. But the man informed me by sign language that he wants coconut seedlings in exchange. I said I would give them. We would meet after two moons near the river bank to exchange our gifts.

SUONU: Yes. He is your roadman. He is your yeibon hula<sup>74</sup> (*the roadman of the wallaby.*) Go to the river when the day comes. Meet the man and come to the village. We can have joint celebrations.

DJINABAU: We have often seen smoke rise. Suajo and I see footprints occasionally in the river banks when we go fishing. We didn't know there were people. We can contact these people through you. My brothers are making a garamut. We shall all celebrate. (*Suonu shows surprise.*)

SUONU: Your brothers? You never told me about them. When did you meet them?<sup>75</sup>

SUAJO: Recently, father! We were out fishing. We heard this hollow sound. We peeped

in and my mother saw them. They said we couldn't see the garamuts. But one man came out and we walk to him.<sup>76</sup>

SUONU: Oh, I thought all your brothers have been destroyed. I heard death drums beat years ago. I saw smoke rise above and later I did not see a single house stand. I assumed my people from Yomunihi had thought we were hiding with your brother and had gone and killed them all and destroyed their homes.

DJINABAU: They didn't tell us that but were all very sad. They said they were building their garamut to mark a big, sad event. They were going to go somewhere. They did not say where

KENIM: Now, we must arrange everything. My son and I shall meet our road people. Djinabau shall meet her brothers. Then we all meet here. The pigs you cook and the yams you dig shall be mine. I will pass them onto my road people. The gifts we give you, shall be yours.

SUONU: No, not ours. They belong to Saujo's uncles.

DJINABAU: Some only. Her uncles did not raise her up. She is my concern and I shall keep her rings, until I die and she can then keep them. (*CURTAIN.*)

## SCENE TEN

(*This last scene may be silent or it may be acted with words. Two different groups from opposite ends of the village-stage. They sit in their separate groups. Suonu makes his speech. Kenim speaks. A man from the Yeibon group speaks. One of four brothers of Djinabau speaks. Gifts are lined up and exchanged. The two children are betrothed to each other. They all eat and perform four different dances. By evening, they agree to meet again on a day they appoint.*)

SUONU: We will meet again.

KENIM: Not before long.

ALL: Yes, we will meet again

We will sing together again

We will dance together again

and feast together, again.

*CURTAIN*

## NOTES.

- 1 This play is based both which are how my village tragedies.
- 2 The legend is younger of the tw the older brother who is heard to fully of his older The temptation invention.
- 3 The wife of a b sister of the brot if she is younger brother.
- 4 The reference to suggestion for lov
- 5 The vessel here r sacred motherho
- 6 Turning the vess breaking the forb making. The wife vessel.
- 7 The dog refusing naked man wo with a women wh
- 8 Brother's bowl r of Djinabau, tha Breaking it woul her.
- 9 Here, Yohologo Djinabau's word her with a dog th
- 10 Reference to you
- 11 Arrows refer to r
- 12 Arrows are fired this emphasises th the arrows he w woman.
- 13 Clapsed hands i succeeded in ca Empty hands, i not caught any t
- 14 Reference to to
- 15 parrots here sugg hungry and look Ho, like the flyin property.
- 16 The scared mess to transmit mess
- 17 Yohologof's spe



# NOTES.

- 1 This play is based on two different legends both which are held to be true histories of how my village evolved from two different tragedies.
- 2 The legend is not clear on who is the younger of the two brothers. It is clear that the older brother kills the younger brother who is heard to have been speaking wishfully of his older brother's wife Djinabau. The temptation scenes are my own invention.
- 3 The wife of a brother referred to as the sister of the brother. She is the elder, even if she is younger in age to the husband's brother.
- 4 The reference to a drink here is a subtle suggestion for love — making.
- 5 The vessel here refers to womanhood and sacred motherhood.
- 6 Turning the vessel upside down refers to breaking the forbidden relationship for love making. The wife of a brother is a forbidden vessel.
- 7 The dog refusing a bone suggests that no naked man would refuse to make love with a woman who appears and invites him.
- 8 Brother's bowl refers to the womanhood of Djinabau, that is exclusively Suonu's. Breaking it would mean making love with her.
- 9 Here, Yohologol is angry and turns Djinabau's words on her by identifying her with a dog that feasts on a useless bone.
- 10 Reference to younger brother see.
- 11 Arrows refer to man's penis.
- 12 Arrows are fired to kill an enemy. Again this emphasises the fact that even if he had the arrows he would not kill his brother's woman.
- 13 Clasped hands is a sign that a man has succeeded in catching a prey for food. Empty hands, in hunting means he has not caught any thing.
- 14 Reference to tongue and flying fox and
- & 15 parrots here suggest that Yohologol is love hungry and looks for love like flying foxes. Ho, like the flying foxes, steal other people's property.
- 16 The scared message bird-sebiten is believed to transmit message to people by its twitter.
- 17 Yohologol's speech establishes sacredness

of the forbidden relationships and property and land.

- 18 Yomunihi is the original village of the two brothers. The older brother killed his younger brother and left, making a new village which is the village of the people of whom the play unite is a member.
- 19 Traditionally, single men sleep in long, men houses, away from women. When they marry, they establish their own homes. In the hills, nights can be cold. Men light fires under the houses and sleep above.
- 20 Blood running through thumbs is one of the traditional telepathic way of receiving messages, both good and bad.
- 21 It is common to talk flirtishly.
- 22 Women, especially young ones are often referred to as plumage.
- 23 Wives mostly chosen for the husbands and vice versa. There is apparently a misunderstanding. Suonu, "won" his wife through beautiful dancing. His wife is not chosen for him.
- 24 Mate here is an attempt to translate "onokin" which is in Bukip Language.
- 25 Blunt arrows is a humorously insulting reference to a man's inability to make love.
- 26 Dialogue between Suonu and his wife is an invention of the playwright.
- 27 Reference to spirits meetings by the berry tree is a fatal decision that in human flesh they would never meet again. And when they meet in spirit by the berry tree, they would fight like enemy pigs for the soft seeds.
- 28 Flies breeding upon them, refers to the futility and hopelessness of death, despair and desolation. It's a curse of the worst kind.
- 29 Two yam shoots is a reference to two brothers, both born from the same parent yam, same father and mother.
- 30 Breeze here refers to anger and bitterness
- 31 Here Suonu appears to show sympathy and hopes that their spirits would meet again in peaceful accord.
- 32 Stream means anger. It runs its inevitable course towards death.
- 33 Ujaing is a curse of the most powerful kind. It is a curse of magic and will power wishing good orient upon a person, over which no control is possible.



- 34 "Earth shall not burn his body". Anyone handsome and very popular is frequently tied to poles so he or she may be seen regularly and his or her skin and bones may not be destroyed by earth. The last occasion in which this happen in the playwright's village would have been 70-80 yrs ago. The playwright's father, witnessed this.
- 35 Taking the burden off ones shoulders. When a person dies, his spirit must be relieved of his nearest relatives, so that the spirit is no longer a burden, but a help to them. There are different ways of doing this. One way is to circle a stone around your neck and throwing it backwards, not knowing where you throw it. Another is to step into a goragoro plant and rip it open and throw it away, down a stream.
- 36 Garamuts sound special messages of death. There are one beat, two three and many repeated ones.
- 37 Shadow means, doubt, jealousy, illwill.
- 38 The chokek is feminine goddess and is the mother creator. The ultimate God over all power is the "Iruhin", the being of the above, with masculine gender.
- 39 Build a fence — refers to the apparent jealousy and enmity.
- 40 A snake that refuses to move when a person is near it indicates that there is a living spirit in the snake. It should not be disturbed. Disturbance of the snake will bring misfortune.
- 41 Djinabau come from another village, she comes from Boduit, bit is married to Yomunihi man. This is not established in the legend, but is commonly held to be true.
- 42 Suonu believes it's the curse of his wife's people that forced him to kill his brother.
- 43 "Tangu" means bamboo.
- 44 "Wantog" means Kuila trees and the name Wantogig Village is from that word.
- 45 The end of one tale. Now starts another tale. They meet together later.
- 46 The exact name of the hunting dog is not known. The name given is the name of the hunting dog of the playwright's and his family. It was actually killed by a snake when the playwrite took it out on a hunting expedition.
- 47 A coconut must fall. The inevitable must occur and there is no way to stop it.
- 48 Some people may dance here, their last dances. The legend speaks of last dance, sing and love.
- 49 The description is the playwright's own invention. It is not known if the man was in fact KENIM.
- 50 Every village has a number of Choket maternity huts for child bearing and for women with menstrual periods to rest in.
- 51 It is believed the masalai used an adze to kill the people. Masalai is a spirit man, usually of the evil kind.
- 52 A woman is believed to have the power of coldness so that if she sits on any magical power, that power would be ineffective.
- 53 Kenim's wife's name is not known. She is believed to come from a coastal village, Banagi. Kenim believed to come from a mountain village, not too far off them then a day's walk. Kenim and his wife are going to Kenim's brother's in-law for a new home.
- 54 Kule: The son's name is not known. The name Kule is an invention of the playwright's.
- 55 Poisoning here refers to death magic.
- 56 The mother's death is not emphasised in the legend. Playwright's own emphasis.
- 57 Kule's uncles had made sago parcel and put a lot of mud in it. The legends feels that Kule was sent to collect leaves to wrap sago. While he was away his uncles placed mud instead of sago and wrapped it. They were tired of Kenim repeated complaints that his brothers in-law were selfish.
- 58 Mother refers to an apparition and a dream, not in the legend.
- 59 No bird nests in thin air etc. Means that even birds needs some solid home like a tree to rest on. Human beings cannot wander without a secure home.
- 60 Often the jaws of people are dug and kept for divination. The playwright recalls seeing his parents use the jaw bone of one of the father's dead sons for messages and advice.
- 61 Bukip speakers are generally the Rohum people. The Sausa speakers are generally the Abrop speakers.
- 62 Details of this scene is not emphasised in the legend.
- 63 Ask about the road and it will have no end is often an answer given to children

- who cry and at distances, as a w too many questio
- 64 This the process
- 65 Scene nine. This Language com explained in term
- 66 The offer of tob spear, the lime, of peace tree, the exchange of gift doubted signs of
- 67 By the time Ken Suonu and his lonely and they and his family t and his son.
- 68 This test is an ef a trustworthy fri
- 69 One river runs that Kule will m take care as to h
- 70 Tree to perch n true home one longs to one.



who cry and are tired of walking long distances, as a way to stop children asking too many questions.

64 This the process of divination.

65 Scene nine. This emphasised in the legend. Language communication problem is explained in terms of hand signs.

66 The offer of tobacco, the breaking of the spear, the lime, the leaves and branches of peace tree, the planting of coconut and the exchange of gifts are all strong and undoubted signs of friendship and peace.

67 By the time Kenim and his son came to Suonu and his wife they have become lonely and they need more people. Suonu and his family therefore welcome Kenim and his son.

68 This test is an effective way to differentiate a trustworthy friend from a fraud.

69 One river runs into another, here means that Kule will marry Suajo, but you should take care as to how you go about it.

70 Tree to perch refers to a home, real and true home one belongs to and which belongs to one.

71 Kenim agrees with his son, but says, sometimes it is inevitable to travel and find a new home. It is common for a girl to grow up in her husband to be's home as a daughter of the family and marry into it.

72 There is a legend that strangers of Sausa tribe befriended the new village through hunting and to this day, contacts are made through Yeibon hula.

73 Yeibon is a wallaby.

74 Hula — means a roadman, identical with the diplomat of a country.

75 It is believed, that Djinabau and her husband Suonu settled not too far from Boduiten, a tribe of people who are supposed to be brothers of Djinabau. This village has now gone out of existence. Some descendants are believed to be living in a village miles away in Woganana area. Very little is in fact known about Bodite.

76 This actual legend has it that they could not cut through a stump in the garamut and Suonu and Kenim helped them out.



# MEATA GOES A - WOONG

**Momoru Tabo**

"What is it that you want?", quizzed the slightly-built Kerema man behind the counter. His aquiline facial features grimaced into a mash of impatience. Still the hulking youth stared at him nonchalantly over the counter, his face showing not the least sign of having understood the storekeeper. Only an expression compounded of a silly smile and a leer played on his lips and dark face.

The thin piping voice of the storekeeper came again: "Look, *wantok*, do you have two ears and a mouth on that great big head of yours or not? If you have, why don't you utilise them? I can't stand here all evening waiting for the apparent dumbass you are to speak!"

For Meata the storekeeper this was the sixth or the seventh time he had requested the ragged youth to make some sort of vocal reaction, and he was well beyond the limits of patience. He had been preparing to close down the store for the day when this youth had entered with such feline silence that he had started considerably on looking up from counting the day's earnings.

"Now for the umpteenth time, *wantok*, what is it that you want to buy? Meata leaned a little closer toward the youth. Still the youth made no positive reaction but instead he grinned from ear to ear, scratched at his shaven head and emitted an animal-like noise from his thick lips. This kid must be off his rocker, Meata made up his mind with considerable alarm. It was bad enough to have one's own misgivings about customers during daylight hours but to end the day's business with an oversized kid hovering menacingly over him at this time of the day was more than a peaceful and ambitious business person like him could tolerate. He was going to give him one more chance before manhandling him out of the store. Aloud Meata said: "Now for

the last time before I throw you out, or call the police, what is it that you want to buy?" At the same time, he put on his most bellicose expression.

But the truth struck him, even before the last syllable had left his lips. He slumped his shoulders in utter hopelessness, when the realisation struck him. What a stupid fool he had been to not have recognised the youth at first sight. This youth hovering over him with that smug face was none other than the deaf-and-dumb boy he had not seen before but had heard of countless times before. And he was slightly retarded mentally, at least that was what his friends had told him, and that made him a triple-handicapped person and that also made this present predicament no better, especially for him.

Yes, he had heard of this youth from his Gerehu neighbours and fellow small scale proprietors who operated similar caravan-store installments in and around Port Moresby. How many times had they warned him of a triple handicapped youth who could easily get away with a free PMV bus ride or a free loaf of bread or a free bottle of Coca Cola. Many times, Meata answered in his mind. Yes, and only last week he, Meata Fareho, had boasted to friends that for as long as he operated his caravan-store, no one whether sound of mind or otherwise would enter his small establishment and depart with a loaf of bread or even a stick of confection. Over his dead body, he'd added then. He'd even boasted that if he ever came across this infamous character, he, Meata Fareho, of Lelefiru, Gulf Province, would give him the beating of his life, handicapped or not.

This formidable looking youth hovering over him was that same infamous character, he had told his friends to beat up one day. He felt ashamed now, seeing that it was an impossibility. The youth was naked except for a dirty loin cloth, and he was not that "pot-bellied and naked Kerema youth with an oversized head and a perpetual running nose", he had envisioned, when his friends had warned him. He was the contrast, in fact.

He perused the youth's physique. His eyes took in the heavy shoulders, the deep chest and bulging biceps. He leaned a little closer and saw the sturdy muscular legs that seemed to be cemented to the floor. This youth could easily pulverise John Aba, himself, Meata made up his

mind with alarm. More than the pugilist at Boroko, when he had to find out if he was found out then he would only blow his studied the youth shuddered. He cur noticed it when his courage left him no

Then Meata found the youth's features, so do earlier. Just about between his eyebrows emblem of gang membership of the rising sun. To the band of un themselves "Kipsco" Kaugere streets, had out of decent residence naked woman sh leathery chest, told probably spent a sp

Meata now wished the youth was physical this giant out of the out of the question, tactics to get rid of smile at him patern he meant no harm flattered and co-op hand to the youth and more like a leer than smile again but still probably due to the chest, Meata could smile. He cursed probably meant him created him. In any good at smiling. He poor diplomat had career with the Dep an ambition he had

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mind with alarm. And he Meata was no taller than the pugilist as he had found out once at Boroko, when he had sidled up to Aba's side just to find out if he was taller than him. As he had found out then he was shorter by about two inches. If this youth could wallop Aba then he Meata Fareho was only a fly and this youth would only blow him away with his breath. He studied the youth's physique again and shuddered. He cursed himself for not having noticed it when he had first entered. All his courage left him now.

Then Meata found himself studying the youth's features, something he had not cared to do earlier. Just above the bridge of his nose right between his eyebrows was the unmistakable emblem of gang membership, the tattooed replica of the rising sun. This youth probably belonged to the band of uncouth layabouts who called themselves "Kipsco Kobonis" who roamed the Kaugere streets, harrassing and scaring the hell out of decent residents. The tattooed picture of a naked woman showing prominently on his leathery chest, told the story that the youth had probably spent a spell at the Bomana jail.

Meata now wished with all his heart that the youth was physically handicapped too. Getting this giant out of the store by physical force was out of the question, he decided. He had to use other tactics to get rid of him. What tactics? Why not smile at him paternalistically and show him that he meant no harm? Yes, he might just get flattered and co-operate. He extended his right hand to the youth and tried a smile. The latter felt more like a leer than a smile, to him. He tried to smile again but still it felt like a leer. Somehow, probably due to the growing knot of fear in his chest, Meata could not manouvre his lips into a smile. He cursed himself again. God had probably meant him not to smile when he had created him. In any case he had never been any good at smiling. He would have made a very, very poor diplomat had he pursued a diplomatic career with the Department of Foreign Affairs—an ambition he had never achieved.

This time, he mastered his wits, parted his lips and exhibited his betel-nut stained teeth. In his mind's eye Meata saw his face resembling a grinning skeleton, he had once seen at the UPNG Medical Faculty complex at Taurama. He extended his hand again. Seeing that the youth was making no attempt to receive his hand,

Meata withdrew it but stoically held his skull-grin, which he could hardly hold onto any longer. Noticing that the youth's face showed no sign of a smile, Meata loosened his jaws and closed his lips with a smack. "Blast you", he swore under his breathe. It was no good. The bloody bastard might have misintepreted his well-meant attempt to smile, and become aggressive. Now he swore in Toaripi. Smiling was no good. He had to use another tactic.

Suddenly he began hoping that another person would happen along. Even a seven year old would be very welcome, he thought. At least his presence would be a deterrent and would discourage the youth from doing anything rash. He glanced at his wristwatch. Six-thirty, it said. Half an hour past closing time. He now realised that the chances of a third presence were slim. He looked over the youth's shoulder at the street. There were no pedestrians but cars and other motor vehicles were buzzing past every now and then. He wished one of the drivers would drive in and drop in a for a packet of cigarettes or something. The streetlights were on now.

Other stone-owners in other streets had closed down already and were probably enjoying themselves at home, while he was caught in this awkward situation with this youth. Meata had to abandon his thoughts when the youth shuffled his feet and moved a little closer to the counterless than his arms length away from Meata. Again, the animal noise left his lips. Meata looked down and saw that the youth's fists were clenched so tight that the veins showed prominently. With alarm, he took a step backward, just enough to get him out of the youth's reach. There was no telling what damage those sledgehammer fists could do at a very close range. Frantically he looked around for a suitable weapon to defend himself with if need be. He found nothing big enough to scare the youth. Frantically he tried another useless smile and received nothing in return but much rolling of eyeballs by the youth. Bribery. That was it. He had to, somehow, bribe the youth out of the store, quickly lock the store and make a dash for his vehicle parked outside. It was now very, very clear in his mind that this handicapped youth was capable of violence and violence was the last thing he wanted in the vicinity of his trade store, let alone inside it. Especially, when his safety and well being were concerned. Moreover, the old



body of Volkswagen bus, he called a caravan, and the merchandise stacked on shelves inside it, had cost him a little fortune—if K600 could be called a fortune. He lived on the earnings of this little establishment and he was determined to keep it free of trouble.

Yes, why not bribe him with a lolly? After all losing two toea's worth of confection was better than spending the evening with this great oaf grinning malevolently at him. Yes, two toea was nothing compared to the money or the goods the youth would take if he acquired the upper hand of the situation. Then, he remembered how he had told his friends that no-one would enter his store and depart with not even a stick of confection. He was discouraged now. He had his pride to keep. What would his friends say or think if they heard how the youth had managed to get away from his store with a lolly? To hell with my pride! Meata almost shouted. He was prepared to sacrifice his pride just to get rid of the youth. And anyway, his friends were not bound to hear about the youth leaving with a lolly. There were no witnesses to spread the story.

His last thoughts had barely finished registering on his brain when he began reaching for the bowl of sweets on the counter just to his left. Mastering his wits to register a suitable smile, he held the lolly toward the youth, who was now standing legs apart, his expression as grim as a pallbearer's. The lolly was refused with profuse head-shaking.

"Damn you! Beggars can't be choosers", Meata muttered heatedly under his breath, as he tossed the refused lolly behind him. His kindly gesture had been refused outright. What could he do now? Counter violence with violence? Yes, there was something in that. He was not a naturally bellicose person but he could just feign one. Yes, maybe, if he acted tough, the youth would lose heart and back out. Then he noticed that the youth was pointing at something on the shelves, still wearing the pallbearer's expression. Meata's eyes followed the direction of his pointing until it focused on the Hutton's canned meat stacked expertly like brickwork on the top shelf. His blood ran cold.

"No bloody fear!" His voice was something between a gasp and a bawl. "Oh, my sweet Lord! Look you wanna make me bankrupt? You wanna make me give up the fruits of years of hard work just like that!?", Meata made a sweep-

ing movement with his open hand. "You wanna make me give up what I resigned from Government employment for?" He pointed accusingly at the somewhat perplexed youth. Then he banged the counter with an open hand.

"You know what or who I am? I'm Meata Fareho and I'm a K-Ave. You know our reputation? Huh? Now get the hell out of my store before I murder you, you bloody son of a bitch!"

Before he knew it, he was vaulting over the almost five-foot high counter — a feat he never could accomplish under normal circumstances. Landing on the other side, he held the confounded youth manouvred to shove him out of the door. But his fifty five pounds was not enough to budge the one hundred and forty pounder who stood rooted to his ground. That infuriated Meata and swearing, he let fly with his puny right fist, and caught the temple of his adversary, who still did not budge even an inch. Again his fist catapulted and this time it landed on the youth's chest. The result was the same. What infuriated Meata the more was that the youth did not seem to have felt his blows because now he was contemplating Meata, like anyone would, as a pestering fly.

Gathering his strength, Meata stepped forward and hit the youth's head with what he anticipated would be the death blow. He felt his fist go numb with pain as it connected but the youth still stood his ground. Meata stood back again and watched agape at the youth's head. He could now feel the delayed waves of pain creeping up his arm to his brain. Had he hit his head or a sackful of lead, Meata wondered. It had felt more like the latter.

The youth seeing that it was high time he retaliated, touched his head where Meata's blow had connected and the animal noise again escaped his lips. Gathering his one hundred and forty pounds into his right arm, he lunged and drove his fist head-on into Meata's face, with pulverising force. The blow caught the lighter man off the floor, over the counter and onto the other side. Meata was unconscious, even before his feet had lost contact with the floor.

Meata regained consciousness about an hour later. Memories of his encounter with the youth came almost immediately. He sat up. Then, more by the numb sensation on his proboscis than remembrance, his hand went up to his nose. He stood up and swayed for some moments, before

reaching for the mirror shelf. He surveyed his thought. He was not looking like one of the he had seen in the *Fe* magazine, just the o mirror on it's nail.

Then he remembered was in his throat a sighted with relief w bottom shelf just whe was amused. The wre know what money w he would certainly ha He counted the notes earnings. He recounted had counted correctly Kina. The same amc retarded kid had ente Huttons canned meat missing. It amused hir youth had gone to th him just for one lousy the overgrown kid di was, Meata thought.

Then he suddenly i rather somebody. Mor visiting her home for her and she was p rendezvous. Morivei v up for. To him, she wa whole of Papua New C had met her during a Kila Horsecamp settle conversation he had fi for him. The only one i life. To show his love her in the tall grass ou munity hall. In the folk in at the Kila Kila Pro lunch hour and share weekends he took h one of the other plush drink or two. Or he to Bull Disco. He could from knowing that she Kila Provincial High family at the Settlement about her. His visit to h the result of his count until last Saturday th promised she would sh



reaching for the mirror hanging on a nail on the wall. He surveyed his face in the mirror. God, he thought. He was not Meata Fareho anymore. He looked like one of the battered up negro pugilist, he had seen in the February issue of the *Fighter* magazine, just the other day. He replaced the mirror on its nail.

Then he remembered the cash box. His heart was in his throat as he whirled around. He brightened with relief when he saw it lying on the bottom shelf just where he had left it earlier. He was amused. The wretched kid probably did not know what money was, because had he known, he would certainly have got hold of the cash box. He counted the notes in it. Sixty Kina. Today's earnings. He recounted them just to make sure he had counted correctly. They were all in. All sixty Kina. The same amount he had left when the retarded kid had entered. He looked up at the flat-topped canned meat and noticed that one was missing. It amused him to think that the retarded youth had gone to the lengths of almost killing him just for one lousy can of meat. Thank God, the overgrown kid did not know what money was, Meata thought.

Then he suddenly remembered something-or-other somebody. Morivei. Morivei Eka. He was visiting her home for the first time since he met her and she was probably already at their rendezvous. Morivei was the only one he saved up for. To him, she was the sweetest female in the whole of Papua New Guinea, if not the world. He had met her during a birthday party at the Kila Kila Horsecamp settlement and after their first conversation he had felt she was the one meant for him. The only one meant to share his bed and life. To show his love for her, he had slept with her in the tall grass outside the settlement's community hall. In the following weeks, he had called on at the Kila Kila Provincial High School every lunch hour and shared his lunch with her. On weekends he took her to the Travelodge or one of the other plush hotels in Moresby, for a drink or two. Or he took her to the Little White Bull Disco. He could afford it, anyway. Apart from knowing that she was fifteen, attending Kila Kila Provincial High, and residing with her family at the Settlement, he knew nothing else about her. His visit to her home tonight was only the result of his countless pleadings. It was not until last Saturday that she had given in and promised she would show him to her family and

they had agreed on tonight. Meata considered himself very lucky compared to other men his age whose wives had left them. Indeed, who would have thought it possible for a thirty year old man to court a fifteen year old. He himself often-times, had not believed he could be as lucky as that. Often he had been faced with the question: "Did Morivei love him or was it his money that she was after?" And he had always answered this himself. She loved him and not his money. Something about the way she had whispered 'I love you' in the tall grass told Meata that she had meant it. With his aquiline features and small build, Meata never considered himself a handsome man but he possessed a certain charm that excited females he met. In fact back in his high school days at Kerema High School, the girls had called him 'pig-faced one' when he'd made approaches to them and with his charms, he had enchanted one or two of them, and had slept with them.

Of his past Morivei, knew nothing. He had been married to Martha Tete who had cuckolded him during their marriage and had run away to Kerema with their six children. He had been glad when she had left him. He was glad he had met Morivei, who had made him a younger man, enjoying the things he had missed out when he had prematurely married Martha. Meata glanced at his watch. He had not more than an hour to get home change and then drive to Kila Kila.

He took the mirror again and looked at his nose. Would Morivei's family approve of the flat-nosed twerp he apparently was, wooing her? He began carefully picking at the blood clots in his nostrils his chin and neck. He certainly had lost a lot of blood. He looked at the bloodstains on the floor, and swore. But nothing, not even his injured nose, was going to bar him from seeing his beloved Morivei.

He definitely was meeting her family tonight, battered nose or otherwise. Again he swore, this time at the youth who was probably feasting over that can of meat. He decided to abandon his picking at the blood clots. He would do it at home during his bath. Water would make it a less painful thing, he reasoned.

Then hastily taking a few canned goods, he took his cash box locked up the store and went down to his parked Toyota pickup. He had less than an hour to get home, change, have some-



thing to eat and then drive to the Kila Kila High rendezvous.

God, please let her be there, waiting for me, Meata thought frantically as he cruised along Waigani Drive. There were a lot of things he was going to tell her. And he was going to get acquainted with his in-laws for the first time and he was wishing all would go as anticipated. He hoped his in-laws would accept him on first sight. Would they? He mused over the question. They would, he thought as he glanced at the cartons of goods at his side on the seat. His left hand dropped from the steering wheel and gave the bugle in his trouser pocket a reassuring pat. The bulge told the story that he was bringing with him K200 as a token that he really loved Morivei and was prepared to sacrifice his everything to get her as his lifetime bed-companion. He glanced at the two cartons of San Miguel beer beside the cartons of goods. Yes, all this bounty would guarantee his acceptance by Morivei's family.

Yes, tonight was the night. Tonight, he Meata Fareho, was going to propose. He was going to ask her old man for her hand in marriage. His heart missed a beat in utter anticipation. What if they asked for his age? Lower it? Yes, that was what he would do, if they asked for it. True, no father in his right mind would allow a man his age to marry a daughter who was twice her age. He looked at the bounty and smiled, to his proboscis's aggravation. They were going to ensure a safe passage. He would hint or even tell them that more would come, if they gave him Morivei.

And he would never at any stage mention his previous marriage. He thought of Martha Tete again, who probably was whoring around Kerema town at the moment. The bitch. The two-timing, unfaithful bitch had run away with his children one night after one of his drunken beatings. God, he had every goddamned right to beat her because she had for a long time trod on the path of matrimonial infidelity, and he had suspected it all along. He could not bear his anger any longer when he had spotted tyre marks in front of his house the night she had stolen away. He had been doing overtime work and had gone with a friend to drink at the Travelodge afterwards. When his friend had dropped him off, he had at once spotted the tell-tale tyre marks in the mud before his house and he had at once realised what had happened. Martha's lover, had

probably dropped in and had bedded her while he had been innocently toiling away at his office, for her well-being, he had surmised then. He had then gone inside and had beaten her almost dead, while his children had cringed in one corner. Well, the bitch then had stolen off with his children after he had fallen down to sleep in the bathroom. He had thought then, that she'd be back the next day but he had waited in vain. It was not until a month later that he had received an unsigned letter posted in Kerema, that he had learnt that Martha was living with her parents at Kerema. Her mother or even Martha herself had written it. What had infuriated him then was that she had taken all the money he had stashed away in a wooden box. She had taken all K1,500, leaving not even a toea. He still hadn't forgiven himself for not banking all that cash.

The bloody whoring bitch, Meata muttered to himself as he braked at the Gordons junction to let some pedestrian cross. And he had vowed then that he would murder Martha if he ever came across her again. His thoughts were still on Martha and his children, when he reached Boroko, where he drove in to buy some cartons of cigarettes for Morivei's father and mother both of whom, he guessed were smokers.

Five minutes later, he was on his way again. His mind went back to the days when he had been in the Government's employment. He had been an accounts clerk with the Transport Department, before and after his marriage to Martha. And before that he had been in and out of odd jobs, never sticking to one job for more than a year. After Martha had left him he had resigned. He had reasoned then, that it was better to resign because, the people he toiled for, were gone. With the capital from his resignation, he had established his little caravan-store at Gerehu-something his Kerema friends envied. As it was, he was better off than most other store owners, or for that matter, other breadwinners, who had to provide for their wives and children. He was, in a way, glad his wife had left him. At least her running away had taken some responsibility off his shoulders.

And just lately, he had included in his ambitions that he would enlarge his business after he had married Morivei and that was not too far in the future, Meata was sure. Yes, he smiled to himself, she was going to be his in the not-too-distant future according to the bounty he was

taking to her family. Meata had won the 1982 general election, he was now in public office and with a li... prime minister. If he joined the Party, he might just win. Julius Chan, who accepted performing as he at first... Julius had outstayed the 5... historic vote-of-no-confidence... somehow, he Meata Fareho a public figure and all his

God, am I turning ambitious? Meata thought. That came to an abrupt sensation in his nose. He rubbed his nose. If he ever entered Parliament, he would surely force all rascal gangsters included sane and insane triple-handicapped youth out of lot of inconvenience. A lot of inconvenience, Meata took his breath. Goddamn, I'm not interning him at the Centre, he said aloud. I'll propose a bill that will be for mentally handicapped at the centre. That was mentally retarded youth folk anymore trouble. His family did not see to it that at the centre, he Meata Fareho were severely punished!

Naturally, he was a man, with a soft part for capped people. His father had been partly-deaf and he died in 1968, had been a his associations with the donate K100 toward the Disabled Persons Fund. He had the agitated nose that had the face of the youth violence injury came to his mind.

Past what he called irrelevant traffic lights, into the pickup. When he was crossing, he drove off in front of some Mekeos who were under the flood lights. For of the nuts, he drove away. Mekeos, Meata looked at



taking to her family. Maybe, someday, but not in the 1982 general elections he would stand for a public office and with a little more luck, he might be prime minister. If he joined the People's Progress Party, he might just wrest the leadership from Sir Julius Chan, who according to him was not performing as he at first had expected when Sir Julius had ousted the Somare government in the historic vote-of-no-confidence last year. Yes, somehow, he Meata Fareho, would become a public figure and all his dreams would come true.

God, am I turning out to be a little over-ambitious? Meata thought. He gave a little laugh that came to an abrupt stop when he felt a painful sensation in his nose. He swore as he gently patted his nose. If he ever became a Member of Parliament, he would fight for a bill that would surely force all rascal gangs out of business. That included sane and insane rascals, including the triple-handicapped youth who had caused him a lot of inconvenience. And still causing him a lot of inconvenience, Meata added, swearing under his breath. Goddamn, his immediate family for not interning him at the Laloki Psychiatric Centre, he said aloud. If ever I became an MP, I'll propose a bill that would make it compulsory for mentally handicapped people to be interned at the centre. That way, that deaf, dumb and mentally retarded youth, would cause no decent folk anymore trouble. And if his immediate family did not see to it that he was interned at the centre, he Meata Fareho would see to it that they were severely punished!

Naturally, he was a decent and quiet kind of man, with a soft part for the disabled or handicapped people. His father Fareho Malala had been partly-deaf and his poor mother, who had died in 1968, had been a paraplegic. In fact it was his associations with them, that had made him donate K100 toward the International Year of the Disabled Persons Fund, last month. It was the agitated nose that had made him swear when the face of the youth who had caused him an injury came to his mind.

Past what he called the sophisticated but irrelevant traffic lights, Meata put more speed into the pickup. When he came to the Taurama crossing, he drove off the road and parked in front of some Mekeos who were selling betel nut under the flood lights. Buying two kina's worth of the nuts, he drove away. How he envied those Mekeos, Meata looked back at them, conversing

and enjoying the night air as they made money. How he envied their guts. True these Mekeo's had the potential to become successful businessmen. They never tire of making money. God, how could they sit in the same squatting position over their merchandise, without breaking their spines? He'd seen many Mekeos squatting in the same fashion, for as long as 48 hours. What sheer determination to make money!

Meata shook his head slowly, as he thought, if only I had the same sort of determination, I'd become as successful as the proprietors of Chin H. Meen and Sons, at Boroko and deal with radios, cassette recorders and other electrical gadgets. Yes, those business-minded Mekeos were the black equivalents of the Chinese. All their chats, at conversational level, were dominated by monetary terms. Yes, if only, he had their guts!

He saw Morivei standing alone under the big white-washed board bearing the inscription: "Kila Kila Provincial High School". Catching sight of her, Meata's blood raced in torrents and his face lit up. In the dim light cast by the distant school area lights, and the solitary street light on the other side of the road, Meata could discern her blue and white school uniform, with her school books tucked under her arms. She wore a scarf around her afro-styled hair, which Meata adored. Her face wore an expression of anxiety and as the pickup screeched to a stop about three metres from her, she warily stooped a little closer and asked: "Meata?" Meata enthusiastically opened the other door before speaking.

"Yep, 'tis me, luv". He stoically let out a little heartless laugh and grinded his teeth furiously to absorb the pain in his nose. "Been waiting long, my sweet?"

"You bet. I've been waiting since school ended four or five hours ago", Morivei said as she made herself comfortable on the seat, her books on her lap.

See, she really loves me and is prepared to wait hours just for me, Meata told himself. Aloud he said: "Sorry, my darling, if I caused you a lot of inconvenience. My apologies."

Morivei smiled, "Apologies accepted."

"Apologies accepted, what?" Meata repeated to her, in demanding tone.

"My darling".

Repeat it with your sentence please".



"Apologies accepted, my darling", Morivei said emphasising the last two syllables.

"Good, luv", Meata smiled. "You know I really want you to say all these love words. That way I'll know that you love me. Oh yes, talking about loving me, Morivei, do you?" Meata asked as unconcerned as he could as he cut off the engine.

"You know I do, Meata..... my darling", Morivei gave a little laugh. "But please tell me why.. why is it that your voice sounds so.. so.. well so.. nasal. Excuse the word, Meata, but it sounds so". She leaned a little closer to him. She could see him only silhouetted against the lights from the classrooms.

"What was it that you said, my sweet?" Meata asked. He had heard all right but he wanted a few more moments in which to think of a suitable explanation about his nose.

"I asked about your voice, Me..my darling. Why does it sound so nasal?" Meata quickly put on his most confident countenance and said:

"Oh, it's this poor busted nose of mine, that makes my voice sound like it does, my sweet. I got tangled up with a deaf youth and his gang. Got rid of them single-handed but not before that son of a bitch deaf bloke crushed my poor nose with an iron pipe. I'll kill the retarded bastard if I ever....."

"Retarded mentally?"

"Yes, my love. But you know me. I have the strength men with my physique lack. Single handed I busted them all up and chased them away. All ten of them. I swear I'll get that blasted youth if it's the last thing I do on earth." Meata patted his nose gently then he asked: "Hey, sweet wanna take a peep at lover-boy's lovable nose?" Meata leaned forward and switched on a little light just above the windscreen. He faced Morivei and smiled.

"My God! Meata...it..it's so dreadful. It's practically knocked flat like the rest of your face. It's a miracle you can breath. Oh Meata, it's so dreadful.." Concern written all over her face, Morivei leaned a little closer patted the injured nose and quite taciturnly pecked Meata's cheek.

"You had better get some kind of medical treatment before that injury becomes a permanent one. I wouldn't fancy ...." She stopped before she could say anything absurd.

Never before, had Meata been covered by such affectionate concern and he was now trying

desperately not to break down. It would be to his discredit if he broke down right in front of his fiancée. And it would show how feminine he was. Once more under control, he said: "Thank you my sweet for all this concern. I..I.. almost did not come. You know, I've been feeling so goddamn miserable since I received this injury because I..I.. I thought you would disapprove of my appearance. A.. and I thought you would...."

He faltered.

"I would what?", Morivei demanded, humor in her eyes.

"Well..well you would.. just discard me on account of my gorilla nose....."

"No way! Meata darling. With me it's 'don't judge a book by it's cover' as the saying goes. Looks don't matter, to a sensible young woman like me. Papa has been injecting this into me since I was a child".

Her words brought courage to Meata and he brightened up a little. "Hey luv, come on, let's get out and enjoy the night air for some minutes. It's such a romantic night with all the stars above us", he said as he opened the door and walked out. It was not because of the night air that he wanted to stay outside. He was also getting funny ideas too. He went to the other side and helped Morivei out. Already, he envisioned himself mounting her and the thought made his blood race. He took her hand and seconds later, they were both seated on the bonnet. A light breeze was coming from the south east and every now and then, cars zoomed past but they were both oblivious to this.

He pulled her close to him and her animal warmth stimulated the amorous equipment all males have. God I'm getting a hard-on, even before I have taken my clothes off. Sooner or later, I'll be getting a premature ejaculation, Meata thought. Oh sweet Lord, Creator of Heaven and Earth, am I going crazy. He lay on his back and pulled her down with him. Then Meata stood up and said: "Aw come on let's get on with the real thing I cannot hold on another second".

Two minutes later they were both in the nude, caressing each other, paying not the least attention to the traffic zooming past every second. Not until someone from a passing vehicle make an obscene remark, did Morivei become aware of how public and open it was but by then it was too late.

"My God, Meata, let's go to a decent and a secluded place. This bonnet's rock-hard, and this

place is too public", Meata who was past caring shook his head, his eye

"A bonnet's as good as a blasted motorist can be gasped as he pinned manouevred himself.

Ten minutes later, they were in a big squatter's shanty town. So this was the house referred to as her home, bigger than other shanties in the south, about thirty beach, if a rocky stretch could be called beach. They had felt earlier was a raging *Laurabada*, and face in disgust when he saw the rusty corrugated iron, fall hell didn't Morivei's folk Commission house and shack. He chided himself that ten minutes earlier in rapture. Morivei had sadly glad of meeting him in the shanty from now on they would And he had told her almost from now onwards he would God forgive him. Meata pickup and almost immediately attracted by four pot-bellies screaming out of the shack. They fell suddenly quiet Meata and eyed him timidly were eyeing him with some awe and he bent down and took Out of the corner of his eye themselves and cluck their ened up and brushed imaginary pulled up his sleeve and glsionally at his watch. Against tongues in awe. Encouraged Meata reached into the car for sunglasses, which he put on. Yes, he told himself, this was their respect. He had to maintain of their brother-in-law but he was a sophisticated Ker

"Have you dressed up Morivei speak and he started "What? Er...yes, my sweet "What was all that about "What?"



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place is too public", Morivei whispered hoarsely. Meata who was past caring now, only smiled and shook his head, his eyes gleaming.

"A bonnet's as good as a bed, sweet, and those blasted motorists can watch if they like," Meata gasped as he pinned Morivei down and manouevred himself.

Ten minutes later, they were parked outside a big squatter's shanty that stood on one metre piles. So this was the house Morivei had proudly referred to as her home, Meata thought. It was bigger than other shanties in the same area. To the south, about thirty yards away was the beach, if a rocky stretch of water drenched place could be called beach. The mild south easterly they had felt earlier was slowly culminating into a raging *Laurabada*, and Meata screwed his face in disgust when he heard a loose piece of rusty corrugated iron, fall from the wall. Why he hell didn't Moreivei's folk move into a Housing Commission house and leave the goddamned shack. He chided himself when he remembered that ten minutes earlier on, in their amorous rapture, Morivei had sadly told him that she was glad of meeting him in the first place, because from now on they would be financially secure. And he had told her almost paternalistically that from now onwards he would improve their lot, God forgive him. Meata stepped out of the pickup and almost immediately his attention was attracted by four pot-bellied children, who came screaming out of the shack, to Morivei's side. They fell suddenly quiet when they spotted Meata and eyed him timidly. Meata saw that they were eyeing him with something like respect and awe and he bent down and tightened his shoelaces. Out of the corner of his eyes, he saw them pinch themselves and cluck their tongues. He straightened up and brushed imaginary dust off his shirt, pulled up his sleeve and glanced almost professionally at his watch. Again, they clucked their tongues in awe. Encouraged by their actions, Meata reached into the car and took his Polaroid sunglasses, which he put on most ceremoniously. Yes, he told himself, this was his way of winning their respect. He had to make their first impression of their brother-in-law favourable. To them, he was a sophisticated Kerema bloke.

"Have you dressed up now?" He heard Morivei speak and he started.

"What? Er...yes, my sweet...."

"What was all that about, anyway?"

"What?"

"Well, all that polishing and brushing and the like. Bet you were trying to impress them", Morivei forced a little laugh, "Come on let's go in now. Papa's waiting."

He quietly grabbed one of the cartons inside the pickup and followed Morivei. He was in seventh heaven as he entered the living room. This was, he told himself, his first meeting with his parents-in-law and he was going to savour every moment of it. Morivei went to an old man sitting near one of the doors and spoke to him. There was no mistake he was her father. He was out of range but he guessed she was saying: "Well, Papa, does he comply with your expectations?". Meata thought he saw the older man's nose screw up in disgust.

Morivei came back to him, beckoned him to place his load on an old wooden table that didn't seem to stop rocking, due to the differing lengths of the legs. She gave Meata a smile, and made her exit. After placing the carton on the table, Meata took his place beside the table and silently surveyed the room. The interior looked a little better than the exterior, he told himself. Then he turned his attention to the elderly man who was sitting on a backless chair, near one of the doors of one of the bedrooms.

He saw that the old eyes were gazing intently at him, probably measuring him. Meata put his age at something over sixty. His thin frizzy hair was white and an equally white moustache drooped freely over his thick betel-nut stained lips. Meata wondered at the absurd position of the moustache. How on earth did the elderly bloke stick food into his mouth with all that hair barricading the way, he asked himself. He almost gave out a laugh but he held it back because it would be unwise and because it would aggravate his nose.

Meata countered the old man's gaze and saw that the pair of old, brown eyes were dancing with something between humour and hostility. The old man shook his head slowly, screwed up his face and looked away.. Why'd he do that for? Meata wondered. The stupid old fool! He fought down the rising anger. It took him a minute or two to do that. He coughed nervously and returned to his surveillance of the room. It was some minutes before the elderly man's harrumph broke the silence. Then he spoke.

"Well, young man, aren't you going to sit down?"



"Uuh? Oh yes, sir, I...I will," Meata was startled but managed to speak. He crossed over to him and squatted on a pandanus mat about two yards away from him. Why couldn't he provide another chair? Meata asked himself. He didn't like the idea of his sitting on the floor while the elderly man was physically higher. He felt like a naughty little boy before his father. With the corner of his eye he saw that another chair was at the edge of the mat but the elderly man didn't seem to have the intention of offering it to Meata.

Again silence prevailed. During that silence, Meata took off his Polaroid glasses, pocketed them and studied the old man's features. Then he thought he heard a bell ring in his brain. Had he seen the man somewhere before? Something about the way the old man held his head was faintly familiar. The eyes, nose and lips were vaguely familiar. And that gaze! He was sure that he had seen the man somewhere before, but he could not place him. To enlighten his baffled conscience, he broke that monotonous silence with:

"Er..sir, er have we had previous acquaintance? Excuse my curiosity but I have a feeling we have met somewhere before....."

The old man put up a restraining hand and for what seemed to Meata an embarrassing eternity, his serious old eyes perused Meata. At length, the old man shook his head slowly and said in, what Meata thought was, a tragic tone: "Oh no, no, no, young man. You must be mistaken. I don't recall ever coming across any gorilla uh..pardon me... any person resembling you." The old man paused and clucked his tongue tragically. "Oh no, young man, I have never seen you before. Anyway what happened to thank trunk of yours?"

Don't tell me you chanced to come across John Aba and exchanged blows with him, on your way here? It was indeed wise of you to have taken off those glasses of yours, a while ago. To tell you the truth, you didn't look the least like a human with those glasses on. Yes, young man; anyway what happened to that nose of yours? Were you born gifted with that or are my eyes playing tricks. I doubt very much the latter because these old eyes of mine have served me faithfully these sixty-nine years, and believe it or not, they often saved my life in younger days." The elder paused and his mocking eyes gleamed.

You old bastard, Meata raged inside. The old man was being unjustifiably offensive and was

not taking the least precaution of hiding his dislike for him. He felt like lashing out and silencing those talkative lips forever but he controlled himself. Before the old man could speak, Meata said:

"I.. I'm sorry if my appearance offends you, sir. I had a very nasty fall from my porch this morning. And you know sir, I landed nose first and ....." Meata was cut off by a restraining hand.

"Young man, I was not expecting any explanation from you. From personal experience, I can tell that that kind of nasal damage can only be inflicted by a fist. Not by the impact on the ground in a fall like you were about to explain. I can differentiate between nasal damages done by a fist, a bottle, an iron rod or anything. Yes, young man, these sixty-nine year old eyes of mine are still as keen as they were in younger days. But so much for your injured nose. I have more important things to say to you. Just relax now, and wait while I quicken my circulation with a *buai*."

The old man reached for his *bilum* on the floor and produced out of it an areca nut, a betel fruit and a tin of lime. He was soon busy chewing, while Meata set before him not knowing what to do or say to deter the oncoming verbal attack. He had never been as helpless as he was now. This surely was something he had not anticipated. Taking Morivei as his wife was not as easy as he had expected at first. This quick-tongued old fool of Morivei's father was going to be an obstacle. And where the hell was Morivei's mother, Meata wondered. Why the hell didn't she come and prevent the old bastard from shaming him. Further Meata tensed when he saw the elder clear his throat to speak.

"Well, young man, I've heard quite a lot about you lately. And you somehow don't come up to my expectations. You don't seem like the kindly Mr So and So, my little Morivei has been bragging about. Nevertheless I do appreciate your bringing all the stuff". He paused and flicked a thumb at the carton on the table. "That indeed was very thoughtful of you, my son. Yes, courting a young woman is in itself an art that is known to all men, black, white or yellow. It indeed is an universal art and it invariably has been the more artistic man who has ended up with the bird every man has been after. I do not know whether you fall into this

artistic category ..... oh I see that artistic touch in you. How careless of me to find you are sophisticated too" The old man swallowed profusely. every pore.

"After all, good looking", at this the man Meata could see distastefully went on. "Yes, a man stands no chance against also courting Morivei, but should I say an advance that you are off, thou well-off, handsome guy, certain yardstick a yardstick choosing the best husband is good character. A man should look into her virtues and explore. With that done whether that wooer has a husband. I have injected Morivei since she was a child."

He paused, stooped and spat through a crack in the floor once more and wiped his lips. He went on, "Yes, young man wooing my son-in-law in character. He should have good habits. He should also not want my son-in-law to have a vulgar mouth. OK? Now man smiled knowingly, and his face.

Meata was still recuperating and degradation inflicted by the old man's words when the old fool straight into his face. His old fool is keeping Morivei angry. He can tell that the old fool is not going to snatch Morivei. He still have fight in me. He and answered the father

"Err..yes, sir I do drink. I have never been a habit of drinking the time away and.....".

"Yes, but the fact remains that you are more appropriately could tell the first moment were an alcoholic pisspot. Your whole appearance. Some people looking and I am one



artistic category ..... oh yes, you do, young man. I see that artistic touch in that carton on the table. How careless of me to forget. And I see that you are sophisticated too" The old man paused and swallowed profusely. He was sweating from every pore.

"After all, good looks do play a part in wooing", at this the man gave a lopsided smile. Meata could see distaste in his eyes. The man went on. "Yes, a man with your looks would stand no chance against a handsome man, who is also courting Morivei, but you have an edge. Or should I say an advantage? That advantage is that you are off, though I'd settle for a not-well-off, handsome guy. And of course there is certain yardstick a young woman uses in choosing the best husband. The most important is good character. A sensible young woman should look into her wooer's inner being and explore. With that done she will be able to decide whether that wooer would make a good husband. I have injected all these into little Morivei since she was six years old".

He paused, stooped low to the floor and spat through a crack. He straightened up once more and wiped his stained moustach and lips. He went on, "Yes, young man, I expect any young man wooing my little Morivei to be pure in character. He should possess clean and decent habits. He should also be pure in speech. I do not want my son-in-law to be the owner of a vulgar mouth. OK? Now, do you drink?" The old man smiled knowingly, triumph written all over his face.

Meata was still recuperating from the shame and degradation inflicted by the older man's ribald words when the question was tossed straight into his face. His mind raced. The bloody old fool is keeping Morivei from me, he thought angrily. He can tell that I'm a drinker. But he's not going to snatch Morivei from me while I still have fight in me. He abandoned his thought and answered the father's question.

"Err...yes, sir I do drink...sometimes...but it has never been a habit of mine. I only do it to pass the time away and.....".

"Yes, but the fact remains that you drink, huh? Or more appropriately, consume alcohol. I could tell the first moment you came that you were an alcoholic pisspot. I could tell by your whole appearance. Some people can tell just by looking and I am one of them. No wonder

Morivei smelt of alcohol when you dropped her off after you took her out on weekends. You should be thankful, I am letting that matter go at that. That's one of the most serious offences anyone can do against my person. Now don't get the impression that I am holding Morivei from you. It's just that I'm concerned about her welfare and well-being when....if you should marry her. I'm sure if you were her father, you would say the same things I'm saying to her wooer. It should be understood now that I do not want my daughter to marry a habitual drinker. Yes, and how old are you, may I ask."

"I....well I...I'm twenty five going onto twenty six, December the sixth, sir", Meata lied.

"Well I suppose you're mature enough to care for a young wife. I loathe those teenagers who marry and then beat up their wives, just for the sake of beating up. I won't tolerate that sort of thing especially from you. That is, if marriage becomes a reality between you and Morivei". The old man stood up and strolled over to the table. He was soon engrossed in inspecting the contents of the carton.

From outside, Meata could hear Morivei speaking aloud to the children, but he could not make out the words. Why the hell were they taking so long to carry the other cartons in, Meata wondered. The old man certainly would not have said those ribald words, had Morivei, or her blasted mother, intervened, Meata surmised. Meata glanced over his shoulder at the father who was taking the contents of the carton one by one and placing them on the unsteady table. At intervals, he would look Meata's way and nod approvingly. There was a new look in his eyes.

Good, the old fool was taking the bait, Meata thought triumphantly. Just you wait and see what's in my pocket.

"What else did you bring, son. I thought I heard little Morivei telling the kids to help her with the other things. What are they?". The old man spoke as he left the table and came back to his chair.

Meata almost shouted out in triumph. He fought down his excitement and said: "Well, I thought you consumed a little booze now and then so I brought two San Miguel cartons. Now that I know that you're a fitness fanatic, I don't see any reason why I should not take them back when I leave."



Meata hoped his voice had sounded modest and inoffensive. There was no telling what kind of rage the old man was capable of having when offensive words were thrown into his face. Already Meata was anticipating a drinking spree all by himself at his Gerehu home.

To his surprise and dismay, the old man's eyes were gleaming probably from the prospect and breaking a year-old abstinence from grog. His composure told Meata that he was ready and waiting. And yet, Meata thought, he had been criticising Meata about being an alcoholic. One fact was clear in Meata's mind now. That the old man was himself a great drinker even if his face and actions didn't show it. He was not surprised by this. In their very short acquaintance, he had learnt that the old timer was unpredictable and could change his whole countenance in a matter of seconds. One moment he could be as furious as a tiger, the next he could be as humble as a sheep. Meata smiled to himself. The old man was taking the bait and that was the most important thing. Everything was now turning out as he had anticipated. Soon Morivei would be his and that was a couple of San Miguel bottles away from now.

Morivei would be his and that was certain because the old man's eyes had shone at the mention of beer. The marriage bond would be tied as soon as the old man had seen the ten K20 notes in his pocket.

"What else did you bring, young man?" the old man asked as he got his excitement under control.

Caught you there, you old fool! Meata thought triumphantly. He put on his best VIP composure, rested his chin on a fist, thumb and index finger straightening imaginary moustache, and said almost professionally:

"Oh just a few bucks. Two hundred Kina, to be precise. Bear in mind that this is only the beginning. From where these came, there are plenty, I assure you. Yes, an initial two hundred kina. I may be a millionaire but to me it's like giving away one lousy toea. Yes, that's right. Like giving away one little toea. Yes, giving away a lousy two hundred don't really matter to Meata Fareho. To you it is a fortune, to me nothing. But be assured that there is more to come...."

Meata hastily dug into his pocket and produced a wad of K20 notes. Thumbing them

noisily as he counted them, he placed them one on top of the other. The man was overcome by emotion and he looked as if he was going to faint. When he looked up, his eyes were moist and smiling-unlike the eyes that had victimised Meata earlier on. He turned toward the door and hollered, "Little Morivei, what's taking you so long to bring in those other things!"

"Coming now, Papa", Morivei's voice came from outside.

The old man turned back again and rapturously stared at the notes on the mat before him. His head never ceased shaking.

Triumphantly, Meata addressed him. "Eh, oldtimer, would you consider it immature and improper for me to address you as Father-in-law?"

"Ah my son-in-law, feel free to address me as such. I feel the marriage bond has been tied". He looked at the notes again. "Well, I never thought.....I....I....never thought....."

He never got to finish his sentence because Morivei and the four children had returned with the two cartons of beer and the other carton of goods. After placing the bounty on the table, they came to the two men. As she sat on the mat beside Meata, the old man announced:

"Morivei, my little one, tonight you have brought me great happiness and my mind is at peace. May you both have many children in years to come. Oh, my daughter, your poor mother Pukari Harifae would have been proud of you but alas, she is dead and may God the Omnipotent rest her soul. She will rest easy and not turn in her grave, because now you will be comfortably married to the most artistic young man I have ever met. I know he will bring you happiness and many children. He is no stranger, because, he is a Kerema like you and me. Which Kerema village do you hail from, son-in-law?" He turned to Meata.

"Lelefiru village and I am of the tribe of Moraita Kave, the legendary great warrior, father-in-law", Meata said proudly.

"You see, my little Morivei, he is no different from us, Moveaves. He is a Kerema or what you of the younger generation call, a K-Ave".

"Oh I already know that papa", Morivei said somewhat annoyed. "But papa, don't you think it's time for introductions?"

"Oh no, you can introduce your little kid brothers and sisters, my dear, but not me. I feel as I have known him all my life. Oh little one,

you have brought me Hey, little Kairi", he began. "go, get two bottles, One brother-in-law. Come on

The boy called Kai tore open the table, tore open the bottle and brought back two bottles.

They ripped open the bottles and announced: "Hey come on, celebrate. Come on son, your future. To Morivei you always be happy", I said against the old man's and satisfaction as the cold gut. My God, she's mine face of the deaf mute who to his mind's eye and I contempt. The poor god had nowhere to satisfy himself at the moment and was or worse, still servicing the stray dog in some dark corner. Fareho, was enjoying his thought of another spell. Yes, Morivei was his to be desired. He smiled again.

He took another sip and diverted his attention to flabbergasted to find that he finished his first bottle and now instructing Kairi to Bloody, hypocritical and sharply. It has been so long wondered if the old man contents through the crevices of the boards. Bloody, hypocritical softly again as the old man exhibited a wide grin. No has been accusing him of a pisspot and now as it was he himself who was the one who has been me doing all the work.

He banished his thoughts and pulled Morivei close to him. "baby, we'll go to some place".

"Oh Meata, this isn't all amorous. I thought of a faction back there", Morivei said. "any way don't you think you to the kids?"

"Oh come on then, let it be. We can't sit here all evening



you have brought me great happiness today. Hey, little Kairi", he beckoned to the older boy, "go, get two bottles. One for me and one for your brother-in-law. Come on. Hurry".

The boy called Kairi, obediently went to the table, tore open one of the cartons and brought back two bottles to the two men.

They ripped open their beer and the old man announced: "Hey come on everyone, tonight we celebrate. Come on son-in-law, let us drink to your future. To Morivei and her husband. May you always be happy", Meata banged his bottle against the old man's and drank. He grunted with satisfaction as the cold beer flowed down his gut. My God, she's mine at last, he thought. The face of the deaf mute who crushed his nose came to his mind's eye and he wrinkled his face in contempt. The poor goddamned fellow probably had nowhere to satisfy his sexual concupiscence at the moment and was probably masturbating, or worse, still servicing the backside of some rabid, stray dog in some dark corner, while he Meata Fareho, was enjoying himself and savouring the thought of another spell in bed with Morivei. Yes, Morivei was his to take at anytime if he so desired. He smiled again.

He took another sip from the bottle and diverted his attention to the older man. He was flabbergasted to find that the old man had finished his first bottle at almost a gulp and was now instructing Kairi to get him another bottle.. Bloody, hypocritical fool, Meata exhaled sharply. It has been so quick that Meata now wondered if the old man had simply emptied the contents through the cracks between the floorboards. Bloody, hypocritical bastard, he swore softly again as the old man looked his way and exhibited a wide grin. Not long ago the old man has been accusing him of being an 'alcoholic posspot' and now as it was turning out, it was he himself who was the alcoholic. It should have been me doing all the accusing, Meata thought.

He banished his thoughts, took another sip and pulled Morivei closer to him. "Aw come on baby, we'll go to some place after all these. I...."

"Oh Meata, this isn't the time or place to get all amorous. I thought you got all your satisfaction back there", Morivei chided him. "And any way don't you think it's time I introduced you to the kids?"

"Oh come on then, luv, and be quick about it. We can't sit here all evening introducing each

other over and over again when we could both be out somewhere enjoying the night air", Meata laughed as he seductively rubbed her thighs. She brushed his hand away and stole a glance at her father who was much too engrossed with his drinking to have noticed Meata's actions. Meata too, glanced sidelong at the old man hoping he had seen his actions. The old man had not seen what he had done, Meata found out with dismay. If the old man had seen him, he thought, Meata could have given him that challenging, triumphant look he'd given to the children when he'd come earlier on the evening. he stood up most importantly.

"Morivei quickly introduced the four children one by one as they shook Meata's hand. He muttered "my little brother-in-law" or my beautiful sister-in-law" to the still-overawed children. Over with the introductions, the four children reverently went back to their places beside their old father. Meata sat down again., only to be pulled up to his feet by Morivei."

"Wait, Meata, we aren't....."

"Meata what?". Meata cast her a serious look.

"Meata. my darling....."

"M-m-mh, that's more like it luv, now what were you going to say, luv?"

I was going to tell you that we weren't over with the introductions". She turned to her busy father. "Papa has Sarufa come back from his daily wanderings?"

Meata's head shot up quickly "Sarufa? Who's he, may I ask?" He strode to the old man, his arm around Morivei's shoulder. Before the old man could speak Morivei said: "No need to be jealous, meata, Sarufa's my older brother ....."

"Why the hell didn't you tell me before that you had an older brother?" Meata said as his hand made it's way down to her rear.

"My apologies, Meata my darling. I never thought his existence was that important to you. Anyway, as it is he's the eldest but I suppose he doesn't matter much." In a whisper, she said: "And Meata Fareho, would you be good enough and take your dirty hands off my buttocks?"

Meata disengaged himself from her. Older brother! Meata suddenly had a feeling that this older brother would be a stumbling block to his relationship with Morivei. Yes, he had to meet the bloke face to face before he could be certain he posed no threat to their relationship. Aloud he said, "Of course, he does matter to you and me, my dear Morivei. And very, very much at



that. Don't forget, my dear, that he's your brother by blood and as such has a every right, like your drunk old father to have his say over our relationship".

He turned to the old man who was obviously past the stage of reasoning. He cast a quick glance at the three empty bottles lying under the chair. If a competition to find a champion drinker had been held, this old man would certainly have won it. He screwed his face with disgust as the old man finished his latest bottle and slowly placed it under the chair.

Meata said, "Old fellow. You had better slow down. There's no one here to outdrink you". Meata placed his hands on the older man's shoulders and gently shook him. "Just take it easy, OK?"

The old man nodded in his drunken stupor. He suddenly brightened up, rubbed his hands with glee and said. "Yesh, my darling. I'll take it eassshy...if you shay sho...but pleesh...give me another bottle I'm going dry". He took both Meata's arms pushed them away. "Pleesh give me one more, my darling."

"Please sir, don't darling me. You know bloody well I'm not a lass. Now be quiet and let me speak." Meata waited until the old man had ceased moving restless on the chair. "Now, sir, where is this Sarufa boy of yours? I didn't know you had an older son until just a few moments ago. You know I must meet him. If he's here in this house, could you summon him here? Please."

Meata stepped back picked up his beer on the mat and drained it all in one gulp. He rolled the empty bottle away and looked again at the old man who was now rolling his eyes and smiling evidently at nothing. The alarmed children were on their feet now behind their father. Morivei was standing beside Meata, her face a mask of anxiety. Meata waited for the old man to make some vocal reply. Seeing him make no attempt at it, Meata spoke again. This time his voice has an impatient edge. "Well? Are you going to get your son here or not? You know I can't spend all night here."

The old man stared at Meata absent-mindedly for sometime as if his brain or ears were at last functioning. He chewed at a imaginary betel nut smiled broadly and then in a tremulous voice, he said. "Oh pleash my darling give me another beer before I get my son Sarufa here." He glanced over his shoulder and said "Eh Kairi, my

shon got get me another bottle." Kairi most reverently executed the order and went back to his place. Ripping it open, the old man sat devouring it until it was three-quarters empty. He paused to regain his breath. He was about to drain the last quarter when Meata, on Morivei's nudging, restrained him. He seized the bottle from his grasp and poured the contents through the cracks. He placed the bottle under the chair.

Straightening up, Meata said. "That's enough for now, old man. You've got enough alcohol in you to last you for the next twenty four hours. Now I'll give you one more chance to get your son Sarufa here. And be warned that I will take back those cartons if you don't co-operate. Now, get your Sarufa boy here. That's final".

Morivei, thinking it was time she buttered in, intervened, "Dad, if Sarufa's home, I'll go and get him here." The old man nodded his approval. She turned to Meata and apologised, saying that she was sorry not to have checked in his bedroom when Meata had first asked to see him. "It's because we girls are never allowed in Sarufa's bedroom without Dad's approval. It's one of his peculiar domestic regulations you'll soon get to know. Of course, Kairi and Haro are exceptions because they're males." With that she went into one of the bedrooms.

The old man spoke again, "Yesh, my li'l one, go get Sharufa here. I doubt if hish deshirable brother-in-law will adore him on first sight". Absent-mindedly, he took a sip from an imaginary bottle in his fist and went on;

"Ah my lover boy, or should I call you my darling? Yesh, why thish shudden craving for my half-vegetable, uselesh shon.....? Huh? He's a disgrashe to the family..he is. My poor dead wife never wash proud of him. He'sh proof of Jehovah Sabbath's curse on us. Yesh my darling. I have thish feeling in my old bonesh you won't like him..Yesh, I just know it". He laughed foolishly and rubbed his hands in glee.

Meata stood back, arms akimbo. He was sweating profusely. He took out his handkerchief and wiped his inundated forehead and brows. The old man was half-mad sober and raving mad, when drunk, he was sure. He glanced at the four children who had now scuttled away to the corner and were eyeing him and their father like trapped animals. God only knew what this inebriated old fool would do to them when he had gone off. Lord have mercy on them. The old

son of a goddamned b under his breath. His hear he heard a faintly familiar the bedroom Morivei ha his ears but it did not con was drawn by the old m groggily stood up and wa side. He came toward M to ear, his eyes beady.

"Eh my love...whasha i lsh it ...Meta? No, it mu Yes, it is Meata. M Kerema name Yesh, c name. That'sh us K-Aves shaia! Oh yesh, my darl shudden craving for my sh all I care, he's prob'ry pl stole yesterday...He'sh ai yesh he ish. You like him

His arms flailing in froi tried to grab hold of Mea by the latter who made a but then restrained hims old man who dwarfed him over.

"Oh eff off, you old foc gently as possible, pushed the chair. For some reaso anger the old man, and children cowering in the probably run out of the hou if Meata manhandled their could see tñem eyeing h pression of awe and respect had seen earlier had di replaced by that of fear. from the old man and to p children's eyes, he turned t skull-grin. He gave up whe in their eyes. "Well whi shouted out at them.

Then he heard more no bedroom Morivei had ente out a noise like a moan, and of feet. He strained his cajoling voice of Morive disbelief, the unmistakable s springs entered his ears. Wl on in there? It took someti tainted anger, along with the that Morivei was making die down. He wanted to ru



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son of a goddamned bitch! Meata muttered under his breath. His head shot up quickly when he heard a faintly familiar noise emanate from the bedroom Morivei had entered. He strained his ears but it did not come again. His attention was drawn by the old man again. He had now groggily stood up and was swaying from side to side. He came toward Meata grinning from ear to ear, his eyes beady.

"Eh my love...whasha name, I forget easily.... Is it ...Meta? No, it musht be Me-me-Meata. Yes, it is Meata. Meata....Disha popular Kerema name Yesh, dash popular K-Ave name. That'sh us K-Aves. K-Ave shaia! K-Ave shaia! Oh yesh, my darling Meata, why that sudden craving for my shon Sharufa? Huh? For all I care, he's prob'ry playing with the doll he stole yesterday...He'sh an overgrown baby.... yesh he ish. You like him eh?"

His arms flailing in front of him, the old man tried to grab hold of Meata but he was blocked by the latter who made as if to push him over but then restrained himself. In any case, the old man who dwarfed him was too heavy to push over.

"Oh eff off, you old fool!", Meata said as he, gently as possible, pushed the old man toward the chair. For some reason he did not want to anger the old man, and moreover the four children cowering in the background would probably run out of the house screaming for help, if Meata manhandled their father. Right now he could see them eyeing him quietly. The expression of awe and respect in their eyes Meata had seen earlier had disappeared and was replaced by that of fear. Meata stepped back from the old man and to put the fear out of the children's eyes, he turned to them and tried his skull-grin. He gave up when he saw no change in their eyes. "Well who cares!" he almost shouted out at them.

Then he heard more noise escaping from the bedroom Morivei had entered. He could make out a noise like a moan, and hear much shuffling of feet. He strained his ears and heard the cajoling voice of Morivei and to his utter disbelief, the unmistakable sound of creaking bed springs entered his ears. What the hell was going on in there? It took sometime for this jealousy-tainted anger, along with the scandalous thought that Morivei was making love with Sarufa, to die down. He wanted to rush in and negate his

scandalous thought but something told him not to. He glanced back at the old man who was standing up swaying and singing to himself an *Ivuri*, without a care in the world. The children well still cowering in the background still looking at him with fear.

The faintly familiar noise came again and this time it was much louder and clearer. For the third time, it came. It was a voice, no it wasn't, Meata thought. It was a cross between a squeak and a grunt. That was the closest description Meata could offer that nondescript sound. And it was causing bells of recognition familiarly to ring deafeningly in his slightly intoxicated brain. Try as he could, he could not place it. Then he heard shuffling of feet and the creaking of loose floorboards and he knew Morivei and her brother were on their way out. The door opened slowly with something of an air of tragedy, at least it seemed so to Meata, and he saw a shame-faced Morivei leading another figure by the hand. He could not discern the face of the figure because there was no light in the bedroom. At last he was going to face Morivei's brother! His future brother-in-law!

As the figure came into full scrutiny of the blazing asbestos mantle of the Coleman lantern hanging from the roof, Meata let out a gasp of utter disbelief and helplessness. His feet felt like buckling under him and the room seemed to whirl before his eyes. The room seemed to become intolerably hot and as he sharply shook his head to clear it, a spray of sweat left his forehead. That youth! It couldn't be! But it was! He was the one from the store earlier that evening. He was the youth who had battered his nose in the store. In one fleeting movement, that would certainly have astounded even an acrobat, he scooped up the K20 notes on the mat and warily and dramatically backed to the door, while Morivei and her father stood mouths agape, much too perplexed to speak or do anything. On reaching the door, Meata pocketed the money deftly and in a shaky and tragic voice said; "Well, I'll be damned! I should have known, the fool I am! Don't expect me to ever set foot again in his godforsaken abode!" With that he slammed the door and was gone.

Father and children, listened dumbfounded as the Toyota pickup roared to life and zoomed away into the night.

The old man murmured softly; "Oh dash it.



Just as I was going to ask him to borrow the pickup. No matter".

Morivei finally regaining her composure approached her father. "What rash thing did you tell him or do to him to make him bust out of the house like that, Dad?"

The old man who seemed to have been slightly sobered by Meata's dramatic retreat looked confused and foolish. "What? I never did shay anything nor do anything rash, my dear. But judging by the way his eyes nearly popped out, my old eyes could see, he'd seen a ghost or something".

He looked sidelong at the cartons of beer on the table and shook his head not without an air of regret. "Ah, the ugly one took off just as I was beginning to enjoy the booze and his company. Eh Morivei my dear, did you know that I was planning to go out with the ugly one tonight? No I don't think you knew, my dear. And did you know that I was going to ditch him after I'd drunk his beer and taken his money? No I don't think you knew that either. Well,

anyway I'm glad he won't be back anymore. He was much too ugly for a pretty child like you, my dear. Makes me wonder how you could have fallen in love with him."

He walked over to the table, took himself another beer opened it and began devouring it. Morivei looked at her silent retarded brother, still standing at his doorway. The youth grinned, touched his nose and laughed his animal-like laugh. He retreated into his bedroom and returned seconds later with a can of Hutton's meat. Touching his nose again and laughing his unearthly laugh again, he handed the can to his kid sister. Once again he retreated into his bedroom to resume his game with the Teddy Bear. He had earlier been rudely interrupted by his kid sister and this time no one was going to interrupt him.

"Dad", Morivei said as she placed the can of Hutton's meat on the table, "I have a feeling. Meata's flight from here had something to do with poor Sarufa's appearance".

Little did she know how correct she was.

AS ANTHROPOLOGY  
SOME SELF-ANALYSIS  
SOME REFLECTION

Anthropology is well known as "other people's" way of looking at Guinea those 'other people' country itself, and scholars and anthropologists have previously re-evaluating the record of anthropology as seen which can be carried out the exotic in the light of seeing the familiar as exotic.

What is 'exotic'? By definition, it is something of our own experience, which we find difficult to understand. For to come to grips with it, we must proceed from the known to the unknown, doing so, to use concepts to us from our own experience, thought, itself firmly located in such a matrix, which obstructs us from the unknown. We can hardly proceed from nothing to instantly into knowledge, all our prior conceptions. But the exotic is in fact a different image of it as different and we must persuasively In doing so we may be a



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