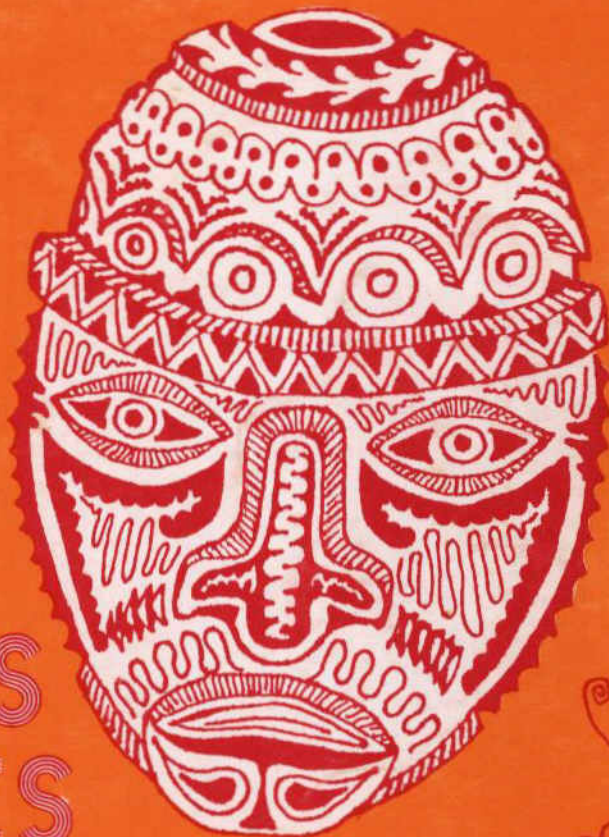


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The Magazine of the Papua New Guinea Writers' Union



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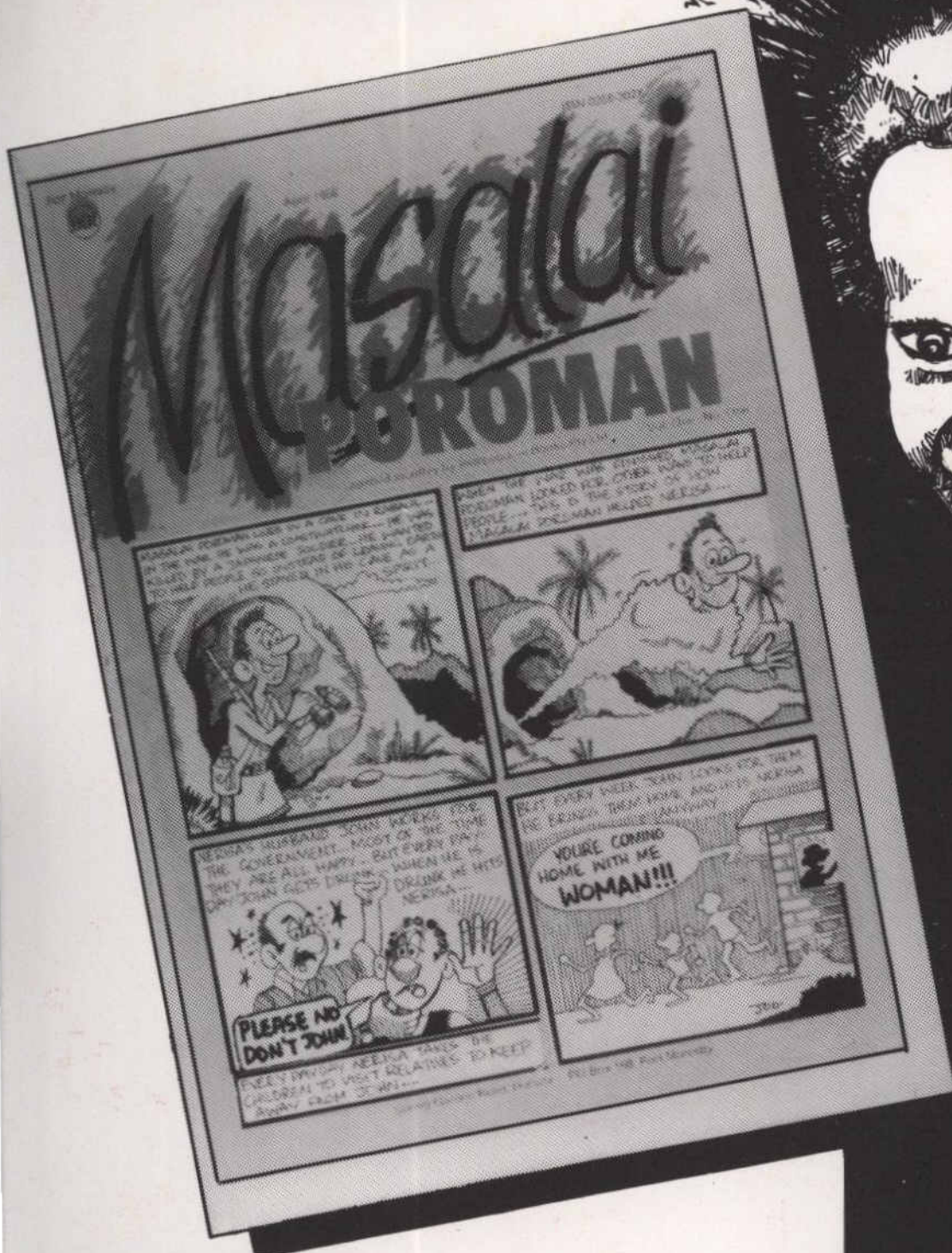
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No. 1. May 1986

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# The PNG WRITER

The Magazine of the Papua New Guinea Writers' Union

## CONTENTS

PAGE

1.	Sorariba Nash Gegera	Waiting for Botol	7
2	Steven T. Lyadale	Growing Pains	13
3	Joe Kunda Naur	Sule Sragl Pre ?	23
4	John Koknack	A Melanesian Confederation	31
5	Steven E. Winduo	Oral Literature	37
6	Yanopa Kai	Universities on the Run	43
7	Memu Ema	Blood for Blood	49
8	Joseph Sukwianomb	Ngugi wa Thiong'o in Exile	55
9	Vincent Eri	Getting Started	59
10	Joseph Kasil Nuno	Moni em As blong Trabel	63
11	Jennifer Evans	Maiba: A Review	71

POETRY: Janet Amean, Abuc Daniel, Micheal Duwang, Gideon Ginkawa, Jacob Harry, A.B. Kaspou, Bernard Lahe, Joe Maino, Bernard Malle, Laho Mitaharo, Winchlee Oibotee Momber, Benjamin Nakin, David Nalu, Allan Natachee, Yeriko Paia, May Paipaira, Data Pius, Lydia Ritein, John Sari, Kua Mathew Sil, Russell Soaba, Nicholas Tagai, Sari Tamasi, Kuwalau Tawali, James K. Tira, Steven E. Winduo, Ati Wobiro, Abby Yadi, George Yapao, Justin Yatu.

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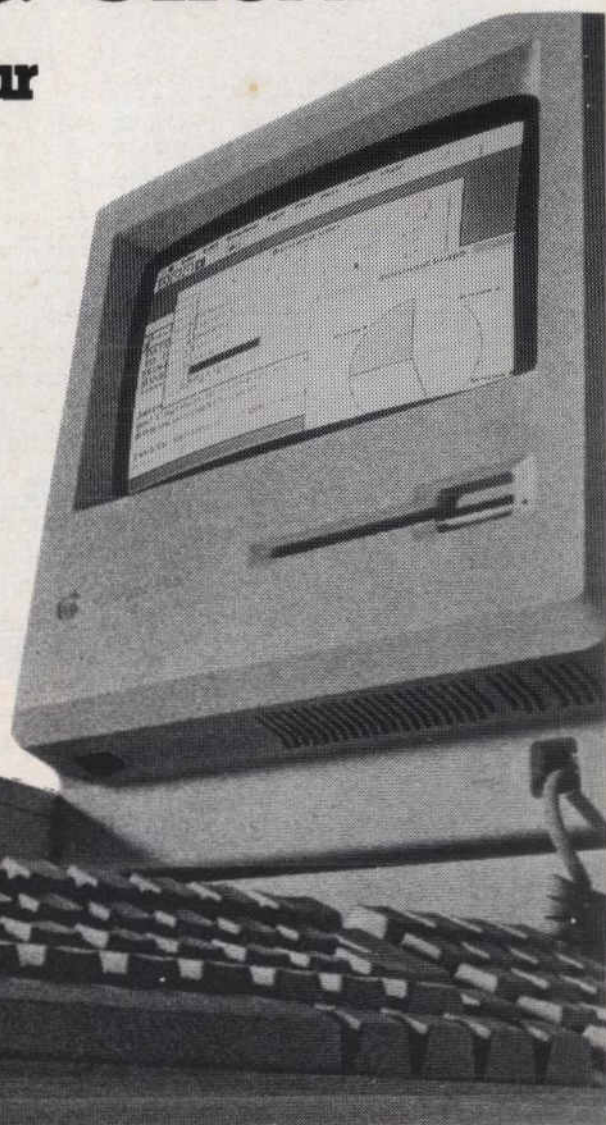


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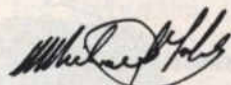
## FOREWORD

The Papua New Guinea Writers' Union is pleased to release its second volume of 'The PNG WRITER'. In September 1985 we produced our first edition to celebrate the country's ten years of independence.

Despite what some of our more staid critics may say, we are not just "talking too much" but are actively getting things done and promoting the cause of literature and writing in this country. The release of this volume is clearly indicative to all, that PNGWU members and intending members are progressively writing and not just talking about it as so many established figures have done in the last decade. Throughout the country, lots of people have been forwarding their manuscripts to the union in the hope of being published and membership of PNGWU has increased substantially in the past year.

The Union has established contacts with similar organisations outside P.N.G. particularly in the Pacific region. We have also met with representatives of the Australian Copyright Council who have agreed to advise us when seeking appropriate legislation for PNG. Financial constraints have meant a slower rate of expansion and development than we had anticipated but thanks to annual membership fees, advertising revenue, sale of our magazines and continued generous government patronage we feel confident that the Union will continue to grow. By far the most pleasing result has been the ever-increasing number of new writers who are appearing each month. It is this solid foundation which has given the PNGWU such confidence for the future. Writers cannot be stopped writing whatever the economic or political climate. We welcome and encourage all new and young writers to contact us.

On behalf of the executive of the Union I would like to thank the editor and his support staff for all their efforts in getting this wonderful exciting collection of literary works to the reading public. I'm sure you will agree with me that the editor has continued to maintain his high standards, proving once again that PNG literature is on a par with other modern international fiction. We thank you for your support and wish you many pleasant hours of reading 'The PNG WRITER'.



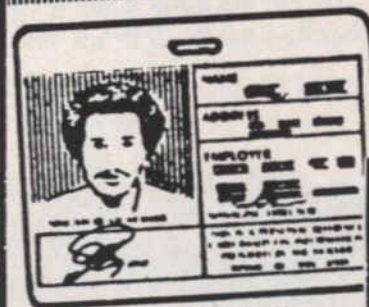
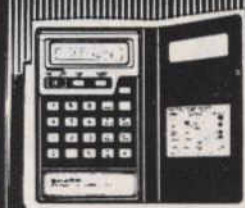
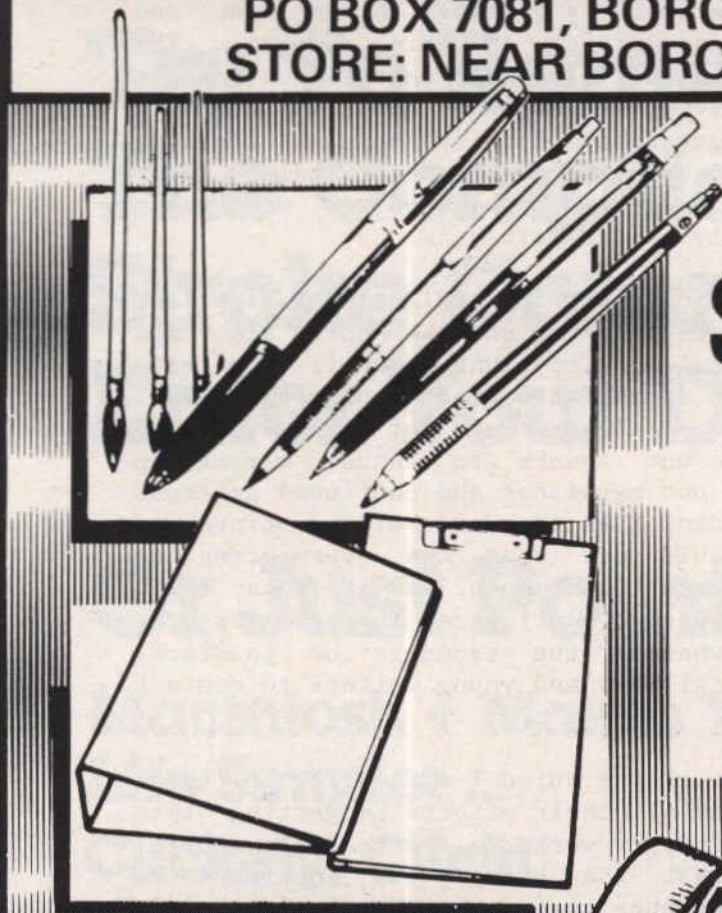
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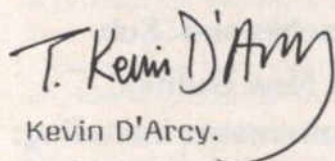


## EDITORIAL

It is always an editor's delight to receive more manuscripts than he can possibly publish in the current issue. This means the continuation of the magazine is assured and that the art of writing is flourishing in the country. This has been particularly true of our poetry section. We have received a plenitude of poems in the mail-bag so please be patient if yours haven't appeared this time. We were impressed by the high standard and excited by the work of some new poets on the scene: Nicholas Tagai who comes from Chimbu and specialises in the Haiku form and Gideon Ginkawa from Sepik whose surrealistic verse shows a rare depth of feeling and philosophical comment. Articles and short stories are also in abundance. Some of these you may find polemic or controversial. If so, we would be happy to publish any reply in our next issue. One area which has been disappointing is our drama section. It may be that most of the writers are not familiar with the techniques of writing for the stage and feel inhibited about submitting a script. In forthcoming issues, we hope to include some articles on play-writing which may give you some ideas on how to go about it. Young writers will find that the article by Vincent Eri in this issue contains a lot of useful advice. If you are a regular short story writer, why not dramatise your next story and submit it to us in the form of a play. It is almost certain to be published.

In September the 17th Waigani Seminar will be held at UPNG Port Moresby. This year's theme is "The Ethics of Development." In conjunction with the seminar we are hoping to bring out a special edition of the magazine dealing with the ethical questions of development. There are five sections in the seminar: Ethics & Communication, Ethics & Society, Ethics & Economics, Ethics & the Environment, and Ethics & Politics. You may wish to write on one of these topics. Although you may write an essay, we would prefer to get your views in the form of plays, stories or poems. Satire and humour are often more effective than political tirades and dialectic diatribes. So let's have some PNG wit when dealing with the affairs of state.

Again I would encourage all writers in the country to join the PNG Writers' Union. Although we are based at the UPNG campus, this is not a university journal but a national magazine. In particular, I am appealing to provincial and women writers. So far we have had lots of men expressing their opinions. We would like to counterbalance that with a feminine angle. If you feel that the magazine has been too chauvinist, write an article giving a feminist perspective. Articles can be in Tok Pisin or Hiri Motu as well as English. I would like to thank everyone who has sent materials to us. The magazine cannot function without your help and ideas. So keep the articles coming and we'll try to publish as much as we can in the coming months. Don't forget; when you've finished with the "PNG Writer" pass it on to a friend. Literature is for everyone.

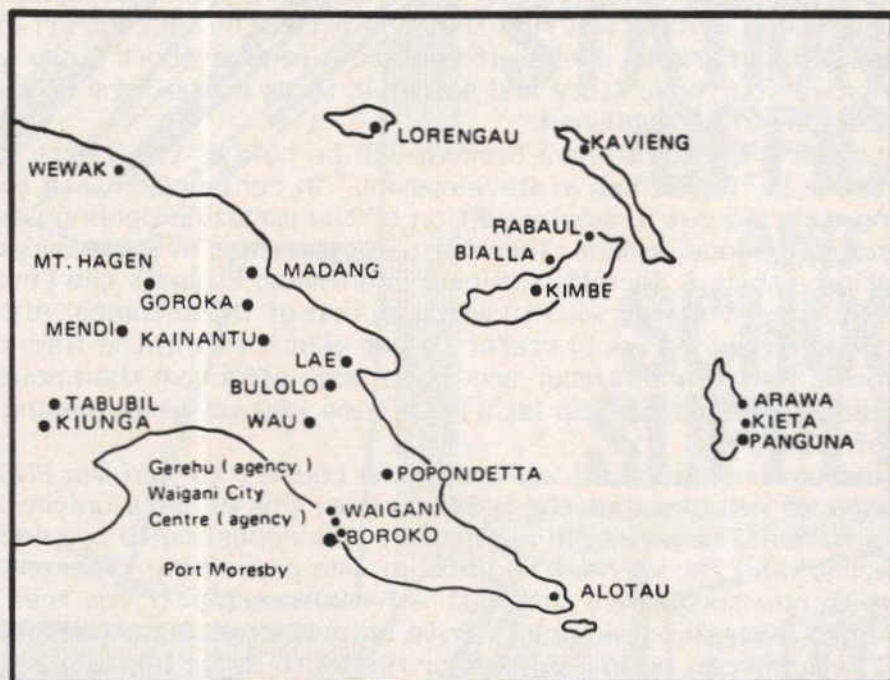
  
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# WAITING FOR BOTOL

by Sorariba Nash Gegera

Dead tired, he would stop, bent under the weight of a dirty bag containing empty Coke and Fanta bottles and then run a little with the hasty short steps of an excited child; the rapid flat feet which had never known the comfort of shoes or slippers. Empty bottles could earn his evening meal - a scone from Arrow Bakery and a bottle of Coca-Cola. Without empties, there is nothing for the likes of Simi; nothing to stop the demands of a hollow grumbling stomach. The clicking and bumping of bottles accompany him wherever he goes. Simi is about fifty, too old for this profession - but hunger drives one's feet relentlessly. What is worse than sitting down and dreaming of buttered bread, fried chicken and a half-frozen beer until death overcomes the starving body? Just under five foot, still tough, a might fellow in his prime, he is now a slight, bent, old man wasted with age and poverty. The old shorts are held to his waist by a piece of nylon rope and the dirty brown "Vegetable Kid" T-shirt, white once upon a time, clings to his bony body. The clothes look as old as himself. Everyday of the year Simi comes here, Gordons Market. The shopping area, the bushes, the drains and the inside of every filthy rubbish drum are his hunting ground. He speaks neither English nor Pidgin though he can communicate in his own way; a grunt or two in his own language and gestures from his toughened old hands. A big gap smiles through the upper set of red stained teeth which he occasionally exposes when he grins in a moment of unexpected excitement. A harmless gentle old creature. There are many like him; men, women and children. Empty bottles is the currency of Moresby's underworld society. It keeps their hearts beating and bellies full. Those whose existence is never acknowledged by the rulers of this country; the illegitimate children of Independence.

"Tura, bottle?" begs the ten-year-old from a passer-by.

"Get lost!" replies the man with some irritation. Two other waifs hearing the reply, give up the chase and look elsewhere. Their longing eyes never leave people with bottles. Like prostitutes, you can tell them by their haunted eyes and hungry stare. An old man with a baseball cap and carrying the usual dirty sack inspects the betel-nut stained rubbish bins. He dips in, pulls out a discarded nut and rubs it clean before putting it in his bag. The parking area is full with shoppers moving to and fro, looking busy and business-like as the low sun looks down on the mass of humanity at dusty Gordons Market. This is the most popular and biggest market in the city, nearly half the city population parade here every afternoon. Those who can afford it came every afternoon to haggle and buy. Here too come the poor to collect the leftovers or, like Simi, gather empty bottles or even snatch a bilum and run. Among the crowd are many who will go home to nothing; pretending to shop, like the brigades of young men eyeing the girls in restless frustration.

Most of the bottle collectors live above here on the hill-side with its large squatter settlement of makeshift houses. No one knows how they survive but they are here day after day. Some get jobs as drivers, cooks, domestics or general labourers. Having come on one-way tickets, they never think of returning. Two generations have already passed away. Simi is one of them - stubbornly following in the footsteps of the past, self-employed. Papua New Guineans are natural gardeners but this rock-hard ground with no water never gives them a chance. Some have tried their hand at growing peanuts but most have long given up the hope of gardening.

The supermarket occupies a large area with a service station where all the cars queue up. It's always busy. Next to it is a liquor outlet. It's amazing how much people drink here. You could get drunk just counting the cartoons passing over the counter. Here small boys stand around offering favours or begging ten toea. The front of the counter is always packed with thirsty impatient people. Sometimes fights break out and then the mass go on the rampage. Once



an old woman, selling cabbage, was trampled to death. Another time a youth stole a woman's purse but he didn't get far. He was left unconscious, blood gushing from his ears and nose and his shirt in rags. Yesterday a police van carted off two teenagers for touching a fat woman's buttocks. But this is the city - life goes on, no question asked. A brand-new Subaru swerves through the main thoroughfare, skids dangerously, brakes violently and comes to a screeching halt. A furious driver jumps out, slams the door and rushing over, slaps Simi full on the face. The old man staggers and falls to the ground.

"Em rot bilong yu? Emi rot bilong yu?." Simi struggles to rise but the driver punches him again.

"Yu lukim kar i kam! Yu toktok". He continues to shake the old man. By now the usual crowd has gathered. All on the driver's side they pour abuse on the old rag-bag and jeer at his bag of bottles lying on the ground. Three bottles roll out of the bag. Someone kicks them away. Simi is frightened. He has no language to reply or explain. His nose is bleeding. He is shaken and confused.

"Neks taim wampela kar bai mekim save long yu! Yu laik dai, ah?" The driver turns away shaking his head. The crowd drift off. Simi wipes the blood from his nose with his shirt, gathers his precious bottles and goes. The by-standers mutter about the silly old lapun who almost got himself run over. In fact Simi was hurrying to cross the street to sell his bottles to the man in the red Toyota who comes every evening to buy bottles from the collectors for one toea a bottle. The factory buys bottles for two toea each and four toea for large ones. The buyer makes a big profit but, like the others, Simi doesn't complain. He thanks his lucky stars that he can afford a scone and a bottle of coke. Even a drink of free tap water is a blessing. Perhaps the punishment and pain are worth it. Pay fortnights like this, you can collect lots of empties but other times you can spend a whole day and end up with only a couple of bottles which add up to nothing. Counting his few toea, Simi slowly climbs the hill to home.

"O Botol,  
Papa botol,  
Mama botol,  
Yu istap na mi i stap isi.  
Sapos yu nogat - mi no save.  
Mi ting bai mi dai."

Simi sat up with a jolt on his cardboard ground-bed. He pushed aside the old blanket which had as many holes as the cockroaches that kept him company. His old shorts felt damp and cold. Then Simi grinned to himself. At least wet dreams were still free, even at his age. He changed into an old lap-lap and spread his shorts for the morning sun to dry. He recovered his cigarette butt of rolled newspaper from the dusty fireplace where he had hidden it the night before and pushed it into the still warm ashes. It glowed into life. He puffed at it and blew a thin wisp of bluish smoke through the tin-and-cardboard shack; a house too small to accommodate guests. In fact it was so low that it forced Simi to stoop. There was nothing to eat so he would have to go down the hill to the main shopping area and work for his breakfast. He crawled out of his hide-out and stared at the rising sun. He thought of the beautiful girl of his dream and tried to wrestle some meaning from it. He thought of his long-dead wife and Tambu, the only son she bore. He had turned out to be a drunkard and a wastrel but as a father Simi still loved him until he was found dead in a drain last year.

Feeling the morning breeze full on his face he breathed deeply but then started coughing. He looked down at his spit. Blood? He coughed and spat again. Yes, he was spitting blood. He felt a kind of nausea and weakness slowly rise in his stomach. He shook his head and a sharp



pain stabbed behind his eyes. Perhaps it was hunger or perhaps he was just getting old. Slowly the dawn crept over the city; a dawn which marked the Tenth Anniversary of the country's Independence. It was a public holiday and a day of general celebration for everyone. But Simi didn't know that. To him it was a day like any other day; a day to search for food and bottles.

The climb from the hill-top to street-level was long and steep; one stumble could mean a fall to certain death if not careful. Neatly folding his old sack and tucking it under his arm, Simi carefully started picking his way down the craggy hill-side. From this height, he could see the Waigani office complex, Gordons industrial area, the shopping centre and other throbbing city centres. He never failed to enjoy this view although recently his vision had become blurred. Old age was a curse he thought. The city was alive and in a festive mood. His weak gaze tried to register what he knew should be there. The landscapes blurred and blended in a haze of blues and greens. Simi clutched the trunk of a gum tree. Already he was breathless. He needed to rest. A hairless mangy dog came to piss against the tree but Simi whacked him with his bag and sent him yelping down the hill.

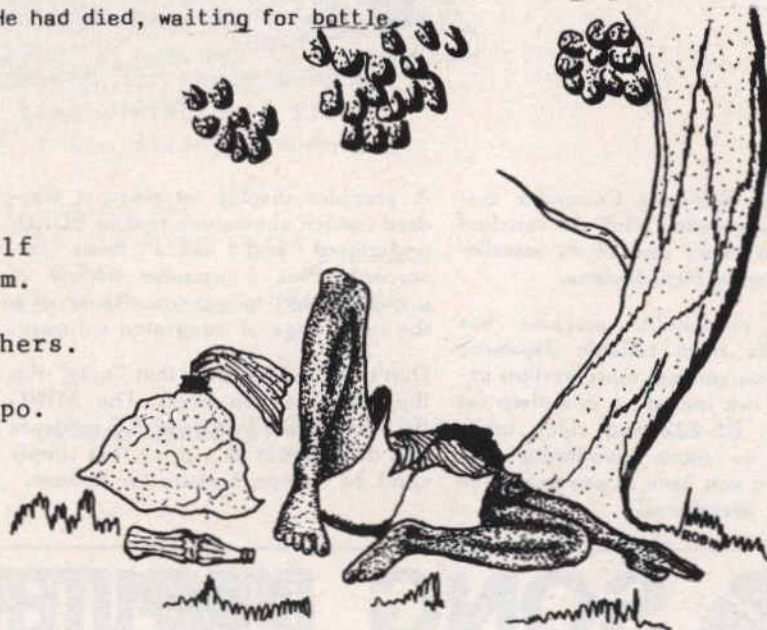
"You expect me to welcome this day?  
From this place  
Where there is no milk and honey.  
You have forced me into exile.  
You have given me stones for bread.  
Raped my wife; cast out my child.  
In the wilderness I cry alone."

The day grew hot as Simi did his customary round. There was nothing, only empty Coke cans. Even bottles were becoming a thing of the past. He retired to rest under his favourite gum tree. Colourful buses and PMVs with Tenth Anniversary stickers whizzed past. Crowds wearing anniversary I-shirts surged through the market-place. It all looked very gay. The old man was happy for them but his stomach rumbled. His mouth was dry and thirsty but he felt too weak and sleepy to get up. He closed his eyes and allowed the sounds to entertain his mind. It was pleasant to sit there, not moving, not caring. His time was near and he knew it. He was not afraid. It would be sweet and comforting to sleep and not worry about tomorrow. While the city celebrated, old Simi drifted away. It was two days before anyone investigated the body sitting under the gum tree. He had died, waiting for bottle.

#### MODERN TIMES

It's every man for himself  
Selfish desires overwhelm.  
There was a time  
When you and I were brothers.  
Now? Nogat i no inap  
Em samting blong taim bipo.

David Nalu





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# GLOOMY DATA IS STILL BEAUTIFUL

Like the lily that buds from the mire  
 So blooms one beauty from the sin-pit.  
 Our nation protects so rare a species.  
 She grooms and preens by the crime-riddled pool.  
 Pecking in with sound: "Gloomy Data".  
 Looking in on her iron-grid screen.  
 She has a vision of having seen afar.  
 Forecasting the clouds that gather  
 Foretelling just and unjust weather.  
 Too dread is this heavy load to shoulder  
 Alone, upon so feminine a gender.  
 To her, thunder and lightning are of one nature.  
 Like moonbeams, beauty and the brute do not compete,  
 But in her, mingle to complete  
 Like one in paradise, bathed in lustre.  
 In her tree-top pool, she sits to display  
 Plumes ever silkier and partner's hearts to inflame.  
 At the question of the fruits of courtship  
 Like a new-struck arrow, I quiver at her sight.  
 Ah, what plumage!

Gideon Ginkawa

## DISPOSSESSED MERMAID

A mermaid sat on a man-made rock  
 And crossed and uncrossed her legs like twin flippers.  
  
 In her eye, a wounded look, in her hands a book  
 Of seaweed, looking more like a displaced fish  
 She listened to the roar of the diesel thunder.  
  
 Then stood on legs of glistening eel.  
 And turned and walked to the crashing waves.  
  
 After all, mermaids are meant for the Southern Seas  
 Is all she was trying to say.

Gideon Ginkawa



# MY BOW STRING NO LONGER TWANGS

I went to church to pray.  
To do penance for atrocities committed in my name.  
I pleaded for justice for my poor land,  
But received excommunication, instead of bread.  
A smile on my lips; a sneer from the priest.  
Condemned as a heathen, I exit God's door.

I turned to the government and laid my head  
On the steps of the great Haus Tambaran.  
I was stepped on, kicked, told to move on.  
In the gallery of that Great House  
I begged for guide-lines:  
Words of mockery blessed my soul.  
In despair I fled.

With grief I turned to my ancestors  
To curse the Haus Tambaran.  
Lift off the roof; dismantle stone by stone  
To see the facts of reality.  
Count each stone; reveal the injustice.

But all in vain.  
My spears are blunt,  
My bow string no longer twangs,  
That once proud music had fled.  
See me now, naked as a new-born  
Where are my Papua New Guinean ways?  
Where shall I lay my head?  
Where now from here?  
Decisions flourish in you.  
Bury me in peace  
In nakedness.

**Benjamin Nakin**

## BRIDE PRICE

Piece of pig meat  
You give me.

A whole pig  
I repay you  
That I killed  
In my bush where  
They are plentiful.

Rings and ropes of  
Shell money you give me  
What I have in my bag  
I lay in front of you.

A bundle of sago and  
A bilum of vegetables  
I give you  
Goodwill and friendship.

And now I give  
You the groom  
And now you must  
Give me the bride.

**Steven Winduo**



## GROWING PAINS

by Steven T. Lyadale.

It was late in the afternoon and I was tired after playing with the other children from the village. It was windy now and the dark clouds had begun to form, signalling afternoon rain as usual. I was already feeling hungry since I had eaten only two pieces of kaukau in the morning. Hoping to find something to eat I decided to go home. From behind, someone called asking where I was going. Home I said.

"Let him go. They are bringing a new wife for him tonight," interrupted Pala. He was taller than me and we really weren't on good terms. He must have heard about the arrangements to bring a woman home for my elder brother. She was expected that day. The other children laughed and started teasing me. I became very embarrassed. They didn't give me a chance to explain or defend myself. I felt hot and became very angry. I told Pala to get married to his sister. This is a big insult to say to anyone who has a sister but Pala shouldn't have mocked me in the first place. Perhaps he had meant only to joke but he had chosen the wrong person. He was unlucky. I really wanted to hurt him and I did.

Suddenly he burst from the bushes and demanded to know whom I had said that to. He knew very well it was to him but he pretended he didn't. Maybe he expected me to deny it and withdraw my remarks. Timid weaker boys would have bowed down to his demand but I wasn't ready for that. I stood my ground and asked him to whom had he addressed his statement. The other boys just stared at us, anticipating what was going to happen next. They were scared. The bigger boys cheered and chipped in with remarks, encouraging us to fight. As the excitement grew more intense, Pala called me a big breast-feeding baby. Even though I was big I was still sucking milk from my mother's breasts. He must have heard about this even though I thought no one had ever seen me do it. Everyone laughed. I was so ashamed I couldn't answer him. I felt really small and vulnerable.

Swiftly I charged at him swinging my arms in all directions intending to hit him. I struck him hard but I was crying and couldn't see properly with the tears. He stepped back to avoid my swinging blows but tripped over a stick and fell face down. I jumped on his back and rained blows on his head until my two fists ached. Then I rolled him over into a puddle of muddy water which a pig had dug while looking for worms. Pala started to cry so I jumped up and ran down the path leading to home.

I glanced back and saw him coming behind me. He was wet and patches of sticky mud were smeared all over his body. Seeing that he now couldn't catch up with me, he slowed down to catch his breath. He was shouting something but I couldn't hear. I could only see his lips moving. I stopped to breathe. My heart was pounding and my body was shaking. Suddenly he started to run again as if chasing me. I jumped up in terror and stumbled backwards. Splash! into the middle of a dirty water hole like my enemy. Quickly I sat up to see if he was gaining on me but he was just standing there laughing and laughing. I suppose it was funny to see both of us covered in mud. His anger had gone now and he was laughing like an excited girl. I didn't know whether to walk back and make friends with him again or not. My hands were still aching after beating him so I had better not.

He was still laughing so I raised my voice and shouted that he hadn't done this to me. Then I felt something sticking to my bottom. I put my hand round and found a large piece of red sticky mud wedged between my buttocks. I pulled it out and threw it away. Pala who had been watching me, called to his friends that I was holding my own "pek-pek". The other boys laughed. Some mud was still sticking to my buttocks so I turned round and tried to scrape it off. The boys danced and hooted with laughter. Pala called out that I was so frightened that I had



messed myself. I held up some to show them that it was only red clay but they laughed even more. I was very angry and humiliated but I couldn't do anything. There were too many of them. I yelled some rude words at them; told them to sleep with their own sisters and then turned for home.

I reached home in no time. In the front yard I wiped my buttocks and hands clean with some grass. I didn't want anyone else to start laughing but there was no one there. Everything was very quiet and still; just the wind blowing through the tall trees. I began to feel lonely and wished I hadn't come home so early. But after what I had said and done, I couldn't go back to my play-mates. It was a pity we had fought. Now I felt sorry but even if I had the chance to return it was too late because it had begun to rain. The sky was covered with dark clouds and the thunder began to roar. First there were just a few drops here and there but then it became heavy. Big drops splashed on the target leaves around the house. When they hit my arms, they stung so I ran for shelter to the house.

A swarm of flies buzzed after me. I hate flies but they are always there; buzzing and annoying. I sat by the house-post and watched streams of these little enemies flying into the louse seeking shelter from the heavy downpour. In the dark interior, they couldn't see properly and flew right against me, smashing against my skin. One flew directly into my eye making it watery. It really hurt. Stupid flies, I called, can't you see where you are going? But they didn't hear me. Some buzzed around my head; others hit my body and fell stunned to the floor. I squashed them, one by one. Take that, and that. At least I would have my revenge on someone.

I was tired and hungry so I looked around for something to eat. I removed one of the planks used to close the doorway and slipped between the others into the house. Only a thief would enter a house like that but I was hungry and in a hurry. Once inside I lit a splint and searched for any kaukau left over from the morning meal. There was nothing except a few tiny potatoes used for feeding piglets. I heaped them near the fire and went to look in the pig-pen. Maybe the pigs would be kind enough to leave something behind for me. I held the burning flame above my head and looked into the first pen. At the far end I could see something. It had been bitten off at one end but it still seemed big enough to satisfy my hunger until mother returned from the garden with a fresh supply.

I lifted my right leg and cautiously stepped into the pen trying to avoid any dung. I stepped on what I thought was a clean spot but suddenly a stab of pain shot through the sole of my foot and up my leg. Something sharp had pierced my flesh. I cried and jumped back. Half limping I went outside to examine my foot. I wanted to pull out the nail or splinter but there was nothing there; just blood trickling out of the wound. I felt very lonely. There was no one to comfort me. No warm breast to hold on to. So I just sat and cried.

But I was still hungry. I remembered the kaukau. I must get it. Again I lit a splint in the fire and went towards the pig-pen. Very carefully I bent over and picked up the potato. To my disgust, it was all rotten inside. That was why the pig had left it there. I felt very angry. I had paid dearly for one rotten smelly kaukau.

"Stupid pig! Is that all you left me?" I shouted and smashed the kaukau against the post. I searched the other pens but found nothing except a bad smell and pig dung.

My foot still hurt. I hobbled out with the splint in my hand. I pushed the burning end into the white ashes killing the flame instantly. I wasn't interested anymore in the heap of small potatoes. I wanted a big sweet kaukau. I began feeling sorry for myself again.



"Oh mama, why didn't you leave me something to eat? Aa,eeeh!" I began to cry but nobody could hear me. The rain outside drowned my crying. I wiped my eyes and went to sit very close to the fireplace. I rested my bare buttocks on one of the large hearth stones. Then I stretched my legs across the fire pit and rested my feet on the two other stones. I wanted to get warm. Underneath I spread out the hot charcoal and soon warm air was flowing all around me. It was nice and comforting. I closed my eyes and tried to forget my hunger. Seated comfortably with my hands across my belly, my body swayed gently above the hot coals. Soon I was dozing. It was warm and peaceful. Slowly one of my arms slipped from my belly and slithered into the hot ashes. I jumped with a start, managing to lift my hand in the nick of time. It was a close call; I could have been badly burned. Yet it was still cold and I didn't want to leave the heat of the fire. So I moved off the big stone and lay down. Using my arm as a pillow, I curled round the fire in a semi-circle. I lay as close to the fire as I dared. The ground was covered with white ashes and so was my body. It looked as if one side had been painted white but I didn't care. I needed sleep. Besides who cares about cleanliness? I never wash except on special occasions.

I must have been sleeping for an hour or so when suddenly a loud noise shook my body and I started out of my sleep. I realised it was the crashing of thunder so I turned over and dozed off again. But not for long. The sound of heavy rain falling outside awoke me. Big drops fell on the target leaves around the house. It was a thud...thud...thud sound and it reminded me of my mother's footsteps as she hurried through the wet jungle with a heavy load of kaukau on her back and a big pandanus umbrella covering her head, to protect her from the downpour. With such pleasant thoughts, I dropped off to sleep again.

I must have slept deeply and soundly. I didn't hear mother opening the door as she removed the timber planks which sealed the doorway. She must have been horrified to see me sleeping so close to the fire. She had never allowed that ever since my elder brother had been badly burnt in a similar case. She dropped her load of kaukau and picked me up in her arms. I felt her cold wet arms slip around my naked body. I shivered. She held me very close to her breast and I felt happy even though her body was cold. I felt her breast press against my cheek. Quickly I squirmed around to get comfortable and suck her breast. She relaxed her embrace. I took hold of one of her breasts and pushed the cold stiff nipple into my mouth. My left hand gripped the other breast tightly. I squeezed. The milk felt cold as it trickled down my throat. I felt safe and comfortable once more.

Late in the afternoon, the rain lessened. By now a big fire was burning brightly. I had eaten two pieces of kaukau and felt very full and relaxed. The pigs started to come home, all wet. Some shook themselves to get rid of the rain-water. One came sniffing up to where I was. Then it stiffened its body and shook water all over me. The cold water shocked me. I jerked up and rolled over on the dirt floor. There I lay, pretending to cry, hoping that mother would come over and cuddle me.

"Get out of the way!" she shouted.

Seeing that I wasn't going to get any comfort, I moved to one side. At that moment one of the big pigs bit another one in front of it on the hind legs. It rushed across the floor, scattering dust everywhere. I would have been stomped upon if I hadn't moved. "There! See that? I could see what was going to happen to you," said mother, in a matter-of-fact voice. She chased the rest of the pigs into their pens and there tied one of their legs to the house post.

As mother was tying the pigs inside, I heard a lot of people coming towards the house. I could hear laughter. There were men and women in the group. They were shouting and whooping; they seemed an excited bunch. My older brother, about twenty years old, was heading the group.



There were about ten in all. They were all my relatives except for one very pretty young woman. She was all dressed up and looked her best. When I remembered who she might be I ran to meet her with a smile. She returned my gesture, flashing even white teeth. If I were a young bachelor I would have fainted. She was the prettiest maiden I had ever seen. I was glad she was to be my brother's wife.

"Hi tambu!" I shouted and held out my hand to shake hands. That was the only thing I knew about greeting people. I stepped forward but my twelve year old brother pulled me back by my left ear. I screamed until he let go but then he pulled me aside, half crying.

"You called that young lady tambu ah? Shame on you! She isn't our brother's wife yet. She will be if she is satisfied with the brideprice which we have offered her. Then she will agree to marry him. But never say that again!"

Then bending low and in a hushed voice he told the other boys what I had said. They laughed so loudly I was embarrassed. To stop them I called my brother's name. They stopped laughing and looked at me expecting something funny.

"Yu kaikai k-.....!"

The words were barely off my tongue when my brother hit me a mighty blow on the ear and sent me sprawling, shocked and dazed in the mud. I didn't know what was wrong so I started crying. Mother had seen him hitting me. She rushed up and chased him but my brother was too fast for her and escaped into the bushes like a frightened piglet.

Mother came back and comforted me in her arms. She carried me into the house and put me beside her on the floor. She lifted one of her breast to feed me. I slipped my head under her arm to suck the sweet milk. I opened my mouth slightly and was about to insert the nipple in my mouth when my wandering eyes met with someone else's, sitting opposite. The young woman smiled. I quickly closed my mouth and pretended to play with the breast, rubbing it against my cheek and lips. Then I pulled my head back and sat up straight beside mummy. I was glad I hadn't sucked the breast blindly.

It was late, past bed-time. Some of the visitors had already left. It had been a good evening of chat and cracking jokes. Many of the young men had become very talkative but now things had calmed down a bit. Those remaining still told jokes and the pretty young woman always responded with a peal of laughter and a sparkle of her beautiful teeth. I never took my eyes from her, leaning over mother's shoulder with my chin resting on her head. When the flames died down I could still see her teeth when she parted her lips to smile or laugh. Such pretty teeth. Once when she caught me staring at her, she kindly offered to let me sit on her lap. I refused and mother gently tried to push me forward but I turned and twisted and hung on more tightly to mother's neck.

"Grrn... grrn... grrn", they squealed. The pigs were hungry. It was past their feeding time because we had stoned so long. I let go of mother as she went to pick up a bilumful of raw kaukau to feed them. She went in quickly to stop the unbearable din. The rest of the visitors now stood up to leave. But the young woman and another girl who accompanied her remained seated. Like any small boy, I tried to follow mother anywhere she went. This time I tried to go inside the pen as she fed the pigs. I got in her way and she almost tripped over me. So she picked me up by one arm and pitched me back into the main room. I rolled over and landed near the young woman.



"Aaaaah ah! Aaaaah ah!" I cried.

The young woman whose name I didn't even know, gently picked me up in her arms. It felt nice and I didn't struggle. She put me on her lap and spread my legs over her thighs. Then she put her arms around me and pulled me close to her; my head resting between her stiff hard breasts. Her skin was soft and delicate, not like mother's. I succumbed to the warmth and comfort of her body. From my safe hiding place I could hear the pigs cracking and crunching the kaukau and then grunting with satisfaction. Mother fed each of them in turn.

I must have sat there for some time and fallen asleep. I woke up when the young woman got up to go to the bedroom at the far end of the building. She rose slowly with her arms still clutching my body. As she walked, her breast rubbed against my cheek. I heard mother offer to carry me because it isn't good manners to allow a child to pester a visitor. But the girl refused and continued to carry me.

"He is such a cute little fellow. Let him sleep with me tonight," she said as we stepped into the big open bedroom. There she spread out an extra lap-lap she had brought and gently laid me down. Quietly she lay down and pulled me close to her. I felt good and safe. Her breasts touched my face. They felt warm when they contacted my body. I wanted to reach out and hold them. They were shiny and pointed. I moved my hand slowly up but suddenly mother coughed and I pulled it down again.

I didn't want to go to mummy anymore. I began to feel sleepy. I squirmed my body closer and moved my head until my face rested between the two soft round breasts. They smelled good. I lay motionless. A little later with my head between her breasts I fell into a deep sleep. That was my last day as a baby.

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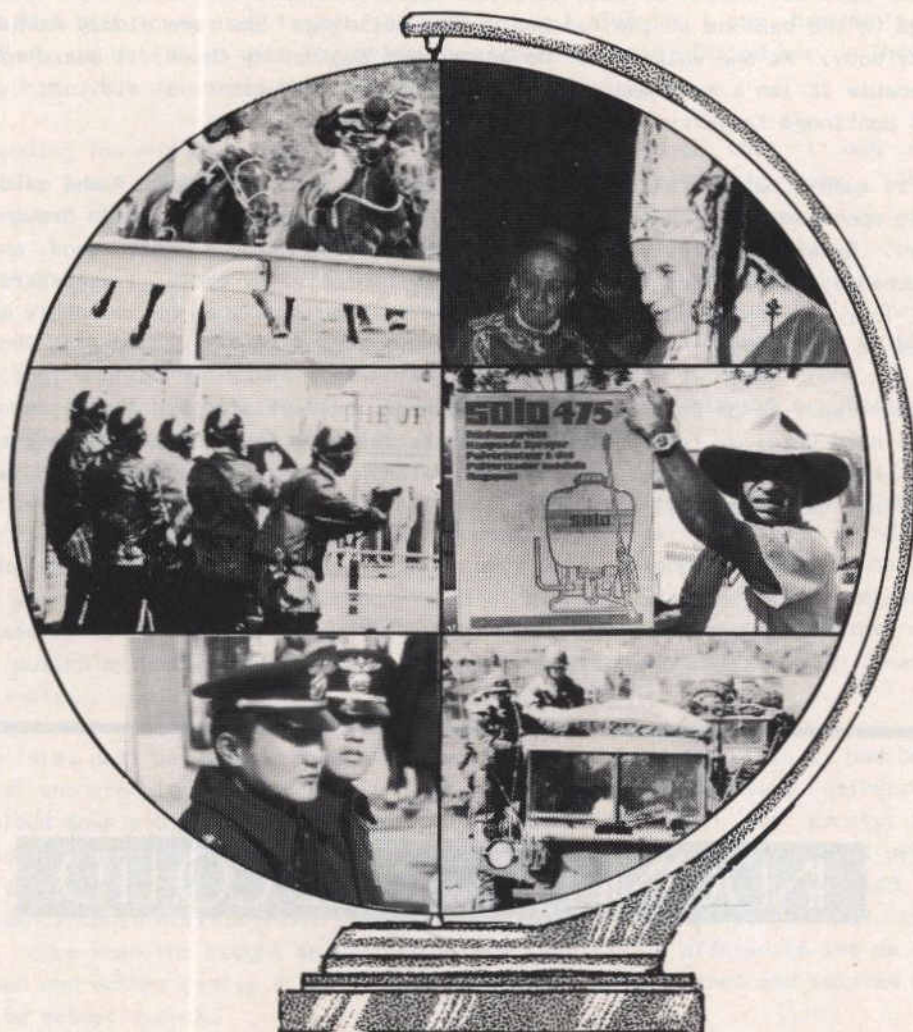
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## SPARE RIB

For long have we parried,  
Your bosom protuding in my absence.  
Sweet fragrance rolls like a fountain,  
Your physique moulded to elegance.  
Temptation was overwhelming,  
But still you resisted.

Days to moons, moons to seasons.  
These tribulations you have survived;  
Heartaches are not novel to you.  
Your pillow weeps everynight for me,  
United in dreams, we curse our freedom.

Now at last the vale of tears is past.  
Come, roll into my arms, my sweet.  
Your throbbing miseries shall be no more;  
Dreams become reality as rings are exchanged.  
Welcome to my body, my missing rib.

John Sari

## HANUABADA

Hanuabada stood on withered pillars.  
Sheltered by corroding aluminium roofs,  
The hanging clothes take advantage  
Of the sea breeze as floating  
Canoes remain tied to  
Their posts under the houses  
Like fierce dogs.  
Now Hanuabada silhouetted at dawn  
Against the southern sky,  
Yawns at every breath of the rising sun  
And earnestly prays for  
Bread and butter for another day.  
For yesterday has stolen the savings,  
And yet everyone insists on  
Parking a Mercedes or a Mazda 929  
Outside the aging house.

Steven Winduo



## EVERYMAN'S FAVOURITE

We were so revealing.  
 Our glassy kingdoms sparkled  
 As glittering jewels in a glass case,  
 And excited men of all classes  
 As mares to stallions in a pen.

We were so lenient in our charges  
 Men abandoned all other rivals  
 And seek our favour.  
 They came running from all directions  
 And surrounded our cool apartment.

Their necks were as hollow as open grave,  
 Their throats were dry as dust,  
 Their tongues stuck to the roofs of their necks  
 Their lips were burned as live coal  
 They were thirsty as flocks in the desert.

No time was wasted in meeting our charges  
 And we were right at their service.  
 They grabbed us by the necks  
 And dumped us gently in some ready made coffins  
 Where we remained giggling.

They dragged us to some shady place  
 Where we could not be viewed.  
 They pulled us each by the hair  
 And clobbered us lightly on the heads.  
 We grinned and enticed more.

They eagerly pinned us down,  
 Stripped off our identity waist bands,  
 Ripped away our only flimsy covers  
 And exposed our tender breasts.  
 We made no resistance.

They stared lustfully upon our forms  
 We were so cold, damp and alluring  
 While they were hot, desperate and perspiring.  
 Our dove-like eyes met their owl-like eyes -  
 An implication of agreement.

Their tough hands embraced our middles,  
 Their cruel fingers clawed our curves,  
 Their greedy mouths bent towards us.  
 Their burning lips ploughed our nipples  
 Their exploring tongues invaded our glassy kingdoms.

We exploded in ecstasy  
 And sent our foamy missiles



That landed right in their gagging kingdoms.  
We killed their nerves  
And held them captive - sucking.

We were so carried away  
We could not make them stop.  
They got stuck on us as fleas on dogs  
And drained us clean of our very self-  
Our life blood!

That is why you find us here today  
Occupying the most ignoble place in society -  
Empty S.P. bottles thrown away  
That were once filled with juicy S.P. beer,  
Everyman's favourite.

Winchlee Oibotee Momber

#### POOR MAN'S PEACE

Kiss me my darling  
The way you always did  
Those love-nights we had  
Under the Pikus tree.

Fresh memories of times gone-by  
Will unfold.  
Then too will I kiss you  
To draw all pleasures  
That your tender lips  
Can lovingly afford.

Close your eyes sweetie  
And float with me  
To a land of dreams.  
Forget with me  
This ugly world.  
We will share a moment's peace  
Beyond my worldly woes.

What is there to win or lose?  
Life is but a dream,  
Full of luck, good and bad.  
Why plan for tomorrow  
When tomorrow's so unsure?  
Why regret yesterday,  
When it's gone for good?

So then, my sweet  
What is there to brood over  
If this moment is well spent?  
Come, kiss me again green bottle  
And drain me your pleasure juice

N.U. Tagai



## TEMPTING SIGHT

North West of Lae City,  
 At Ten Mile,  
 I found at the back of the Marmar tree,  
 One silent evening,  
 A motorcycle with its engine running.  
 As it lay on its side  
 Tickling over slowly,  
 In the kunai grass,  
 I was tempted.

I admired all that gleaming;  
 Shiny flanks, the beautiful headlights,  
 Fringed where it lay.  
 I led it gently to the road  
 And stood with that companion,  
 Ready and friendly.

We could find the end of the road,  
 Meet the sky,  
 I thought with confident opinion.  
 On the bridge we indulged our forward feeling,  
 Testing throttle and clutch.

Glancing back further in the grass,  
 I felt weak and nervous.  
 The owner, just coming to where he had flipped over  
 The rough karanas highway.  
 He had blood on his body; was pale.  
 I helped him walk to his machine.  
 He ran his hand over it,  
 Called me a good man,  
 Roared away.

I stood cross, imagining the ridden motorcycle.

Michael Duwang



## SULE SRAGL PRE? (WHY SCHOOL?)

by Joe Kunda Naur.

The education system in PNG has long been criticised by campaigning politicians, failed students, tired teachers and frustrated parents. Each of these groups see a different purpose of education and claim that the present system is not achieving that goal.

What is the purpose of education? To educate you might reply but in PNG that answer is wrong. Education here in PNG has always been seen as a means towards a salary-earning job by those attending school and those who sponsor them. It is seen as an access to employment by the students and as a long-term investment by the parents. Since automatic employment no longer follows for the majority of school leavers, the aims and goals of education will have to be re-defined and perhaps re-directed if we are to avoid further frustration and unhappiness among our citizens.

A major political platform for our campaigning politicians in election year has always been the promise of setting up more primary and secondary schools in the region. In past times the majority of people approved of this ideal and favoured the demand to have more or better educational facilities for their children. But now ten years after independence things have rapidly changed; the rising population figures have also seen a rising tide of unemployable youngsters. We do not have the industrial base to absorb them. Worse than that we have produced a generation of educated misfits - students who cannot find work in the modern sector but who refuse to return to traditional life because we have given them totally unrealistic aspirations while at school.

Do all our children automatically benefit from the present system? The vast majority do not because there is a constant weeding-out process at Grade 6, Grade 8 and Grade 10. A pyramid system of education exists in PNG with a huge base which gets smaller and smaller as you approach the top. The lower levels of the pyramid are useless; only serving to feed the top. In fact the education system is a form of age-grade initiation ceremony - each grade is useless in itself unless the initiate is admitted to the next grade. Lets be honest. What chance has a Grade - 6 leaver got of obtaining a job these days? Thus the community school is only useful as a base for high school which in turn must lead to National High School if it is to be of any use. Grade 12 isn't much good unless you gain admission to a tertiary institution. Even at that level you are not safe. Admission to university does not guarantee you security in life. Many failed Preliminary Year students and drop-out Foundation Year students still cannot find employment. Unless you obtain that vital piece of paper at the end of nearly twenty years of school you still will find it difficult to get a decent job.

Because of this block-building system of education, the ordinary villagers are now taking a second look at their previous commitment to schools. Are they really benefitting from them or have they just become some sort of meaningless ritual and initiation ceremony? Parents are saying that they have wasted money for many years on school fees only to find their children failing at the end of the process. This money could have been much more profitably used for buying better food, purchasing iron roofs for their houses, obtaining better clothes to wear, better health-care or even simply buying better cooking and eating utensils. The money normally set aside for children's education can be channelled into more practical fields which are guaranteed to give an immediate return. For example buying new fishing nets, an outboard motor or clearing and planting a new coffee garden. A vast majority of parents have discovered that the sacrifice they have made to pay school fees will not bring any benefit to them in the future years. Instead of being an investment and security it has become a gamble like "Win-Moni". There is absolutely no guarantee that you will win (i.e. your child will succeed and get a job)



but there is a faint chance that you may. Because the chances have become so poor and odds against you so high many parents have decided that the whole process is a waste of hard-earned money and have decided not to send their children to school.

As for the children themselves, they really don't see the point of education. Most students say that they are at school because their parents wanted them to attend. Others go because their friends are there and they enjoy the company. Like their parents, most children do not see school as an end in itself but rather as a means to an end; it is a process not a product. The children look forward to the day when they will leave their school and village forever with their certificate in their pocket, heading for the bright lights of the nearest town to find a smart job, a smart car and a smart flat as previous generations of school-leavers have done. But now the cold reality is that the bright lights have been switched off in town; the doors of offices and industry are locked against them and they will never be able to afford a smart car or live in an expensive town house with electricity, water, garbage and rent bills every fortnight. It's a sweet dream to have while growing up but most students realise very early on that for them it will never become a reality.

As well as parents and children, village teachers are also beginning to realise the futility of the present system. Year after year they urge poor villagers to pay school fees and send their children to school only to tell them at the end of six or eight years that their children have failed and that all their money has been wasted. Through those years, the parents trusted the teachers and expected success in the end. Yet even from the very beginning the teacher knows that only a tiny percentage will be picked to go to high schools and from that, only a handful will make it through to the National High School schools. Because of this the teacher feels guilty, while the parents feel their trust has been betrayed and that they were advised wrongly. Resentment quickly builds up between the teacher and the local community. The present system can produce hatred between parent and teacher. In some areas, the parents of disappointed children may even go so far as to burn down the school or threaten the lives of teachers. This can often end in tragic or even fatal results.

Where did we get this screwed-up idea of education? Our father's generation sought education in the true sense. Although today we may laugh at them for seeking "cargo" they were looking for something spiritual as well. They were seeking wisdom and enlightenment. They wanted to become educated people in the true sense of the word. They admired a person because he was wise and understood his environment and knew how to live in it. Like all previous systems of formal education in PNG, this present model has come from the west. But why is it so different to the type of education taught to our fathers by the early missionaries and old colonial teachers? We can only assume that the latest wave of expatriate experts, whether they are university lecturers or Waigani planners, has brought this misguided and highly unsuitable model of education to PNG.

Who are these expatriate experts? A quick survey will show that the majority of them are lower class or the sons of working class parents in the European sense of that word. They themselves have never really understood the true purpose of education. They simply used it to climb the social and economic ladder in their own society. To them education was a means to leave their parents' class and to become lower middle class. Just like our village kids, they did not appreciate education except as a means to a better job and a better position in their society. However in their own country they continued to remain third-class people despite their education. They were in fact failures in their own society. They therefore decided to either emigrate or become expatriates. Some will deny this hypothesis but let's face it, no one leaves his own country if he is successful and at the top of the social or academic ladder in his native country. You won't find Margaret Thatcher or Ronald Reagan applying to work or teach in the so-called Third World. I therefore maintain that these expatriates who have failed in their



own country are basically unhappy misfits. They have brought with them this warped idea of society in general and of education in particular. By profession, they are mercenaries; they have no loyalty or patriotism to any country or institution but are willing to sell themselves to the highest bidder. These people, who have no long-term commitment to anything except their own bank accounts cannot possibly instil the right kind of attitudes in our students. Even if this were not true we cannot continue to allow expatriates, who will be here for two or three years at most, to plan our future for the next twenty five or fifty years. We must be in charge of our own destiny. The expatriate philosophy is unacceptable here. Their values are self-interest, self-promotion, self-preservation - greed in fact! Again they will deny it but this becomes perfectly clear when you ask any of them to accept a local salary. They are off on the first plane to Australia or the Middle East.

Unfortunately these selfish attitudes and values had now almost totally permeated our own PNG society through the competitive uncaring education system which has been introduced. I say "almost" because one feature of true Melanesian society has survived despite numerous attempts to stamp it out by western planners; both church and state alike. I refer of course to our glorious "Wantok-System". This is our wonderful protective safety-net which until now has guaranteed that in PNG no one starves or has to go on the streets to beg like in so many other countries. The Europeans have tried to destroy this system because they see it as a threat to their own selfish, materialistic values. Western capitalism cannot thrive in the face of wantokism. In Melanesia we have always put people before possessions. Possessions were only important in that you could re-distribute them among your clan and dependents and thus strengthen the ties of love, friendship, peace and good-will in the community. We did not need Christian doctrine or Western education to teach us this.

PNG now stands at the crossroads; we can follow the road towards increasing western consumerism where we spend all our lives chasing after big jobs, big salaries, big cars and big headaches or we can return to our Melanesian philosophy of life which emphasises personal relationships, loyalty to family, clan and country and the ideal of sharing one's wealth with those less fortunate than ourselves in society. You don't need to be a communist to believe that. It is just the traditional Melanesian outlook on life. It is time therefore that the whole orientation of our education system was changed. Obviously every child cannot go to university or get a top job in the big cities.

At the grassroots, our people have already realised this and are keeping their children away from school in increasing numbers. Village people, although simple-minded, are realistic. If something isn't relevant to them or necessary for their lives, they aren't going to spend money on it. This applies to their children's education just as much as household equipment. If they can see no immediate or long-term gain from it, they will not invest in it. The children are also happy with this solution because they will not have to face the humiliation of being called a "failure" or "drop-out" and they will have no problem adjusting to village life because they have never left it. Probably the villagers will continue to educate one child in the family in the off-chance that he might succeed through the system. The others they will keep at home to work in gardens or tradestores.

Papua New Guineans therefore (and not expatriates) need to look again at the whole question of education in this country and education for what? We do not have and never will have the infrastructure and industry to employ thousands of western-educated children. After all, what is the point of teaching children to speak a foreign language (e.g. English) when they are never going to use it in the village community? On the other hand if you don't teach them English, you are automatically barring those children from any prospect of further education or any possibility of employment because whether we like it or not English is here to stay. So there are no quick or easy answers. But one thing is obvious. The present education isn't



relevant and isn't working for the majority of PNG children. Parents spend large amounts of money for ten years with no positive results at the end.

Unless this problem is looked at immediately we are going to have a continuing rise in unemployment, increased drop-outs, more rascal problems and greater social unrest all round. At present the government are building bigger and stronger prisons and expanding the police force. Unfortunately that is dealing only with the symptoms. It does not cure the disease. The root of our disease (which no one at present is prepared to admit) is our education system. Until that is radically changed there will be no improvement in life in PNG.

### AIMING FOR THE STARS

Knowledge, mother never knew existed,  
I grasped in both hands  
Scorching like a hot potato.  
I threw it from hand to hand  
To cool its confusion and understand its meaning  
Only to burn my fingers.

Knowledge, mother never dreamt of,  
I drink like cool liquor  
Only to get drunk in its heavy demands  
Leaving me with a throbbing hangover  
And no answers to life's dilemma.

Knowledge I climbed mountains to seek  
I picked from the forbidden tree  
Yet my troubles grow taller  
Leaving me weak in understanding  
Frail in comprehension.

Ignorance never gave mother sleepless nights,  
While I toss and turn in perplexing anxiety,  
On a hearing sea of delirious knowledge.  
Backwardness gave her peace and satisfaction.  
Ignorance shut her eyes on complex reality.  
Simplicity directed her every step.

All these have I surpassed  
But found only dust in my hands  
A barren desert of illusions  
A sea of taunting riddles  
Only silence may answer.

Jacob Harry



## MOUNTAIN MAN

A mountain patriot I remain.  
 My rugged country out of which  
 Each saga and generation steps to the future.  
 My blood was conceived and reputative virtue identified.  
 Bright fruitful valleys where first I learned my song.  
 My chilly springs and streams in profusion,  
 Spurt in aggregate to the oceans of my Nambis brothers.

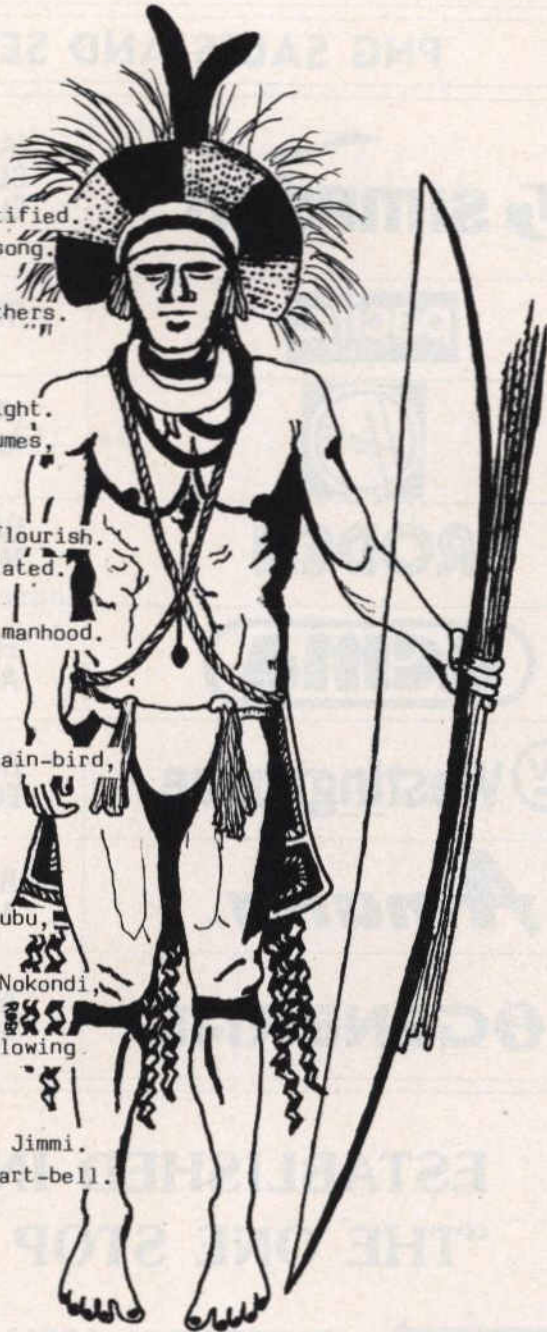
Here time stands still:  
 Only filtrate rays signal day and crickets belo night.  
 Princes of the forest arrogantly display their plumes,  
 Chanting challenge from branch to branch.

From the still forest floor, fluorescent glories flourish.  
 From its bare limestone umbilical cord, I was isolated.  
 From Giluwe to Mount Micheal, my war-cries echo.  
 The furious skeleton of Mount Wilhelm displays my manhood.

Along the Waghi valley I acquire my bread,  
 Up Miok's deep-trenched territory,  
 Stretching to the impenetrable misty land of the rain-bird,  
 Where Whelma blows his flute,  
 My kundu beats to the aroma of fresh blood.

My nose is pierced, my cheek tatooed;  
 Blood streams down my back, glistening in Lake Kutubu,  
 To merge in mosquito-infested Karamuie.  
 Gentle, mysterious land of mudmen and mischievous Nokondi,  
 Where cannibal gods have reigned for centuries,  
 Unfolding prairies of Bena Bena, land of cane-swallowing  
 gallants,  
 To the high plateau of the notorious Kukukukus,  
 We kiss the Bundi half-castes and descend to Lower Jimmi.  
 This panorama of my mountain blessings rings my heart-bell.  
 Its smoke-curles infatuate me for this is my land;  
 My home, sweet home.

John Sari





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# **NATURE ON THE WARPATH**

A night not to forget.  
 Lights zig-zagging across my room.  
 Dancing on the louvres; prancing on the walls,  
 Lighting up my face; my carcass on the bed.  
 Blinding me in oblivion; a zombie in the room.

This was lightning at its best.  
 Painting the sky with flashes,  
 Striking terror in its wake.  
 People clinging to each other like glue.  
 As for me, a lone figure  
 Two pillows stuffed in my ears  
 Face down. I prepared for the worse  
 It came rolling like an angry bull,  
 Stamping, bellowing from end to end,  
 Only to burst itself open.  
 Like an atom-bomb in chain reactions  
 Opening the once blocked ear-drums  
 And bringing people to reality  
 Trembling, wondering when the next blow will fall

Oh what a night.  
 Folks wondering if the end has come.  
 Confessing to each other.  
 Trying to make amends for a life-time's wrongs,  
 But this is only a glimpse of Nature's power.  
 Beware God's wrath and repent.

**Benjamin Nakin**

## **FLAME OF THE FOREST**

As nothing  
 Among thorns and bushes  
 It climbs higher.

Avoiding beetles and butterflies  
 Around the Tree of Knowledge  
 It twines.

Among the leaves of prosperity  
 Within the black culture.  
 Stand firm PNG; steady and sure.  
 Don't waver or stumble  
 But display your blood-petals.

**May Paipaira**



## DRIVER YOU

Eh! Driver, you,  
Take it easy,  
Don't over limit.

The eyes are not on you,  
It's not your truck,  
You are not the owner.

Never think everyone admires you,  
Look!  
The wheels are coming apart.  
Take it easy, Driver you.

Why are you in such a hurry?  
To the end of the earth?  
To Heaven or where?  
Oh Driver you, Take it easy.

Justin Yatu

## THE BEAUTIFUL FLOWER

By the highway,  
Beside my market,  
A beautiful flower flourishes,  
With its natural beauty.

First car comes and passes  
Second one comes,  
On full speed,  
Brakes a few yards.

A handsome face,  
Pops up at the window,  
Looks back.

Smiles to himself,  
Then to the mirror,  
Then to me and proceeds.

That's me ya!  
Meri Simbu,  
Yu lus tru!

Justin Yatu

## SETTLEMENTS

A face, turned away slightly,  
Blames the tears on smoke  
From burning blue gum wood,  
The green kindling bundled  
One day, to flame up  
The pot on fire. Humming  
Fingers scoop up sago crumbs  
And the evening sets  
In, firmly.

The woman by the earth  
Oven croons tunes  
Of sugar cane days  
And blackbirding voyages.

They come, one after the other,  
Over barbwire fences, and on  
Dancing feet, their teeth  
Grinning lanterns in the dark.  
Flames light up the settlement.

Russell Soaba.

## BOOK-KEEPING

Man Friday listens  
To the surf lapping against  
The hulks of foreign vessels  
Mooring at the sleep of the bay.  
And knows  
He is not in that dream.

He says:  
God forbid. No!

And he's on land  
Cracking hauga-nut shells  
With patient hands and book-  
Keeping eyes. the gathered nuts  
Gleaming greenstones and abira rocks  
In the morning sun.

He will circle the island for signs  
Of storms and high tides. He will  
Save turtles and others stranded  
By an outgoing tide. He will comb  
The island once more and cycle  
Into town, to check the balance  
Of his savings account.

Russell Soaba.



## A MELANESIAN CONFEDERATION

by John Koknack.

Although the importance of a Melanesian state cannot be over-emphasised, its creation causes many problems to be overcome. Yet the formation of such a state is a must for the continued existence of the Melanesian people. This point has already been discussed in an earlier article (PNG Writer '85) Everyone recognises the strategic and economic importance of this region. It follows if one is important, then one can also be in a position of danger. We should not be dismayed by the problems involved when trying to establish such a federation. If all Melanesians can be convinced of the necessity of such a state and become committed to its formation, then all obstacles can be overcome.

To achieve a Melanesian federation, two things must be looked at:

1. The contemporary experiences of each of the sub-regions in Melanesia.
2. The present system of government in each of these regions.

Although we have similar cultures, similar racial groups, the same religion and economic systems, these may not be enough to weld us into a Melanesian unity. The historical accident of European contact and its subsequent colonisation has produced many marked differences in the region. This is most obvious in Melanesian border areas where once homogeneous tribes have been fragmented by arbitrary divisions drawn by Europeans. I refer particularly to the people of the Solomons who have been split by a false border and more particularly all Melanesian peoples living on both sides of the Indonesian-PNG state line. With the passing of years these lines unfortunately fossilise and become internationally recognised. The people on either side begin to develop different attitudes towards their former wantoks. Finally different languages, customs, religions and governing systems (the legacies of the colonisers) convince the people that they are different and the original unity is lost. This has already happened to the small tribes of Melanesian stock who still live in the hill country of the Philippines and Malaysia. They have been completely swamped and cut off by the later waves of Asiatic migrants. It is now too late for them to assert their true Melanesian identity. The same process is continuing today in a much more aggressive manner in E. Timor and W. Papua. In less than fifty years West Papuans will be greatly outnumbered by Javanese migrants.

Before we even think of a Melanesian Federation we need to consider two problems and decide which option we should choose. Today the world is divided between two opposing ideologies: (1) the socialist/communist tradition and (2) the capitalist/imperialist one. We must decide which of these is going to be successful in the long term. Secondly we must decide which is the best method to unify the experiences and systems already existing in this region. To me the second problem is of much more immediate concern than the first one. In fact choosing an ideology is not a priority because both communism and capitalism are imported western philosophies. I believe in the final analysis Melanesians will have to work out their own doctrine. Despite what some learned lawyers and academics proclaim there is no Melanesian way. Nor will there be one until Melanesians become sure of their own identity. It is probable that we will never accept a pure form of western capitalism nor an eastern model of communism but rather we shall evolve the Pacific equivalent of African or Arab socialism which tries to blend the best of ethnic traditions with modern political systems.

The first criterion for any Melanesian Federation is that all the sub-regions are politically free. Without this, there can be no progress. Therefore it is most important that the already independent countries give active support to independence movements in any of the

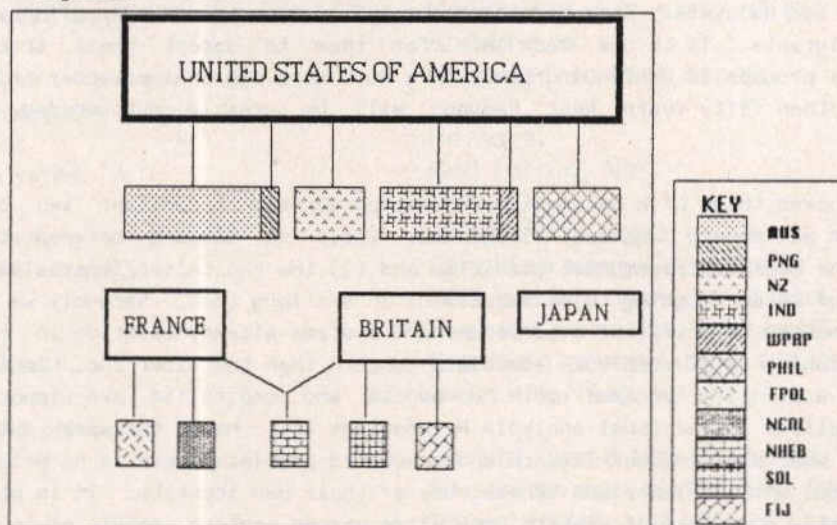


areas that are as yet not free. This applies in particular to the Kanaks in New Caledonia and the West Papuans on this island. However this does not necessarily mean military involvement as in Vanuatu some years ago. Vocal support and consistent agitation at the U.N. and other world forums may be all that is necessary or indeed prudent at this time. The right to self-determination by all colonised people has long been accepted by the U.N. While agitating for co-Melanesians' independence we must strive to maintain peace and harmony in the region. The stability of the area is of supreme importance to the dominant Superpowers. Strategically and economically it is in their interests to have a peaceful region. As the idea of a Melanesian federation grows it will also be in the superpowers' interest to foster this concept.

One of the greatest hindrances to the promotion of such a cause is the lack of self-confidence shown by Melanesians. America, Australia, China and Japan all realise the tremendous potential of this region. Why then can't Melanesians themselves see the importance of Melanesia as a power-bloc? Is it our colonial complex or are we just too provincial in our thinking? The outrageous and childish behaviour of both our provincial and national M.P.'s in recent parliamentary sessions makes one despair of their leadership quality. The old saying: they can't see the wood for the trees is particularly true when applied to our own members. When are they going to grow up and see what is really happening in PNG and in the Pacific right under their noses? Just as World War II caught our grandfathers completely by surprise, our present leaders are going to get the shock of their lives but by then it will be too late for the country.

Let us look at the political picture which has been existing in the Pacific until fairly recently. The political alliances and trading partnerships are fairly obvious. I shall attempt to represent these shifting power-structures in the post-war Pacific with a series of diagrams. Then I will project the likely picture for the 1990's to the year 2000 and beyond. Immediately after the war, the Pacific was controlled by the United States as she was the victor. Gradually she handed over some responsibilities to her allies, the British, French and Australians. In the 1970's the power structure was like this (Fig.1) European powers ruled the Pacific with Japan just beginning to assert her position.

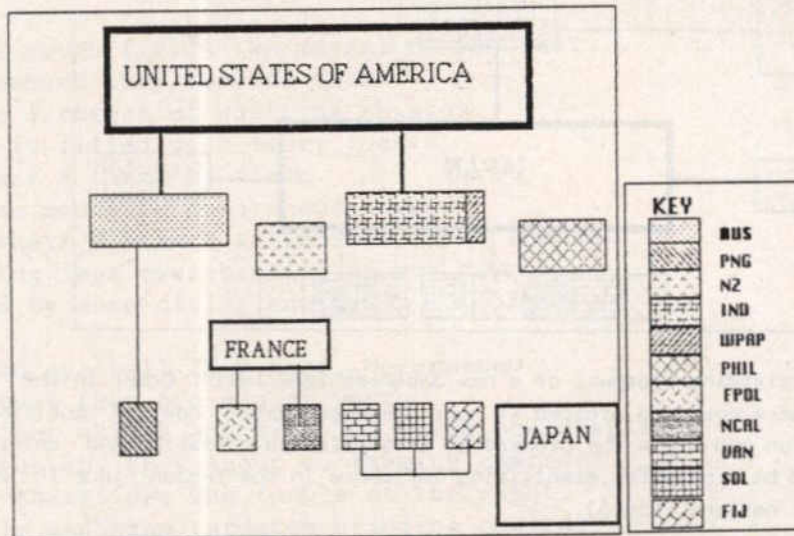
**Figure 1 Pacific Power Blocs (60's-70's)**



This picture altered dramatically in the late 70's and 80's as many Pacific nations gained their independence. The economic and trading alliances continued to shift in Japan's favour as she grew more powerful in the region. Both New Zealand and the Philippines moved away from direct American control. (Fig.2)

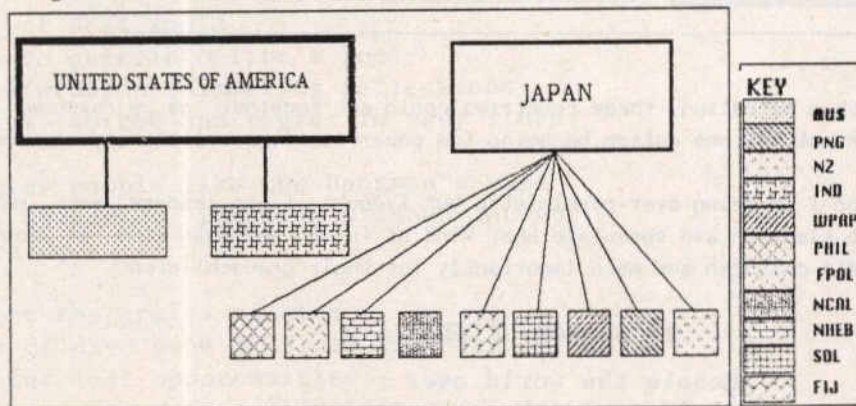


Figure 2 Pacific Power Blocs (80's)



Without doubt the old colonial powers in the Pacific will continue to weaken while the economic clout and might of Japan will grow unchecked. Through her tied aid program, her astute marketing and clever acquisition of local resources, she will inevitably surpass Australia and begin to rival the United States as the most powerful country in the Pacific (Fig.3). However this may be checked, as the Americans fear, by Soviet expansion in the region. This could only happen if (a) the New People's Army were successful in their revolution in the Philippines and kicked out the U.S. presence and (b) the newly independent socialist Kanak government of New Caledonia were to invite Russians in.

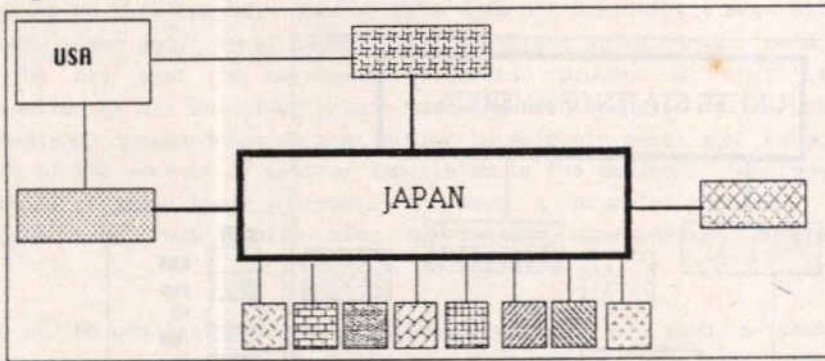
Figure 3 Pacific Power Blocs (90's)



If the Soviets do not move into the region we are left with two possible scenarios for the year 2000. The most obvious one (towards which all present trends are pointing) is that Japan once more becomes the Superpower of the Pacific. By this stage it is most likely that U.S.A. will have perfected her "Star-Wars" Defence system, using satellites and will no longer be dependent on naval or territorial defence bases which will have become obsolete. If Japan is willing to remain an economic power, rather than a military one, she can be assured of dominance in the Pacific (Fig.4) Australia, Philippines, Indonesia and the smaller Pacific nations will have no choice but to trade with her as U.S.'s interest lessens in this area.

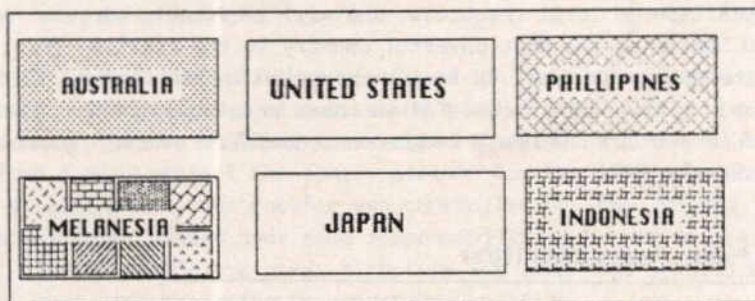


Figure 4 Pacific Power Blocs (2000 AD)



This rather alarming prospect of a new Japanese Imperialist Order in the Pacific with its neo-colonial dangers could be avoided if our leaders acted now to mobilise Melanesian awareness in the region and begin the process of Melanesian co-operation and unity. A united Melanesian bloc would be a powerful stabilising influence in the region since it could balance the strength of other nations (Fig.5).

Figure 5 Alternative Pacific Power Blocs



In such a situation, these countries could act together as a system of checks and balances to prevent any one nation becoming too powerful either militarily or economically.

Perhaps I am being over-pessimistic but I doubt if our leaders ever manage to think beyond the next election and speculate what kind of future and what kind of country they are leaving for their children and more importantly for their grandchildren.

#### IN SEARCH OF ME

People the world over  
 Claim we are born by design.  
 But wait a minute  
 I was born by accident  
 Sheer bad luck!  
 My father released  
 His dreams and frustrations  
 Through my mother  
 I was thrown out  
 Not to perpetuate the old order  
 But to question our new beginnings. A.B. Kaspou



### YESTERDAY'S WARRIORS

Out on the rough fields two masses of men meet,  
Without command they move to form  
A fearsome fortress of shifting shields.  
The front is filled with fiery foes  
Exposing not a flank of flesh.  
Behind come men with spears and arrows.  
Maintain their distance to improve their chance.  
The pounding legs ever-beating up and down  
As powered by some divine energy.

Eye-ball to eye-ball they meet, determined  
To prove that they are men of worth.  
Their ancient skills and fighting force now displayed  
Fears forgotten. they shout to lagging comrades  
And curse their foes who fumble at the sight.  
Arrows fly and axes threaten cringing cowards  
That they might break and lose their guard.

Oh charging brutes and beasts for battle bred  
What bloody benefits bring you to our beds?

**Data Pius**

### THE PASSING OF DEAD SOULS

The passing of dead souls  
Are moments to gaze into life's pool,  
To watch yesterday's shimmering reflections,  
Throwing back, sorrow and regret in wavy lines.

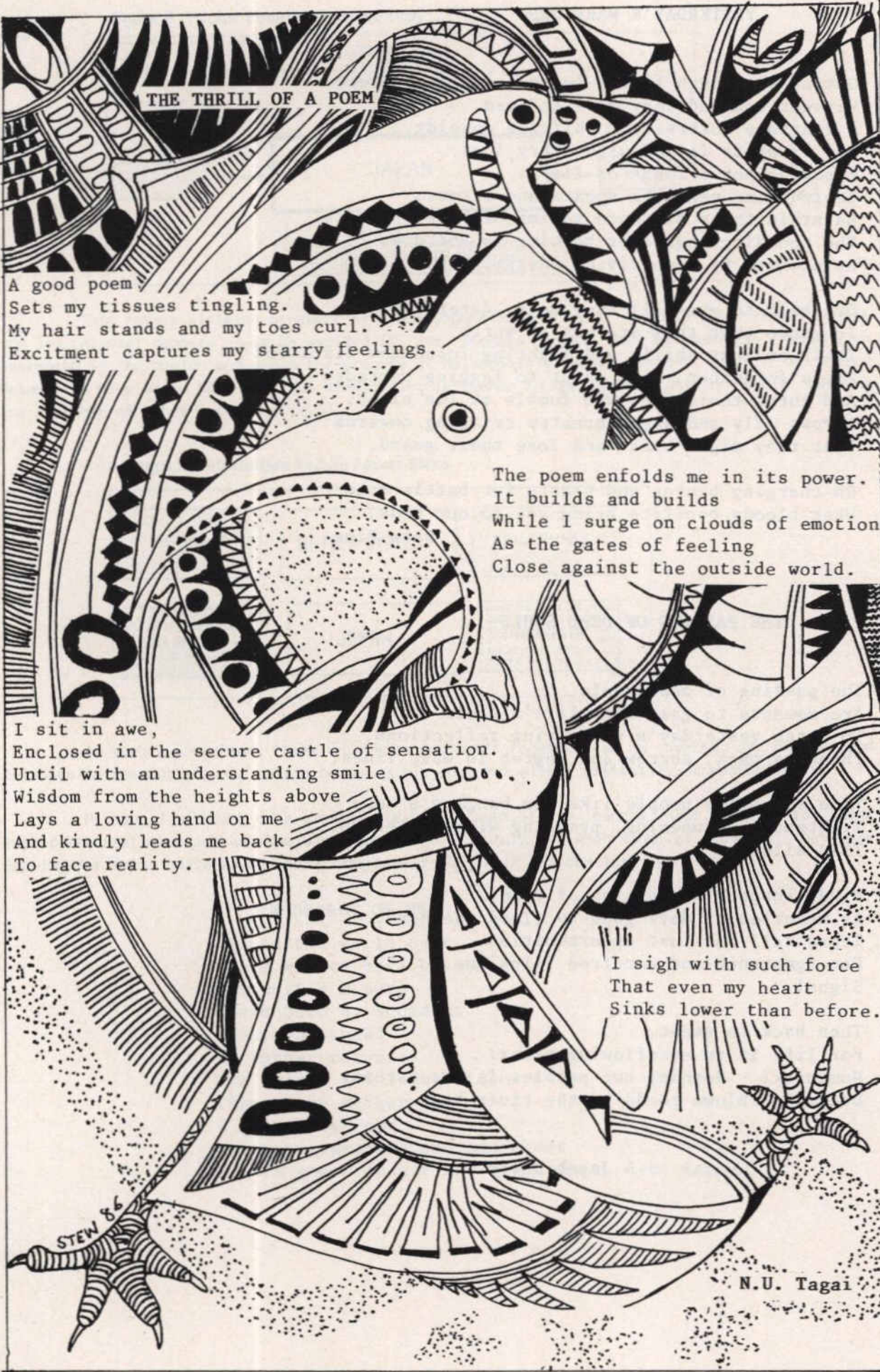
Time strangles people like the hangman's rope  
Tightening, squeezing, pressing without let-up.  
Then silence.

Minds inspect the grains of time,  
As memories of days gone-by flood the head.  
Tears fall for lost opportunities,  
For ignorance and carefree illusions.  
Sighs!

Then back to sweat,  
For life is an everflowing river.  
Humanity? - Nothing but pebbles in the stream.  
Dreams? - Blown reeds by the river bank.

**Jacob Harry.**





# THE THRILL OF A POEM

A good poem  
Sets my tissues tingling.  
My hair stands and my toes curl.  
Excitement captures my starry feelings.

The poem enfolds me in its power.  
It builds and builds  
While I surge on clouds of emotion  
As the gates of feeling  
Close against the outside world.

I sit in awe,  
Enclosed in the secure castle of sensation.  
Until with an understanding smile  
Wisdom from the heights above  
Lays a loving hand on me  
And kindly leads me back  
To face reality.

I sigh with such force  
That even my heart  
Sinks lower than before.

N.U. Tagai



## THE NECESSITY AND REALITY OF ORAL LITERATURE

by Steven Winduo.

My interest in oral literature started when I began to observe and study objectively the culture and traditions of Ulihembí. This is a typical Sepik village of about two hundred people. It is situated inland from Wewak to which it is connected by a fine broad limestone road. Two is the common "tokples" which is also spoken on the coast from Boiken to Sawarin and in some of the interior. The people live in traditionally built houses on metre-high stilts which makes sweeping and cleaning easier. Although regular contact with Wewak is now maintained there has been very little intrusion of modern life in the village. Most developments have passed Ulihembí by until very recent time. Less than a quarter of the villagers are literate and these are mainly the younger generation. Few people had managed to complete schooling before independence. Things have now progressed somewhat with the opening of a permanent school at Marinumbo thanks to the efforts of the Catholic mission at Passam. The village therefore is a good example of an unspoilt Sepik settlement where people divide their time between subsistence farming, cash-cropping and ceremonial participation which by performance helps maintain and preserve their culture and traditions. Initiations, marriages funerals, traditional sing-sings, yam harvestings and numerous other cultural activities can only be fully understood if one studies the oral literature in which these ceremonies are embedded and explained.

It is surprising that despite being easily accessible to Ph.D - hunters and voracious researchers, no significant work has been done on the culture of Ulihembí and the surrounding villages of Kasaun, Porombe, Japarauka and Paparom. The area remains unexploited and unresearched. So far clan histories, customary beliefs, rituals, values, legends myths, chants and songs have not been written down but preserved in the memories of the elders. Whether the early missionaries recorded anything is difficult to find out. The German fathers probably did record their observations but these are in the archives of some German monastery or university waiting for some future Sepik academic to come and re-translate and give them back to the people. However at this stage (we may call it the crucial stage) modern life is challenging the old traditional way most seriously. So that rich little world of Ulihembí will soon be shattered to nothing to become insignificant and disregarded. The dying culture will be of interest only to obscure American anthropologists and museum collectors. The younger generation of Ulihembí are no longer interested, attracted by the social nights, blasting sounds and excessive alcohol of the nearby provincial capital. The old men despair of finding anyone to pass on their knowledge to. Therefore it is little wonder that they welcome visiting anthropologists with open arms. Both need each other desperately.

As in most other Melanesian societies, oral literature in Ulihembí is interwoven into the culture and social life of the people. To understand the society one must study the oral literature of the area and vice versa. The social structure and the social hierarchy are all patterned and explained by the literature. Even complex tribal linkages and clan obligations are explained by ancient genealogical literature. Oral literature then can be seen as an "integral part of our culture, a functional part of our way of life" (Cnos, 1972:46)1 The society with its complex social and cultural structure requires an efficient process of socialisation of each generation. It requires a complete and thorough training of its youngsters. This was compulsory training requiring them to acquire sufficient knowledge of their own culture and tradition. Full participation in life requires them to have substantive knowledge of their own culture. The initiation process is a prerequisite to inheriting certain knowledge of the necessary literature. This is important in a man's life, simply because when he is initiated he is required to live like an adult - doing things without parental supervision.



## GOOD MORNING

Yawning, Stretching,  
 Rubbing sleep from my eyes,  
 I slide out of bed  
 To be embraced  
 By warm sunny smiles  
 From the Gate of Heaven.

Abuc Daniel

## THOUGHT

Irritations of a thought  
 Kept me awake for naught  
 Till I cleansed my brain  
 And no longer feel its strain.

N.U. Tagai

Bidding friends farewell?  
 Remember, bring umbrellas  
 You may start to rain.

Abuc Daniel

## FAME

Fame is flower  
 So full of bloom and colour  
 Yet as the flower must wither  
 So must your glorious fame.

N.U. Tagai

## FATE

If fate is a fact  
 Life is a fake  
 'Cause fate governs all  
 And life has to stall.

N.U. Tagai.

## A CREEK

Creeping winding trails  
 Among creepers and veils  
 Sneaks and whispers by  
 With a never-ending sigh.

N.U. Tagai



NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

Small and insignificant  
The ant  
Builds a mighty hill  
It struggles simply to exclaim:  
Nothing is impossible.  
Even for the small.

N.U. Tagai

WANNA KNOW SOMETHING?

Wanna know something?  
Ask the hills:  
Can't beat their knowledge.  
Ask the birds:  
They've been there.  
Ask the rivers:  
They've heard it all before.  
Ask the ocean:  
It is wiser than it's deep.  
Ask the wind:  
She carries many whispers.

Sun, moon and stars,  
Have seen it all.  
Just call.  
They'll answer.

Abuc Ganiel

WISDOM

Seek, silly earthling  
And find Understanding  
Search stupid earthling  
And chase away Knowledge.

As vast as Knowledge is  
There is always the next hill to climb.  
If you find Understanding  
You need not pursue Knowledge.  
They who chase Knowledge  
Do it to find Understanding.

N.U. Tagai

The past is my own  
The present is on loan  
The future still unknown.

N.U. Tagai

LIVE TIME

If life runs too slow for you  
You are living an incomplete life

If time chimes as you expect  
You are living an artificial life.

But if time runs too fast for you  
You are living life to the full.

N.U. Tagai

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# UNIVERSITIES ON THE RUN

by Yanopa Kai.

The recent 5% cut in budget allocations to tertiary institutions will force the University Planning Committees to recommend abolishing those departments, disciplines and subjects which they think are no longer relevant or necessary for the development of this country. This is a difficult task but what criteria do they use to come to the decisions? By what yardstick do they measure the relevance or importance of a particular discipline or department?

The "politics of pragmatism" has recently become the dominant political school of thought in PNG. Following the example of Reaganomics and Thatcherite policies, PNG politicians have decided that everything must be assessed in economic terms. If it isn't making a big profit for the government then it should be sold or scrapped. Not many private investors want to buy an ailing Arts Faculty so they will probably have to scrap it. The next best thing is to drastically prune it until it finally becomes an economic asset. That will just leave the economics dept. or rather the commerce and accounting section of that department. This seems to be the thinking of the present planning committee and its government watchdogs. They are perplexed because they cannot find an economic formula which expresses the value of a poem in terms of kina and toea. There is no way they can sell an anthropological seminar on the commodities market and recently shares in the history dept. haven't been doing very well. Psychology, anthropology, archaeology, philosophy, history, literature and politics will just have to go to make room for Economics (Part 3) More Economics (Part 5) and Further Economics (Part 12).

As politicians continue to tighten the screws on funds we may well ask what has happened to the age-old tradition of university autonomy and academic freedom which is so beloved by western educators. The answer again comes from the west: you can have as much freedom as you want as long as you are able to pay for it. The day of reckoning has long been overdue for universities. Now every faculty, every discipline, indeed every lecturer, must be shown to be cost effective; otherwise he comes under the axe.

This brings us back to the criteria used by the planners to justify their axe-operations. Again and again we hear the phrases "manpower training" and "relevance to PNG's development". What exactly are we trying to develop as we produce more and more accountants and economists and fewer and fewer philosophers? According to the dictionary a philosopher is one who thinks rationally and seeks knowledge while an accountant is someone who keeps the accounts of business houses; in other words a highly trained person who is not expected to think but rather execute various complex mechanical operations. It becomes clear then that the government does not want thinkers but rather highly efficient clerks who will do what they are told. You may feel that this is an exaggerated distinction but I think it will help you to understand more clearly what is happening to the academic life and freedom of this country. The campus at Waigani is rapidly changing from being a University for thinking, research and learning to an institute for training professional and future government employees.

Unfortunately the government are very short-sighted in their decisions regarding financial constraints. Although they insist priority must be given to development in this country, they fail to realise that there can be no development unless human development comes first. Development in PNG is not Ok Tedi gold, Bougainville copper or Trans-Gogol timber. The benefits of these macro-projects go directly to the transnational companies overseas and their foreign investors. There is very little spin-off for the ordinary PNG citizen. The country will only be developed in the true sense of the word when the potential of every citizen of this nation is given the opportunity to be realised. This cannot happen without national thinkers,



philosophers and writers. Economists and accountants trained in the western style will continue to maintain the status quo in this country and will continue unquestioningly to impose a neo-colonial structure and an imperialist framework on the resources of this country. These graduates have quietly slotted in to the niches left by the old colonial masters. Superficially they appear to have formed the core of a new rich educated class but in fact they are not the masters but a new educated type of "mankimasta" in the service of a giant network of western capitalist companies which continue to enslave the Third World. There is no need to name them individually; we see that practically all banking, insurance, accounting, real estate, financial transactions and all high level monetary matters in this country, are still controlled by expatriate companies. If the politicians were really serious about independence and nationhood, all these activities would have been nationalised or at least localised a long time ago. Unfortunately most of our politicians are still simple village-based orators who are totally dependent on their advisers when it comes to deciphering data and making maiden speeches in the Waigani Haus Tambaran. The advisers are usually expatriates or increasingly UPNG graduates who have been educated to maintain the status quo. Since they have been trained to accept the western capitalist model of development, they cannot advise their superiors that there are alternatives. This is why PNG has now become bogged down in a permanent neo-colonial mud-wallow. We have become the fat sow, well-fed by our new masters but unable to climb out of the dirt and stand on our feet. Economists and accountants cannot show us the way. That is why we still need radical thinkers: philosophers, political scientists and poets who will expose the absurdities and injustices of this present system which pretends to be fostering development in the country but is really a fattening shed for power-hungry, fund-grabbing, small-time politicians.

Students trained in the humanities can offer an alternative view of development. They have not spent four years being trained in some trivial pursuit but rather they have been given time to think and to react radically to the present malaise of this country. Their vision is broad enough and courageous enough to look at their environment and to propose other strategies for development which encompass the spiritual side of people as well as the economic realities. If we abandon our historians, our writers and our artists, we cannot call ourselves civilized nor do we really understand what is meant by development. This is why in the long run archaeological research is much more important than economic planning and the writing of one good PNG novel will bring far more prestige and fame to our country than a hundred feasibility studies. Financial constraints is not a reasonable excuse for crippling the university and government rationalisation programme should never be applied to the search for wisdom and the pursuit of excellence.

#### EDUCATION FOR CONFUSION

We sat on worn-out mats, cross-legged.  
Our necks raised heron-like.  
High above, hung two saintly photos.  
Her majesty, Queen of the Commonwealth.  
And Blessed Mary. Virgin of Virgins.  
Our half-baked teacher always said  
Undivided loyalty to them  
Is next to Godliness.

That was many years ago  
When Kiaps ruled, iron-fisted.  
Now thrown in Waigani campus  
My godliness is shaken.  
I search for truth  
But find a mental war  
Between Jesus and Darwin, Marx and me.  
Now Heaven seems remote.

A.B. Kaspou



## TOURISTS

Plenty of people, package tour  
 Around the city  
 From all over the world  
 White and rich, stand and stare  
 Perhaps in pity  
 Buy carvings, baskets and painted pots

I walked with them, talked with them.  
 Carry them to the beach,  
 Show them the sights,  
 For a snap-shot and a bottle of coke.

Evening comes: back to the hotel.  
 Thirty toea for my bus-fare and a brief farewell.  
 Behind closed doors they stand and stare  
 In air-conditioned security.

They'll never write,  
 Or invite me to their home  
 Just keep me pressed in their album  
 Another curio from PNG.

It seems to me they're all the same.  
 I wonder why they ever came.  
 Clicking Kodaks and Hawaiian shirts.  
 They'll never know how much they hurt.

Laho Mitaharo

## JUNK-FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Beside my softly layered bed  
 I sat through the long hours  
 Until my soccer-ball head  
 Could no longer bear  
 The thoughts that junked my mind.

Lydia Ritein

## Soldier Boy

Soldier Boy, made of dust,  
 Of vines and scrub,  
 His odour of the swamp.  
 Disliked by many,  
 An alien in his land.

Made to scale  
 Rugged terrains,  
 Cross ruins and rivers  
 With a desolate pal.  
 Risking his life  
 For masters' whims.  
 Regrets but no credits.  
 Destined for Darkness,  
 A symbol and a hero.

No friend but a comrade soldier,  
 No home but the jungle,  
 No clothes but the scrub.  
 That's him - Soldier Boy,  
 The Forgotten One.

Joe Maino



## THE VILLAGE THAT MY GRANNY KNEW

I walk,  
They walk, the oldest men  
Through the village that my granny knew.

Their pride of what they are,  
Their certainty of place,  
Their obedience to traditional ways,  
Their keeping of customary law,  
Made the village that my granny knew.

Now they leave the village and come back,  
Dressed in strange clothes;  
Garments that soak the rain,  
And need protection; a plastic to keep it out.  
Such clothes my granny never knew.

I hear new words  
Take place upon our tongue:  
"Missis... Masta... Mani... Kapa... Rais... Tinpis."

I see  
New houses being built,  
With roofs that shine like a river in the sun.  
Galvanised Iron-Witchcraft my granny never knew.

My son possesses marvellous things.  
I gave him the name, "Good Fortune".  
I gave him only the name,  
The fortune is his.

At the far end of the village  
I sit and think and look ahead:  
Our culture which granny jealously guarded  
Is like the morning dew  
Fading under a modern sun.

If we keep the shells  
Without the heart or laws;  
If we remember  
Singsings as a time  
To jump and drink;  
What value is left  
Of the culture that granny knew?

What are these angers?  
These fightings, wife-beatings;  
Crying children, afraid of their fathers  
Like dogs in a stranger's way?  
Such things granny never knew.

Yet, my son  
Is determined to have  
Houses high in the air,  
Where he can lock neighbours out  
And eat food from a tin.  
Determined to have  
Lots of paper money,  
Lots of loud music,  
To drown out soft voices  
And soft thoughts behind those voices.  
Determined to have  
Cars, hard shiny cars,  
To escape from the village that granny knew.

Now they're talking  
Of building a road  
Right through the centre  
Of the village that my granny loved.  
Right through the centre, they say.  
And I know it will come.

Kua Mathew Sil



## LIFE LINES

Life is a line drawn,  
 Like the footwork of crabs on the shore  
 In defiance of the receding tide.  
 Some are drawn with stress and strain,  
 Some designed in frolic and fun,  
 Forgetful of tomorrow.



Others with tender care are drawn,  
 Some deep-rooted, incised in complex cubes.  
 Short or long, thick or thin, ornate vague.  
 When the day is drowned in night,  
 And the sea of justice withdraws.  
 Lapping clean all iniquities,  
 The shore-line is clean and undisturbed.

Hence it is impossible,  
 To leave eternal foot-prints on the shores of time.  
 Therefore let's start a fresh with smiles endowed.  
 That's probably all the meaning there is.

Gideon Ginkawa



could distinguish a human form. It was male; short, well-built and holding a bunch of tangkosa leaves in front of him. Without doubt, it was a sorcerer. Luckily Yorike's precautions had rendered him visible. The creature continued to approach; confident that he could not be seen. Yorike then noticed other dark shadowy creatures behind the trees - more sorcerers. He knew their tricks. They would wait until the chief sorcerer had immobilised him by grabbing his testicles and squeezing hard. While the victim was writhing in agony the other sorcerers would attack. Yorike still held his position; his arrow pointed at the sky. Cold sweat trickled down his face and into his eyes. He dared not blink lest he lose sight of the sorcerer. On and on came the dark figure. Now he could see the white eyes and red-stained lips. Just as the creature stretched out to grab his privates, Yorike jumped aside and let his arrow fly. The sorcerer screamed and stumbled headlong off the log to the ground. The others realising that their cloak of invisibility had been destroyed, took off in the bush.

Immediately Yorike set up a great shout to warn his clansmen who were awake huddled over their morning fires. Grabbing spades, digging sticks, axes or any weapon, they raced towards the forest. They knew that Yorike was in danger. Yodelling to his comrades, he explained the situation. Quickly they fanned out and started combing the area for the culprits. At first it seemed as if the evil-doers had escaped but then a cry of triumph from a dense patch of underbrush signalled the capture of one of them. They dragged the cowering creature out and began beating him until the blood flowed freely. Some wanted to kill him on the spot but most insisted that he be brought back to the village to be executed as a warning to anyone else. A thick pole was chopped down and the squirming sorcerer was lashed to it with thick jungle vines, like a wild pig brought home after the hunt. Shrieks of laughter and excitement greeted the procession as it made its way to the village. Children and women spat at the dangling figure while the men continued to rain blows on him and whip him with sharp canes. The battered, bleeding near-corpse was dumped in the middle of the village for all to see. Suggestions were made as to his fate: some wanted to burn him alive because he really wasn't human and that was the only way to destroy an evil spirit; others thought they should drown him. A circle of people stood round and prodded him with their bush-knives and spears. His face was now a mass of blood and flies buzzed fearfully around the open wounds. Pimpona, a village elder, stepped forward and spoke:

"We must destroy this evil, piece by piece as a warning to his tribesmen never to come near our village again. Someone fetch me a blunt knife".

"Don't you mean a sharp knife?"

"No, a blunt one will cut more slowly. I'll start with his eyes. Then his balls I'll feed to the dogs. Go! Get me the knife".

At the far end of the village, Honeri sat in the menstrual hut. It had been her period for the last two days so she sat in total seclusion. From the sound of the commotion, she knew what was happening. Through the cracks in the wall, she saw the man lying on the ground with his life-blood draining away from him. She thought of her own blood which had flowed in the past days; blood which men called unclean and polluted, yet without which they could not be born. She put her hand between her legs and felt the wetness. The scream of the sorcerer attracted her attention. Pimpona had already started his task, bending over him, while the crowd stamped and jeered.

Honeri stood, picked up a piece of kaukau and rubbed it round and round until it was covered with her blood. Then she opened the door and walked slowly towards the jostling throng. The man was now screaming in agony as Pimpona hacked at him with a dull rusty blade. As Honeri approached, the men made way for her not wishing to be touched by a menstruating woman. Some shouted and waved at her while others stared in amazement. Now she stood above the bleeding man and watched as his terror-stricken eyes turned towards her.



"Eat!" she said.

Blinking back the sweat from his eyes, the sorcerer stared at the dripping kaukau in her hand. Then he realised the significance of the red object. His stomach churned. He felt like vomiting as waves of nausea swept over him. Honeri pressed the kaukau closer to his lips.

"Eat!" she said again.

Without thinking, he opened his cracked lips and she thrust the bloody object inside. He closed his eyes, bit hard and swallowed the morsel. The crowd gasped at this humiliation and fell silent.

"You can go now", said Honeri quietly. "No one will touch you".

### **LITTLE MAN, GROW UP.**

You claim to see the world perfectly but it's double.  
You think you're walking upright but you stagger.

Boasting, bashing, seizing innocents to show off your  
strength,  
Not knowing how easy it would be to knock you out cold.

You boom and scream to gain attention,  
Straining your vocal cords to the limit.  
Your foul language (the latest invention) forces kids to  
adapt it,  
Rather than their mother's pious tongue.

Your lust you cannot control and the night ends in tears.  
You're a nuisance to all and to yourself  
You can't admit, you're a drunk, incapable.

Tomorrow, a lot of apologising all round.  
Too late, the damage's done.  
Come down to earth, Little man. Grow up!

**May Paipaira**



## BUTTERFLY WING-I

The rush for registration, semester 2 is on.  
 Registration form, Admin block.  
 Rush back course adviser, Arts 2 Building  
 Natschol officer, Union building  
 Up on the other side  
 The rush is on for another semester 1981.

As the sun sets over the hills, behind Gerehu  
 It's July 6th 1981, The end of the day.  
 It's joys and sorrows, it's activeness and passiveness  
 The end of the day and it's work done.

It's six pm., feasting over cane sugar  
 Fresh from home, plump and juicy.  
 All is at rest and peace.

Hey! Jim, Dick calls from the other end of bed  
 In that Toa 2 room  
 Call Mendi Hospital Morrow  
 Heard that dad's in hospital  
 Didn't check the condition he was in  
 Cause you know, I rushed for semester 2.

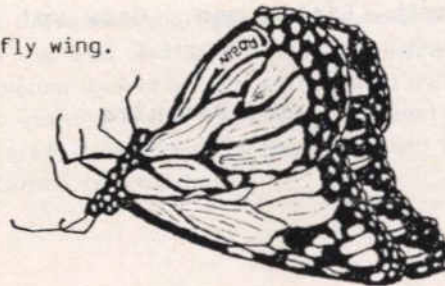
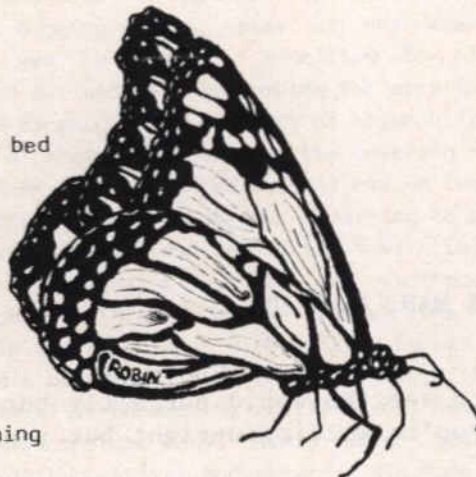
Ya! That'll be done. I respond  
 Thinking everything's truly well and fine  
 Saying: goodnight and see you in the morning  
 Over the back of my ears.  
 I walk off to my Toa 2 room  
 For the night's rest.

July 7th 8.15 a.m., still in bed  
 Tap! Tap! Tap! it's the door.  
 Half asleep, I call out from bed; Come in.  
 Realising the door was locked.  
 I stagger out of bed and to the door  
 of the Toa 2 room.

At the door  
 An old friend, a brother and high school mate  
 Hands me a neatly folded paper  
 Like a butterfly's wing.

I wonder, wonder what's inside  
 The news, what is it?  
 Eagerly I open the neatly folded butterfly wing.  
 "James, our daddy left  
 This July morning 4.00 a.m."

So it's another day again!  
 And that's the news.  
 The news for the day, July 7th 1981.

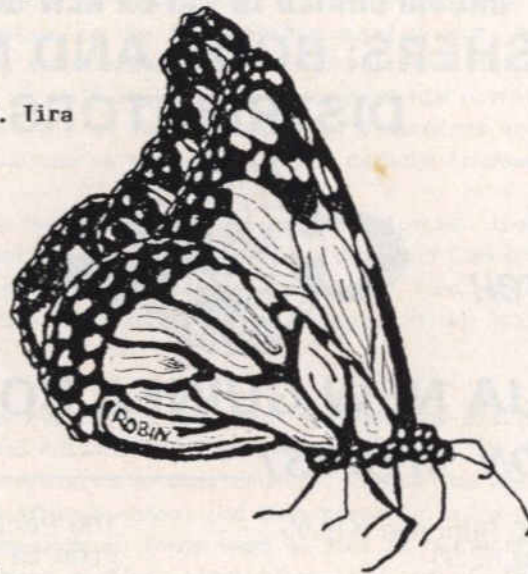




Dad left me for eternity without notice.  
Is this true?

Confused..... Confused..... Confused!!!  
What should I do,  
Away from home, in Port Moresby  
The lost son of the dead.

James K. Tira



31

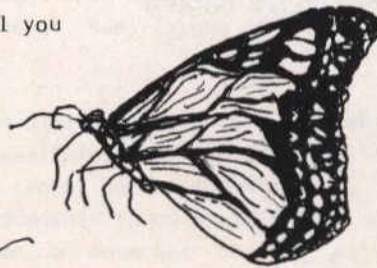
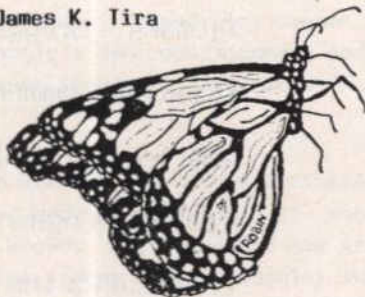
#### BUTTERFLY WING-2

In the corner pocket of my wallet  
Like a sleeping butterfly  
Neatly folded lies a note. Five years old.

When you open it  
This sleeping butterfly tells a story  
A message, a memory, a remembrance  
Of what I will never forget.

Butterfly or paper, I don't know what to call you  
You'll travel, eat, play, and live  
As long as I live.  
Butterfly never will I throw you away  
You'll be with me forever.

James K. Tira





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## NGUGI WA THIONG'O IN EXILE

by Joseph Sukwianomb.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o is undoubtedly one of the most internationally renowned writers in Africa. For students of politics, language and literature, he provides deep insights into developments that are taking place in the Third World generally but more particularly in his motherland, Kenya. His strong attacks against neo-colonialism which is perpetuated by a small clique of national bourgeoisie is well-known to many who read his novels. Likewise, he spares no energy in his criticism of the role of the international financiers and their continued presence which directly or otherwise subjugates many Third World nations to dependence and servitude.

Persons of conscience having to take unexpected enforced leave from their home are many. It is sufficient to mention Alan Paton, Alex La Guma and Ezekiel Mphahlele, all literary artists forced by circumstances to flee their homeland and find political asylum elsewhere. Political exile is a common fate for many outspoken writers in the Third World and Eastern bloc countries.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o was about fourteen years old when the British Imperialist government declared war against the MauMau nationalist independence movement in Kenya. On October 20th 1952 a state of Emergency was declared in that country. Since the age of eleven wa Thiong'o had been attending an independent African school and this probably had a lot to do with his future position with respect to colonialism in Kenya when we look at his writings. Going to school, he would often walk through the huge coffee plantations and sisal farms owned by the white settlers. Inside he noticed the small thatched round houses of the landless African labourers and their families. These were mainly Gikuyu tribesmen from the central Highlands whose land had been expropriated by the colonial settlers from England. This realisation and other encounters with the brutal forces of colonialism sharpened wa Thiong'o's vision and stamina to take up his pen as a weapon to fight what some have called "the spiritual and mental war" for Africa.

After completing his A-levels, wa Thiong'o entered Makerere University College in Kampala, Uganda where, apart from his academic achievements, he completed the first draft of his novel, **Weep Not, Child** which was published in 1964. At Makerere he met and married Nyambura in 1961. With all the wrath wa Thiong'o has brought upon himself and his family, it is Nyambura who has suffered the most. She now lives alone at Kamiriithu, a small village about eight kilometres from Nairobi.

Kamiriithu in the Kiambu District was a hive of colonial domination and exploitation during Ngugi's youth. Kiambu was one of the wealthiest coffee districts in the so-called White Highlands of Kenya. In fact it was a typical racist colonial settlement. During the massive land alienation period, wa Thiong'o's father suddenly found himself like other Gikuyus "... a dispossessed peasant farmer forced to become a squatter on the estate of a well-to-do landowner". wa Thiong'o's own consciousness and subsequent bitterness over the fate of the masses of other Kenyans is clearly reflected in his writings. (**Weep not Child, Petals of Blood and Detained**).

Wa Thiong'o himself did not participate in the MauMau struggle against the British but today his 'virulence and persistence' in waging 'a relentless siege on colonialism and capitalism' is well known. The themes of his writing are bound up with the historical emergence of his country and the independence struggle: why was this nationalist/revolutionary war fought? Who actually took part in the fight for freedom? Who were the reactionaries and supporters of the British Empire? Who benefited from the looting and confiscation of property and assets after the British defeat?



Kenya was given nominal independence in 1963. The independence leaders, particularly the late president, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, became celebrated heroes of the post-Mau Mau era. Wa Thiong'o soon became disillusioned with the new leaders because of their greed and corruption. He accused them of selling Kenya to the multinationals. To make matters worse the new politicians began dismissing the national liberation struggle of Mau Mau as a war waged by a group of illiterate hooligans with tribal tendencies. Who was right? The diehard sons of the freedom fighters or the new leaders whose parents were probably British loyalists and ashamed of their background. When wa Thiong'o began to look around, he realised that independence was just a name and that there was no improvement in the lives of the people who had actually fought for it. This view was openly expressed in his writing much to the displeasure of the new political leaders. When **Petals of Blood** was published in 1977 the President, Jomo Kenyatta, moved quickly to suppress its circulation and wa Thiong'o was detained without trial on sedition charges from 1977 to 1978. After his release wa Thiong'o continued his writing but he was constantly harassed and coerced by the state. Finally in May 1982, fearing for his life, wa Thiong'o left Kenya and went into "self-imposed exile" in Europe, two months before an abortive military coup in his homeland. Outside of Kenya, he is hailed as a literary giant who fearlessly speaks the truth about the realities of so-called independence and the injustices which are perpetrated by the new leaders. Some of his most famous works are: **Weep Not Child** (1964) **The River Between** (1965) **The Black Hermit** (1968) **Homecoming** (1972) **The Trial of Declan Kimathi** (1976) **Petals of Blood** (1977) **Writers in Politics** (1981) **Detained** (1981) **Devil on the Cross** (1982) and **Ngaahika Ndeenda** (1982) Most of these novels are available from the UPNG library and are well worth reading by any citizen who is worried about the future of his own country.

#### PRISON CAMP

Life's a prison camp  
And we are the inmates.  
Life's a spider's web  
That traps those  
Who breach her laws.

Life's got no premium  
For those who reach the grave.  
Life's just a prison camp  
And we are the in-mates.

Stanley Lapa

#### THE WOUNDED ONES

Sharp like the blades of morning grass  
Bursting like vigorous ocean waves  
Fires of dawn!  
The listening land gave her heart to you.

But now full pockets, soft - big - bellied  
Riding your smoking chariots  
You feel the pain no more  
"Betrayers!" cry the wounded ones.

Kumalau Tawali



## ELECTION FEVER

Fever has come  
 Spilled out of the Almighty's womb.  
 For days it held its breath:  
 Education for the successors  
 Predessor, stricken by Father's care,  
 Was sick, dead and buried  
 In a sinner's home of prison.

To awaken the silenced Mioko  
 Sound of yellers, day and night.  
 Hour of battle, battle for victory  
 None but the fit shall fight  
 Give chance; undermine illegibility  
 Just try - chance brings luck  
 In the battle for power  
 No gain without pain.

Like a pastor, words are planned  
 But fine words butter no parsnips  
 A man of colourful words  
 Is like a garden of weeds  
 His promises are like  
 A pie-crust to be broken.

They will come with power and glory.  
 If blindly elected they will  
 Separate the united; hinder development  
 Make the poor poorer, the rich richer.  
 And eliminate national identity

Listen, my people,  
 Don't you have eyes to see?  
 Can't you see that it has come?  
 Tomorrow is a lovely future  
 But today is our decision day  
 On this Election Day.

George Yapao



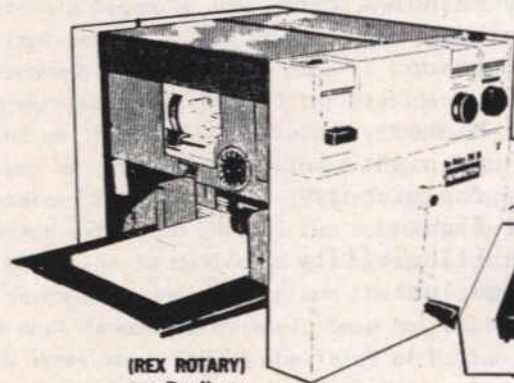
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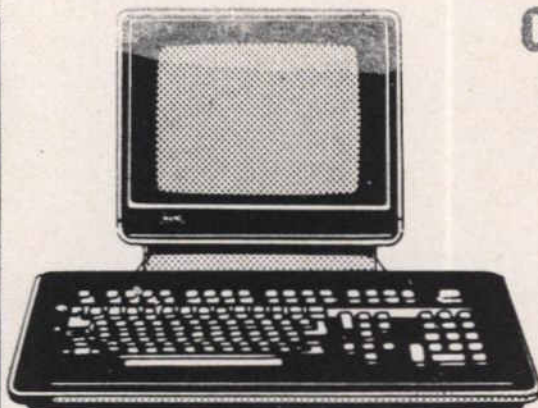
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## GETTING STARTED

by Vincent Eri.

For non-English speakers such as ourselves, reading and writing are the most difficult skills to get used to. One never quite masters all the subtleties of an alien language in one's life-time. For some in fact the reversal takes place because after leaving school they stop reading the type of books (novels, short stories, magazines, etc.) which are necessary to give constant practice and increased fluency. When this happens, one's vocabulary and understanding of new words does not increase and widen. So we find more and more young people and adults turning to **comics** where the picture is already drawn for them instead of them building up that mental picture for themselves from the words that flash before their eyes. They become intellectually passive and accept other people's visions. They do not have enough words to play with and the few they do know are not capable of being meaningfully arranged into a complete picture of whatever they are reading.

Reading and writing compliment one another. One can never become a competent writer unless one reads widely and voraciously. These skills are like one's legs; each balances the other's performance. Yet both legs never move together at the same time. One must enjoy reading; that is it should give one actual pleasure and relaxation. Then it will not be such a laborious task to put one's own thoughts down on paper. From the pleasures of reading and writing, other talents show up; being able to draw clear outlines and sketches of simple daily scenes and finally painting a picture in great depth with a full range of emotions and feelings. Do not give a feast until you can first fry an egg successfully. Another talent derived from reading is the art of debating or public speaking where one can illustrate one's speech with information and comparisons drawn from the books one has read.

The early African novels of the sixties were a definite source of inspiration for many of the first writers in this country. One such writer was **Chinua Achebe** who visited UPNG and had considerable influence. It was not so much their style of writing that made the impressions but rather the subject matter of their novels which dealt with aspects of the colonial era in their countries and the fortunes or misfortunes of the nationals who were the agents of those changes. Finding a suitable subject for a novel is quite a difficult task because one needs to draw on experiences from various sources to give it richness and credibility. It is almost impossible to write convincingly about a subject that one has little knowledge or experience of. To do this requires a considerable amount of imagination and creativity and a lot of background reading and research. In this regard, older writers have a distinct advantage over younger ones from the point of view of "having seen the sun longer". Yet young writers can effectively bridge this gap by reading widely and using their imagination.

Writing a novel can be fun as well as hard work. Having your friends read the manuscripts each week will prove quite useful. Their reactions will give you a fair idea as to whether your message is getting across or not and from this you can re-write or change the chronology or presentation. Welcome critical appraisals for these will often give you fresh insights into the problems and possible solutions.

The best advice an experienced writer can give is to encourage one to expand an idea that has already been expressed. This is more beneficial than giving a set of rules which do not relate directly to anything that is already on the manuscript. For example:

Boaby washed up the dishes and when she heard her father call, hurried into the room with his cup of tea.



With advice, this could be expanded in something like this:

"Boaby held the last dish in the tea towel. It was dry but she kept rubbing it. She was humming a tune which drifted down the corridor to her father.

"How much longer are you going to be in that kitchen?" Ben called to his daughter. "Don't they teach you at school to do things quickly these days?"

"Coming, Dad." Boaby had been trying to recall the tune of a new song they were learning at school. "It's tea you wanted, Dad?"

Ben tried not to be angry with his only daughter. He accepted the fact that pressures on today's children were much greater than when he was young. He smiled and nodded. Still humming, Boaby returned to fetch the tea.

The University of PNG had the foresight to introduce **Creative Writing** as a subject. Its achievements are obvious from the growing body of literature produced by ourselves. In the early years there wasn't much published research available as source material for writers. Now there is a flood of academic works on early history, exploration, local anthropology and the Pacific War. All of these could form interesting subjects for novels if wrapped up in creative language and expressed from a local point of view. I am confident that literature will continue to grow and expand in the next decade in this country and I hope that our schools will once more treat the study of literature as a worthy subject necessary for the advancement of civilization and education of our people.

#### A LIFE WELL LIVED

Never was a life so well lived.  
He had no degree.  
But was the wisest man who ever lived.  
No salary.  
Yet he claimed to be a man of riches.

He was a carpenter and knew no laziness.  
He sat with prostitutes but knew no sin.  
Ate with sinners but stole no money.  
Many hated him,  
But he smiled and loved them all the more.

He never planted a farm but feed thousands.  
He was no sailor,  
But commanded the wind and waves.  
His love so deep;  
No measure can quantify it.  
No man can stand by his side.  
He is distinct.  
Never was a life so well lived.

Ati Wobiro

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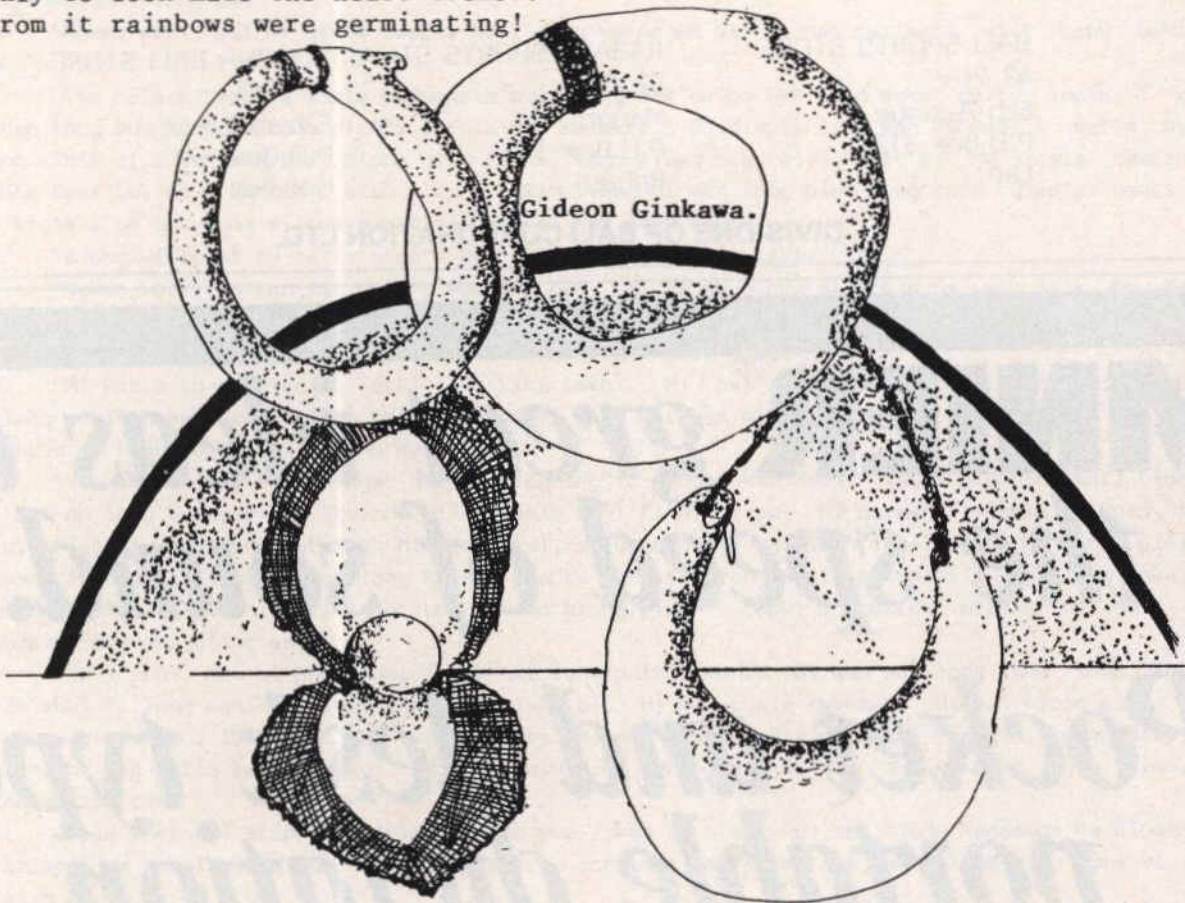
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## PEARLS BEGET RAINBOWS

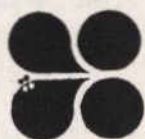
I saw an old man carving his treasure  
 From clam-shell.  
 First he hacked and sawed.  
 Then he rubbed and scrubbed  
 Next he twirled and polishea,  
 Until his ringed treasure mirrored clear,  
 The ring money with a heart beat.  
 "In the night you'll see stars germinate,"  
 He said and he wasn't wrong.

Later, by co-incidence, I discovered  
 Another shell from the sea-bed depths.  
 I did not hack nor saw,  
 Nor rub or scrub,  
 Nor swirl or polish,  
 Because this treasure was made  
 By Nature's hand divine.  
 Only to look made the heart tremor.  
 From it rainbows were germinating!





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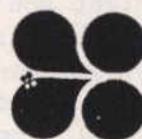


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## MONI EM AS BLONG TRABEL

by Joseph Kasil Nuno.

San i go down long mounten. Em salim laspla lait i kam antap long Mount Hagen Taun. Klostu maket i laik pas nau na planti man na meri i wok long go aut long maket geit.

Ol man na meri save em taim blong pasim maket. Bos Boi blong maket i wok long rausim ol long maket na hariapim ol i go long geit.

Long wanpla tabol long maket i gat sampla kumu, korn na kaukau i stap. Sampla man i wok long askim papa blong displa kaikai long daunim prais bai ol i ken baim.

Wanpla liklik boi i krai arere long maket na tupla bun nating dok i pait klostu long wanpla pipia dram. Tupla pait long ol pipia kaikai i stap insait long displa dram.

Tupla nambis man blong Markham Vallei i sanap klostu long wanpla tabol. Wanpla i pulumapim buai blong em i stap antap long displa tabol. Narepla i sanap klostu long wantok blong em na pulim smuk i stap. Em salim olgeta buai blong em pinis long san yet.

Nem blong wanpla Lepu na narepla Lino.

"Lepu, yu hariap na pulumapim buai blong yu. Bos boi blong maket i kam klostu nau." Lino tokim wantok blong em.

"Noken wari, bai mi givim sampla buai long em na em bai no nap hariapim mi." Lepu bekim tok.

Lino helpim Lepu na tupla pulumapim buai long bek na go aut long maket geit. Tupla i go sanap long bus stap wantaim planti arepla man na meri. Ol displa lain man na meri i wetim bus long kisim ol i go long ples blong ol. Planti kago olsem bek rais, katen pis na arepla samting blong taun tu, ol i bungim i stap. Em i pasin blong ol man long ples long baim displa samting na kisim i go bek long villes blong ol taim ol kam long taun.

"Blong wanem mi no salim olgeta buai blong mi?" Lepu i askim Lino.

"Noken wari, yu ken salim long morning gen. Mi salim blong mi pinis na mi laik go bek long ples." Lino bekim tok.

"Hamas moni yu kisim pinis long buai blong yu?" Lepu askim Lino.

"Mi kisim tu hundret na forti-faiv kina tasol. Mi bai yusim long wokim niupela haus belong me long hap graun blong kandre blong mi long Markham maket ples. Mi bai go long Bulolo na baim ol timba blong mi." Lino bekim tok.

"Yes em gutpla tru. Mi gat displa tingting tu long wokim haus. Tasol pikinini meri blong me bai go long Bumayor Hai Skul na mi bai peim skul fi blong em. Ol gavman i makim bikpla fi tru. Bipo mi stap long Lutheran Mission Skul, mi hapeim fi. Mission i peim. Nau i senis pisin Gavman i lukautim skul na wok long kostim planti moni tru long salim pikinini i go long skul. Wanem taim bai gavman i sori long yumi ol man blong ples?" Lepu i toktok strong na swet i pundaun long pes blong em.

"Em i tru. Nau ol papa mama i wok hat long painim moni. Ol man wok long taun inap long peim skul fi long moni ol Kisim long wok blong ol. Mi no wanpla saveman. Mi man blong ples na mi save kisim moni long buai na kokonas mi salim long maket. Pikinini boi blong mi kamap bikpla bai mi no nap putim em long skul. Mi bai lainim em long plantim buai na kokonas long ples." Lino bekim tok.

Tupla toktok i stap na wanpla 25 sita bus i kam na stap. Ol man blong Kagamuga na Kindeng i kalap i go insait long Bus. Bus i pulap tru long man, meri wantaim kago blong ol. Draiva i statim ensin na ol i go.

"Mi bai kisim wanpla PMV na go long ples. I gat planti taim nau." Lino tokim Lepu.

"Maski, em lait pinis, yumi go silip long Sainataun wantaim kasin blong mi. Em wok long stua blong wanpla Sainaman. Yu ken kisim kar long morning na go." Lepu i bekim tok.

"Ah, yu noken wari. Wanpla kar i kam bai mi kalap. Planti kar i wok long raun nau na supos wanpla i laik go long lae bai mi go." Lino tok olsem, pulim aut smuk blong em long siot



poket na laitim. Em pulim smuk na lukluk long ol kar i go i kam long strit blong Mt Hagen Taun.

Wanpla blupla Toyota stout i kamap na stap klostu long ples we tupla man i sanap i stap. Draiva wantaim tupla boskru i stap long fran. I nogat wanpla pasindia i stap long baksait.

"Kar i go we?" Lino askim Draiva

"Kar bai go long Lae nau." Draiva bekim tok

Lino kisim bek blong em, sekanim Lepu na kalap long kar.

"Tokim pamili blong mi olsem mi bai kam taim mi salim olgeta buai blong mi." Lepu tokim em.

"Noken wari, mi bai tokim ol." Lino bekim tok.

Draiva statim kar na kisim Lino i go. Lepu sanap long bas stap na lukluk long wantok blong em long kar. Tingting longem i no stret. Em pilim sori long wantok blong em. Inap wantok blong em bai go stret long haus o nogat? Em i no save. Emi kisim bek buai blong em na behainim rot i go long Sainataun.

Draiva i spitim kar long rot. Insait long kar tupla boskru i singsing long tokples Melpa. Wanpla katen SP bia i stap insait long kar. Olgeta i gat wan wan botol long han belong ol. Taim blong hamamas i stat.

Autsait bikpla kol win i behainim haiwei i go antap long maunten. Kol i kisim Lino gut na skin blong em i guria. Em kisim aut smuk blong em long siot poket, laitim na pulim gut. Tasol smuk i no helpim em. Kol win i strong moa yet.

Em putim han i go long trousers poket na pilim moni blong em i stap. Displa moni bai baim gutpla samting blong em long wokim haus. Em i tingting long meri blong em. Susanna wantaim liklik boi blong em. Susanna bai tok wanem taim em lukim displa moni em kisim i kam. Inap em bai hamamas taim em tokim em long wokim haus kapa blong ol? Em i no save tasol piksa blong em wantaim liklik boi i kamap long het blong em. Em i pulim smuk strong na smail.

Ol i abrusim sampla bikpla trak i karim kopi na arepla kago blong kisim i go long Lae Port. Ol i kamap klostu long boda mak blong Western Highlands na Simbu. Em i klostu tudak. Wanwan man na meri i sanap long rot. Planti i stap long haus na kukim kaikai blong ol. Sampla i stori long wanem samting em ol i mekim long san. Tupla man i toktok long buai no kokonas tupla bai kisim long Markham. Wanpla liklik boi i sindaun arere long rot na lukim wanpla redpla Masda i spit i kam. Liklik boi i poreit na kalap i go long baret. Kar i putim hon wanpla taim na spit i go pas. Spit blong em moa yet.

Liklik boi i tanim het na putim han antap long het blong em. Em tingting planti. Inap bai em draivim kar olsem behain o nogat? Em i no save. Em harim mama blong em singaut long haus na em ron i go. Em sanap long dua blong haus na lukluk gen long rot na lukim wanpla bluepla stout i go pas. Spit blong em i moa moa yet.

Draiva blong blupla Stout i stopim kar arere long Wandu maket na kam aut. Tupla boskru blong em i stap long kar. Singsing blong tupla i moa yet. Tupla spak pinis.

"Wantok yu peim fea blong kar nau." Draiva askim Lino.

"Hamas bai mi peim?" Lino bekim askim.

"Twelv kina tasol. I no planti." Draiva bekim tok.

Lino putim han long trousers poket na pulim olgeta mani blong em i kam aut. Em kauntim Twelv kina na givim long Draiva.

"Eh, wantok, yu gat planti moni tru. Yu kisim we?" Draiva askim em.

"Mi kisim long buai mi salim long Hagen Maket. Mi bai go long ples blong mi na wokim wanpla haus kapa long moni mi kisim kam."

"Hm...Man, em planti moni tru ya. Yu laki man stret," draiva tok olsem na go insait long kar.

Draiva statim kar na ol i go. Ol i kam stap arere long wanpla klab. Draiva i go insait na baim wanpla katon bia. Em i kisim i kam long kar na opim katen na ol i kisim wan wan botol na dring.

"Eh Brata, holim wanpla botol ya." Draiva i kisim wanpla botol na givim long Lino.

"Sori Brata, mi no laik dring bia," Lino bekim tok.



"Ah maski wari, wan botol tasol. Mipla yet dring bai nogut yumi wantaim ken dring. Kamon kisim ya. Yu poret long wanem samting?"

Lino i no laik dring tasol em i poret long Draiva. Draiva i spak pinis na sapos em i no kisim bia blong em draiva bai kros. Em i kisim displa botol na dring isi isi i stap.

Insait long kar tripla man wok long dring yet. Draiva i givim moa botol i kam aut long kar na Lino i wok long dringim ol. Lino i dringim aitpla botol pinis na het blong em i raun. Em i pundaun long trala blong kar na i pasim ai. Em i spak pinis.

"Yu tupla lukim, displa nambisman i spak pinis," draiva i tokim tupla boskru.

Wanpla boskru i tanim het na lukluk i go baksait na lukim Lino i silip i stap.

"Yes, бага ya i spak pinis. Em silip olsem hap diwai long kar," displa boskru bekim tok.

"Mi lukim em gat planti moni long poket blong em. Em i laik baim timba blong wokim haus blong em na kisim i kam," draiva i tokim tupla.

"Yumi stop na kisim moni blong em. Em i no inap save, em i spak pinis." Wanpla Boskru i tok.

"Supos em i kirap na laik bikmaus bai mi kilim em", draiva tok olsem na pulim aut wanpla hain bar i stap long kar.

Kar i kamap long wanpla bris, krungutim pinis na i kam stop long hapsait long bris. Draiva i kilim i dai lait blong kar na ol i go aut. Wanpla Boskru i putim han i go insait long trousis poket blong Lino na pulim moni i kam aut. Sampla not moni i pass long poket na em pulim strong na Lino i kirap.

"Eh. Yu mekim wanem long moni blong me? Em i no moni blong yu!" Em tok olsem na bikmaus wanpla taim tasol.

Draiva i kisim hain bar na burukim het blong em na em pundaun long kar. Draiva paitim tupla taim gen long het na bun i buruk olgeta.

Olgeta driman blong Lino long lukim Susanna bebi boi blong em i no moa stap long het blong em. Olgeta i kam aut wantaim blut blong em na drip i go aut long traila na pundaun antop long tar.

Lino i dai pinis long rot. Long Markham, Susanna wantaim liklik boi i wetim em i stap.

Insait long haus Susanna i silip wantaim liklik boi blong em long bet. Liklik boi i silip gut i stap. Em pulim win gut na silip aninit long liklik bebi blanket em Lino i baim long Papido stua long lae. Susanna i kisim Talcom Bebi pauda na kapsaitim sampla i go long nek blong liklik boi na rabim isi isi long skin blong em. Swit smel i pulumapim rum blong tupla.

Susanna i lukim pes blong boi blong em na smail. Pes blong em i olsem papa stret tasol i gat wanpla liklik blakpla mak i stap long bros blong em. Em mak blong mama. Susanna i lukim displa mak long bros blong em na long bebi na smail gen. Em i kisim moskito net na pasim antap long bet na kam aut long veranda blong haus.

Em sanap long veranda lukluk long dak na tingting planti. Man belong em i no kamap long dei na taim em makim long em. Olsem wanem na em i no kamap long haus nau? Em harim planti trak wok long go long lae long nait tasol nogat wanpla i stop long rot bung blong villes blong em.

Em i go insait long rum gen na go silip klostu long liklik boi blong em. Em i traim long silip tasol silip i no kam. Em i tanim tanim long bet i go na behain long planti aua, silip i kisim em. Em silip na i driman...Em i putim liklik boi blong em long bilum na hangamapim antap long han blong wanpla diwai. Wantu bikpla win i kam na mekim nais na wanpla bikpla drai kokonas i pundaun antap long het blong liklik boi na het i buruk olgeta.... Susanna i kirap nogut long bet, bikmaus na krai. Em putim han long pes blong bebi na painim olsem bebi i no dai. Em silip gut i stap. Susanna i putim susu long maus blong em na em dring. Em givin susu pinis na go bek long silip gen.

Bodi blong Lino i stap antap yet long kar. Ol tripla man wok long lukluk long blut i drip i go daun long tar. Blut i ron moa yet.

"Bai yumi mekim wanem long bodi?" draiva i askim tupla boskru.

"Tromoim em long bikpla wara. Husat bai save?" wanpla boskru i bekim tok.

"Yumi ken tromoim long wara tasol lukim wanpla kar i kam long hapsait nau. Nogut em bai lukim yumi wantaim bodi," draiva bekim tok.



"Kwik, kisim wanpla kopra beg i stap long kar na putim bodi i go insait. Nogut displa kar bai lukim bodi". Narapla boskru i singaut na wantu tupla i kisim bag i kamaut na supim bodi blong indai man i go insait long bag.

"Displa beg i sotpla, lek istap nating. Kisim wanpla moa beg i kam," draiva i singaut na wantu boskru i givim narapla beg na ol supim lek i go insait. Draiva i statim kar na ol i go. Ol i go long we liklik na displa kar i kam behain i abrusim ol.

"Oloman, Haiwei Polis Patrol. Klostu ol holim yumi!" draiva i tokim tupla boskru. Sindaun blong tupla boskru i no stret. Skin blong tupla i pulap long tuhat stret. Tupla i poret nogut tru.

Kar i kam daun long maunten na bodi blong indai man i roll antap long trala. Taim kar i seksek long rot, bodi tu i mekim nois. Nois belong indai bodi i mekim tripla man sindaun insait long kar i poret olgeta.

"Yu bai rausim bodi long Asaro riva," draiva tokim tupla boskru. Tasol tupla ino bekim tok. Tingting blong tupla i paul pinis.

Ol i kam long Asaro Riva na laik tromeim bodi aut tasol sampla man i sanap long rot na dring bia i stap. Ol tripla man i poret na larim bodi i stap long kar na draiva i go. Ol i pret long ol man sanap long rot long painim aut.

Kar i kamap long Goroka Taun na i no stap. Em i bihainim rot blong Lae. Draiva i kam aut long we long taun na stopim kar arere long Kamaliki Poultry Senta. Em i go aut na lukim blut i karamapim olgeta hap blong trala. Planti blut na smel i mekim draiva traut. Em traut pinis, i go insait long kar, statim ensin na ol i bihanim rot gen.

Tupla kar i kam behain long ol, abrusim ol na go pas. Wanpla moa kar i kam behain long ol. Spit blong em i moa yet. Em i kam klostu long kar blong ol, stop liklik na go gen.

"Blari bastards, Haiwei Polis Patrol gen. Klostu ol i stap na sekim kar," draiva i tokim tupla boskru.

"Yes, yumi mas go kwik na rausim bodi long wanpla hap. Nogut polis bai kisim yumi", Narepla boskru i tokim draiva.

"Ah, maski poret, yumi tromeim i go aut long displa bus", draiva i tok olsem, stopim kar na go aut.

Tupla boskru i behainim draiva na go aut. Ol laik rausim bodi na wanpla kar i kam bek long rot blong ol. Ol kwiktaim go insait long kar na draiva statim ensin na ol i go.

Ol i go longwe liklik, na Haiwei Polis Kar i kambek gen tasol i no stap. Em spit tru i go daun long maunten.

Draiva spitim kar na ol i go. Bodi i stap yet long kar. Ol i kam kamap long Kassam Pass na lukluk i go daun long Markham. Lait blong paia na koleman lamp i brait moa yet long maket ples. Sampla trak; i stap long maket yet na planti man na meri i wok long move i go long ol liklik haus stap klostu long maket. Markham maket i stap olsem yet. Displa maket em maket blong ol man blong Hailans na nambis long kam baim o salim ol buai, kokonas na arepla samting.

Long haus, Susanna wantaim liklik bebi i silip tait. Wanpla samting kol i holim skin blong em. Em i kirap long bet na skin blong em i guria. Em i opim ai na lukluk long dak tasol i no lukim wanpla samting. Skin blong em i pulap long tuhat na bikpla poret i kisim em.

Em i laitim lamp i stap long het blong bet na hangamapim antap long wanpla huk. Em i sindaun gen long bet na tingting planti i stap. Em i tingting long man belong em. Piksa blong man blong em i wok long kamap long tingting blong em. Em i lukluk long pes blong bebi na em wari. Wanpla samting i rong tasol em i no save wanem samting tru i rong. Skin blong em i guria gen na em i poret olgeta. Em i no moa go bek gen long silip.

Bodi blong Lino i stap yet long kar. Ol i kam kamap long maket tasol draive i no stap long maket. Em i spit i go yet long rot. Em i tingting planti long bodi i stap long kar. Em bai mekim wanem nau?

Tingting blong em i paul pinis.

Draiva i no save olsem em kamap klostu long ples blong Lino. Kar i kamap klostu long rot bung blong villes blong Lino, na ensin blong kar i no karai stret. Kar i pairap wanpla taim na ensin i stap olgeta. Draiva i statim ensin gen tasol em i no stat. Em i mekim i go i go na



nogat tru. Em i kam aut na opim bonet, sekim ensin long lait blong stik masis tasol paia i dai out long win.

"Gut nait wantok. Inap mi helpim yu?" Wanpla man i tok olsem na kam aut long wanpla liklik rot.

Draiva i kirap nogut na klostu bikmaus.

"Ah wanpla liklik samting rong long kar blong mi na i no stat," draiva bekim tok.

"Yumi ken sekim, mi kisim tos i kam," man i bekim tok na kamap klostu long kar.

"Noken wari, mi ting mi painim displa rong pinis. Kar bai stat nau," draiva bekim tok kwiktaim, pasim bonet na go insait long kar.

Draiva statim ensin na kar i krai. Em putim long gia na laik go na kar i stop gen. Em i swet nogut tru insait. Tuhat wara i kapsait long pes olsem wara kalap long maunten.

"Wantok, yu opim bonet na mi sekim kar," Man wantaim tos i tok olsem na kam sanap long nus blong kar.

Draiva i poret olgeta. Em i laik ron awe tasol lek blong em i hevi. Nek blong em i pas long toktok. Em lukim tupla boskru i silip tait. Em i holim het blong wanpla na kirapim em tasol em i no kirap. Em silip olgeta.

Draiva i opim dua na kam aut long kar. Em i laik sanap tasol lek blong em i guria na em i pundaun antap long kolta.

"Olsem wanem wantok? Yu spak eh?" Displa man askim em.

"Yes, mi spak ya," Draiva bekim tok.

"Tasol nau mi lukim yu wok hat long statim kar na yu no luk olsem spakman." Man i bekim tok.

"Ah maski, yu go na larim mi i stap. Mi laik silip ya". Draiva i tokim displa man.

"Orait, mi go nau. Gutnait wantok". Man wantaim tos i tok olsem na kalapim baret long rot na go sanap long graun i antap liklik. Em i bengim tos i go long kar na i kirap nogut long lukim planti blut i kapsait long tar i stap.

"Eh wantok, em wanem samtin yu kilim na putim long kar?" Man i askim draiva.

"Mi no putim wanpla samting long kar". Draiva bekim tok tasol toktok blong em i no kamap klia. Nek blong em i pas pinis.

Man i bengim tos gen long kar na i kirap nogut long lukim lek blong man i stap nating long kar na lukim blut i no pilai pilai long kar. Man i bikmaus na singaut i go long villes blong em na ol man i laitim bumbum na ron i kam.

"Draiva yu wet pastaim!" Man i tok olsem na i kam long kar tasol draiva i no stap. Em bengim tos i go long rot na lukim draiva i ron i go insait long wanpla bus. Em ron i go na holim pasim displa. Draiva aninit long wanpla kokonas tri. Sampla man silip klostu i harim bikmaus na ron i kam. Ol i helpim wantok blong ol na ol i holim pasim displa draiva. Ol i sesim draiva i kam bek long kar. Karai blong em i moa yet.

Tupla boskru i silip yet long kar na i no save olsem ol man i sanap raunim kar blong ol pinis.

em na wokabaut i kam long rot.

Ples i lait long wanpla Kolman lamp em villes Kaunil i laitim na karim i kam. Ples tu i pulap long ol planti man na meri.

"Yupla i lukim pes blong indai man pinis?" Wanpla man i stap namel long ol i singaut.

"Mipla i no lukim yet". Man wantaim tos i bekim tok.

"Man mi les long lukim planti blut long kar ya!" Wanpla meri i bikmaus na ron i go insait long wanpla liklik rot.

"Yu go na rausim beg long het na lukim," Villes kaunsilla i tokim man wantaim tos.

Man wantaim tos i go antap long kar na pulim beg long het isi isi. Blut i pas long han bogn em. Smell blong bodi na blut i kamap strong long olgeta hap long kar.

Em i pulim aut beg na i kirap nogut tru. Em i lukim pes blong brata blong em stret. Pes blong Lino i karmap wantaim blut blong em.

"Lino! Lino! brata blong mi!" Man i bikmaus na pundaun antap long bodi blong brata blong



em na krai.

Susanna i kirap nogut. Em i ron i kam long kar na lukim Lino tru i dai i stap. Em pundaun antap long bodi blong man blong em na krai.

"O Lino, yu gutpla man blong mi. O Lino blong wanem ol i mekim olsem long yu? O Lino, yu tingting long liklik boi blong yumi?" Susanna i karai moa yet.

Ol arepla man na meri i kam holim pasim tupla boskru wantaim draiva na pasim lek han blong ol long rop na redi long kisim i go insait long villes blong ol.

Em i spit i kam klostu long blupla Staut na stop. Ol man na meri i kirap nogut long lukim Hailans Haiwei Polis Patrol Kar.

Dua blong Polis kar op na fapla polisman i kalap i kam aut. Wantu ol i kisim displa ol displa man i go long Lae Polis Stesin.

Susanna wantaim brata blong Lino i kam daun long kar. Planti man na meri i kam na holim

"Watpo ol polis i kisim displa tripla man i go?"

"Blong wanim ol i no larim mi kilim i dai wanpla blong ol?" Brata blong Lino i askim em

"Polis i kisim ol i go long Lae. Lo bai mekim save long ol. Yumi no inap kisim lo long han belong yumi yet na bekim bek indai blong brata blong yu". Villes kaunsilla i bekim tok.

Em holim han blong brata blong Lino na tupla behainim rot i go insait long villes.

Susanna i behainim tupla i go. Wokabaut blong em i no stret. Tingting blong em i pulap tru long bikpla sori.

Iaim ol kamap klostu long haus Susanna i harim liklik boi krai na em i go insait long haus. Em i kisim liklik boi putim antap long han blong em, na lukluk long pes na krai.

"Maski Lino, yu dai pinis tasol Senis blong yu i stap. Bel blong mi bai stap isi. Bai mi bringim yangpla blong yumi kamap man olsem yu save toktok long em". Em i tok olsem, pundaun antap long bet na krai.

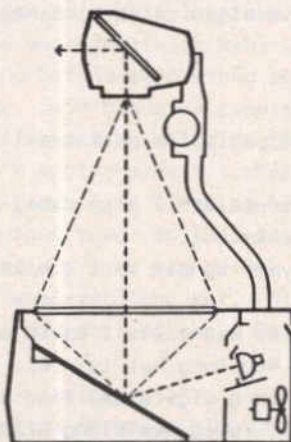
## The model 213B Overhead Projector

The Model 213 is a major advancement in communications. The design offers

- 160 Hour Lamp Life
  - Low Energy
  - Improved Optics
  - Easy Maintenance
  - Cool, One-Piece Stage
  - External Colour Tuning Wheel
- Together with 3M brand Transparency Film and Transparency Maker you have a communication system that's easy to use, effective and the best.

### 160 Hour Lamp Life

Our brighter dichroic reflector lamp is designed exclusively for the 3M "213" projector series to give exceptional screen uniformity and high contrast and... 160 hour lamp life, more than twice that of conventional overhead projection lamps.



### Our Clean, Cool Way

With the new 3M Folded Optics System, the air is drawn past the lamp, but not into the optics compartment. Result: No dust or dirt is drawn into the optics area. So, optics components practically never need cleaning. But if cleaning is required, the exclusive one-piece stage makes it simple because there are only two surfaces to clear, compared to the four to six surfaces of conventional projectors.

### External Colour Tuning Wheel

Tunes out red or blue corners and tunes in a true white image by precisely positioning the lamp for any size image. The optical tuning wheel is conveniently located on the exterior of the projector.

### Lamp Ejector

Is designed to easily remove a blown lamp from its socket by simply moving a lever.

### SAFETY

#### Safety Interlock Switch

Shuts off all power to the projector for your safety whenever the unit's door is open or the optical stage is not in place.

#### Safety Cut-Off Thermostat

Shuts off power to the lamp if the cooling air is blocked and the projector over-heats. This protects all components from damage due to over-heating. When the components return to normal operating temperature, the thermostat automatically resets.

### Improved Optics

With the new 3M Folded Optics System you receive a sharper image all the way to the edges. Reason: There is a longer distance between the projector's lamp and our new optical stage. So, the lens is not required to bend the light rays as severely as conventional projectors. Result? Your projected image is brighter and sharper.

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## ANGELIC TRANSPORTS

In winged chariots, the angels fly  
Like keen-eyed eagles far they pry  
To steal her softly from me.

The car that stole her had eagle's wings.  
She walked to it with a gentle sway  
And never looked at me just standing there.

Why should she care for one so low  
While she's flying high in her gold road-show  
So soon she's forgotten me in a blink.

Now all God's cars have fiery wheels  
While I walk below on dusty heels  
Dreaming of eagles and angels and unseen things.

Gideon Ginkawa

## METROPOLIS

Welcome the sign said to the nation's capital  
People, people everywhere.  
Yellow tops of Tolais, black mops of Mekeo.  
Savage sons of the coffee lands,  
Muscular daughters of the same.  
Noble sons of the islands,  
Round breasted virgins of the same.  
Notorious sons of the Muddy River,  
Long-limbed daughters of the same.

People conjection, born of freedom.  
Empty-handed beggars, light-fingered pick-pockets,  
Eye-glassed youths, Mercedesed ministers;  
All intoxicated and buaiied in the  
Exploding heart.

Bernard Lahe



## GRANDFATHER GELUA

Looking out from bald Binerin  
 Grey-haired grandpa Gelua sits  
 His back to the sun  
 Lost in past visions.

Down in the Daluma valley  
 The trees grow young and tall  
 And through them, Waula moves  
 Young and tall as she was.

Upon her darksome hair  
 Rubbed clean with Bolma oil,  
 Twinkles the morning sun,  
 Walks the breathing wind.

Beneath the young trees  
 She rolls and plays.  
 To herself she sings  
 In a tuneful tone.

Among the silent bushes  
 Gelua sees himself,  
 Straight and handsome as he was  
 Turn towards the sweet music.

His heart beats faster.  
 In his head he spins a plan.  
 His ear catches her rhythm.  
 His legs walk towards that song.

Among the green aiba grass  
 They meet, Gelua and Waula.  
 In his gentle manner,  
 With bright endearing smile,  
 Gelua offers his hands.  
 Waula shily accepts.

Grandpa feels Waula  
 Holding his hand lightly,  
 Between her very own,  
 Warm and soft as they were.

Into the valley they disappear  
 Alive with feelings and smiles.  
 Deep into the river's blue  
 They dive smooth and even  
 To emerge clean and easy,  
 And reward each other  
 A kiss on the cheek.

The sun sighs, the stars begin.  
 Gelua and Waula reflect  
 Their deep growing love  
 In each other's eyes.

Looking out from bald Binerin  
 Grandpa Gelua sees it clear.  
 Now the mist hides the valley  
 But his eyes are inward turned.

Bernard Malle.

## LEMURIA

Always it will have to be  
 Mr Wanpis at the wheel of things  
 And caught in the storm; always  
 It will have to be this man,  
 Looking out past reefs and deep blue  
 For the first spark of beacons  
 From Lemuria.  
 And this lady at the bilums  
 In her cabin, and her children  
 Gathered round her.

Russell Soaba



## MAIBA: A REVIEW

by Jennifer Evans.

"Maiba," we are told in a note at the beginning of Soaba's novel, is "the common form of Anuki communication which expresses truths only through parables and riddles." True to its title this novel is both parable and riddle, a complex and enigmatic statement on the nature of life in contemporary Papua New Guinea. Soaba's eponymous heroine reflects this complex mystery. Abused and venerated, admired and reviled, she is the remnant of tradition as the last in the line of the Wawaya-Magura dynasty, customary rulers of her village of Makawana, but she is also a University drop-out, a young woman of her times, struggling to find her place in a changing world.

Maiba is made an orphan at a young age, and is brought up by a reluctant and uncaring aunt. As in his earlier novel, *Wanpis*, Soaba is again exploring existence as the terrible reality of ultimately having to face the world alone. For Soaba's characters family and community have failed. There is no warm, easy embrace or place. Maiba has neither the comfort of parental love nor the security of a real home.

The story of Makawana village represents a cautionary tale. There are extraordinary happenings in the village when Doboro Thomas, the respected village orator and eldest elder makes a bid to establish a new kingdom, tricks the trade-store owner out of his store, bribes some of the men with alcohol, gives them guns, has himself carried about on a raised chair like a divine king, and wreaks terror on the village in a mad night of drunkenness and debauchery in which a young girl, Christine, is raped and almost killed. Doboro Thomas, who should be the guardian of the people's culture and tradition, tells strange and alien tales pretending, or believing, that they are the people's own legends. An example is given of the legend of killing one twin which he sends to a radio programme saying it comes from Makawana when in fact it is African in origin. His mad night of terror with his armed and roughly uniformed henchmen, Kaboni and his companion, and other drunken villagers appears as the allegorical acting out of the political option of violent corrupt dictatorship, growing out of man's lust for domination, power and greed, all of which is portrayed as alien to the Makawana way of sharing and consensus. Violence had been used in the past in wars with outsiders, but never before had the villagers turned in violence against one another. Here is a loss of innocence as the first gun is pointed at someone in Makawana, and the villagers realize it means "a terrible change in the history of the village." (p.77).

Male violence, its dangers and its control, hangs like a shadow over the book, and finally threatens to tear the village apart as the men prepare to take revenge for the rape of Christine. Throughout the novel Maiba is threatened by male violence. Even when she is a small girl at primary school small boys repeatedly attack and attempt to rape her. Much later Kaboni and his friend humiliate Maiba and are about to rape her when her cousin Siril comes to the rescue, as he had done so often in the past. In the breakdown of order towards the end of the novel rape is again a prominent motif. Doboro Thomas, the orator turned mad dictator, offers food, alcohol and "young virgins like Christine in abundance for every man in Makawana" (p.103) as an enticement to his male followers. Siril, Maiba's defender, unforgiveably succumbs to the alcoholic debauchery of Doboro Thomas' gang, while Maiba becomes the villagers' champion. Her significant moment of glory comes when she stands up to the violent intimidation of Doboro Thomas and his gunmen by challenging them to shoot her. Appearing as a true leader of her people, and worthy of her chiefly inheritance, Maiba's courage shames and frightens the erstwhile terrorisers, and breaks the evil spell Doboro Thomas seems to have cast.

Like a play acted out on a small stage the action of *Maiba* takes place entirely in the village and a few surrounding nearby locations. The "outside" world, to which Maiba, Siril and



their older brother Royal Bob Rabobo all travel, is left as a vague and distant place. We never really find out what happened to them out there, or why Maiba and Siril has to leave the University. Greater insights into their wider experiences and their changes in consciousness might have been interesting, and could perhaps have provided a deeper understanding and exploration of the stresses which are apparently tearing their society apart. Instead we must symbolically deduce from the happenings in the village the predominant theme of change and conflict, and the struggle of a people to find strong and coherent values to live by.

The chronology of events that take place in the novel is fairly difficult to follow as the story weaves and cuts between scenes in the days of Maiba's childhood, and the days after Maiba and Siril have returned to the village from the University, which leads up to the novel's climax and conclusion in Doboro Thomas' night of terror and the following morning of redemption. **Maiba** demands a lot of its readers. It is not a novel to which you should turn if you are looking for light entertainment. Unravelling the riddle of **Maiba** is a serious business, and the tone of the novel is sombre. However it is a novel that is worth persevering with and rewards its reader's efforts. It represents an important contribution to Papua New Guinea's growing body of creative literature written in English, and a substantial addition to Russell Soaba's work. A more carefully crafted and ambitious novel than his earlier **Wanpis**, it takes a step further away from autobiography, and achieves considerable success in incorporating a female perspective. The hopeless anomie that pervades **Wanpis** has given way in **Maiba** to a greater sense of responsibility and belonging. The villagers lose their innocence in the course of Maiba's unfolding story, but they gain a new awareness of their weaknesses and strengths.

At the close of the novel Maiba's uncle, Mr Wawaya, dies with a picture from a tourist magazine before his eyes. It shows "a remote tropical inlet or bay which resembles Iubuga Bay: rich greenery, coral reefs, blue sea, and sky. No one seems to be living in it." (p.115) Yet, the villagers do still live in this idyllic setting. There is no reason to suspect that with the will and determination of all of her people, particularly the female qualitties represented by Maiba herself, "paradise" cannot be regained and reinhabited.

### MOTHER STANDS

From dawn to dusk, mother stands  
Amid clattering dishes and undug gardens.  
Sweat is her shower; the sun her energy.

By the evening table she stands: Has everyone eaten?  
Her duty comes first. Tiredness is her satisfaction.  
Last to bed. First up to prepare breakfast.

How have I rewarded her life-time's work?  
An illegitimate child; another burden.  
When all she wanted was my love.

May Paipaira



## TIME BEFORE

The sleepy mountains  
Drip and flow  
Like a lazy lizard  
Crawling to the sea.

People sing  
Drums beat  
Old men sit by the fire  
And talk of their past.

A shore breeze blows  
Couples make love  
Under the swaying palms  
While the world was young.

Data Pius

## THE SEA

Green cascades roll  
Against dirty posts  
Reach up white walls  
and creep away.

Green in her youth  
Blue in her prime  
Dark blue as age rolls by  
A torrent of darkness in finality

Breeze blown boats  
Bob like toys  
She shows white teeth  
Bites them  
Tossing them from side to side

Mile upon mile  
To the unimaginable distance  
A grave for sailors  
A home for depth-dwellers.

Sari Tamasi

## THE PROMISE

For you my love,

What my hands can, I will do  
Where my feet stray, I will go  
Where my body is, I will serve  
Whatever I reach, I will get  
Whatever I have, I will give  
Whenever I can, I will do

But for

That which I cannot reach  
That which I cannot give  
That which I cannot do  
That which I do not have  
That which I cannot move  
That which I am not....

Forgive

Janet Amean

## DEAR DIARY

Yesterday I went to class;  
It was boring.  
Today I'm not going;  
It will be boring again.

Last night very busy;  
Went to the movies.  
Slept at four;  
Storied till twelve.

Today I don't feel like work;  
Have a headache.  
I'd rather stay in the library.  
After lunch I'll go and sleep.

Avoid boring classes,  
Linger in the library,  
Sleep in the afternoon.  
Pack your luggage and go.

May Paipaira



## MEMORIES OF A LOVING SISTER

O Memories of the day  
When you and I were young  
When together we would play  
And songs that we had sung.

O memories of the time  
When quick I came running  
For the hurt that gave you pain  
And the tears that came tumbling.

O memories of those nights  
When, hand in hand, we'd go  
To watch dancers in delight  
While fires flickered to and fro.

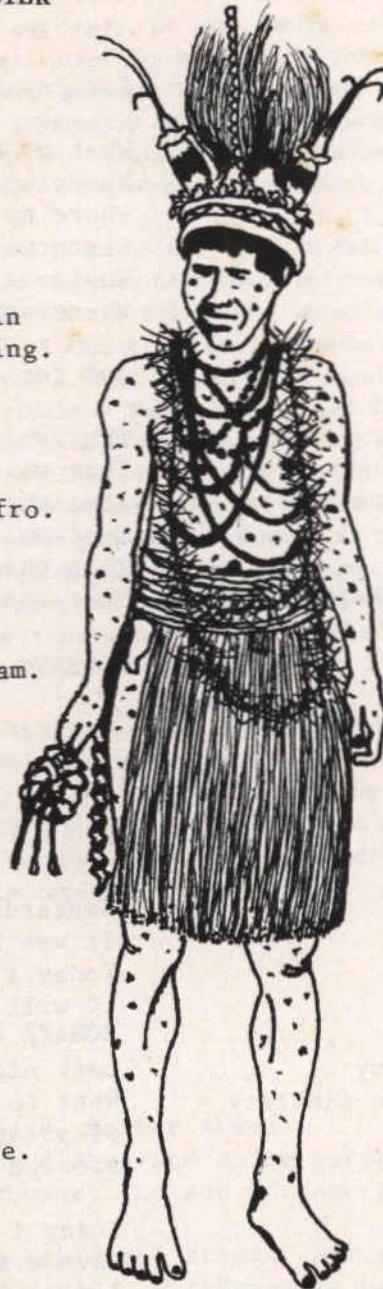
O memories of the time  
Before you went from home  
Amid the crowds and lines  
From street to street we'd roam.

O memories of that day  
When God did take your soul  
Your life was borne away  
Across the ocean flown.

O memories of those times  
Bring tears to my eyes  
When echoes of your laughter  
Still ring around the rafters

In memory of that day  
I'll kneel and say a prayer  
In work or sleep or play  
You're in the good Lord's care.

Janet Amean



## DYING CHILD

Fragile flame, cold mute child  
Your assemblance, lone windswept beaches  
Staring into misty realms beyond  
Bridged by colourful rainbows  
No sorrow troubles those vacant eyes  
Just a weariness with time's heavy footsteps  
Delaying release from this scarlet shell.  
On golden wings the morrow shall find you  
Hand in hand with heaven's cherubs  
Walking those rainbows to Dreamland

Jacob Harry



## SHELTERED SILENCE

Death has stolen the quiet breeze  
That showers with rain, tranquillity.  
At dawn will it return?  
Not till a river of turbulence is swollen.

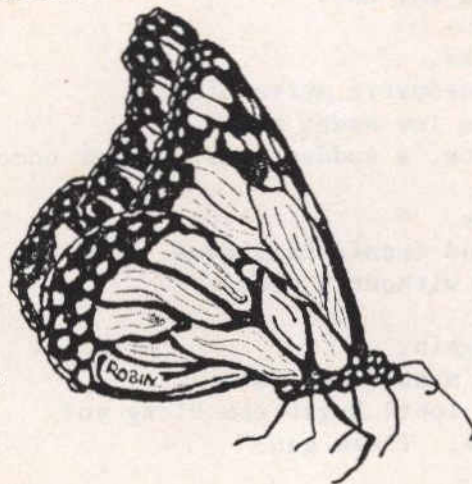
A generator or air-conditioner  
fills the space.  
Rough horrible sounds  
That sicken solitude's mind  
Where before sweet waterfalls  
Breathed soft harmonious sounds.

A screeching car with  
Drunken night-club drivers  
Pierces the night with fear.  
Unwilling citizens keep behind doors,  
Seared by the sound.  
Shutting fear behind their ears.

Insects refuse their nightly celebration  
Falling, seeking refuge behind shelled wings.  
While darkness harbouring fear  
Seems threatened by the neon light.  
Boldness and shame remain all night.

Beyond and away sheltered silence  
Is blasted by modern music  
While Nature is shaken  
Until even the moon is rocked  
Out of her heavenly orb.

Steven Edmund Winduo



## WEARY STUDENTS

(Dedicated to the late Bembo Kera)

October 13th it is, 1984  
Poroman is the hostel  
Where they hide out  
Two weary young chaps, weary from  
Pressures of life, education and careers  
Day and night, these two chaps stay there.  
Hey! fren, it's 2.00 p.m.!  
Aren't you working?  
Aaaah! Jim sighs reluctantly.  
Let me rest a bit.  
Then I'll get this thing done.  
Jim thinks it over  
As he ponders on this poem  
In that Poroman building  
On that hot hazy October afternoon.

James K. Tira



## TRY LUCK

A youth of eighteen  
Wearing blue jeans and denim jacket.  
Slim, tall, big hair, smooth face,  
Descends a PMV bus.

Sees a lass,  
One-way automatic attraction;  
Whistles a low sweet note.  
Lass reacts, a sudden twist of her coconut.

She stares,  
With popped tennis-ball eyes.  
Then goes without a word.

A blast again.  
She turns a hardened face:  
"Say! Get lost! Nogat sem blong yu?  
Sori tumas. Traim gen!"

Youth pretends  
Not to hear, mumbling in his mouth:  
"Isi long lukim; hat long kisim".  
Walks shamefully behind the parked car.  
"Maski mi pinis tru."

Yeriko Paia

## AN EASY HABIT

A gold watch, I steal it.  
The act is done. Not caught; I got away.

It's good. I'll steal again.  
I did and got clean away.

It's easy. I'll do it again,  
And think less of it.  
Thus stealing becomes a habit.

May Paipaira



## TRIBAL WARFARE

Blood spilled, clothes the spears  
 Upon dried hearts the victims' stain  
 But deeper still it says  
 "Blood cannot spill  
 Without revenge.  
 Revenge must win".

No need for introduced democracy  
 No call for christian doctrine  
 This land is still eye for eye.  
 Tooth for tooth.  
 Upon this inspiration  
 Eagerness and power grip their spears

Unplanned rapes. unpaid raids  
 This the weakness of a tribe.  
 For the clan cohesive and caught  
 Bound by security  
 Like a high structured garden fence.

On the ridge  
 Melanesian aristocracy echoing calls  
 Appealing to chaotic valleys  
 In one a tribal fight prevails  
 Another feasts after consensus  
 Thus do we survive.

Steven Edmund Winduo

## THE SHADOW OF MY FATHER

The shadow of my father  
 I saw crying  
 Weightless tears  
 Dropping from his simple eyes.

Staring at the sea  
 here and as far and as wide  
 And as deep as his shadow  
 Could penetrate the empty sea.

Here swimming under the moonlit sea  
 The ocean song again  
 Disappearing from the ears  
 Of the quiet listening shadow.

Kumalau Tawali



## THE ARCHER'S SMILE.

I took it for a sisterly glance  
 Never realising what was to chance.  
 Those lips where bow-shaped of the kind  
 Used by the imp in a Mid-Summer Night's Dream  
 His latent love poison to transmit.  
 And on her lips quivered deadly darts,  
 Well oiled, tipped and glistening with honeyed love.

One fine morning those darts she aimed, released  
 And hit home to my very soul  
 I rocked. She drew and aimed again.  
 That smile! It hit so fatally.

Now withered and dying like the palm tree  
 Struck by thunder's lightning  
 I lie, counting my heart-beats.  
 My eyes have dimmed; my brain lost its power.  
 I cannot tell right from wrong.

Sweet god, Good Cupid, admirer of South Sea Women  
 Lurker in love-nests, hear my cry.  
 Please end this game of aching mischief  
 And help me find the one sovereign cure  
 Which you call juice-of-remedy.

Gideon Ginkawa

## GARDEN OF LOVE

Sunlight is  
 When I kiss you.  
 Red hibiscus  
 Doves and butterflies too.  
 In our garden of love  
 Reaching to the sky  
 Emotions sometimes make me cry.  
 Dreams of days  
 Nights of tenderness  
 Always, always  
 Loving you and  
 Wondering why  
 Yearning for you,  
 Leaving is so hard.

Sari Tamasi



## WRITER'S CONGRATULATIONS

All you sons and daughters  
Who play with magic words  
Turn words to love and hatred  
From know to unknown longings  
I congratulate you!

Like rocks immortal  
You stand against  
The furious whirlpool  
Of life's roaring tempest  
And disregard political assaults  
Until they tire, subdued and spent  
Withdrawn in worn futility.

Like a woman of beauty  
Whose perfect body mirrors our soul  
With her tricks, cruelty and sharp nails,  
You never lose your tenderness.  
Changeable as the weather,  
Fixed as the sun,  
You adjust to any situation,  
And let your words pour forth.

Sons and daughters, would-be writers  
I love your poisons  
Your smiles and tears,  
That ooze through your hands,  
That flow from your pens,  
Shaping the Past, Present and Future,  
Into wondrous words,  
On sheets of listening paper.

Allan Natachee



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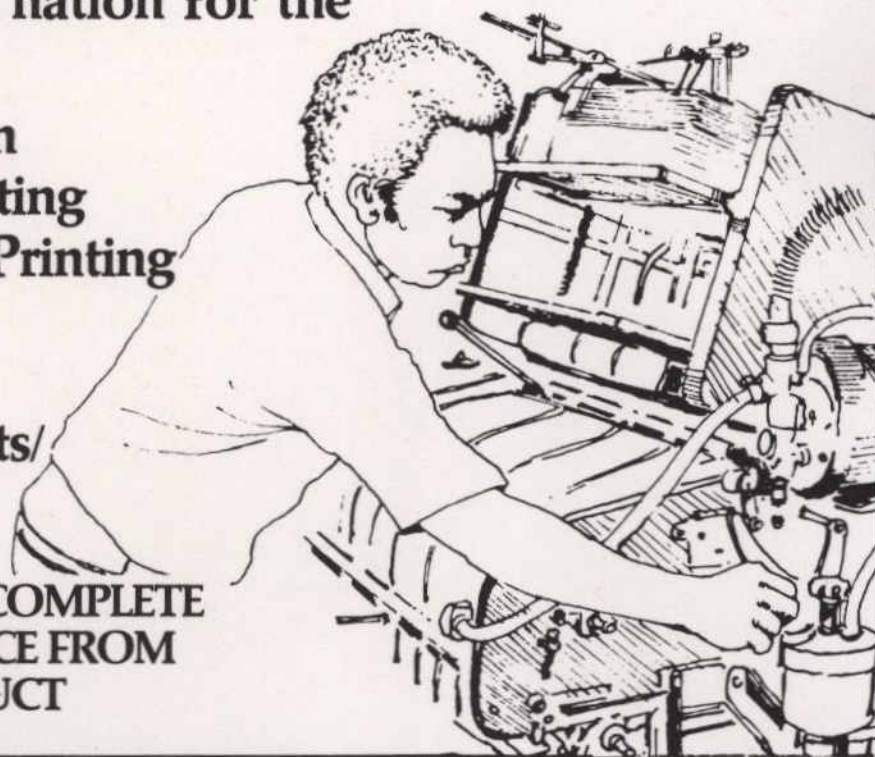
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