KOVAVE

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Students of Port Moresby Teachers College. These translations were encouraged by Elton Brash.

HOMECOMING

Pokwari Kale

There were greetings from the living
And handshakes from the dead.
Familiar faces all, but remote.
The sounds were strange
The scene not remembered.
Small hills had grown into mountains
And had moved closer together
With grey clouds hanging from their brows.
The devil had been around planting unusual trees
Leaving wide valleys, dark and green
Clear of all human trace.
A big place for himself to reign?
Was I cut off to put roots in the air
And expected to grow fruit thereon?
All was so quiet, so cold, so vast,
I felt lonely and small, like a wanderer
Walking through an ancient, ruined kingdom.

THE NIGHT WARRIOR

by Wauru Degoba

FOR THE LAST FEW hours before the dawn, the great father of the warriors lay very stiff, stained with blood. . . .

Dawagaima was looking for his lost brother in the country of the deadly enemies. He offered his last prayer to his only protector, Aukapa, the god of Kaiguna.

'O papa Aukapa, help me to fight my enemies this night.'

He ate his last meal from his three wives, Omoi, Sukure and Towame saying to the women, 'I come back before the sun can come.' The women quarrelled as to whom he should spend the rest of the night with. He silenced them. 'I can come to any one of you. Leave space for me.'

He collected all his spears, bow and sticks of arrows that contained all the magic power from his god, Aukapa. With no warning to the guards watching out, he crawled away from the hut, across the fence, and away into the country's air, moving softly, cautiously.

Just at the village perimeter, he met his great friend, Apakuru.

'*Yu go where?*' asked Apakuru.

'*Mi go panim pig long dispela ples,*' was the reply.

The full moon was mounting in the eastern ranges of Dikagawa. Both men looked up.

'*You look out yourself in enemy land, eh,*' said Apakuru.

'*Me can look out good long man,*' said Dawagaima.

Beneath the banana trees, the shadow moved slowly down the path in the silent air. All things were frightened but the great warrior was not. The insects sang their night choruses while he moved very cautiously with his fighting weapons.

He was all the time being eyed by the watchers on both sides of the path. These sentries sent their warning signals to the men with spears in the village a distance away. In his hands Dawagaima carried a spear and some sticks of arrows for the work which he intended to do. He didn't know that there were many pairs of eyes on him.

On either side of the path, the sentries were watching him moving slowly and steadily towards the dark shadow of the enemy village. He listened for a few moments to the night air. He thought of his revenge which he must take before the dawn. He prayed to the moon for being so kind to him. He didn't realize that the moon also gives her light to his enemies, as well as to himself. The talking trees vibrated for their food and water. He moved on. The eyes kept on him.

In the enemy village, quietly, darkly, figures moved about their tasks. Men gathered together in the small house. The elder said the prayers and chants to the fierce men. The men then divided themselves into even groups and went out to ambush Dawagaima. Some moved to Kamanekoia others to Aimoini, some to Kiaugui and still others to Gepadunumi. They put up their shields and waited for the moon to give up.

Meanwhile Dawagaima was waiting, and thinking. He thought of his three wives, he thought of his distant country. How would he get home again? He listened to the night birds calling. 'They are warning me,' he thought. The moon was right on his forehead; no warning noise came to him. 'If I do not take my revenge, will I be the great father of the warriors of Kaigunua?' he thought. The spirit of being the father of his people had struck the warrior strongly. 'I am a warrior, a brave warrior of

Kaigunua,' he thought. He offered himself as the agent of revenge. 'A stick into the thick grass,' he thought.

Now he moved himself a little distance forward. Instantly the arrows were all pointing at him from the bananas and every hidden place where eyes looked out. He didn't know. The watchers' arrows were all moving at the same time. He began to move up the shadowy path.

Back in the village, the people of Aukapa heard with amazement the message told by Apakuru. 'Quick time, get all the fighting implements and let us go.' They rushed about. 'Let us hurry before the father gets killed.'

The old woman, Arekon, was preparing the taro for the men to take with them. Silently they moved into her hut as she mumbled her prayers to the north. 'The Great Father is smoking his pipe and hiding his face behind the smoke. You will not succeed in your work.' She wept as she broke the two taros and blessed them with her fingers while the mucus trickled on them from her nose. She gave a piece to each warrior, and to the elder leader she gave a whole taro, roasted and smooth. The men slipped out of the hut, while her cry followed them:

'*A-po-o*
A-po-o
Kan kuya pa io
A-po-o.'

Thirty or more men set out, walking as fast as they could, all the time keeping their eyes on either sides of the path. What had happened to their leader, Dawagaima, the great leader, father of all men in the land of Kaigunua? The question was in the mind of every man. Each silently cursed the enemy he hurried to meet. They cursed her that gave the bright blood into the earth. Her laughing made them unsafe because the wild land of Kiau was only of their imagination. The deadly spear might talk to them at any time, for they knew not the men nor the land. As they climbed the mountainside, the land of Wauwi, they hummed their powerful war chant. They went as it went and got courage again.

'Let us tell them all that we are the men of Kaigunua, we are men of great courage, that where there is battle, there we go.'

'*Kura yo!*
Kura yo!
Puis — o yo!
Nono opai ta moi kepini!
Nono Kaigunua wee ndo!
Kumuno O - O!'

It took almost four hours to travel through the wilderness. The moon was on their eyelids. The life of nature went on, as the bloodshed people of Kaigunua crept into the sleeping night. Suddenly a cobweb caught the leading man's face. He came to a stop without any warning as each man melted into his side of the path. 'When the cobweb stops your way, you won't succeed,' was the thought of each man. They crouched, eating the piece of taro to satisfy the gods, praying for strength and courage and power to beat the enemies. The leader moved to each man, offering the special taro, that would protect them from the evil that threatened.

Meanwhile the ambushers put up their shields and scratched a hollow for their spears. They said to one another, '*Man i kam bai yumi givim soup. Ngan de nu ware wanim ya.*' (They are just looking for garbage so give them the rubbish.)

They aimed at any dark object and pulled their bows and arrows to practise. 'We will crush them like insects,' was the thought in their minds. Each ambush group sent out two watchers to bring back information. From Kamanekoia came Kumai and Ipamoi. Suddenly Ipamoi heard a pig rushing into the bush and he shouted out. He thought it was the spirit of his brother's dead wife who had recently been shot. Kumai swore at him and hit hard at his head. Ipamoi wept bitterly for some paces. He thought of taking his revenge, but Kumai was of great muscle, so he dared not. They walked towards the village, four miles away. Again they heard a noise from bushes in front of them. They whispered to each other, then slipped under the soldarell bush and waited for the ambush. They waited for some minutes and the noise was still coming. They waited and waited. 'Surely it is just a spirit. It is ghost country. It is the place of spirits. It is not a place to walk through

without brightness.' Each man's thought went to his own spirit. Would death come to their bodies here? They shivered, and then made a break for their village.

Yes, they were frightened nuts, and so they ran back to their ambush perimeter and told the warriors that the attack was soon to break out. The men trusted their word, and waited. How long would they wait? Nobody knew the answer. It was blood that they waited for. They were still, yet mentally quickened. It was wild pigs that they waited to shoot. The game that they enjoyed doing. The blood to be smeared on the arrows and spears. They are the men. They that shoot plenty. They that wait without meaning. Oi!

Oi! man who likes to shoot for fun to add great reputation to his family's clan. Oi! the warriors who are the centre posts in the buildings. All the thoughts grew in the mind of the waiting ambushers. A noise! It was the last flicker of life that Dawagaima had and then the blackness that won't come back to life again. . . .

His village tribesmen came in the early hours of that morning and wrecked the enemy village. 'Where is he? What has happened to him?' Over and over again it was asked as the spirit of blame ate deep into the human heart.

For the last few hours before the dawn, the great father of the warriors lay very still, stained with blood. . . . He was the father of Kaigunua in the land of many wives and many husbands. The father who led them through difficulties with the spirit of pride. That was he who fought the neighbouring tribe and said all things. After two days he was laid in the ground, and the people prayed that he would guide them in the time of their troubles. He was gone out of sight, with the mourning of the women, the children, and the widows.

'Oh! child, don't cry! The father has gone into the unknown land. He will not be back, but he is calling for me to meet him tomorrow.

'*Kan kiya pa io*
A-po-o.'

MEKEO SONGS

translated by Allan Natachee

DAWN

Come dawn
Absorb me!
Come day
Brighten me!

Break dawn
With crimson!
Break day
With crimson!

Dawn spreads
With noise!
Day spreads
With noise!

Bird of dawn
Bird of birds!
Bird of day
Bird of birds!

Dawn bird sings
My heart beats.
Day bird sings
My heart beats.

Bird bird
Like black bird of paradise.
Bird bird
Like red bird of paradise.

I HAVE COME FOR LOVE MAKING

When the wet season wind shall blow
  The woman shall worry
  She will be thinking.
When the dry season wind shall blow
  The woman shall worry
  She will be thinking.

The wet season wind
  Shall blow and blow.
The dry season wind
  Shall blow and blow.

The woman is your woman
The wife is your wife.
  Pity me!
  I have come for love making.
Bid me enter the house
I have come for love making.
  Your bad words make me miserable
  Don't let me go away.

LOVE SONG

Son of Avia
I walk along the ridge
I go for love making.
The good woman is swimming and calling
She walks away
We go to the hiding place.
Her eyes thinking sparkling
She walks away
We go to the hiding place.
Her eyes knowing sparkling
She walks away
We go to the hiding place.

I descend into the river
To seek the water woman.
I descend into the river
To gaze on the water woman.

I AM THINKING OF A WOMAN

I am thinking of a woman
My father calls me every day.
I am thinking of a woman
My father calls me every day.

Son of Avia
I have come
To live in a land of sunset.
I hear the bird of a foreign land
Calling his call
Evoking memories.
I hear the bird of a foreign land
Calling his call
Evoking memories.

Son of Avia
I have come to another land
I am lost in thoughts of regret.
In that land of good water
I swim till dark.
In that land of river water
I stand till dark.

SONGS OF WAR

The wind came and set me thinking:
I'll live in the bosom of the army
I'll become the son of the army!
The wind came and set me thinking:
I'll live in the bosom of the navy
I'll become the son of the navy!

Japan! Chief! You rose from your home
And you brought down the war!
You explored the town
The time of danger came
And the time came for fleeing.
Wretch! We fled to safety!
You explored Papua
The time of danger came
And the time came for fleeing.
Wretch! We fled to safety.

As soon as the government speaks of the coming year
The navy steamer comes tossing towards us.
The sea is rough, the South East is blowing.
Who will keep going to war?
The sea is rough, the South West is blowing.
Who will keep going to war?

Son of Moava, I carry ammunition to Ower's Corner
  I carry it day by day.
You shoot bullets in the air — I am afraid
  I flee across the hills of the land.
You sway combat in the air — I am afraid
  I flee across the hills of the land.

Song of metal!
Song of the engine!

Metal bird explores the home of women
Metal bird explores the land of women!

White men are clever
The plane is flying through the air
New Guineans see it
They argue about it!

The poor man lives in the bush
The sound of metal
Is carried to him by the wind
The sound of the aeroplane
Is carried to him by the wind

War for the army
War for the world
The war is over!
War in the air — the Americans
Have flown and gone.
War in the air — the aeroplanes
Have flown and gone.

ACCIDENT

He is hit! He cries in the metal house
We are running towards his voice.
He is hit! He cries in the metal house
We are running towards his voice.

It is dark in the metal house
So bring your lamp!
It is dark in the saw mill
So bring your lamp!

WOMEN YOUR LOVE MAKING

Women your love making
Is ever the same
Laughing excitedly!
Laughing excitedly!

On the beach by the sea
I gave you betelnut
And you sat down with it.
On the beach by the sea
I gave you tobacco
And you sat down with it.

The sea shall increase
Shall ever increase
The sea shall decrease
Shall ever decrease.

Walk, let us go
We can smell the tide
The tide is flowing.
Walk, let us go
We can smell the creek
The creek is flowing.

My footmarks in the mud
Wash them away.
My footmarks in the mud
Wash them away.

Your message has come
To prepare my adornments.
Your news has come
To prepare my adornments.

Adorning myself
I descend to entice you.
Adorning myself
I descend to entice you.

The place of adornment
Is the place for enticement.
I walk in my decorations.
The place for enticement
Is the ceremonial house.
I walk to my love making.

THE KILLING OF KARA

told by Avavo Kava and recorded by Albert Maori Kiki

KARA WAS A MAGICIAN who was feared by everybody in Orokolo — even his own family. He killed many people. He was a proud man who boasted of his power. Every day he dressed up like one going to a feast: he always wore his hair very big, and he had a long comb sticking in the front, with a feather dangling from the end. He never went out without a large moon-shaped shell on his breast, or without armrings and aromatic herbs. Every day he rubbed his body with coconut oil and red ochre. He had a white *sihi* bark cloth tied around his loins, and a bark belt on his waist. Sometimes he wore a necklace of dogs' teeth over his hair, with the teeth forming a crown over his head. Whenever we saw him like that, we knew that someone was going to die within the next few days.

Kara's younger brother was married to my sister. But Kara liked the woman himself, and thinking that his power had no limits, he announced one day that he was going to take my sister away from his own brother and that he was going to marry her himself. I was very angry when I heard this, and together with Lakore, my cousin, I went to fetch my sister back home.

A few days later Kara came to our village. On that day we were sitting in the *eravo* and we were preparing the *Kovave* masks for the impending initiation festival. Kara walked up the steps and came into the *eravo*. In front of all the men he asked us to return 'his wife'. Then Lakore and I got very angry indeed and we got up and beat him. Kara wiped the blood from his face and said: 'All right. I have shed my blood before you today. But I warn you: within the next few days, both of you will die.'

I went home feeling very frightened on that day. I knew that this was no idle threat. Kara had killed many people with his magic and his boasts usually came true. The next day Lakore fell ill. He became very weak and two days later he was dead. I was terrified. I knew that I would be next unless I acted quickly. Then I called my sister and said: 'Kara will kill me. You must return to his house quickly. Then you must try to steal his dirty *sihi* cloth and bring it back to me at once.'

My sister departed the same day. A few days later she came in the night, and she met my brother Miro and she gave him the *sihi* cloth. When Miro gave me the cloth, I was glad. But who could be powerful enough in Orokolo to make magic against Kara? I knew that Kara was more powerful than anyone on the coast, so I decided to walk inland, into the hills, and see a magician from the Parevavo tribe.

I took the cloth to a magician called Ekavo. But Ekavo said that the most powerful magician was Kolahareke and he gave the cloth to him. So we paid Kolahareke his price in shell money and Kolahareke took the *sihi* cloth and prepared it with barks and herbs and medicines and put it into the fire place to become hot and bring sickness to Kara. When I returned to Orokolo I heard that Kara had already fallen ill. During the next few days he was very weak and we expected him to die. Yet for two weeks nothing happened. Kara was ill. He was too weak to leave the house, but he refused to die. Then I took Hori, Lakore's brother, and we went up to the mountains and we saw Ekavo and asked him why they didn't kill Kara. Then Ekavo said to us: 'I told Kolahareke not to kill Kara. I asked him to hold it because I want to marry Lakore's widow. If you agree to let me marry that woman, then Kolahareke will kill Kara off.' Then Hori and I became very angry. We abused Ekavo and

left at once to return to our village.

Next morning we were told that Kara had fully recovered and that he was planning revenge. We knew then that Kolahareke had removed the medicine from the fire and had allowed it to cool, because we did not agree to let Ekavo marry Lakore's widow.

Soon Kara's relatives came to me and said: 'Your husband has now recovered. If you cannot kill him, he will come and have sexual intercourse with you or with your wife.' This insult annoyed many people. Nobody had ever dared to call me a woman before. All over Orokolo people were beginning to say that they were tired of Kara and that he must die. Then Kara became afraid also and one day he appeared in our village. He came straight to my house and decorated me with shells and he said: 'The people are planning to kill me. I want you to be my friend and to protect me. When you hear about people's plans, you must come and tell me.' Then I agreed to protect Kara and I promised to give him warning.

Shortly after that there was a funeral ceremony for a woman from Oru village. That night all the magic men and other leaders of Orokolo got together and they said: 'Tonight is Kara's night. We will finish him off tonight.' I heard it and decided to warn Kara.

Late in the night, when the feast was finished and I was sitting in my house, I heard Kara outside. He shook the step and called out: 'Avavo Kava, my friend, what are you doing?'

So I said: 'Come inside.' Then Kara came in and I said to him: 'Come and eat.'

But Kara replied: 'No I don't want to sit down. I want you to take me back home, to my village.'

I told him: 'No, I want you to sleep here. Then tomorrow morning I will take you back home.'

But Kara got impatient: 'No, I want to go now. You talk like a woman. I am not scared!'

Then I warned him again: 'The air is not still, the air is moving.' But Kara would not listen to me.

'Only women are scared of the wind,' he said, 'but not men. Come now!'

Then I said: 'Well, I must eat first. Why don't you come and sit down with me and eat something?'

But Kara said: 'I don't want *papaa* and the rest of the food. I will just eat a piece of meat.' Then I put a piece of pig meat in his palm and Kara closed it in his hand and he opened it again and saw it crawling with worms. Then he said: 'Look here, this meat is bad. It is full of worms.'

And I answered: 'That is what I mean. The air is not still. The air is poisoned.'

But Kara said again: 'I am not afraid. Let's go.' So I got up and followed him.

Somewhere between Oru village and the Catholic Mission we saw another man standing on the road, whose name was Aviapo. Aviapo called out: 'Oh, I have thorn in my foot. Help me to remove it.' So he leaned against us while he pulled out the thorn. Then we all went on together. But a group of people were already waiting for Kara in the bush. Suddenly they came out and Irave stepped forward and threw his spear right through Kara's side. Then everybody closed in and beat him until he was dead. When I saw this I got frightened and ran away and hid in the bush. And I saw that they left him dead on the beach and went away.

I had not been able to protect Kara. I thought that the least I could do for him now was to remove his body from the beach and take it back to his village to be buried. There were no men to carry him, so I wrapped him up in sago branches and took him to the creek and floated him down the creek towards the village. As we passed the house of the European trader, Mr Frank Burke, the man must have heard some noise and he flashed his torch from his verandah and shone it right in my face. I had never felt so frightened in my life. I kept very still and I was thinking: 'Here I am floating a human being who is already dead, down the river; and there is another human being who is still alive, and he is flashing his torch into my eyes!' But fortunately Mr Burke did not seem to suspect anything, so I went on to Kara's village and left him in front of his house. Then I went home to Oru and slept. But the next morning, when the sun came out, I was very scared and so I left the village

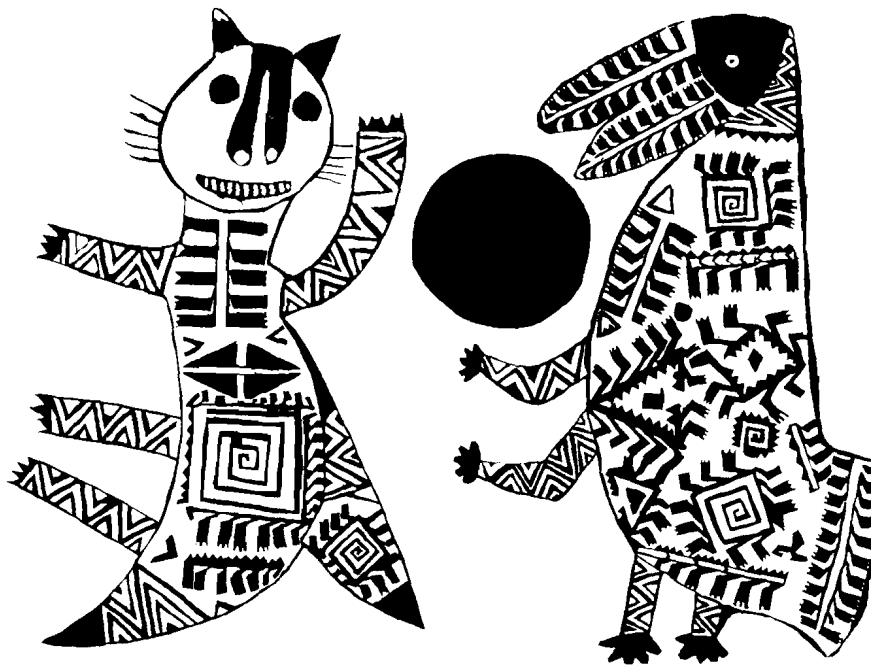
and stayed in the cemetery for the next two days.

But there was a government patrol near Lepokera at that time, and when the news reached the patrol officer that Kara had been killed, he sent the police up to Orokolo. When they asked questions some people told them that I was living in the cemetery and so they came to arrest me. When I saw them coming, I gave myself up. Then they put handcuffs on me and they asked me who the others were and I told them. But I did not mention the inland magicians, because I knew that if they were to be arrested, their relatives would kill us as soon as we got out of prison.

Nine of us were handcuffed together in a long line and taken to Kerema. There the District Officer told us: 'Yes, I knew that Kara was a bad man who had killed many people. You will probably only serve a year. I will keep you here until the judge comes.' Some weeks later the judge arrived in Kerema on the *Laurabada* and as usual he held his court on the boat. The judge sentenced us all to three years.

After three years I went back home. Others decided to stay away from the village, but I decided to go back and live at home. At first I was frightened, but people soon came to me and said: 'You have performed a good work. The village is safe now. You can see that plenty of new children are born, and there is nobody now who can frighten us.'

And Kara's young son, Kara Kara, also came to me and said: 'I know that my father did some bad things in this village, but now I am asking you to protect me.' And I told Kara Kara: 'Nothing will come between us and I will protect you like my own son.' And we have been good friends ever since.



THE BUSH KANAKA SPEAKS

The kiap shouts at us
forcing the veins to stand out in his neck
nearly forcing the excreta out of his bottom
he says: you are ignorant.

He says: you are ignorant,
but can he shape a canoe,
tie a mast, fix an outrigger?
Can he steer a canoe through the night
without losing his way?
Does he know when a turtle comes ashore
to lay its eggs?

The kiap shouts at us
forcing the veins to stand out in his neck
nearly forcing the excreta out of his bottom
he says: you are dirty.

He says we live in dirty rubbish houses.
Has he ever lived in one?
Has he enjoyed the sea breeze
blowing through the windows?
and the cool shade under the pandanus thatch?
Let him keep his iron roof, shining in the sun,
cooking him inside, bleaching his skin white.

The kiap shouts at us
forcing the veins to stand out in his neck
nearly forcing the excreta out of his bottom.
He says: you'll get sick.

He says: you'll get sick
eating that fly ridden food.
Haven't I eaten such food all my life,
and I haven't died yet?
Maybe his stomach is tender like a child's
born yesterday. I'm sure he couldn't
eat our food without getting sick.

Every white man the *gorment* sends to us
forces his veins out shouting
nearly forces the excreta out of his bottom
shouting: you *bush kanaka*.

He says: *you ol les man!*
Yet he sits on a soft chair and does nothing
just shouts, eats, drinks, eats, drinks,
like a woman with a child in her belly.
These white men have no bones.
If they tried to fight us without their *musiket*
they'd surely cover their faces like women.

Kumalau Tawali

THE OLD MAN AND THE BALUS

by John Waiko

I LOOKED UP AGAIN and then I saw the *balus* coming like a bird out of the trees. At first it looked like the smallest *suriri* bird, but it became bigger and bigger. Soon it looked like a hawk. It circled twice, then it came down like a hawk to the ground. But hawks dive to the ground silently. The *balus* came with a great noise. It was like the noise of all the cockatoos put together plus *dunana*, the thunder.

The *balus* came to where I was standing, turned round and stopped. The noise died down. A door was opened and people came out and bags of rice and cases of meat were unloaded. The *balus* looked exactly like a hawk. It had two wings and two legs. It had a tail and a head. But the *balus* had no beak and no eyes, no mouth and no claws. There was a white man who had brought the *balus*. He looked tired and angry and he shouted: '*Ani pasinja?*' Then Yavita stepped forward and said: 'Yes two,' and gave him our *tikes*. We went into the balus and I sat on a *seia*. The white man turned round and faced the head of the *balus*. He touched a small stick in front of him and the *balus* started to shout. Yavita put the *berete* round my waist. The noise was becoming louder and the *balus* began to move. The white man looked back at us quickly, then he turned round again. His hands moved and touched the small black and white sticks and the *balus* began to run like lightning on the ground. Then it dived away.

I did not want to see it diving, so I shut my eyes and bowed down. The noise was very frightening now and all my intestines, heart and everything inside me climbed up into my neck and waited there.

The *balus* rose quickly and Yavita said we were over the trees. But I still shut my eyes. The noise made by the *balus* now resembled the shrieking of cockatoos when they bite a lizard on a *simani* tree. Yavita did not seem to worry. I knew that he wanted me to open my eyes and see things. But worries came to me like waves breaking on a rock. I kept myself strong, by forcing the words of the evangelist into my skull: 'Our fears for today, our worries about tomorrow: wherever we are, high above the sky or in the depth of the ocean — nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in *Iesu Keriso*.'

The *balus* was like a madman who is shaking his arms and legs. My heart did not come down from where it stayed hanging in my throat. The more the *balus* climbed, the nearer my heart came to my mouth. Then for a moment, the *balus* acted as if it was falling like a leaf to the ground. And my stomach walked up to join my heart in the mouth.

When the *balus* was tired of climbing, it put its head straight. Now it felt like floating down the Gira river in a canoe, when the waves throw you up and down.

'I want you to see what it is like up in the sky,' Yavita said. I opened my eyes for the first time. First I looked to see if Yavita was there with me. Then I looked to the left and saw what Yavita wanted me to see. I did not know what to say. The tall trees I see walking on the ground, were not there. Everything looked very flat, like a river. But on the right there was a great fence of mountains that closed in the river of land. The sun was about to sink behind that mountain fence.

I wondered how long the *balus* would take to get to Popondota. It had once taken me a week to walk to Higa Furu, which is near Popondota. 'Will we travel like this days and nights till we reach Popondota?' I asked Yavita. 'And when

is the *balus* falling to the ground for us to get out?' But Yavita said: 'No, it won't be long before we go down to the ground.' And I was amazed at the speed with which this *balus* could run. I saw a black and white cloud in front of the *balus*. I always thought that clouds were tied to the sky above by some strings. But now this cloud was just floating in the sky, no strings. I thought the man would take the *balus* away from the cloud, but he made the *balus* go straight through it. I closed my eyes quickly and the next minute the *balus* was shaking like a madman. It went up and down like a canoe paddling against the waves in the sea. I thought that the cloud was something hard that would tear the *balus* to pieces. But we soon came out of it and I opened my eyes again.

The *balus* lowered itself and began to circle the village of Popondota. It was the biggest village I ever saw. The roofs of the houses were shining white. On the roads below strange pigs in different colours were running up and down. I was looking down at the white roofs which became bigger. Then the *balus* bent over to one side — all my fear came back to me and then we swooped down like a hawk trying to catch a rat.

The *balus* touched the grass. It ran madly, but the man touched the little black sticks in front of him and it stopped. Then, and only then, my heart and my stomach came down from the neck to their proper places and I took a deep breath.

When the door was opened and we came to the ground, I cast my eyes here and there. I saw a white pig that came running towards us in the distance. But this strange pig had no legs. Its head was blunt, there was no nose, no tail. It ran very fast, as if to attack a man. It came with a noise, like a *balus*. 'It must be a wild one,' I thought, and I looked around for a tree to climb if it should attack me. But there was no tree near and I decided to hide in the *balus* in case of danger. As the pig came near I could see its two white eyes, but I could not see the mouth.

But to my greatest surprise, there was a man inside the head of this pig-like thing. I was frightened, but Yavita came and said: 'Father, that is a *taraka*. The place for the *balus* is far away, so the *taraka* is coming to take us to the village.' I bit my finger. As it came nearer to us, it stopped running and began to walk and then it stopped. The man came out of the head. I was anxious now to have a look at it and we walked over and touched it.

It was exactly like a pig, but it had no hair, no mouth, no flesh and in fact it had no intestines. I bit my finger again, because there was no string attached to it. Who had made the pig *taraka* and how, I could not tell.

Then some thought suddenly entered my skull and into my brain. I had forgotten to say thank you to God, because he had taken the *balus* safely through the clouds and down again to the ground. When the *balus* stopped and I came down to the ground, I was busy looking at the pig *taraka* and I forgot to say thank you. Up in the air, when my heart rose to my mouth, I was a frightened baby in the hands of God. But once safe on the ground, I felt like a grown man and the hands of God seemed remote. Up in the clouds, there was only God to ask for help, but here on the ground I felt safe, because my dead father and mother were near me.

LOVE SONGS

LOST GIRL FRIEND

My friend
you are still my friend.
All the time I remember you.
I eat a new vegetable
but I remember old vegetable.

Stephen Katumapula (Kiriwina)

GIRL WITH BIG THIGH

Ovaro girl with big thigh
she wears a short coconut skirt
short coconut skirt.
Mairo girl with big thigh
she wears a short coconut skirt
short coconut skirt.
She lives under coconuts
she wears a short coconut skirt
short coconut skirt.

Lei Kaipu (Toaripi)

LOVE CHARM

O moon, o moon!
Who is your mother?
White crescent!
If she frowns on you
bad harvest befalls you.
If she does not
your mouth will be full.
She gave me charms
for women of any age.
She gave me these two secrets —
But don't ask me why!

Mati Marase (Elema)

Songs translated by students of Port Moresby Teachers College. The original language is given in brackets.

WOMAN WITH TWO LOVERS

Who is the man coming along the beach?
Is it Maiu coming for me?
Or is he coming for someone else?
Who is this man coming along the beach?
Is it Kevea coming for me?
Or is he coming for someone else?

Haruha Apupu

FAVOURITE HUSBAND

Sorry, sorry, sorry, sorry,
is it your baby or mine?
Sorry, your favourite husband
is just over there.
Sorry, sorry, is it your baby or mine?

Stephen Igru (Waghi)

LOVE CHARM

I like to play my bamboo pipe
close to your eyes.
If you hear the song of a bird —
that means something.
I'll start running from behind
that betelnut tree.
You start running, wherever you are,
so we'll meet at the road.

Rochus Binao (Tolai)

WOMAN AND MAN

O woman, o woman, o woman!
You are like coconut shell
you are like coconut skin
thrown by the wayside.
You are like rotten fruit
scattered in the bush.

O man, o man, o man!
You are the wonderful tree
you are the hibiscus flower
your colour never fades.
You carry your colour
everywhere you go.

Numa Karo (Hula)

EMBARRASSED LOVER

O girl from Anona you are standing on the beach
You are standing on the beach.
Your pants are white
I am not worrying, I am not looking.

E. Roy Opis (Kainantu)

INEXPERIENCED LOVER

Black mother: do I have to stand or sit to kiss you.
I am feeling nervous, I don't know what to do.
I don't know what to do —
do I have to stand or sit to kiss you?

Red mother: do I have to stand or sit?

Maki Namabiru (Bena)

Note: Red mother; black mother: a girl is sometimes addressed as 'mother' in Bena songs.

I BECOME A MINISTER

by Reverend Lazarus Lami Lami

TODAY MY FATHER'S NAME is spoken through the tribe as a leader of fight. He was a warrior. And they look at me and sometimes say: 'But you are not interested in fighting and things like that!' And I tell them: 'No, my father was a warrior and I am not, because I was born from peace making.'

Because this is how my father married my mother — there was a tribal fight between the Mainjenai people from East Goulburn Island and the Marogovit people. My father belonged to the Marogovit people, and my mother belonged to the Mainjenai people. During this fight, my mother's brother did a terrible thing to my father's brother, and he was badly hurt and he died. When my father's brother died, it meant that somebody from the other tribe would have to die. But the leaders got together to see if they could settle the trouble, and the only way to settle it was to give the other tribe a wife. So my father was given my mother and that was how the trouble settled down. They said: 'All right, there will be no more trouble, because we now have a wife from your tribe.' And this is how myself, my sister and my brothers have come into this tribe — because our father was from one tribe, and our mother came from another tribe.

The first thing I remember is the hunting days of my father's and my mother's family. We used to go out in a group, hunting from place to place, and wherever we could find food we would settle down for a while. It would take about two or three months before the food was gone, then we would move on to another place. We used to make our camps from the barks of trees and in the wet season that was where we used to get shelter. Our people never learned to build houses or grow gardens, but they were very good hunters.

We used to go out with our parents, digging up yams. There are different round ones, which are what they call hot. They are like chillies, and have to soak in water before they can be eaten. But the really long ones, the ones that are a foot or eighteen inches long, they are the good ones. The long ones were brought back into the camp and cooked straight away for the children to eat. But the round ones were soaked in water over night, and they might have those for breakfast.

After breakfast we would go out hunting again, sometimes for wild honey. This is what we used to do: sometimes we went out hunting for yams, other times for wild honey. Our people used to go out with baskets made from the cabbage plant and they would bring back three or four of them filled with honey in the evening. Any man who could fill a whole basket with honey by himself, they would call him a champion. The next morning we would go out hunting again, this time for goannas, bandicoots, frill-neck or blue-tongue lizards, and we even went to the lagoons to look for the fresh water tortoise. The next day we would get some lily roots in the billabongs.

Those who had canoes would go out hunting for turtles and fish. Our canoes were made of paper bark, but it was the Makassas who came from Indonesia who taught our people to make dug-out canoes. They didn't use nets for catching turtles but they had harpoons and ropes which they twisted from bark.

When we went out hunting we had to keep within our own boundaries. The Maung people only lived on Goulburn Island and on the mainland right along to Junction Bay. We could not go inland because there the land belonged to the Gunwingu people. We could not go there unless by invitation. If they wanted us to go there and share some of their food and some of their fish

they would send a letter stick. And the next year we might have a good season and we would also invite other tribes. That is how they used to intermarry among different tribes.

In our traditional marriage there is no bride price. Usually, if a young girl has been promised to a young man they get married. They do not make payment, because they were promised. But if someone, as we now say, falls in love with a young girl, and if he really wants her and she wants him, and if they are right, then they can still get married, even if they were not promised. But then there will have to be a payment to the father and mother of that girl. In the olden days they used to give spears and fishing nets and dilly bags and flint stones. But now they give blankets, rolls of material, and flour, tea, sugar, tobacco and money — that is now.

Of course, sometimes, even if they were right in marrying one another, the people would not let them. In that case the young man and the young girl would make up their mind to run away: what we would call in our language *mararaij*. One night they would run away to another tribe and live there. In some cases they would return to their own tribe after two years, but if they still were not accepted, they might spend the rest of their lives with the other tribes. But their children would later have to go to their own tribe to be initiated.

As a young boy I had to learn to throw spears and dodge spears; I had to learn how to hunt; how to track the little bees that make the wild honey; how to track up wild animals. I had to learn to tell how old was a track, and where to find water, and how to swim. All these things I learned when I was very young.

I had to learn to be courteous to someone older than myself, learn to respect the very old people, and chiefly learn to respect my parents. We would learn never to enter another man's house: we had to call out and say that we were there. When we saw old people carrying bundles of wood or paper bark buckets with water we had to ask them if we could carry it into the camp for them. Often we had to light the fires at night.

With all the things we had to learn, we still found time for songs and games. I remember that we had many songs about birds; like this one about the jabiru:

When the tide is low
you can see the sandbanks
and the little water pools.
The jabiru is looking for fish
looking in every pool.
He walks up the sand bank
and down again into the pool.
He catches a fish: *chup!*

And we used to play the frill-neck lizard game. We danced round a tree singing:

You are going around the tree
and I am going around the tree.
You are going around the tree
and I am going around the tree.
Now you are going away!
A long way!
A long way!
A long way!

And with the last words of the song, the one who was playing frill-neck lizard had to climb quickly up the tree, right to the top.

Another game we used to play was about a bird called jawok. I do not know what they would call it in English, but we used to call it jawok. In October we used to hear that bird. We did not hear it during most of the year, but in October, November, December this bird came round. When we heard this bird talking, we used to know there were a lot of plums everywhere. Well, the jawok was blind, and when we were playing these games we had to tie something round one of the children's eyes, so he could not see. And this jawok would go around and catch people. I think that this jawok was once a man and this is what he used to do — he used to go around and catch people. So when we played this game one of the children played jawok and caught others, and the ones he had caught he made them lie down in a straight row and the others would run away and watch. Then he would say: 'I will go and collect some wood to make fire and cook you.' And when he returned with the wood all the little children would suddenly get up and run away.

And there is another game we used to play

Well, this is not a game, it is something we used to do. In the sand we used to draw tracks like a human man, or the track of a dog, or of a turtle coming up to lay its eggs or the track of a witchety grub. And they would see who made the best tracks and they would say: 'This one will be clever when he grows up, he will be able to draw or make some carvings.'

There were plenty of stories that our people would tell us. They used to tell us about the stars and the Milky Way that we could see up there at night. The story went that a shooting star at one time was a man, but the man died, and now his spirit lived up in the sky, going from place to place. And they told us about the Milky Way during the *Ubar* ceremony, and they used to say that the Milky Way that we see up there once used to be upon the earth.

They showed us the stars which you call the Great Bear, and they said: 'That is a kangaroo and a dingo is chasing it. The kangaroo and the dingo once sat under a tree and the kangaroo said to the dingo: 'Would you paint me? Please paint a picture of me.' And so the dingo got some bark and painted the kangaroo. And when he had finished he said to the kangaroo: 'You can paint *me* now!!' So he gave him a sheet of bark and the kangaroo started to paint the dingo. But when the kangaroo painted him he also started to paint his 'lower part' and the dingo got very cross and he said: 'What did you do that for! I did not do that on your painting, but you have done that to me!' And he started to chase the kangaroo, and he chased and chased and chased, so now they are up there in the north, still chasing, but the dingo can't catch the kangaroo.' And they told us that any time you see these stars in the sky you know that you are looking at the north. But I don't know if that is true.

My favourite story as a child used to be the story of the giant, Yumbarber, who lived in a thick jungle called Kaidjielek. This place is still called Kaidjielek on Goulburn Island today. The giant used to live there all on his own. Once a man who was called Mainail wanted to cut some vines. From those vines he would strip all the bark and then make some string for nets and dilly bags. The man went early one morning and he came to this place Kaidjielek. The giant was still asleep and he was snoring. The man wondered what that noise was. Not thunder — he looked around and there were no clouds. The sound grew louder as he walked deeper into the jungle. Then he saw a lot of large flies. 'What are these large flies coming at me for?' He looked around and saw the giant, who was just getting up. Manail had a shock and said: 'What am I going to do? I am in trouble.'

So the giant said to this man: 'What do you come here for?' And then he started to swear at him and use bad language.

The man said: 'I have come to cut some vines.'

'This is my boundary, you cannot come here.'

'I'll cut some vines.'

'If you want to cut vines, we'll have a fight.'

And the giant stood up and Manail stood along side him just like a little ant. And the giant said: 'You can have this fighting stick and I will have this one.' So the giant gave the man just one whack and sent him up in the air just like a ball and he bounced on the ground and lay unconscious. And the giant said: 'Get up and fight.'

The man could hear the giant talking but he did not say anything. He got up at last, and while the giant wasn't looking he took his stick and hit the giant's large testicles, and the giant dropped dead. And the ground shook. The man just collapsed right on top of the giant. And he got sick and he vomited and vomited and vomited. Then he walked to his home, about three miles away. For a while he was very sick and he could not tell his people anything, but at about sunset he got up and told them what he had done. And the people said: 'Let's go and see this giant.' And they went there at night and saw the great giant lying on the ground. And in the morning they took his two eyes out and one of the eyes they sent to east Arnhem Land and the other one they sent right out to the west. And we can still see his eyes as stars in the sky.

But his bones were left in that place and they turned into stones and you can still see these stones there. They look just like human bones, but they are stones.

I can still remember some of the tribal fighting that took place when I was young. Once there was a big fight over on the mainland, some thirty or forty miles from Goulburn Island. We went over for a ceremony. But to our surprise there were these people there — these people we would call *Milk*. They were spies. They came to find out where the camp was, how many people in it and from where. One day, towards four o'clock in the afternoon, these spies came. They came and pretended that they had come a long way and that they had seen some of our people over there. So we gave them food. We gave them wild geese that we had caught. But during the night these people went away and we said: 'After all, these people must be spies. They have left us now.' So the people in our camp got ready. They got all their spears and fighting clubs ready. Then at about two o'clock the next day there was a call. A lot of people were coming to fight. There were two groups of people. One group made this sort of noise:

tup waaaaaaaaah errrrrrrrr

and we knew that they came from the coastal side, but the other group of people made this sort of noise:

ka ka ka ka ka ka ka

and that meant they came from inland. And these two groups of people made a ring around us so our people could not get out. There were spears just like rain, but no one got hurt. People were very good at dodging spears, but of course myself and a lot of younger boys had run away into the bush and we watched these people fighting. We saw one knocked down by a club. One of our men knocked him over with a flat fighting club and another man got speared right through his foot. But none of our men got hurt.

They came back again the next day about noon to settle the trouble. It was something about someone having a gun. Somebody had told them a story that one of our people had a gun and that he had said he would shoot someone from their side. But it was not a true story. We never had a gun. It was a lie, and that is how the fight happened. So the trouble was settled and those people came back and made a big corroboree for us, and our people put on a corroboree for them. And the young women danced and we gave them presents and they gave some of our dancers presents. That is what we call *Yamalak*.

Life changed for me through the coming of the Europeans, the missionaries. But the first Europeans who came were not missionaries, they were trepang fishers. The first ones I saw were Joe Copper and Mr Brown, but there were some early ones whom I did not know. And there was Mr McPherson who mainly lived over on Goulburn Island. He had his house there, and his boat there, and he had everything there. Everybody liked him. They said he was a good man. Mr McPherson died on Goulburn. I suppose they said he drank a lot and one evening our people wondered what had happened to Mr McPherson and they went out in their canoes to the boat to see. They found Mr McPherson lying dead on his bunk in the boat. Then they picked him up and wrapped him up and put him in the dinghy and brought him ashore. That night, throughout the camp, everybody was mourning over Mr McPherson. They cried that night. They said he was a good man who used to help them. I remember as a little fellow I used to go to his house and he used to give me lollies and biscuits and maybe a cloth for my mother to make me something to wear. And on Christmas day he used to get all the people together and he would tell us: 'Well, this is the month of December; it is Christmas. That is when the baby Jesus was born. So we will celebrate Christmas.' And he would give presents to the people, blankets, trousers and shorts and tomahawks, knives and axes. And so our people knew Christmas before the missionaries came to them. Mr McPherson also used to bring a lot of alcohol to give to the people for Christmas, and that is how I knew him.

And after Mr McPherson's burial the people had a big corroboree round his grave. But there was a Malayan who had been working for him on the boat, and he collected all Mr McPherson's belongings and took them back to Darwin. And another boat came out with a policeman on board to come and inspect the body of Mr McPherson and then the boat went back again.

But some of the early Europeans were not friendly like Mr McPherson. There was Alan Spencer, who was killed in eastern Arnhem Land. They say he came from America. He was a crack shot and he often shot Aborigines. But I do not know the full story of his death. And there was another man, Mr Campbell. He was a very rough man, and he used to shoot the people too. I do not know which ones he shot, but I was told he shot a lot of Aboriginal people. Then he got killed by the native people from Junction Bay, Rowland Bay and Goulburn Island. About two or three of them went over and collected more men from the other groups until there were about ten of them. And one night they sneaked up and killed him. His body was taken away and buried and then the police came out and took all the ten of them away as prisoners and took them away to die. None of them returned except one. He came back when I was a man. He could hardly hear, he was very weak, very thin and he did not live long. About a year later he died. But all the rest of the prisoners died in jail. Those were the people who killed Mr Campbell.

But these European traders were not the first men to come to Goulburn Island. The first people who came to us were the Makassas who came from Indonesia to get trepang or beche-de-mer. I never met the Makassas, but my father saw them and he told me about them. They brought their water buffaloes with them and Timor ponies and pigs. It is through them that we got all these animals. They were a friendly people, but sometimes our Aboriginal people would get — I would put it this way — they would get a bit greedy and they would start to fight them. Many of them were killed by Aborigines along Malay Bay and along Maningrida way. You can still see some of their graves on Goulburn Island and elsewhere.

Wherever you see a tamarind tree, you know that the Makassas were there. This tree does not grow elsewhere in Australia but it grows in Arnhem land because of the Makassas. They brought tobacco and they used to teach our people how to smoke in those long pipes. They also brought alcohol and this is how our people learned how to drink. They used to have it in big blue bottles and it was very strong and sometimes it made people fight. They used to get turtle shells from our people and all kinds of other shells and stone axes and grinding stones. And in return they would give them tobacco, alcohol and materials. This is the first cloth the people used to get and they used to wear it like a Fijian *sulu*. But the Makassas used to call the cloth *leba* and the knives *badi* and the long pointed knives they called *yara*.

Some of our people went away with the Makassas and some of them came back and some of them didn't come back. We do not know what happened to them. They might have stayed and married and died there. And some of the ones who returned, they taught us how to make dug-out canoes. Some people say that we also learned to make carvings from the Makassas, but this cannot be true, because carvings are used in our oldest ceremonies, like the *Ubar* and the *Maraian*.

The first missionaries who came, our people found them a bit different to the other white people. They never found any missionaries who tried to fight them. They told them about Jesus and the love of God and they got them to work and they gave them food and clothes for working. Yet every now and again our people would argue with some of the missionaries. And even today some of our people do not agree with some things the missionaries say and they argue with them. They do not like to be told that some of their customs are bad. Then they turn around and start to argue. But they accept the missionaries, because they know that they have come a long way to live with them. They have left their own people behind to live with Aborigines. Now, of course, we have aeroplanes, we have wireless, but in the early days the missionaries' lives could be very lonely. When I was a little boy going to school, one day our teacher, Miss Matthews, was left all alone to run the mission — only one white lady. She was the one who had introduced basket work from Fiji and had taught it to our people. The superintendent and other missionaries had gone on leave and she had to do all the work that two or three men used to do, but

she managed to get on with all the people who didn't understand properly.

One day a man came from the mainland. He had seen a buffalo there and he said he wanted some bullets.

'What do you want the bullets for?' Miss Matthews asked.

'I want to shoot some buffaloes.'

'All right. We have a rifle here and I will give you the rifle but I have to write a letter and you will take this letter to the superintendent at Oenpelli and he will give you some bullets.'

So the man went over to Oenpelli and gave the letter to the man in charge. Oenpelli was not a mission station then, it was a government settlement — a government cattle station where they used to run a lot of cattle. When the manager saw the letter he felt there must be something wrong at Goulburn Island and he wrote a letter to the Administrator in Darwin, telling him that the lady wants some bullets. So shortly afterwards a big boat arrived at Goulburn Island with lots of sailors and soldiers and they came out with guns and ammunition. They landed two big launches which were full of soldiers and sailors. And there was this lady to meet them who they thought was dead. They asked her where was that lady and she said: 'I am here! Everything is all right.' They knew the story of the bullets and she said she had only wanted to shoot some buffaloes. Then the sailors and soldiers bought a lot of craft work — spears and flints and dilly bags — and took them all back to Darwin. And this is the story that tells how this lady was very lonely and how she could not have a place like today, with boats coming often from Darwin and some reaching here in a day.

When the first missionary came, we all ran away. We thought that it was another one of those rough men who had come. But after two weeks we returned to Goulburn Island and there was Mr Watson. And Mr Watson asked my father if he could let my sister and myself go to school. They wanted to know what school was and he said: 'It is a place where you learn how to read and to speak English, and you learn how to work, and when you grow up you become useful people.' My father was quite happy to let us go. But Mr Watson said: 'But they won't live with you. They'll live in a dormitory.' And my father said: 'All right, they can live in a dormitory. But at weekends they can come home and see us, perhaps?'

And so I went to school during the week and on weekends I came home. In the school I learned to read and write and to speak English. I also learned gardening. The first thing we had to plant was tomatoes. We had to get goat manure and water that and dig up the soil and make it soft. We planted pawpaws, bananas, beans, cabbages, and shallots. All these were used in the mission kitchen.

But during the weekends we went home to our people and we used to have many happy times in the camp. There we had to hunt for our food. The missionaries used to give us some food to take for our Christmas holidays. The first week we would eat that but the second week we would have to hunt for our food. We used to have a lot of food. We often caught more fish than we could eat. There were lots of crabs and oysters and those big nut crabs and turtle eggs, goannas and lilies.

And during this time we used to learn again about our own people. They would tell us the stories of the Aborigines.

At school they would not tell us the story of Goulburn Island, of how North and South Goulburn were once one island with no water separating them. This I was told in the camp. They said that there was once a big tree standing in the middle of the island: a paper bark tree. We would call it *waral*. And there was a little creek that was running right across the island and that was going out towards the east. It was just a little creek but there were lots of fish in it. The people who lived there would make a drum net, what we would call *yarlawoi*. They had three or four nets in the creek and every morning they dragged the nets onto the bank and they tipped the fish out that had got caught inside. But a certain man was sitting there and he was going around from place to place looking for fish, but no one would give him any. So all the bad fish, that they threw away, he used to pick

them up and he would cook them and eat them. And the next morning this went on the same and this went on for a long time. He would eat the bad fish because he was a hungry man.

One day the man thought of a plan. He said: 'What is this tree doing here? I know what I am going to do. I will cut this tree down and I will see what is going to happen.' So he got his stone axes and started to chip away at the tree. He did not cut it down in a day. It took him a long while. I do not know how many days. And people used to ask him: 'What for?' and he said: 'Oh, nothing.' Of course the people did not know that to chop down this tree would cause a flood. The man got tired and gave the tree some rest. But again he had to eat these smelly fishes, the really bad ones. And he said to himself: 'I am a poor man, I have no relations, no friends, I am all on my own. I will take revenge on those people, I will do something.' So he went and cut the tree. Every day he cut in and every day he ate the stinking fish. Even if they had maggots he had to eat them, he was so hungry. One day the tree was cracking. It looked as if it would soon fall down. So one day it did, it fell down. When the tree fell, the man said: 'Now I am a crow and I will fly up in the air and I will eat the bad fish. Anything that is full of maggots, I will eat it. I am a crow, I am bird.'

Then all the other men saw the flood coming. They saw the creek rising higher and higher, and it was getting bigger and bigger and they said: 'We will have to do something. We will turn ourselves into birds so we can fly.' Then some turned into pelicans, some into jabirus, some into brolgas, some into hawks, plovers, seagulls and eagles. They all flew up in the air but the crow just laughed and said: 'I have done something.'

And the creek separated North Goulburn from South Goulburn and all the birds we see today were once people, but now they are birds.

It was while I attended school that I had to take time off to attend the *Ubar* and the *Maraian* ceremonies. When they wanted to start an *Ubar* two men would have to go away to the bush for a year. And after a year they would come back to the camp, but not right to the camp. They would stay somewhere near and beat a tree so people would know they had come. Then two other men would go out to them and would join them for about a month. Then the two men who had joined them lately would return and they would come into the camp and sing the *naukuruk*. When they finished the women would call out: '*oipo oipo oipo oipo*'. Then the men would sing again and the women would call '*oipo oipo oipo*' and so on until they had finished all their songs. And these two men, that is, the messengers, would call the people to go into the *Ubar* ceremony, because the other men had made the ceremonial ground all ready. And they would take the young boys, the ones we would call *namangalara*, and take them to the *Ubar*. And they would show them the dancing and the songs and they would teach them the laws that they must keep. All the laws I was taught in the *Ubar* — now I can see they were very good. They were like the ten commandments, where it says that we should not steal, we should not kill, we should not lie, we should not take another man's wife. All these laws were laid down long before the missionary came.

After the *Ubar* they led us back to the *guiarambara*, that is the place where all the women are. And the women get up a tree and they call out *leda leda leda leda!* And they make a fire and warm the boys up or smoke them and that is to say that these young boys are now finished. They have been initiated in the ceremony. Then they wash the boys after the smoke and then they can go back to their mothers. But for two weeks they are not allowed to laugh in front of anybody. And at the end of that time they can laugh and they can come out and join the older boys.

As I grew older our teacher used to ask us what we were going to be when we grew up. 'Well,' I said, 'I would like to be a carpenter.' And she said I would have to go to another school and someone would have to teach me how to use a saw, a hammer, a square and how to read a ruler, a spirit measure and a tape measure. At first I did not agree with that, I thought that a bit hard for me. But as I grew older I thought, 'This is something that would

help me.' When I left school at about nineteen, I went to another dormitory and that is where I learned how to be a carpenter. That was my trade before I became a minister. I was a carpenter all my life.

After I had learned the trade I went away to Darwin and helped to build some houses. And then I went to the other Mission Stations and helped to build some houses there. This very house we are in now, I helped to build just after the war. And all the cottages that are around here, I helped to build them.

Sometimes when I am by myself, I think on how I became a carpenter and how from a carpenter I became a minister. I was not very impressed when I was young. I did not think much about the mission work. I never tried to be a missionary myself. I never thought about that before. I don't know what changed me. It was something I felt. I had been reading the Bible, but the Bible meant nothing to me. The Bible was just like reading a book. Until one day when I came back from down south, where I had been on deputation work, and I thought: 'Yes, I think my people need help. I must help them. I speak their language and that is the only way to win their souls.' That is how I thought about it and then I became a local preacher and from a local preacher, a minister.

But though I am a minister, I still go to my people's corroborees. I do not think we should get rid of the corroborees. They are good and we should keep them and the *Ubar* and the *Maraian*, because I have found out that the Church and the old ways in which the Aborigines used to do things in some way match together.

THE COMING OF DEATH

The Tiwi Myth of Purakapali and Tapara the Moon Man

as told by Sandra le Brun Holmes

IN THE DREAMING TIME for the Tiwi people of Melville Island there was no death, and Purakapali and his wife We-ai had already lived many many years without senility overtaking them.

A son was born to the two people and they called him Jinaini.

The man, his wife and his son lived in a bark hut, conical in shape on a beach with jungle country behind them.

Each day the man, Purakapali, went off to hunt and fish for moon fish, and his wife collected crabs, mangrove grubs and small game, or simply sat nursing her child.

They lived at peace until the attentions of Tapara, the moon man, who became enamoured of his brother's wife who was young and good to look at, and Tapara had no woman.

Tapara would watch the woman as she nursed her child and one day growing bold, and making sure the husband (his brother Purakapali) had gone he made his approach to the young woman.

Tapara was big and strong and also good to look at, and he had decked himself out with feathered head dress, etc. and, walking into the clearing, set down a bark bag with gifts for the woman. Then he began to sing a sort of love song to her, and began an erotic leg dance, singing and showing his desire. After a time he called to the woman that it was her turn to answer him. The young woman was attracted to Tapara and began to dance and sing a song of her desire. The two then danced close together and he touched her.

The woman put the baby boy in the shade of a tree and leaning against Tapara was led off into the bush.

The sun rose higher, hotter and hotter, and the tree shade moved exposing the baby to the fierce heat and insects. The child cried and cried but the mother stayed away all day with her lover, the moon man.

As the shadows lengthened and swamp birds were feeding on the edge of the mangroves, Tapara and We-ai, the young wife, returned laughing until they broke through the bush into the clearing. The woman screamed at the sight of her child, and at that moment Purakapali leaped through the bush thinking his woman was in danger, but sized up the situation in a flash. He rushed and picked up his child held his head on its chest and put his mouth to its lips. There was no heart beat, no breath.

With a great cry of anguish, the father raised the child high and turning round, sobbed and wailed, and began singing. What he sang was sorrow for the dead baby and revenge for its death.

The mother cowered on hands and knees on the ground, wailing and then hitting her head with a club.

The moon man reached out a hand to her and at this point the father quickly but gently placed the child's body under a piece of bark and seizing his two short throwing spears hurled them at Tapara who turned to run.

Seizing another spear and a club, Purakapali leaped upon his wife, dragged her round the

clearing beating her, then he threw her inert body onto the ground and sprang at Tapara who was forced to defend himself.

The two men fought round and round and Tapara, hard pressed, climbed a tree to escape, hotly pursued by Purakapali. To the top of the tree they climbed until Tapara could go no further. Then his brother gave a roar of triumph, climbing slowly and intently up to dispatch Tapara.

Tapara sang a magic song asking for help, and then he stepped off the tree, climbed the stars and hid in the moon. Purakapali could not follow, and, descending the tree, he danced wildly, tore his hair, sobbed and cried out in grief and frustration.

From the moon his brother called out for him not to be so upset, but to give the boy's body to him and as the moon waxed and waned so would the child. He said, 'When the moon is full you will have the boy, then he will sicken and die, but always come again.'

Purakapali shouted and waved aside such an idea saying that now death had come to the world and he would make the first *Pukamani* (mortuary) ceremony and ever after that men must die and what he did must be perpetuated.

At this stage an owl cried out and flew down landing on Purakapali's head. 'I will give you the painting designs,' said the bird.

Purakapali then made the poles and set them up around his son's grave. When they were set up he moved amongst them hanging on to this one and that, crying to each in turn his story and his sorrow.

As he sang other men came and sat down and began singing the responses, and slapping their thighs. Purakapali began the crocodile dance, then retired as another man did the courting and sex dance (with basket) etc.

Then the older women danced the breast milk dance and the father also performed this singing 'I feed my little son', etc. Various relevant dances were performed, and the women's dancing was led by We-ai, the mother, and her mother.

At the end of the dancing the father and mother rushed at the grave hurled themselves on it, weeping and crying, and the women hung onto the poles hitting themselves on the head with clubs.

The full moon looked down on all this and Tapara wept. Light rain fell on the inert bodies of the father and mother. The swamp birds walked past (curlews at night) and their eerie crying was the only sound.

Suddenly the father, Purakapali, rose up from the grave with raised hands walking like a man in a dream, tears running down his face which was a picture of intense pain and grief. Then he began to walk, still with raised hands, towards the sea. The tide was in, and its sound mingled with the crying of the curlews. The man walked on into the sea to drown himself, leaving the moonlight to light the grave, the poles and the woman lying on the grave.

PIDGIN SONGS

FLAWA

Win i ron antap i kam
Bai i kisim yupela i go
Mi laik lukim husat gen?

Flawa i mak bilong mitupela
I stap long yu na yu lukim
Inap long taim mi kam bek gen

WANPELA MERI

Wanpela meri
I karai long mi
Na mama i tok
Mi no nap yet
Long marit.

Wanpela meri
I karai long mi
Na mama i tok
Mi no nap yet
Long marit.

YU LAIK

Yu laik mi paitim gita
Lala la la la la
Yu laik mi paitim gita
Olosem a mi noken lusim yu.

Yu laik mi tupela marit
Lala la la la la
Yu laik mi tupela merit
Olosem a mi noken lusim yu.

WEL PIK

Mi daunim wanpela wel pik.
I silip long bel bilong mi.
Mi daunim wanpela wel pik.
I silip long bel bilong mi.

Yu yu girap
Yu kilim dai mi
Tomoro bun long wara Yiriu.

CREATION

The creation story of the Nehan people

told by Leo Hannet

TIMBEHES THE GREAT MOTHER

AT THE BEGINNING no one lived on Nehan Island, except our great mother goddess. Her name was Timbehes, which means mother of fertility. She lived at Hohou, which means place of sleep. Timbehes created all things.

Timbehes's pet was a large pig called Bungtione. Bungtione slept at Barahun. You can see the big hole where he wallowed near the shore, filled with blue sea. When Bungtione grunted you might think it was big waves pounding the cliffs.

Timbehes also had a pet butterfly. It was called Sisiklik. It was very beautiful and Timbehes loved it very much.

Timbehes had everything — bananas, gardens of taros — she had everything she wanted.

TIMBEHES GIVES BIRTH

Timbehes had everything but no children. Then one day she got a banana and pushed it into her vagina. Later on a child was born, and she called him Bangar. Then she produced another son, whom she called Lean. Her third child was a girl, whom she called Sisianlik.

Her children grew up and played together. But after so many moons they had grown up, and they had no one to marry.

THE FIRST COUPLE

But the mother goddess had a plan. She called her eldest son, Bangar, and told him thus: 'Bangar, my son, go and lie down in the house and pretend to be sick and groan in a loud voice. Sleep near the fire. Then I will tell your sister Sisianlik to come and attend to your need. When she comes, you must lie immodestly, so that your sister will fall in love with you.'

Bangar did as he was told. When his sister Sisianlik came, she saw her brother sleeping in a seductive manner. But she merely gave her brother food and built up the fire and left. She was not tempted.

But her mother sent her again to look after Bangar. Bangar tempted her again and this time Sisianlik could not resist any longer. She made love to her own brother. Bangar and Sisianlik thus became the first husband and wife, and they produced many children. Timbehes was happy.

THE ORIGIN OF CANNIBALISM

One day Bangar and his brother Lean were playing near a fire. The fire was not blazing, but gave out thick smoke. Bangar challenged his brother to jump over the fire. Bangar pretended that he had already jumped over it. Actually he had merely walked across to the other side, behind a screen of smoke. Lean believed his elder brother and obeyed. But just as Lean jumped, the fire suddely blazed into flame and Lean was caught and fell into the fire and burnt to death. Bangar was helpless and could not save his brother.

But when the wood had burnt out and the flames had subsided, Bangar recovered his brother's body. The hot body of his dead brother burnt his finger and Bangar licked it, to cool it. Then he found that his brother's body tasted sweet. And that is how we began to eat man.

THE ORIGIN OF THE COCONUT

Everybody was sorry for Lean. They all mourned him. Bangar took Lean's skull, and sadly decorated it with red clay. Then he placed the skull onto a stump, in an honorable position at the right side of his house.

Bangar was surprised to see that a tree grew out of the skull: a kind of tree nobody had ever seen before. That tree was the coconut. It was a very short tree, but it grew bunches and bunches of coconuts, that were resting on the ground. The tree never grew any taller. But each one of the nuts resembled a human head, because it had grown from Lean's skull.

HOW THE COCONUT TREE GREW TALL

One day Sisianlik was sweeping around the house. When she grew tired she sat down to rest on a bunch of coconuts. That was a most shameful thing to do, for she had failed to respect the tree that had grown out of her brother's head. So immediately that coconut tree grew very tall, right up into the sky. From that day on all coconut trees grew tall and out of the reach of women. Until this day no woman must climb a coconut tree, because it is disrespectful for a woman to be above a man.

HOW THE COCONUT SPREAD TO OTHER PLACES

That first coconut grew so far into the sky, that its crown could not be seen any more. Then one day Timbehes called all the creatures together, men, animals and birds, and asked them to compete in trying to reach the top of the coconut tree. Many men tried, but all failed. They got short of breath and they became hungry and thirsty and so had to turn back. The animals and the birds also tried, but they too failed. They got short of breath and they became hungry and thirsty and so all had to return to the ground, without having reached the top.

Then it was the turn of the flying fox. The flying fox was wise. It prepared for the trip very well. It took some food with it on the journey. Because of its many claws, it could take extra food. The flying fox climbed up and up. When it got hungry it rested for a while and ate some of the food. Then it continued until all lost sight of it.

When it finally reached the top, the flying fox began to distribute coconuts to all parts of the world. The largest coconuts were thrown right onto Nehan Island, because they were too heavy to throw far away. To other islands, further away, it could only throw the smaller nuts. That is why we still have the largest coconuts on Nehan. But the islands furthest away could not get any coconuts at all, because the flying fox could not throw them that far.

HOW THE CLANS WERE FORMED

Timbehes the mother goddess now had many grandsons and granddaughters from the marriage of Bangar and Sisianlik. She decided to separate them into different groups and to allow them to marry. So one day she made a big feast at Hohou. There were many baskets of food spread out in long lines in the village. The baskets contained different kinds of food, as well as meat and fish. When the feast was all set, she called all the grandchildren and said to them: 'Pick any food you like. Choose whatever you wish. But any food you refuse to choose today, that food shall always remain sacred to you, and you shall never eat it again.'

So all came and picked their choice. Some picked all types of food, except the basket containing breadfruit and dove. So the dove and

the breadfruit became sacred to them and Timbehes forbade them to eat these. So now they belong to the clan of the dove.

Others did not pick the food from the basket that contained the eagle and the red yam. To these the eagle and the red yam became sacred, and they now belong to the clan of the eagle.

And those who refused to choose pig, belong to the clan of the pig, and so on. In this way, all our clans were formed.

Finally Timbehes told the various clans to marry among themselves, but she forbade them to marry within their own clan.

So this is the story of how the Nehan people descended from Timbehes the great mother goddess.

THE MIGRATION OF THE GIRIDA TRIBE

recorded by Arthur Jawodimbari

THIS STORY WAS HANDED DOWN from father to son throughout the generations. I, Elsie Duna, heard it from my grandmother. I am now telling it to my son.

About four generations ago, the Girida tribe lived on the border of Papua and New Guinea. My grandmother did not tell me where they came from or when they came to that place. This tribe lived in the place called Tewara. In this place there were two other tribes who were unfriendly to the Girida. But the other tribes, the Buku Jimena and Jia Waria were not as aggressive as the Girida people.

One day, the Girida people planned to kill most of the people of the other two tribes. They told the other tribes that they were building a huge ceremonial house called Oro Ario to terminate the tribal fights. The Girida tribe promised that the building of the Oro Ario house would be the symbol of peace. They then asked the other tribes to participate in its construction.

Before long, everyone was engaged in the construction of the Oro Ario. Only the middle aged women did not take part in the building, because they had to cook food for the workers. Within a short space of time the house took shape. The only part that still remained incomplete was the roof. The young men and women were sent to get sago leaves (*siroro*) for the roof. Everyone returned home, except two young boys from the Buku Jimena tribe. These young men were strolling along the footpath, because they had arranged to meet their lovers.

The young man who was leading the way heard some murmuring sounds in the bush and signalled the other young man to stop. They listened attentively, while their hearts were beating faster. The leader of the Girida tribe was telling his men what they would do when the house was completed. He said: 'Brothers, you all know that the house is nearly complete, but still those foolish people do not know our plan. As soon as the house is complete, we will put food in the house and we will ask everyone to go in. But all our warriors will stay outside, while our old men and women will accompany the other people.'

As soon as they arrived back, the two young men told their leaders what the chief of the Girida people had said. The word passed around among the warriors. The leaders told the people not to betray their feelings to the Girida people. They were told to work enthusiastically on the Oro Ario, but to hide spears, clubs and shields near the ceremonial house at night.

When the house was completed a very big feast was held. Everyone brought his best crops from the garden and prepared them for the feast. Late in the afternoon, everyone was asked to enter the Oro Ario and celebrate the completion of the house. The warriors of the other tribes persuaded their old people to enter together with the Girida people. The leader of the Girida tribe was impatient. He asked the warriors of the other tribes to go in quickly, but they declined. They said: 'Our old people have gone and so are your old people. Since you

are the organisers of this feast, you must go in first and get everything ready in there. Then we will follow you.'

The Girida tribesmen were scarcely in the house, when the fight broke out. The Girida people were not able to fight, as they were already in the enclosure. Many men, women and children were slaughtered. The Girida warriors were scattered and slain. A few fled into the bush and some put out to sea in their canoes. They started to sail towards sunrise. The heads of the families who put out to sea were: Yaura, Paporo, Aruga, Biaga, Dorei and Veu.

After a few days at sea, these drifters landed near Ambasi, on a lonely shore. They established a village on the hill called Unu Pamo. They did not give up their aggressiveness and cannibalism. They were threatening the nearby tribe called Duna Ungi. At last the people of Duna Ungi felt they could not tolerate these aggressors any more and they decided to wipe them out. A fight broke out and both sides suffered. The people of Girida decided to sail on. But Biaga, Dorei and their sons decided to settle at Ambasi. They said: 'A tree has to have buttresses to support it. The Pandanus tree too has to be supported by its roots that are sticking out in all directions. We will divide ourselves, so that if one group falls victim to the enemies, others will carry on the name of our tribe.'

Those who put out to sea sailed on towards sunrise. The people were accompanied by the seagulls, their totem birds. (It is believed that the sea gulls are their dead ancestors.) The people relied on the seagulls' guidance all through their journey. The people followed their direction, and if the seagulls stopped at some place, the people stopped too. By doing this, they escaped storms and rough sea. After some time they arrived at the mouth of the big river called Ope. The seagulls headed towards the source of the river and the Girida people followed in their canoes.

Thus the Girida wanderers reached the source of the river where the Aiga tribes lived. They established a village, but even now they would not change their aggressive mood. Their presence menaced the Aiga tribes. Before long, some innocent Aiga men and women were killed. The Aiga tribes met together and decided to drive out the intruders. One morning a surprise attack was made on the Girida families. Some people were killed, but the rest managed to paddle down to the mouth of the river.

At the mouth of the river they were received by the big man of the Vitaia clan. This big man, Tabe, lived at Duvera Pamo. He gave a piece of land to the Girida families and they established a village. They lived happily with Tabe's tribe. However, one of the influential men, Yawara, fell in love with Tabe's wife. Whenever Tabe went out fishing, Yawara used to sleep with Tabe's wife. One day Tabe returned from fishing and found a piece from a wig made of the lower stalk of the betel nut tree under his wife's mat. Tabe knew immediately who owned such a wig.

Tabe presented a huge bunch of betel nut fruit with the piece of wig he had found under his wife's mat to his men. The people of Gonini Tutu and Ambasi Koina boiled in their stomachs. Word was sent far and near about the up-coming fight. Toaba the big man of Siabe (inland of Ambasi) heard about the coming fight. He could not do anything to save the Girida families, but he decided to save just one young man. He sent a message to the young man, who was named Sindariba. He said: 'Sindariba, I am starving up here. So come up and make sago for me.' Sindariba accepted the job that Toaba had offered to him and so unwittingly he stepped out of the menacing circle of Tabe's warriors.

When Sindariba returned, many of his people had been killed. Some put out to sea again, in their usual fashion, and headed towards sunrise, accompanied by the seagulls and the sharks. (It was believed that these sharks were the spirits of the men killed by Tabe's men.) Sindariba entered the village and found many cuscus, lizards and other animals. These animals shed tears and Sindariba too wept bitterly. He returned to Siabe with the sole survivor, his younger brother.

Sindariba married one of the daughters of Toaba. He and his brother were given land to make a garden and to establish a village. They called their village Viru Geite and it can be seen

(*Bill Tody is back with her.*)

BILL TODY: Here you are. (*He hands the cigarettes to her.*) Shall we go? (*He puts his hand around her waist and they go out hand in hand. The girl is walking very demonstratively.*)

APPRENTICE: Lukim tupela go bambai tupela go bakarapim stret. (*They watch them go out.*)

KASMUT: Lukim kain wokabaut bilong em, bilong yu tasol hia, wantok. Em masta bambai

to this day. Sindariba's wife gave birth to four sons, and of those four sons the youngest was my father, named Borua.

The other families who had put out to sea decreased in numbers as they travelled towards sunrise. Some of Biaga and Dorei's sons settled at Katuna and their descendants are still living there. The other two families sailed on till they reached the village called Basabuga. My husband's great grandfather was received by the Yega tribe, one of the coastal tribes of the Orokaiva people. Aruga died and left his sons among the Yega tribe. The descendants of Aruga are now one of the twelve clans that make up the Yega tribe.

Veu and his sons settled at Garara on the other side of the lagoon. The descendants of Veu now form one of the clans of another tribe that lives next to the Yegas. There are still close ties between Aruga's descendants and Veu's descendants. They perform different types of dances, which they learned from those other people. They respect the concept of those dances and will not allow others to perform them.

Before these Girida drifters moved down the coast, the people living there did not know how to make outrigger canoes. The Giridas settled among these coastal people and taught them the skilful way of making canoes. Sindariba taught the people of Oma Bonadu his fighting skills and his canoe-making skills. This was by way of retaliation against the Aiga tribe, who were enemies of the Oma Bonadu. The youngest of Aruga's sons made himself the leader of the warriors and the big man among the Yega tribe. He remained the great leader till the white man arrived in our land. He was known by the famous name of Jawodimbari.

Here I end my story. This story was told to me twice. It was first told me by grandmother and then my father told me the same story after I married. He told me that I am the descendant of Biaga and that my husband is the descendant of Aruga.

THE GOOD WOMAN OF KONEDOBU

A Play by Rabbie Namaliu

CHARACTERS

IREA RAKA A young beautiful prostitute from Konedobu
BURUS KAMIR A young Niuginian clerk just come into Port Moresby
AN APPRENTICE A friend of Burus Kamir who has been in Port Moresby for a long time
KASMUT A friend of the Apprentice and later of Burus Kamir
BILL TODY A friend of Irea Raka
A POLICEMAN

SCENE ONE

The Kontiki band has come into the Kone Tavern and has been playing for about an hour. The band now stops for a spell and the crowd disperses back to the tables. They have all been standing around the band watching it play and also dancing to the music.

BURUS KAMIR: (*to his friend, the Apprentice*) Wantok, dispela meri i wok long danis ol taim hia, em bilong husat?

APPRENTICE: (*replying*) Ai, yu askim long em. Em bilong planti man hia. Olsem yu nupela wan tok na yu no save gut long Mosbi yet.

BURUS KAMIR: (*eager to find out more about her*) No, has bilong em tasol hia i laik danis no kaikai, bilong em yet.

APPRENTICE: Na yu ting yu laik traim, bambai yu hangamap hia, wantok. Yu lukim dres bilong em hia, yu nap long paim narapela olsem?

BURUS KAMIR: Hia, yu no skirapim bel.

APPRENTICE: No, olsem mi laik tokim yu tasol wantok. Olsem nau hia, man strong kisim. Laik bilong wanwan.

BURUS KAMIR: Em bilong we? (*Suddenly she gets up and walks across presumably to the toilet and Burus Kamir catches a glimpse of her.*) Wantok, lukim, lukim, em i wokabaut i go. (*And he shouts across.*) Nan . . . se. Sore, Peles i long we tumas.

APPRENTICE: Yu lukim em i lap. Em kain bilong em olsem. Sapos em save planti man i wok long lukim em, bambai em i sampong mo, mo, yet. Em i ken wokim ol kain pasin long skirapim bel tasol. Em i laik putim dres, em i laik danis, em i laik wokabaut na bambai yu sek nogut tru olsem nau yu lukim.

BURUS KAMIR: Pes na tupela susu bilong em tasol hia. (*And he grinds his teeth together.*) Ol save paim em tu, no nogat?

APPRENTICE: Hai, yu ting bambai yu kisim nating. Trausis, bambai buruk pastaim, long em i tok yes. Fifty dollars, hundred dollars i no magi. Olsem na ol masta i save bukim em ol taim.

BURUS KAMIR: Yu tok tru o giaman?

APPRENTICE: (*calls Kasmut*) Kasmut, Kasmut, yu kam pastaim.

KASMUT: (*comes over*) Wonem?

APPRENTICE: (*introduces Kasmut to Burus Kamir*) Burus, Kasmut wanpela peren bilong mi na em bilong Madang Burus i tok me giamanim hia long Irea.

KASMUT: Irea husat?

APPRENTICE: Oloman, yu nupela. Irea Raka, hap pilo bilong yupela hia.

KASMUT: O . . . em, na yu tokim em olsem wonem?

APPRENTICE: No, em i askim mi long Irea na mi tokim, em bilong planti man. Sapos yu gat fifty o hundred dollar, orait bambai yu nap. Sapos nogat bambai i no nap.

KASMUT: (*turning to Burus*) Wantok, em tru yet. Em wanpela long ol meri bilong Kone Tawan yet. Sapos yu gat nap bambai yu nap go. Nau yu lukim em wantaim ol masta long wonem ol igat planti mani. Yu ting kain meri olsem bambai tok yes nating. Em meri bilong askim planti. Planti samting tumas olsem sigaret, bia, dres na ol kain samting olsem.

BURUS KAMIR: Ol sampela bilong yumi i save go tu o nogat? (*She gets up again.*) Lukim, lukim em i go gen. Nan . . . se. Lukim has bilong em.

KASMUT: Nau yu lukim. Olsem mi tupela tok pinis sapos yu gat nap yu ken nap go. Planti man tumas save mangalim em tasol sampela tasol i save winim em.

BURUS KAMIR: (*turning to Apprentice*) Yu nap kisim tripela bia mo?

APPRENTICE: Mani kam. (*Burus hands him the money and he goes off.*)

KASMUT: (*back to the conversation*) Yes, nau sapos ben i stat gen bambai lukim em, em inamaban tru long danis. Em i laik danis no kaikai bilong em yet.

BURUS KAMIR: Tupela lek bilong em tasol hia sapos em i givim mi bambai mi pinisim olgeta. (*And he demonstrates by his mouth.*) Yu ting sapos mi go askim em long danis bambai orait?

KASMUT: Ating bambai yu no nap hia.
(*Meanwhile the band goes back on the stage and begins playing again.*)

BURUS KAMIR: Hai dispela man we nau hia? O, em kam.

APPRENTICE: Mi paim tripela ram na cok long wonem bia no save kik gut.

BURUS KAMIR: Em orait. Sindaun na em bambai tokim yu.

KASMUT: (*to Apprentice*) Em laik go taraim askim Irea long danis wantaim em na mi tokim em bambai i no nap.

APPRENTICE: Wantok, ating bambai yu no nap hia. Dispela kain pamuk meri mi tupela tokim yu longen, em dia tumas.

BURUS KAMIR: Bambai mi taraim. Mi laik holim em na simelim em tasol. Em tasol. Yumi go sanap klostu liklik long ben.

KASMUT: Koan. (*And they move close to where Irea is dancing.*) Lukim, samting bilong em yet. Lukim hia na maus bilong em. Lukim em tanim has bilong em.

BURUS KAMIR: Ben pinis bambai mi go askim em long taim ben i stat gen.
(*The band starts playing another hit.*)

BURUS KAMIR: Em nau. (*He goes over to where Irea is standing.*) Orait sapos mi danis wantaim yu?

IREA RAKA: (*very indigantly spits at him*) Yu husat? Husat nem bilong yu? Yu bilong we?

BURUS KAMIR: Mi tok mi laik danis wantaim yu. Sapos yu laikim nem bilong mi, orait mi Burus Kamir bilong Niugini.

IREA RAKA: (*very angry*) Yu-u. Nogat, mi no laik. Raus! Get lost, you bush kanaka. I don't know you.

BURUS KAMIR: Mi gat mani sapos yu laikim mi paim yu long danis. Mi laikim danis wantaim yu, em tasol.

IREA RAKA: Yu — Yu no save long liklik long danis na yu kam askim long danis, mangi nating. Go away, you stupid idiot.
(*Burus Kamir very embarrassed. Turns back and walks towards his friends.*)

KASMUT: (*to Apprentice*) Hai, baga hia kam bek.

APPRENTICE: (*Burus back*) Yes, wantok olsem wonem?

BURUS KAMIR: (*swearing*) Bladi baset. Pamuk baset. Mi askim em long danis em i no laik na rausim mi olsem wanpela mangi. Mi askim em tasol na em koros nogut tru.

KASMUT: (*laughing very loudly*) Em mipela tokim yu pinis na yu no laik harim toktok bilong mipela.

APPRENTICE: (*also laughing*) Man aste tasol long yu na yu no harim toktok liklik. Olsem nogat meri tru long peles bilong yumi.

BURUS KAMIR: Orait, bambai i go we. Peles bilong yumi hia, Kone Tavern.

APPRENTICE: Nogat pamuk meri olsem yet hia. Sapos em save long yu na i save long yu gat planti mani bambai orait sapos nogat bambai i no nap tru, bambai yu lus.

BURUS KAMIR: Mi no askim em long wok. Mi askim em tasol long danis na em i koros. Mi tokim em mi gat mani sapos em laik mi paim em long danis wantaim em.

APPRENTICE: Tasol yu rong hia. Laka, Kasmut yu no laik isi liklik.

KASMUT: Em tru, mi tupela tokim yu pinis na yu no laik harim toktok. Tasol sapos yu laik yu ken traim em gen long sampela taim bihain. Tasol take it easy, laik bilong wanwan.

BURUS KAMIR: Nogat ating sapos mi go na traim em gen bambai orait, long wonem, em save long nem bilong mi nau. Mi tokim em long nem bilong mi.

APPRENTICE: Orait, laik bilong yu sapos yu no laik harim tok. Bambai em hamarim yu gen hia. Em i no save kadim kain man olsem yumi. Yumi ol lusman hia, nogat mani.
(*Burus strolls along to the table where she is sitting and very cautiously stands beside her.*)

KASMUT: (*shouts to Burus*) Laik bilong wanwan. Girisim em gut, bambai i go hia.
(*The band starts playing another popular hit.*)

BURUS KAMIR: (*Bending down very carefully he asks her again.*) Mi laik danis wantaim yu. Bambai yu kam danis wantaim mi nau o nogat? Mi laikim yu tumas, mi laik danis wantaim yu. Yu tasol wanpela gutpela meri mi mangalim tumas.

IREA RAKA: (*in Motu which she often speaks just to show off that she knows how to speak it.*) Hi — He Marai las. Yu husat? Mi no save long yu.

BURUS KAMIR: Hai mi no save long tok Motu na yu tok Motu long mi. Mi askim yu tasol, long danis wantaim mi. Olsem yu gutpela meri tru long danis na mi kam askim yu long traim danis wantaim yu.

BILL TODY: (*being brought to his attention says to her*) Tell him to get lost, Irea. (*He shouts at Burus.*) Go away and leave her alone.

BURUS KAMIR: (*embarrassed withdraws very quickly and joins his friends*) Nau mi save. Dispela masta bambai tringim bulut bilong em wanpela taim.

IREA RAKA: (*to Bill Tody*) Darling, can you get me another drink and another packet of Rothmans please?

BILL TODY: Yes, sure. What will you have this time?

IREA RAKA: I want a gin squash please. And also a tin of peanuts and Rothmans, OK?

BILL TODY: Anything else? Is that all?

IREA RAKA: Oh, and a glass of whisky.

BILL TODY: Are you sure that's all you want?

IREA RAKA: Sure.

(*Bill Tody goes to the bar to buy the things.*)

KASMUT: Mipela tokim yu pinis bambai yu no nap. Masta hia tok wonem long yu?

BURUS KAMIR: Mi askim meri hia long danis na masta kirap na tok long pamuk meri hia long rausim mi. Bladi white baset. Ating em lus tru long peles bilong em long meri na kam girisim ol pamuk nabaut.

KASMUT: Em pamuk meri hia em kaikai bilong ol masta yet. Sampela long yumi tu i save go. Tasol ol save kisim planti mani tu na gat bikpela save.

APPRENTICE: Wantok i mo beta yu larim em. Mi harim sampela wantok tok pinis sapos yu lus tru baim balus, go long peles. Maski larim em. Em i no gutpela meri tumas. Em pamuk meri hia.

BURUS KAMIR: Orait, yu tupela ken tok olsem, na hatim bel. Inap yu tupela wet long tripela mun?

APPRENTICE: Bambai yu mekim wonem?

KASMUT: Bambai yu go long peles. Em orait sapos yu laik go bek long peles na painim meri em gutpela tumas.

BURUS KAMIR: Yu tupela wet bambai yu tupela lukim.

APPRENTICE: No olsem peles bilong lus hia. Sapos yu laik yumi ken painim wanpela long yu. Sapos yu laik yumi ken go long Hanuabada na painim.

BURUS KAMIR: Nogat (*very emphatically*) Mi laikim Irea. Em i ken wet. Em i ken hambak. Mi laikim kaikaim maus na holim susu bilong em tasol hia. Em inap bambai yu tupela lukim.

KASMUT: Oloman yu lus tru o yu tok pilai tasol. Sapos yu laik yumi ken painim wanpela long yu.

BURUS KAMIR: (*sounding more determined than ever*) Nogat, mi no tok pilai. Long tripela mun bambai mi putim olgeta mani long bank. Long tripela mun pinis bambai mi tokim yu tupela gen long kam trink wantaim mi na Irea long hia. Harim yu tupela gen lap tasol mi tokim yu tupela wetim mi long tripela mun.

KASMUT: Kusai bilong yu no liklik. Orait, bambai mi tupela wet na lukim.

APPRENTICE: Orait bambai mi tupela lukim. Sikan long mi tupela. (*They shake hands as a promise.*) Sapos yu man tru, wantok.

(*Meanwhile it is ten o'clock, time for the band to stop playing.*)

BILL TODY: Shall we go? Or do you want anything moie before we go — a packet of Gold Leaf perhaps?

IREA RAKA: Go and buy me another Rothmans. Not Gold Leaf for me, thanks. That's the last cigarette I'll ever smoke.

BILL TODY: What's wrong with Gold Leaf? Anyway, can you wait here while I go and get it?

IREA RAKA: Yes I'll wait here — and Rothmans, not Gold Leaf. Gold Leaf is too inexpensive for me thanks.

BURUS KAMIR: (*While Bill Tody is at the bar*) Hey! (*And he tries to attract her attention by making a noise. She looks at them*) Yumi go. (*And he points towards town making the sign for her to go with him.*)

IREA RAKA: He, Marai las. No gat sem bilong yu. Yu lus tru paim balus. (*And she turns away from them.*)

BURUS KAMIR: Orait, yu ken tok olsem, yumi go we, peles bilong yumi hia. Kone Tavern tri mun ino long we tumas. Yu ken wet.

BURUS KAMIR: (*to the Apprentice*) Yu nam baim sampela bia mo na tupela wiski na ice. Na wanpela tin pinat — Gallip. Yu save? (*He gives him some money*).

IREA RAKA: Em olgeta hia wantok bilong yu? Yupela bilong wonem hap long Niu Gini?

BURUS KAMIR: Olgeta wantok bilong mi. Mipela kam long Madang. Yu go long Madang pinis o nogat?

IREA RAKA: Long taim. Mi go pinis long olgeta hap long Niu Gini long Rabaul, Kavieng, Buka, Manus. Mi bilong Lae.

APPRENTICE: (*returning with more drinks*) Em nau. Em tupela hia na Gallip bilong yu tupela.

KASMUT: Burus, yu bin paim trausis hia we?

BURUS KAMIR: (*for the sake of Irea where in fact it was a lie*) Mi bin paim long Australia long taim mi go daun long year i go pinis. Mi paim long Sydney na siot tu. Sydney mo, mo yet long ol dispela samting.

IREA RAKA: (*clutching close to him*) Yu no tokim mi yu bin go long Australia. Hm . . . m yu smell nais tru. Na yu bin stap hamas mun?

BURUS KAMIR: Mi bin stap long Sydney long sikispela mun olgeta. Em bikpela tumas, i no olsem Mosbi. Mosbi em mangi nating. Mi bin wok long wanpela ofis bilong Reserve Bank.

KASMUT: I gat planti hotel tu, long Sydney? Atink i gat planti meri tu hia.

BURUS KAMIR: Yu askim long hotel. Man planti tumas, meri samting nating. Nau sapos yu wokabaut long rot long Sydney bambai i no long taim wanpela meri kam kisim yu long kar.

IREA RAKA: Yes Burus, mi laikim yu tumas bambai mi tupela go wantaim long haus bilong yu o bambai yu kam wantaim mi. Kain danis bilong yu mo, mo yet.

BURUS KAMIR: Bambai mi kam wantaim yu. (*And he winks at her and holds her close.*) Dispela trink pinis bambai yumi go laka.

IREA RAKA: Mi laik trink liklik mo. (*Everyone is watching every step they make as if it were a two people show.*)

APPRENTICE: Bladi baset, baga his kisim olsem wonem; lukim tupela olsem tupela niupela marit nau hia.

KASMUT: Mi ting se em, i tok pilai tasol hia, long taim em tokim yumi tupela long putim olgeta mani long bank. Hei lukim ai bilong tupela. Tete bambai boi hia wok stret.

APPRENTICE: Aste tasol em kam na em winim Irea pinis. Na yumi hia munmun yiar yiar no itrai tru. Sapos tupela kam bek, bambai yumi tupela paim sampela trink mo laka.

KASMUT: Nogat em bambai no ken larim yumi go paim trink bilong yumi. Em bambai Burus strong yet long paim hia.

Hei, hei, lukim tupela dres hia flai olsem wanpela balus nau hia! Lukim ol man na meri ol no trink mo ol lukim tupela tasol.

BURUS KAMIR: (*back at the table*) Yu pinisim dispela trink na yumi go laka.

IREA RAKA: Nogat. Hariap bilong wonem i no taim yet. Yu gat pikinini long haus? Mi stap mi ken lukautim yu sapos yu spak.

Mi laikim wanpela wiski mo na wanpela paket Stuyvesant.

BURUS KAMIR: Orait. Kasmut inap yu kisim tupela paket wiski mo na wanpela paket Stuyvesant. Na sampela bia mo. Bilong yupela mani hia. (*He hands him a note and Kasmut goes to the bar.*)

APPRENTICE: Yu tupela laik go nau long haus?

IREA RAKA: Nogat Burus seksek na em laikim mi tupela go kwik long haus. Yu no wari. (*And she fondles his back.*)

BURUS KAMIR: No atink mi spak pinis hia nogut mi pundaon long rot na ol polis kisim mi i go long rum gat.

IREA RAKA: Yu seksek, ha? Mi laik danis mo wantaim yu. Sapos yumi danis mo bambai yu no ken spak tumas olsem bambai danis i kirapim het bilong yu. (*Kasmut comes back with the drinks.*)

BURUS KAMIR: Orait yumi trink pinis yumi tupela go laka. Het raon pinis hia nogut trovel kamap.

IREA RAKA: Yumi danis sampela mo. Mi laikim tumas kain danis bilong yu. Plis yumi stap liklik mo. Bambai yumi go tasol mi laik bambai yumi stap trink liklik mo na danis mo orait yumi ken go long haus.

(*They have another dance.*)

BURUS KAMIR: No mi les pinis, mi laik yumi go nau. Mi laik bambai yumi go long haus na yumi ken trink na danis mo long hap. Yu swit tumas. (*He presses her closer to him as they dance.*)

(*Their friends are following every movement Burus and Irea make.*)

APPRENTICE: Atink Burus spak pinis hia, na em laikim tupela go long haus nau.

KASMUT: We hia, em giaman em tasol hia. Em laik wok hia, em no spak. Tru yu save pasin bilong yumi ol Niugini yumi no save wet. Samting yumi kisim yumi mas go yet.

APPRENTICE: Lukim, tupela. Man, ol man i no trink mo, ol lukluk tasol. Man, Burus lainim danis we? Nau tasol mi lukim em danis.

KASMUT: Atink em lainim long Australia hia long taim i go.

APPRENTICE: I go we hia? Em i no bin go long Australia. Em giamanim yumi hia, mi save long em. Em nambawan taim tru long lusim peles hia na em kam long Mosbi i no long Australia.

(*The band stops playing and again Irea and Burus are applauded. They come back and join Kasmut and the others.*)

BURUS KAMIR: Yumi pinisim trink na yumi go laka, Irea. Em klostu taim bilong pinis nau, het i raon pinis. Mi laik silip nau sapos yumi wet liklik mo bambai polis kisim mi hia.

IREA RAKA: Wanpela danis mo Burus, wantaim yu na wanpela wiski mo. Na wanpela Rothmans. Mi stap long lukautim yu. Yu no ken sek, pos i stap. Sapos yu laik silip orait yu ken go pas long haus mi kam bihain wantaim ol man hia, orait?

BURUS KAMIR: Nogat mi laikim yu kam wantaim mi tasol em orait yumi ken stap long danis wanpela taim mo na trinkim wanpela wiski mo. Yumi pinisim yumi go, harim?

IREA RAKA: Orait bambai yumi go. Bambai yu les na silip hia long taim yumi kamap long haus. Mi no laik go wantaim yu sapos yu les na laik silip nau. Bambai mi toktok wantaim husat long haus.

Koan yumi go danis. Em ken go paim trink na sigaret. (*And they dance again while Kasmut goes and buys the drinks and cigarettes.*)

APPRENTICE: (*when Kasmut comes back with the drinks*) Man yu harim tupela tu. Meri hia tokim em tasol long no ken seksek ating bambai em bagarapim turangu hia long wonem em sikirap tumas na laik go long haus kwik.

KASMUT: Larim tupela em no save gut long meri yet. Man sisa hia hap man tu hia mi bin harim long sampela man. Em no save kadim ol man em hap dai pastaim bihain em larim em.

(*The band stops and they come back to drink their last drinks.*)

BURUS KAMIR: Olsem wonem ol wantok yupela orait? Atink mi tupela pinisim tupela trink hia na bambai mi tupela go. Em orait. Atink mi tupela pinisim tupela trink hia na bambai mi larim dispela ten dollars long yu tupela laka.

APPRENTICE: Em orait tasol maski long mani, bambai mi ken paim trink long mani bilong mi tupela.

BURUS KAMIR: No, no, kisim. Mi singautim yu tupela long kam (*And he hands them the money.*)

Yu pinis nau Irea? Yu redi?

IREA RAKA: Yes, mi pinis. Mi redi nau mi laik danis mo tasol maski yu laikim yumi tupela go pas. Mi redi.

BURUS KAMIR: Orait ol wantok bambai mi tupela go pas. (*She takes his hand and they go out of Kone Tavern hand in hand giggling.*) Good night. (*And they walk towards a taxi.*)

IREA RAKA: Good-night olgeta. Good-bye. (*And they all look at them as they walk out.*)

SCENE THREE

Scene three is divided into two parts. The first part is in Irea Raka's bedroom where she and Burus Kamir have gone after leaving the Kone Tavern. The second part is outside Irea's flat in the street where Burus encounters a policeman.

PART ONE. Bedroom Scene.

Burus is lying exhausted on Irea's double bed. Irea is beside him sitting up.

BURUS KAMIR: (*breathless*) Em nau mi nap. Yu no ken askim mo. Bambai mi dai sapos —

IREA RAKA: Mi no laik kam long haus kwik. Em laik bilong yu long kam long haus. Yu strong long kam na nau yu we? Em tasol hia yu wok long sikirap longen. Mi no laik yu silip long bed bilong mi sapos yu laik silip tru. Mi tink bambai yu givim mi planti hamamas tasol nogat, yu laik silip olsem wanpela liklik pikinini. Yu man tru o nogat? Burus kirap. (*And she tries to make him get up.*)

BURUS KAMIR: Larim mi, mi laik silip. I no laik bilong mi em laik bilong yu.

IREA RAKA: (*laughing*) Tru? Nau yu laik tok, em laik bilong mi. Husat bin tok long kam long haus mi no yu? Giaman bilong yu no liklik. Mi tok mi laik trink mo, danis mo, nogat Burus Kamir laik strong yet long girisim mi long kam long haus. Yu we nau? Kam on, mi no les yet. Mi laikim yu givin mi mo. (*And she shakes Burus on the bed.*) Kam on, mi laikim yu sikuruim mi gen.

BURUS KAMIR: Maski mi les nau. Mi laik silip. Pasin bilong yu no gutpela tumas.

IREA RAKA: Yes, mi save yu laik silip tasol, husat askim yu long kam silip hia? Mi no askim yu long kam wantaim mi. Yu no tokim mi yu laik silip taim yu mi kam insait long haus. Yu tok yu laikim mi na mi tok yes. Nau mi givim yu pinis na yu laik silip. Yu tink mi wonem, pilai bilong yu? Pilis Burus, kam mo, kam mo.

BURUS KAMIR: Ha, maski mi les nau. Mi nogat strong mo. Tru tumas mi nogat strong mo long wokim mo. Wonem yu nogat marimari long mi?

IREA RAKA: No olsem laik bilong man. Mi no laik kam long haus kwik. Mi no laik lusim Kone, mi tok mi laik trink na danis mo tasol yu no laik. Yu strong mo long kam long haus.

BURUS KAMIR: No, mi tink mi spak tumas, na mi laik lusim Kone hia.

IREA RAKA: Yes, mi save yu tink, yu spak. Sampela man ol save spak tru long taim ol gat meri long girisim ol long go long haus tasol. Ol man, no bik nait yet.

BURUS KAMIR: Kilok bilong yu rong. Em klostu moning nau.

IREA RAKA: Orait sapos yu laik yu ken lukim kilok bilong mi. (*And she hands him her watch.*) Em tok wonem taim? Wan kilok o eleven kilok? Mi no laik silip yet. Mi no les yet. Mi laik trink mo na mi laik yu mo tasol yu bagarap pinis. Yu no nap mo long mi.

BURUS KAMIR: No, no, mi no bagarap. Mi laik silip tasol. Trink bagarapim mi pinis, na mi laik silip.

IREA RAKA: Orait sapos yu laik silip tru, silip. Watfo yu no laik silip long taim yumi kam long haus? Yu tink mi pilai bilong yu? Orait yu ken silip. Bambai mi go long toilet

pastaim bihain bambai mi tinktink long wonem samting mi laik wokim nau. (*And Irea disappears into the toilet.*)

BURUS KAMIR: Bladi bastet, watfo mi kam wantaim em? (*And he gets out of bed.*) Em no stret liklik. Mi nap pinis long yu. (*He tries to put on his long pants when he hears Irea coming out of the toilet. He rushes out of the room just as Irea is about to enter.*)

IREA RAKA: (*as she comes back into the room she says without knowing*) Yu silip pinis o nogat, Burus? Nau yu ken silip mi tok pinis. (*As she looks on the bed she finds he is gone. So she starts calling.*) Burus, Burus, Burus Kamir. (*Still there is no answer.*) Burus yu go we? Yu stap we? Kam bek mi no koros long yu. Burus. (*While calling she searches the room for him but can only spot his shirt.*)

(*Meanwhile outside the flat Burus in his long pants but not buttoned up properly and without a shirt on rushes out straight into a policeman.*)

PART TWO

It is concerned with this incident. Burus rushing out of Irea's flat into the street half asleep and half naked runs straight into a policeman.

POLICEMAN: Stap yu. (*Burus is taken quite unaware because he keeps on walking.*) Hei, yu, yu kam we? (*At last the policeman catches up with him and holds him.*) Yu kam we?

BURUS KAMIR: No, no, nogat mi kam long haus tasol, hia. (*Frightened and trembling he finds it hard to pull himself together.*) Em haus hia. (*He points at the house.*)

POLICEMAN: Yu mekim wonem long dispela haus? Yu laik stil, ha? Trausis bilong husat hia, ha? Em trausis bilong husat yu stilim?

BURUS KAMIR: No, no em haus bilong wanpela wantok bilong mi. Trausis em bilong mi yet. (*And he is trembling even more.*) Mi bin go lukim wantok na mi kam arasait tasol long kisim win.

POLICEMAN: Em trausis bilong husat, yu giaman yu laik stil na yu stilim, stret? Westap siot bilong yu? Mi save gut long pasin bilong yupela. Yu tink mi husat na yu laik giamanim mi? (*And he gets hold of his hands.*) Soim mi long haus.

BURUS KAMIR: Em haus hia. (*He points at the house again.*) Meri stap insait sapos yu laik lukim em. Em olsem wantok bilong mi. Mi kan soim yu sapos yu no bilip long mi. Mi no save giaman.

POLICEMAN: Wonem? Yu tok meri? Pastaim yu tok wantok bilong yu na yu no tokim mi long meri. Nau mi save. Yu trink ha? Yu laik wokim trovel. Wonem kain kisim win hia, yu nogat siot, yu nogat su, trausis yu no wokim gut. Yu luk olsem yu laik ron awe. Kamon yu stil? Sapos yu no tokim tru bambai nau, tasol mi putim yu long rumgat.

BURUS KAMIR: Yes mi no giaman. Siot bilong mi stap long haus. Tru — u tumas mi no save long tok giaman.

POLICEMAN: Orait soim mi long haus bilong meri wantok bilong yu hia. (*They walk towards the house with Burus hesitatingly walking in front.*) Sapos yu giaman, tete bambai yu pinis, bambai mi putim yu long kalabus.

BURUS KAMIR: Tru tumas mi no giaman dispela meri em i antok bilong mi olsem sisa bilong mi. Em stap insait. (*They enter the house*).

POLICEMAN: (*knocking at the door*) Igat man insait long haus?

IREA RAKA: (*hearing the knock comes rushing to the door*) Yu husat, Burus? (*in a rather happy mood she opens the door very anxiously but to her surprise*) Ho, kam insait. (*But the policeman doesn't step in; instead he starts interrogating Irea with Burus standing behind him so that Irea does not see him immediately.*)

POLICEMAN: Em haus bilong yu?

IREA RAKA: Yes, em haus bilong mi.

POLICEMAN: Yu save long dispela man? (*And the policeman pulls Burus out of the dark.*) Yu save long em?

IREA RAKA: Burus yes. Kam insait na mekim wok bilong yu. Yu no pinis long mi yet. (*And she pulls Burus in and shuts the door quickly, shutting the policeman off.*)

POLICEMAN: Hm — mm. (*He laughs a little and then louder as he leaves the house.*)

PULLING THE PUNCHES ON PAPUAN PLAYS

by Don Laycock

A UNIQUE EVENT IN the history of Australian theatre passed almost unnoticed in Canberra last year: the production, by the Prompt Theatre, of three plays written by Papuan students at the University of Papua New Guinea. The plays were staged in the Canberra Theatre on the nights of 29 and 30 August, but you wouldn't have thought so if you had had to rely on the news media. Even the fact that some of the actresses, bodies brown with cake make-up, went topless[1] (in true native style) rated only a brief mention in the *Canberra Times*, although the last time that nipples were seen on a Canberra stage was during the visit of the African ballet — and on that occasion all but two were covered up, in deference to Canberra sensibilities.

Perhaps the blame for the lack of publicity rests with the people involved in presenting the plays; but they, on the other hand, suspect that the lack of media coverage was deliberate. If this is so, is it because the producer (Al Butavicius) has, after *Viet Rock*, a reputation for offering controversial plays, or is it because of a desire not to offend the Department of Territories, since one of the plays deals with an explosive situation involving a patrol officer and a group of unsophisticated villagers? Whatever the reason, it is true that, of five publicity releases about the plays submitted to the *Canberra Times*, only two brief notices saw print. A favourable review of the plays, written after the first performance on the Friday night, was excluded from publication on the Saturday by an unusually early closing of the page, and appeared only on Monday, after the plays had finished.[2] Even the good story about three of the

Additional notes:

[1] To say nothing of the fact that the audience was seated on the stage, right next to the actors. If bare breasts are obscene, they must be much more obscene when viewed from two feet away — and when they are on white women rather than black!

[2] The page for the Saturday edition normally closed at 2 a.m. Saturday morning. The plays finished at 10.30 p.m., and the reviewer had her copy in by 12.30 a.m., only to be told that the page was already closed. She says this has never happened previously.

[3] The three actors had just been filmed for a spot on 'This Week', a Canberra programme. The police apparently caught a glimpse of a black face in the car, and stopped it, although they were doing less than 30 m.p.h. in a 35 m.p.h. zone. (Later the police said they stopped them because they were going too slowly!) The driver's breath was smelt, and, when the police saw they were Europeans dressed up — in beads, brown bodies, and one male wearing a sheepskin wig — implied they were queer. 'And that goes for your girlfriend too,' said one, referring to the male in the wig. The actors explained they had come from the TV studio, and the police, realising they had no case, let them go, but could not resist the parting shot: 'And next time I catch you in black make-up I'll arrest the lot of you.'

[4] The TV interview was filmed twice, because 'Bougainville' was mentioned the first time through.

cast, still in their Papuan make-up after appearing on ABC television, being questioned by the police was suppressed, although in this case from fear of offending the police rather than the Government.[3]

The ABC was apparently subject to similar pressure. They screened a segment showing a patrol officer hitting a native, and ordering the burning of the village, but they cut a long sequence showing the villagers fleeing from their homes while an old man tried to make peace with the ancestors, on the grounds that it was 'too moving'. In its place was shown an interview with the producer of the plays, Al Butavicius; and even here the word 'Bougainville' was banned by the interviewer, and the phrase 'recent events' substituted.[4]

In this interview Mr Butavicius was taken to task for attempting to make political capital out of 'recent events', by presenting the plays at this time; and, perhaps, he did not make his case stronger by screening, immediately after the staging of the plays in Canberra, a few newspaper headlines relating to the trouble in Bougainville. But, in fact, the plays had been being prepared and rehearsed since May, ever since Mr Butavicius obtained the scripts from Ulli Beier, whose course in Creative Writing at the University of Papua New Guinea was directly responsible for the plays being written in the first place. The months since that time have been taken up with the difficult task of transforming a group of young Canberra actors into Papuan villagers, by teaching them to sit, dance, talk and behave in approved New Guinea fashion — and by painting them brown and fitting them out with various scrounged artefacts, grass skirts, shorts, and sheepskin wigs.

The only play of the three that could be described as 'controversial' — and that only by those who see controversy under every coconut palm — is *The Unexpected Hawk*, written by John Waiko, currently a second-year student at U.P.N.G. It tells of an Administration order to a small group of villagers to amalgamate their village with a larger village, to simplify patrolling and administration. Unfortunately, the village chosen for the amalgamation is that of their traditional enemies, and so they refuse to move. In an excess of zeal and rage, the patrol officer, behaving in a manner that would no longer be countenanced in this day of greater sensitivity to outside opinion, burns down the village. The last scenes show the villagers evacuating with their few meagre possessions, while a young boy plans to leave for school, in an attempt to find out why white men behave in this fashion.

The play is a larger-than-life presentation of European behaviour as it appears to the native villager. Although the attitudes expressed by both natives and Europeans can still be encountered in New Guinea today, it is important to remember that the historical events on which this play is loosely based occurred *over thirty years ago*. It would indeed be a very sensitive government that would worry about the application of the play to current events.

The language of the play shows that the author has a better grasp of the subtleties of English than many of his contemporaries in New Guinea. He has hit nicely at the light-hearted banter of the patrol officer and his superior in discussing natives, especially 'the mission boys on the coast getting too damn bigheaded for their own good'. The native conversation also comes off well, and could be translated back directly into any Papuan language. It has the simplicity and directness of village conversation, uncluttered by euphemism, but spun out by allegory and analogy.

Similar language is used by M. Lovori, another student, in the other two plays, *Alive!* and *They Never Return*, but he has made more of an attempt at a poetic style, with a result that sometimes sounds a little odd to an English audience. For the plays to be acceptable, a few minor cuts and changes had to be made in the dialogue. In *They Never Return*, for example, a line given to the girl, Hene, was changed to 'my body shall cool your desire', lest the original wording 'my hand shall calm your excitement' should convey the wrong impression to a sophisticated and literal-minded Australian audience.

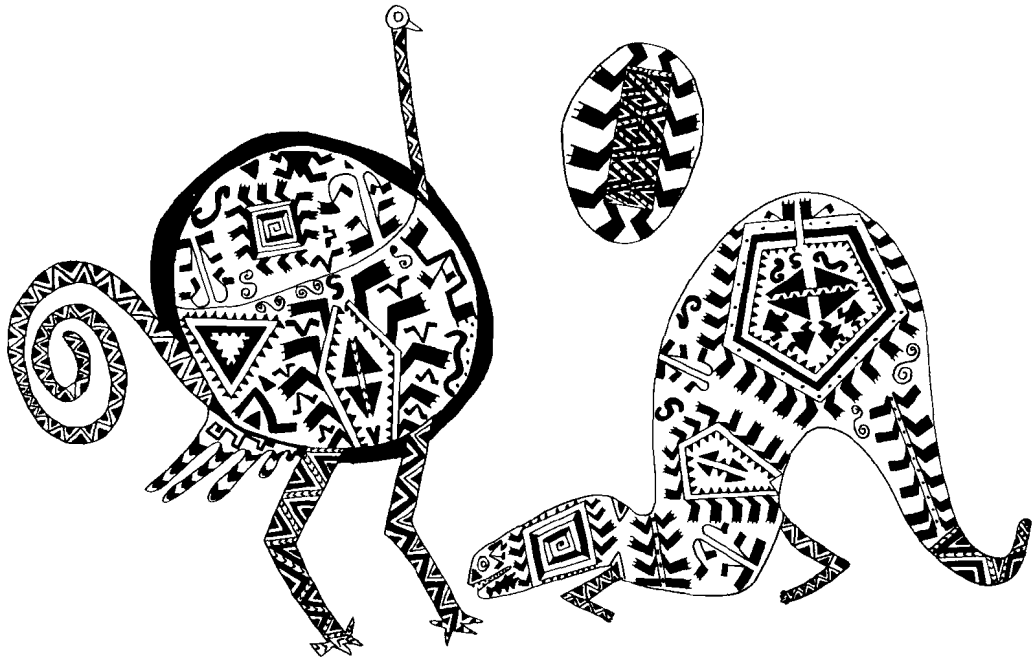
Both *Alive!* and *They Never Return* are based on native stories of the boundary between life

and death, and show striking similarities to the Orpheus legend. The former is a Binandere tale collected by John Waiko, and published in its original form as 'Why we do not receive cargo from our dead relatives' in the Pilot Edition of *Kovave*; but in Lovori's dramatisation the names of the ancestors are changed, and the cargo element is absent.

They Never Return is a Motu story on the same theme, presented in this case by the age-old device of having an old man tell the story to a young boy, while the actors play out the action on the other side of the stage.

The plays were produced by Al Butavicius with a minimum of props and clutter, with the result that their messages came across forcefully. The mixture of costumes and decor — grass skirts from the Sepik, arrows from Bougainville, a Chimbu net-bag, and a few beads from as far afield as Fiji — meant that the plays were not localised in the minds of those with sufficient New Guinea experience to recognise the objects, but could be taken to have a general Papuan reference —or, indeed, a general human reference.

There is a possibility that the plays will be presented again in Sydney during 'Papua Week'. If this happens, every playgoer should take time out to participate in these small beginnings of a likely new theatrical direction in Australia.



WANAMERA

by Ulli Beier

THE VILLAGE OF ASEMPA lies nearly 7000 feet above sea level. A few low round huts are hugging the shoulder of a bare mountain top. The village does not look any different from other Auyana villages of the Eastern Highlands. The casual visitor would not suspect that one of the huts in this village contains a strange mausoleum with a collection of some forty-odd woodcarvings.

Asempa is the home of Wanamera, an extraordinary and unusual artist. Woodcarving is not very common in the Eastern Highlands, though there is a tradition of wooden funeral figures, painted black and decorated elaborately with beads, feathers and teeth. But the village of Asempa does not appear to have had such a tradition and its inhabitants credit Wanamera with having introduced the art form into the community.

According to his own story the idea of carving images of the dead people in the village was suggested to him in a dream. His brother had died in the morning, and on the afternoon of that day he appeared to Wanamera saying that the village had neglected its dead. The burial places were not marked and after the funeral ceremony the deceased were quickly forgotten. He suggested that Wanamera should carve an image of every person who died and that these should be kept amidst fresh flowers in a special hut and that every week a small remembrance ceremony should be held there. Wanemera carried out the instructions with religious fervour. He grows a large patch of land with flowers to be used in the ceremonies. To carve his images he retires into the bush. There is a touch of millenarianism in the ritual, but there seems no evidence for the allegation levelled against him by some missionaries, that Wanamera is a cargo cult leader. His handful of followers could hardly be described as a movement.

The Administration looks upon him a little more kindly than the missions. One ADO tried to help him by commercialising his carvings. But even here Wanamera is suspect: a strange eccentric dissenter. Some consider him harmless, others potentially dangerous. When I visited Wanamera last he was being 'investigated'. According to one Kiap, Wanamera's mausoleum was once raided by the police and the carvings were removed. Wanamera himself claims that he was jailed several times, but it was not at all clear why, though in his own imagination he was made to suffer for his ideas.

As a man Wanamera is a mystery. As an artist, he is important and impressive. He created a tradition entirely out of himself. One could say that he 'invented' a style. I use the word 'style' judiciously, because even though Wanamera has not found a formula for his sculpture, everyone of his works is unmistakably his.

The common element in these carvings is extremely difficult to define. There is a naive seriousness, a helpless expectation that can be read into all his figures, but to express this Wanamera uses no convention. Every figure is invested anew, without reference to previous figures.

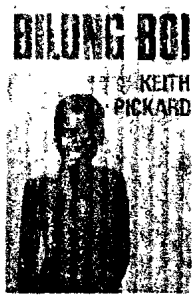
His faces stare or grin at us. The eyes can be deep holes, sometimes very close together, or they can be marked with rusty nails or transparent marbles. Sometimes the mouth is a narrow slit, at other times it is a gaping wound. The proportions of the figures change all the time. A tender shy body rests on heavy peasant legs, or a broad-shouldered body is supported by dwarf's legs. At times the legs are omitted altogether. The treatment of the arms is even

more differentiated. Their form and the way they are linked to the shoulder are among Wanamera's most powerful means of expression. Sometimes the arms jut out brutally from right angled shoulders; other times they are left out altogether; sometimes they are merely painted on; other times the arms are carved in flat relief, with the hands painted on — the sort of idea one would expect from Picasso in a happy mood. Some figures omit the genitals. Some wear trousers, with the penis (detachable) jutting out from them. Women's breast's, too, are sometimes detachable, or they are represented, negatively, by deep holes.

The figures are brightened up by erratic touches of colour. Chalks and inks are used for the purpose. For the greater part the white wood of the carvings is left exposed, but odd touches of colour supply a surrealist touch. A gaping black mouth. A bright red neck. A blue face. A shocking pink vagina opened wide. A green penis. Sometimes linear ornaments are scribbled across the figure in several colours: like children's graffiti on a school wall. Once the heart is represented like a burning red sun under the breast. Another time the eyes are transformed into stars through rays painted around them.

Most observers have described Wanamera's figures as crude. So they are. But the crudity is not clumsiness. It is not even lack of sophistication. Wanamera omits every irrelevant detail. He endows his figures with some basic, elementary shape, then he carves or paints on those details that add meaning to his present purpose.

Wanamera's figures are moving because they are powerful and helpless at the same time. Through them the artist tries to cope with the strange, dangerous world that is encroaching on his village. Wanamera lacks the education to interpret correctly the conflict of cultures in which he has been caught up. He feels persecuted and victimised by the world. But his art is not pathetic. It reveals a great strength and resistance and it expresses a deep faith in some richer, dreamlike future.



BILONG BOI

A [illegible]
K[illegible]

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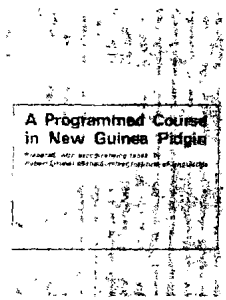

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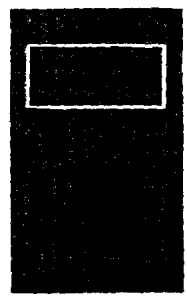

AN INTRODUCTION TO NEW GUINEA PIDGIN

by *Father F. Mihalic*

85c

This book consists of an English/Pidgin dictionary section containing both words and phrases and an explanatory introduction. In effect, it emerges as a quick course in New Guinea Pidgin for those who want only to master the basic language patterns.

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