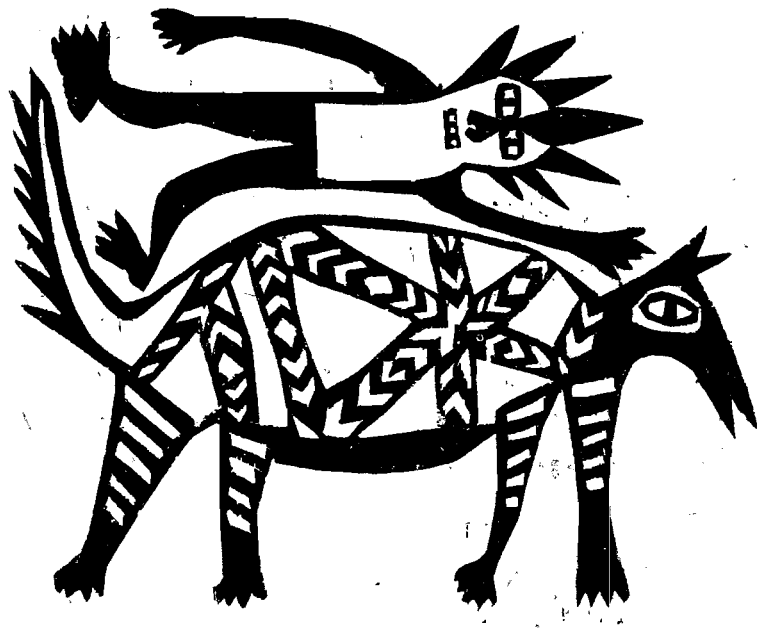
Published by Jacaranda Press Pty Ltd, 46 Douglas Street, Milton, Q. in conjunction with The New Guinea Cultural Centre of the University of Papua New Guinea

Printed in Hong Kong

Contributions and books for review should be sent to Mr Ulli Beier, P.O. Box 1144, Boroko, T.P.N.G. Manuscripts will be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope but no responsibility will be accepted for them. Copy for advertising should be sent to the Business Manager *Kovave*, Jacaranda Press, 46 Douglas Street, Milton, Q., 4066.

Kovave will appear twice a year, in June and November. Subscriptions $2.00 per year from Business Manager *Kovave*, Jacaranda Press.



CONTENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

Marjorie Crocombe is author of *The Works of Ta'unga*. "The Healer" is a chapter from a book progress. Another of her stories appeared in *Kovave* Vol. 1, No. 1.

Leo Hannet is a third year arts student at the University of Papua and New Guinea. He is auth of two plays: *Em Rot Bilong Kago* in the pilot issue of *Kovave* and *The Ungrateful Daughte Five New Guinea Plays*, Jacaranda Press, 1970. "Disillusionment" is a chapter from an au biography in progress.

Arthur Jawodimbari is second year arts student at the University of Papua and New Guinea. *Sun* is his third play. His first play *Cargo* appeared in *Five New Guinea Plays*.

Sandra le Brun Holmes has spent many years studying Aborigine art and folklore in Arnhem La

Albert Maori Kiki is author of *Ten Thousand Years in a Lifetime*, Cheshire, 1968, and *Hoha* Nelson, 1970.

Oa Maiu is a farmer and fisherman from Orokolo in the Papuan Gulf.

Kumalau Tawali is a regular contributor to *Kovave*. His first volume of poems *Signs in the S* appeared with Papua Pocket Poets in 1970.

Maurice Thompson, a New Hebridean, is a third year arts student at the University of Papua a New Guinea. "Seduction" is a chapter from a novel in progress.

John Saunana, a Solomon Islander, is a second year arts student at the University of Papua and Ne Guinea.

The Occasional Songs were translated by students of Port Moresby Teachers College and of t University of Papua and New Guinea.

THE HEALER

by Marjorie Crocombe

Mata was a witch. At least that was how Europeans translated our word *ta'unga*, which really means: a specialist in the art of the supernatural.

She lived by a small stream that L-shaped its way along. Her tiny house nestled under some coconut trees, and beside her cook house there were the usual mango trees, a clump of sugar cane and a lemon tree. The creek was a useful one, for Mata's family fished there for prawns and eels. They also drank the water and bathed in it. We lived next door and we used to swim in a deep water hole higher up the creek. Further up again, there lived another family who made similar use of the creek, but they also tethered their pigs by it.

Mata's family could not afford to install a tap. We felt superior because we had one, but now I come to think of it, we were little better off with our upright tap outside our kitchen, than Mata was with her creek water. The tap water originated in the same mountains as the creek, and in the rainy season both kinds became the same undrinkable chocolate brown.

"What do you expect?" Nero would say, when we got periodic attacks of stomach trouble. "We drink gallons of mud from the open intake and not to forget the shit of dear old Boss's cattle that roam around there. Maki was telling me the other day that they found some cattle bones in the water intake up there." Then he'd amble off to write another letter of complaint to the Administration. It achieved nothing.

Mata's husband was Piri, a returned soldier with the distinction of actually having seen Egypt and the Red Sea during the First World War, when he had volunteered for service with the New Zealand forces, like many other islanders. Now he could look forward every year to a free trip to town to take part in the Anzac Day parade. Piri would dress up in his long white trousers, white shirt, coat and tie and he would pin on a couple of war medals. Then he would send his daughter to watch out for the truck.

"Papa," she shouted as the truck veered round the corner half a mile away. "Papa, hurry. It's coming—now it's passing Brown's place—whew it's going fast." The driver stopped the truck with a screech of brakes and the horn beeping loudly. But there was no need for Piri to rush: he knew that the *gavamani* (government) had sent the truck to get him and it would not leave without him, no matter how impatient the driver was.

There were many of his fellow ex-servicemen on the truck. Some of them old, toothless, grey-haired men. Piri immediately noticed that one or two were not on board this time.

"Where's Tua?" he shouted as the driver revved up the engine. "In hospital," he was told. "Been there for six weeks now." Piri also learned that Mani was dead, and that someone else was too old to march any more. "But you look young, anyway," said Tei. "Must be the good bush beer that you have around this part of the island." Piri didn't answer. He knew they were referring to his son, a notorious brewer whose name regularly appeared on the list of court convictions.

The parade was a short, sterile affair, but it could not stifle the feeling of oneness between the soldiers. The group was small and one would rub shoulders with prestigious men, both Maori and European. It rekindled in Piri an ember of glory that would help him through his other three hundred and sixty-four days of insignificance.

After a rather bedraggled march to the

soldiers' memorial, several prayers, a Biblical text and a hymn, a bugler who was long out of practice sounded a tinny last post. The men were dismissed. Then they went and drank cups of sweet tea and ate dry sandwiches. Soon it was all over for the Maori veterans. The truck took them home again to obscurity until the next Anzac Day service—if they lived that long. The European ex-servicemen would retire to one of their friend's homes and drink beer. It was against the law for Maoris to drink and it was on occasions like this that laws like that really hurt. Some Europeans took particular Maoris home to drink, but that only made it worse for the uninvited like Piri.

Piri shook every hand warmly, as he left the truck to walk home. "Not many old people left," he would tell Mata later, as he struggled out of his restricting clothes. He sighed with grateful relief as he flung them on the mat and wrapped a length of *pareu,* a gaily coloured sarong-like material, round his waist. Then he sat down cross-legged and rolled a cigarette.

"After the service," he said to Mata, "we had pieces of bread with tiny bits of meat in them. Not enough to feed a hen! Got anything to eat?"

"Only this," Mata replied, pushing a banana leaf parcel towards him. Piri's hunger vanished rapidly as he was confronted with a blob of dried-up, rubber-like octopus tentacles, that had been baked in an earth oven the day before. He pulled out the smallest piece, dribbled some coconut sauce into his tin plate and dipped the meat into it. Then he swirled the octopus tentacle round, as though hoping to soften it. But it remained as hard as it had ever been and his worn-down molars refused to cope with it. Finally, in disgust, Piri threw the chewed remains of the octopus meat into the open fire and noisily drank the sauce from his plate. His wife just sat and watched.

Piri was a little sorry for Mata. He had had a very interesting day, yet his wife had never even been up to the village ever since they had been married. She lived a very withdrawn life.

Mata was known as the "ghost maker"; for she had power to call on her own special spirit "Ka'u Mango", or "Ka'u the shark". Because of this she was both feared and respected, particularly by children.

Mata, it seemed, knew everything that went on in the spirit world, but of course she kept up to date on what went on in the real world too. Keeping abreast of gossip and scandal was part of her stock in trade, and the spiritual answers usually reflected the material realities.

The screeching of waggon wheels on the sandy road and the whoa-ing of the driver soon brought Piri back to the present. "That coming here?" Mata asked. "Oi—Oi!" she was answered from outside, as if the visitors had heard her question. "Oi—Papa Piri e! E Mama e!"

"Oi—come!" Piri answered, as he stepped out from the cook house. Then he stuck his head back inside to tell Mata who the visitors were. "To see you, I think," he added. A young boy was lying on a pillow in the waggon.

"Take them into the other house," Mata called to Piri. "I'll come in after." Mata picked up the knife and finished prising the chestnuts out of their shells, carefully placing them on a tin plate.

Inside the separate sleeping house the leader of the party was telling Piri why they had come. She brought out a packet of tobacco from her basket and passed it to Piri. What a luxury it was for Piri to roll a cigarette with real cigarette paper. Normally he used nothing but dried banana leaves, which smelled just like those women smell, who burn the rubbish by the road. Piri rolled one for Mata too, who was coming in now.

"Ae—we've come today because it is a holiday. We were hoping there wouldn't be many people here." After a puff or two on her cigarette, she continued, "My grandson here: we took him to hospital. The doctor, a European, he tap him here; he tap him there; he listen to his chest and took a picture—aue—where was it, Mere?" She turned to her daughter trying to pick up the thread. "Ae—ae—a picture of the chest, but he find nothing. They give us big bottle of white medicine, but he drink it all up quick—nothing happen to

him. Still the boy is not well. The Maori doctor friend he say—Ae, try our own medicine at the *ta'unga*. Maybe she can fix him."

Mata said nothing for a while. Nor did she examine the patient. She seemed to withdraw into herself and her eyes became glazed. Her body trembled and her mouth twitched as she fell into a trance. At last she asked Mere: "Where is the boy's father?"

"Dead."

"Where?"

"Makatea Island, digging phosphate."

"He write to you? He send you things?"

"Yes, every ship from there bring something."

"You write back?"

There was silence. The mother wept, blowing her nose. Mata said no more. The spluttering of the candlenut lamp cast eerie shadows in the house and the smell of the nut was very strong. The sick boy wanted so much to cough, but he was too scared to break the silence. Mata stared towards the entrance of the house as if she was willing something to enter. Piri, the two women and the sick boy looked towards the door, wondering. It was getting late now. Then the silence was suddenly broken by a distant voice that immediately stopped the boy's weeping. The voice came from the direction of Mata.

"E Mere e! Can you hear? You know who it is—don't you? Listen carefully to me. Don't waste time weeping. My sweat—I wasted it in the mines working—to earn money for the European house you wanted. I sent the money—the plates—the glasses—the linen—and—and perfume—yet you lie to me—I didn't know you lie so much. My friend had a letter—from his wife. She say who you live with—that news made me angry. My gang was working that night—I fell from the top—top of the cliff. And I want—want my son—to—aaaah!"

"Aue, aue," wept the mother of the sick child. "It's true, it's true what you say."

Mata did not move any more. She sat as if in a deep sleep. Then her eyes twitched and slowly opened. Still, no one spoke. When she was fully awake she said: "I make some medicine for him to drink." Piri got up and went outside to gather the stalk of the red sugar cane, a few leaves of a plant which grew by the creek and some green guava leaves. Then Mata said: "I think your son has cried for his father—he wants to die like his father. He doesn't like his new father. Ask him at home if that is true. You and he can help each other sort out what to do," advised Mata. "Then come again next week."

On the way home, the young boy, Tei, thought about Mata's words. Indeed he had cried for his father to come and take him away. For he hated to see the new man around the place who would not even help his mother in the tomato plot, who wouldn't even cut the grass around the place. All he seemed to do was to get drunk on the weekends and sleep off the effects of his three-day bout for the rest of the week. Once he had thrashed Tei for answering back, and that day Tei had decided to die like his father. It had been his secret until that day but, as Mata knew, it was a common "way out" among her people.

"Mamma," he whispered to his mother after everyone had gone to bed, "I did call Papa to come and get me. I wanted to die very much."

"Why?"

Tei told his mother the secret. As his mother held him in the dark Tei felt for the first time that maybe he did not want to die after all. And Mere made up her mind to send away Epi, her lover. When she told him to leave the house there was a tremendous row, which attracted the attention of the neighbours.

"It's taken a long time," one said. "Why she kept such a good for nothing for so long I don't know. And now all of a sudden she gets rid of him."

"It's because they went to see the *ta'unga*."

"Oh, is that so?"

"Oh, you and your *tupapaku* story. That's all you women think of."

"What do you know about such things anyway? You who were born yesterday."

When Mere returned to the *ta'unga* the following week Mere's husband spoke to her

once more through the medium of Mata, but this time he was pleased. "Meitaki—good," he said, "Tei should stay with you." And Mata added, "Carry on taking the medicine I made for him, but no need to come back and see me."

Mata's reputation as a healer was again confirmed, and she had a long line of visitors in the afternoon. She did not exploit her clients. Some brought her gifts of food, tobacco and occasionally money. The police ignored her activities. The Maori policemen probably secretly believed in her powers. Even the church ignored her. Many churchmen brought their patients there as a last resort. After many futile visits to the hospital, they came to try Mata's kind of healing.

One night my sister fell off her bicycle after she had been packing oranges for the monthly ship that called at the island.

"Get the benzine lamp," ordered my mother. No other lamp would do, for the brighter the light, the less likely were we to run into a ghost on our way to Mata's home.

Mata did not need to go into a trance for such a simple diagnosis. "It's the *arapo*," she told us without hesitation. "Look at the moon, it waxes full and on such a night the chief Tepera walks. He comes down along the boundary of Brown's property and the Seventh Day Adventist compound. That's the way he always goes. Tonight he was chasing a slave who escaped out to the sea. He never catches him though, so he is awakened to repeat the performance every night like this for ever."

"Why did Alice get hurt?"

"He doesn't mean to hurt anyone, but your daughter happened to come along when the chief was passing. She brushed against him, that's all. Lucky though she didn't run head-on into him or we would have had bad news for you tonight."

Mata's clients continued to come and go. We knew most of the visitors there, because our mother was very friendly with Mata and she got the more personal details from her. Throughout the years Mata's reputation grew and she attracted many clients. Then, suddenly and unexpectedly, came her tragic downfall.

There was a visitor from the outer islands staying with Mata and Piri. One day, he went fishing in the lagoon. He did not return. The news spread through the village and the men went out to search for him up and down the lagoon. But they could not find him. Mata sought him by spiritual means without success. On the third day, Piri found Kati's body wedged in a rock in the harbour. Piri and his son wrapped the body up in a mat and they floated it home along the edge of the lagoon. Somehow it was a familiar sight—for Piri was always dragging something home: a piece of log he found on the beach, a dry coconut leaf for his fire, or a bundle of octopus with its tentacles streaming behind on a rusty wire. Now he returned with Kati, the epileptic, who had gone out fishing three days before on an equally beautiful morning.

"What's happened to Mata?" someone asked, as a group of curious helpers followed the bundle to Piri's home. "Why she not tell Piri where to find Kati three days ago?"

"E'aa—what did you say?"

"You know, Ka'u the shark. He knows everything." Soon they reached Piri's place. He untied the rope from the mat and threw it into the canoe that had been drawn up on the beach. Silently the men stepped into the water and took each corner of the mat bundle. They heaved it up and walked up the beach to where some other men had already dug a grave.

"Didn't you send for the pastor?" asked Timi.

"He's inside with Mata."

"I'll get him now," said Piri, grateful for a chance to get away for a moment.

Soon the pastor came out, followed by Mata and Piri. Mata's hair was dishevelled, her eyes were tired. For the last three evenings, she had vainly tried to call upon Ka'u the shark to let her know where Kati's body was. But Piri had found him merely by accident; maybe helped by his knowledge of the currents in the lagoon and harbour. Kati's death was a defeat for Mata and everyone knew it.

The pastor conducted a short ceremony. There was no wailing. No pigs were killed. Nobody bothered to perform more than the bare necessities for the under-privileged stranger.

From then on fewer waggons drew up outside Piri's house. Even we children heard the news that Mata had lost her power. We were now a little less afraid to pass her house at night.

Mata died alone one day, when Piri was out fishing in the lagoon. Ka'u their son, who had been named after Ka'u the shark, migrated to New Zealand to seek a new life. Piri was now too old to attend the Anzac Day parade. His daughter got married and moved to another village. Then some distant relation took pity on Piri and invited him to come and live with him in another village.

At long last the owner of the land on which Piri had been living was able to take it back with an easy conscience. Often he had been tempted to kick Piri and Mata off, for they never supplied their share of food gifts, even when requested, but he always feared Mata's supernatural retaliation. Now she was no more.

Piri's former home was burned to the ground and the site was ploughed up and planted with sweet potatoes. Only Kati's grave reminded us of the spot where the village healer had lived and plied her trade.

SIX POEMS

by Kumalau Tawali

FUNERAL FEAST

Powesu you have flown away!
You have untied us two
O Powesu!
I am drifting.

Your hands,
the axe hands!
Countless canoes they built,
canoes
that went to touch the west
canoes
that went to touch the east.

Your hands that fished the turtles
the turtles
that filled the ceremonial houses.
Those hands
no others were enough for them.
Those hands, which knew nothing:
the anger of the western sky was nothing to them.
The anger of the eastern sky was nothing to them.

Now the hands fly. . . .
Where will we go?
Where is our name?
Our canoes are gone
the turtles are gone
the sea is forbidden to us.

THE OLD MAN'S EXPLANATIONS

Thunder roars in the sky:
"God is angry!"
The sea is rough:
"God breathes hard."
The sky rains:
"The angels are pissing."

THE OLD WOMAN'S MESSAGE

Stick these words in your hair
and take them to Polin and Manuai
my sons:
the ripe fruit falls and returns
to the trunk—its mother.
But my sons, forgetful of me,
are like fruit borne by birds.
I see the sons of other women
returning. What is in their minds?
Let them keep the price of their labour
but their eyes are mine.
I have little breath left
to wait for them.
I am returning to childhood.
My stomach goes to my back,
my hands are like broom sticks,
my legs can fit in the sand crab's hole.
I am dry like a carved image
only my head is God's.
Already I sway like a dry falling leaf
I see with my hands—
Oh tell Polin and Manuai to hurry
and come to my death feast.

TUNA

Tuna you are mirror of the blue
Tuna you are the pain in my veins
Tuna you are lord.

When I set out to catch you
I am a prisoner of taboos.
"Don't dangle legs over the side of the canoe."
"Don't whistle for merriment."
"Is your thought straight?"
"Is your wife having her first pregnancy?"
"Are you newly married?"
All this awkwardness my duty.

But on the market you are the sun.
You darken the eye of the inland man
when he offers plenty in exchange
without bargain—just to get you.

You are worth the pain in my veins.

MOURNING SONG

I sat and listened to him
mourning his mother.
The song's rhythm
almost possessed me to tears.

There were peaks and valleys
each peak a painful memory
each valley the receding image
of his mother.

I realised the thousand things
which must have rivered through his mind.
I saw his mother, looking at me now,
his mother cooking food, his mother
talking now in her soft voice . . .

And suddenly I understood:
a fantastic process was taking place,
a miraculous communication.
A spectacular reenactment
took place on the vast stage in his head
and my mind was the audience.

THE SKULL

O skull
a smoked old bone
that's what you really are!

But you are the father of this house
your spirit guards us
we fear you.

When a child of this house is sick
you are the cause
when a child of this house is well
you are the cause

Oh skull
you hang there useless
you hang there powerless

Oh skull
you hang there useful
you hang there powerful

Oh skull
my ancestor
mysterious skull
skull . . .

from Signs in the Sky, *Papua Pocket Poets, Port Moresby, 1970*

SEDUCTION

by Maurice Thompson

O Lord my God when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds thy hands have made
I see the stars I hear the rolling thunder
Thy powers throughout the universe displayed
Then sings my soul. . . .

And so sang the choir on Sunday. The melody rang through the afternoon air and we sat still . . . like statues . . . listening. There was something very New-Hebridean about the singing. I felt then that if ever I went away, far away somewhere, one of the things that would always remain in my memory, that would urge me to return, was the singing. I thought of the sound of a hundred girls' voices singing in the school choir; a hundred women's voices singing in the church; a hundred boys' voices accompanying guitars at *La Fête*, and a hundred men's voices singing for *Bonne Année*. At *Bonne Année* the men were always accompanied by boys and girls, when they went around from village to village singing. But it was always the men's voices that stood out on this occasion. I thought to myself: to sing is to be human. Singing expresses humanity. It is part of life. It is like poetry or writing, but it requires no literacy. The simplest illiterate man can sing about his God, his women, his land . . . and most important, he can sing in protest. The Efatese people of the New Hebrides sing at *Bonne Année* because they are happy to have outlived another year; but they also protest against the new and unknown —the unknown that came to them through the invasions of Europe in trade, technology and government. The men did not fully understand how these strange things worked. When they sang about them they were in fact saying: "Though I do not understand you and the things you have brought with you, I shall sing about you and your ways with my friends in the village. My son will understand you." I remembered one Christmas Eve very vividly. We were on holiday and I was helping my father run the Council launch. On the night of the 24th of December we picked up some men who had been given their pay by the Manganese Mining Company. They were loaded with money and presents for their families and friends. They had brought some presents for my father too, but he refused to accept them, except the wine. While we were all at sea the men drank some wine and talked. Someone said:

"People, sing out some *Bonne Année*!"
"Yes, yes. . . . it's time for it."
"*Allez*, Kalsei, you start!"

Kalsei started and they all joined in. The songs were in fact a protest against the hard work in the mines. One of them had been composed during the war, when the government had imposed forced labour on all adult males, to aid the American soldiers who had landed in 1942. The song was nationalistic and I wondered why it had needed something as big as the war to spark off the spirit of nationalism in the New Hebrides. Their song drowned the tug tug of the engine:

Awi awi tai manga tu pae sara nalauna
Tu pae Efate, Nguna, Pele, Emau, Mataso,
Makura, Tongariki,
Tonga, Malekula, Emae, Paama,
Epi, Santo, Malo, Pentecost,
Aoba Tauna Eromango
Awi awi te tunga vae sava
Soldier te Rumai paki New Hebrides
Eupae United States America

(Please please my brothers we
come from every island

we come from Efate, Nguna, Pele, Emau, Mataso, Makura, Tongariki . . .
Awi awi what is going to happen to us
Soldiers they have come to the New Hebrides
They have all kinds of ammunition.
They come from the United States of America.)

That night someone passed me a bottle of wine and I drank. It must have been port for it was sweet, yet burned my throat inside me.

"My Palemata," this man was saying to me, "you are at school. You must be successful at school, so that you can live by writing in an office and not like us carrying bags of copra or shovelling manganese or going off to Numea to work the Nickel. We do all these things for the white man, and still we do not understand him."

I remember my father, a little intoxicated by now, turning to us, saying:

"Hey, you two, what are you doing?"

"E, Wawa, it is a little drop that I give Palemata."

"Well, don't get him drunk . . . he's got to steer the launch through the passage."

"In all the New Hebrides . . . "

"What . . . ?"

"In all New Hebrides, Wawa," the man shouted trying to make himself heard above the singing, "you cannot find better captains than me and my Palemata."

"Pierre," my father said, "do you know this man here?"

Then he went on telling me how we were related. His name was Kalorana. I knew all along that the man was something or other to me. Among us Efatese everybody is related to every one else, and no one called another one simply by name. You had to say Wawa, Kalorana, Tata Songi or Pua Topau or whatever the correct kinship term was.

Uncle Kalorana passed me the port again. I refused.

"Why don't you want to drink with your Wawa, Palemata?"

I took another drink.

"Yes, Pale', we are the best captains around."

That night we were miles off the passage. The launch was wrecked, fortunately not beyond repair . . .

The choir sat down and tore me out of my dreams. I suddenly became aware that throughout my reminiscences I had continued to stare at Leitare in her white dress. I knew that I loved her. "Tomorrow," I thought to myself, "I shall begin to get closer to her. I am going to join the choir."

My attempt to join the choir was a failure. Sitting there in the hot classroom with a dry throat trying to sing the matron's way, I suddenly realised that singing with a bottle of port was one thing, and singing in the school choir another.

"Pierre!" called the matron for the third time. I was beginning to get bored—particularly as Leitare was not in the class. This was a beginners' class.

"Yes, matron," I said.

"Please try again. No, say Do, Re, Mi . . . "

For the seventh time I sang Do on a flat note. For the seventh time my class mates laughed. She adjusted her spectacles and pretended to cough. The five o'clock bell prevented her from saying whatever she was going to say and she told us instead:

"All right, you may go. I shall see you next Thursday afternoon."

But she didn't quite see all of us. I gave up.

I tried the fellowship committee next. Leitare was a member and I thought if I could join, I might work on her from there. But at the election meeting Leitare sat at the other side of the room and I only caught one or two glimpses of her. I found to my disappointment that you didn't just automatically get into the committee, but you had to be nominated and elected into it. To be nominated you had to be a devoted Bible reader. I just didn't have a chance. . . .

Later that night, lying in bed, I realised that God was not going to make Leitare love me; that if I wanted her I would have to do something about it myself. I told Vonu about it next morning.

"Man," he said. "What have you done about it?"

"I prayed to God that he will make her love me."

"You know what you have been doing? You have been making fowls' droppings."

"What will I do then?"

"You will do nothing. I shall be your wireless."

I trembled.

"I shall tell her that you like her."

"No, please man. Don't talk to her. She will say: 'That dog Pierre, that fowl's dropping'."

"She won't say that about you."

"She'll tell everyone about me and then I shall be finished. It will be the end of me."

"Man, I know Leitare like my own mother."

I was half convinced that everything was going to be all right. That week our house was on special duty. The house leader gave out the duties in the dining hall. I had seen the list earlier on and had decided to volunteer for cowboy duties. I remembered the Western films my father had taken me to see once or twice in Vila. I thought of the songs, the horses, the gunfights and the love scenes. And I said to myself: "That's for me. That is Pierre Kalont as Tangarazi."

I was rather glad when Vonu and I got the job. But Vonu said: "Man, this is a filthy job."

It was indeed very disappointing. There were no horses involved, let alone guns or women. We had to get up at four in the morning to round up the cows for milking. The word morning is misleading. That hour of the day was still pitch dark at Malafakalo. That hour of the day was when sleep was sweetest. The first morning was sheer horror—and the following morning and the one after that. I shall never forget our last morning which was a Friday. Vonu came and woke me up as usual. My eyes were sore from the deepest and sweetest sleep in my life. It had been raining all night. It was cold and I did not want to chase any animal at that hour. I wanted to be left alone in peace in the warm comfort of my bed.

"Is it four o'clock?" I asked.

"Yes man, it's four already."

I put on my shirt and we went out into the rain, the cold, the darkness, the jungle—searching for the sleeping cows. Perhaps due to the rain, the jungle was darker and more alive with the sound of crickets. Their cries filled our ears with an alarming density. I felt that they were all round us and that we were being swamped by them. It was our belief that the dead travelled in the rain, while the living took shelter in their houses. At every cautious step I thought I would be touched by a ghost's hand. I was frightened by the cows too, and I thought that when we found them they would not be real cows, but ghosts in the shape of cows.

The cows fed on small bushes. But in the rain they would go deeper into the jungle to sleep under the dense canopy trees. Vonu's torch hardly gave any light at all. We had used up the batteries during the week. Because we had no coats, the rain soaked our shirts until they stuck to our bodies like plaster. My teeth were chattering from the cold. Suddenly the dim light of the torch caught something black lying by the root of a huge tree. We stopped dead. I was about to run for my life, when Vonu said:

"It's Jersey."

We soon found Leisilo, Leitau and the rest. The cows wouldn't budge an inch when we tried to move them. I went up to Leitau and she kicked me in the leg. I cried out in pain.

"Hei, it is like what?" Vonu cried.

"Leitau, she kicked me badly!"

He came up to me as I was rubbing my knee.

"Here, taina, hold the flash light."

It was the first time that he had called me brother.

I realised that morning that common cause and suffering bring people closer together. From that day on I looked at Vonu in a different light. He was no longer the eccentric liar—he was my friend.

With a shaking hand I held the torch while Vonu broke off a branch from the tree. He went up to Leitau and began whipping her madly and shouting. Leitau got up. Then he

whipped Jersey, but less hard. By the time he got to Nellie he was merely poking her arse. I knew then it was not the poor cows he was hitting at. They received the blows for somebody else. I was to learn who that was later that day. Through the rain and the dark we managed to get the cows back into the milking shed. The rest of the day would be less miserable.

I hardly saw Leitare for the rest of that day, as it was a practical teaching day. The girls were at the hostel learning home economics. We boys did carpentry on Fridays. I hated it. In our first test I had been top of the class, but then as the weeks went by I dropped down till I was last. I let myself drop because I believed it was wrong to force someone to do anything against their will. My father had told me that people who design and build things like the Eiffel Tower become famous and rich. But as we were only making little book racks I did not see my road to fame in carpentry.

Almost everything in school was compulsory. The worst obligation we had was "devotion" which Vonu had first described to me as "a little reading, a little singing, a little preaching and a little praying."

Vonu used the words "a little" advisedly, because all prayers, hymns and readings had been limited by a rule. He had been the cause of it. He thought that morning devotion was a waste of time. One day when it was his turn to lead devotion he chose as his hymn a psalm with sixteen verses and he insisted on singing all of it—even though only the teachers and a couple of girls knew the tune. He then read the longest chapter from the Old Testament—something about the Israelites and the Babylonians. The reading did not relate to the hymn in any way, but he plodded through it meticulously. He then said such a long prayer that God must have fallen asleep in the middle. Vonu went on and on thanking the New Zealanders for helping the New Hebrideans and asking God to help the teachers to teach nice things in the school. At the end he said: "And God we . . . we . . . ask you to . . . help the Government to . . . to to . . . work . . . to teach . . . I mean to administer, administer this free, this sunshine land in a good way." He had to stop because he could not think of anything else to say. Vonu got ready for a nice long sermon but the headmaster stopped him. "We appreciate your preaching, but we are already very late and you must stop. Perhaps you will continue that on Sunday."

That Friday was Leitare's day to hold devotion and she followed the new rules exactly. Her reading and praying were short but meaningful. She seemed to know just what God wanted to do and what we needed him to do. I realised that day that the God Leitare knew was different from mine. If we were to meet, the gap between our different Gods would have to be bridged somewhere.

Her meekness on this occasion and her obedient efficiency irritated me too. I hated the eagerness with which she accepted this compulsory devotion. I sometimes felt during my school days that I would rather be in Russia, for my father had told me that in Russia you didn't have to go to church. I thought it must have been a Heaven of a place, this Russia. Sometimes I wished Krushchev would suddenly walk into the room and torture the teachers. I wanted to laugh, thinking what fun it would be for matron—who always watched over the girls as if they were precious diamonds.

School stopped at 12 o'clock. After lunch everyone started on their special duties and they had to continue with them until each job was finished. Vonu and I started at half-past one by giving all the animals that looked like cows a drink. To make things more difficult for us the cows had been put into different paddocks, miles apart from each other. The virgin heifers were in one paddock, the bulls and old cows in another, the uncastrated young bulls in another, the young baby calves in yet another. Vonu was all for putting the whole lot of them together but I stopped him, saying there must have been a reason for this separation.

At four o'clock in the afternoon we brought the cows into the shed to squeeze milk out of

them for the second time that day. As we were milking, Vonu said:

"Pierre, I am sorry I hit that cow so hard."

"You shouldn't have struck her like that."

"Pierre, when I finish this school I will never touch another cow for as long as I live."

"They are educating you here, you know, Vonu, so that you may become a cattle breeder."

"That's the whole point of it. Education my foot. Some fowl's dropping of an education. Look, taina . . . are you going to become a farmer?"

"No."

"That's it. I'm not going to be a farmer . . . neither is George, Kaloran, or any of the others. Why bother about cows? All you are doing is provide milk for those teachers. We don't drink any milk. We don't eat any beef. Look at those fat pigs. The boys on pig duty nearly die cooking for them . . . and do you ever eat pork in this school? No. Yet we work, work, work . . . "

We were silent for a while. I was thinking that he might be right, when an exclamation interrupted my thoughts.

"*E pei* God man!"

"*E pei* God what?"

"Man, Leitare and Selina are coming this way. They are probably coming to meet Mrs Roy."

"You're lying."

I took a look and sure enough the girls were coming towards the milking shed.

"Vonu, man, if they come you mustn't tell Leitare . . . eh?"

"Everything stays all right. Don't worry. Everything stays all right." Before I could argue any more Vonu had addressed them.

"You two—are you going back to the hostel?"

"Is that you, Vonu? You are like that!" Selina ignored his question.

"No, this is a different person. It is not me."

"Go on. We came to help Mrs Roy but we have finished and we are going home. We came over to see you milk the cows. How do you milk these cows?"

"We milk cows like women milk their breasts."

"*E pei* . . . everybody .... don't talk like that, Vonu."

"I simply mean that milk comes out of cows like milk comes out of mothers."

"Yes, but don't say it like that. Is that Pierre of Péle?"

All this time I had been quiet and had not dared a single glance at Leitare who had also been silent.

"Pierre, Tata Tangarazi and your mother—they are all right?" asked Selina.

"I . . . yes, they are all right," I answered meekly.

"Leitare, come and see how they milk these animals," she then said to her friend.

"Do they kick and bite?"

"No, Leitare," said Vonu. "If you hold their titties with your hand and gently squeeze, they just want to sleep."

"E pei."

"What do you mean, '*Ei pei*'?"

"The way you say it it's different, it's . . . it's . . . "

"Let me try to milk your cow, Vonu!" Selina interrupted.

"Go on, but make sure the milk flows into the bucket. Leitare, you try and squeeze Pierre's cow."

"I don't know how to do it."

"He'll show you . . . go on."

Leitare's fingers were delicate and tender . . . from too much laundry washing, I thought. I guided her hands to the Jersey's tits. We both squeezed . . . or rather I squeezed her fingers over one of the tits. We both watched the white milk shoot into the bucket. She'd supported herself by putting her arm on my shoulder, so that her left breast was touching me. I felt an urge to withdraw my right arm from her hand and put it round her shoulder. But something held me back. I started to sense a kind of warmth that began in my shoulder and crept to the depth of me somewhere inside. I wanted to stay like that for ever.

"Pierre, you are a good teacher," Leitare said, as she withdrew her hand to stand up.

The warmth had gone, but I was bursting with a mad desire to be close to her again.

The girls skipped away and Selina's giggle died away in the distance.

"I go take another bucket," Vonu said.

I continued milking and all sorts of things passed through my mind like a succession of film scenes . . . love, men and women, Zozo, marriage, bed, nudes, sex. Vonu was away for a long time. When he returned I was on my third cow.

"You think I want to sleep with those beasts? *Merde!*"

"Listen, man," Vonu said. "I have done it already."

"You have done what?" I was interested.

"I have talked to the girls. The road is clear. We are going to have a little talk on Saturday morning—tomorrow."

"You are lying."

"No, taina. God. God. I am not lying."

I believed him. I was so excited that I turned Tina's tit up towards him and squeezed. I was surprised how far the milk shot. I shot him between the eyes. I shot him again as he went down for the tits of his cow. Then he shot me. We were laughing and shouting wildly. At first the cows stood unperturbed. But they were probably feeling pain and started to kick and moo. I thought the shed would come down . . . and grabbed my bucket and ran out laughing. Vonu followed me with his bucket and we stood and watched another battle; the one between the cows and the shed. They kicked, shook their heads, and jumped about, but they couldn't get out, because their heads were secured. Then the shed was coming down. It fell on the cows. The whole thing looked very funny and we laughed. Then Vonu tried to empty all his milk on me and he ran away. But I chased him and poured all mine over his back. We laughed and laughed, pointing at each other. Luckily the cows were not hurt. We let them out. We quickly changed our clothes and distributed the one remaining bucket of milk to the teachers. We told Mr Roy that the shed had fallen down and that it was the cows' fault. But he gave us an hour's detention on Saturday, which meant that we would have to do an hour's work while everyone else was free.

"The bloody New Zealand bastards," Vonu was saying, as we returned to the compound. "For all the work we do during the week—this is the thanks we get."

After lunch and detention on Saturday, Vonu and I showered and changed. Then we went to meet the girls. They were waiting for us in the bush, off the road and about a mile from the hostel. We separated immediately. Vonu and Selina went one way and Leitare and I went the other.

My heart was beating fast. I felt happy, but scared, not knowing what to say. She walked behind me not saying a word. I walked in front, unable to speak. Occasionally I had to stop to lift up huge vines, so that she could pass through. At last we came to a clearing. "I—I think we can stay here." We stopped. We were under trees that had grown through the years to form a canopy on top shutting off the sunlight. Little bushes had no chance to survive here. There were a few patches where the sun's rays could penetrate like flashlights shining down from Heaven.

"It is like this that it exists in Brazil."

"What?" Leitare asked.

"The trees, like this. Only better."

"Is better like how—when they have big snakes and other bad things!"

"I was not thinking of the snakes. It is the good of it, the beauty of it."

"Oh."

We sat on the dark hard ground.

"Did you want to come, Leitare?"

"If I did not, why am I here now?"

I moved closer to her. I could smell her French perfume. I put my hand on her shoulder. She did not brush it away.

"Leitare, I like you very much."

"You can't say things like that to people you meet for the first time."

"But it's true. I like you."

She did not speak. The warmth I had experienced at the milking shed returned. I

moved closer still, so our thighs could touch. I tried to change my position to face her so I could kiss her, but her legs were in the way. I stood up. I pretended that I was sitting on an uncomfortable spot and sat down on her left.

"Do you like me, Leitare?"

No answer.

"Do you?"

She nodded. I kissed her. She had never kissed before. She didn't know how to. It was a dry touching of lips on her part. I remembered Zozo's words: "Take it easy man, for the first time." I tried again and to my delight I discovered that two-way kissing was much better than one-way kissing. She got the idea of it now. The warmth was now centred somewhere below me. When I stopped kissing I felt a pain below and discovered that it was my penis sticking to my trousers. I kissed Leitare again and pushed her to the ground. To hell with Zozo's sober advice. I wasn't going to wait for the next time. I just wanted to do it there and then. But suddenly I found myself lying on my back. Leitare jumped up and straightened her dress.

"I am going home. Pierre, how could you?"

I was embarrassed to go after her straight away, because of my erection. When it slackened at last I ran after her like mad. I caught her just before she reached the road. I caught her by the arm.

"Leitare, I am sorry."

No answer.

"Leitare, talk!"

She didn't.

"You think I am a God? A superman or something? Every boy meets a girl, he likes her and wants to sleep with her."

"It's not right. It's sin," she said.

"Who said it's sin? Look, nothing is sin, if people do it privately."

"What about killing and stealing?"

"Oh, I don't mean that kind of sin."

"Listen Pierre, you may not want to be a true Christian, but I do."

"And you think Christians don't fuck?"

"Don't say that! Don't say that!" she screamed.

"All right, all right, Christians don't sin, you think."

"They sin, but they must try to avoid it. It is sin for young people to have sexual relations before marriage."

"That's what the matron and the missionary told you and all the damned stupid people in the whole New Hebrides. You believe it, because they told you so. You are being . . . being indoctrinated."

"What does that mean?"

"Whatever it means, it's bad."

"It's not bad, Pierre. I believe in God. I believe it's wrong for us to sleep together, because I myself believe in it—not because someone else told me so."

"Look Leitare, all those good things the missionary told us about, they are not what we should do. Not many people live up to them. They can't. They mustn't."

"Why mustn't they?"

"Because if they do, the world would be a boring place to live in. And thank God, it's unnatural to live without sin."

"God did not put us in this world to do as we like."

"My God . . . "

"There you are, *your* God!"

"My goodness, Leitare, that's nothing to do with me wanting to have intercourse with you."

"Oh yes, it has."

"All right, but he gives us wants. I want you. You want me. I want what I believe is sensible and reasonable. I have enough sense to know that if I want to kill Mr Ray, I can't do it. But I also know that to make love to you is not wrong."

In the heat of the argument we had not noticed that we had reached the road, walking. We could now be seen by people coming along the road, and with a little cry Leitare freed her arm and ran off towards the hostel.

She refused to see me on Sunday.

OCCASIONAL SONGS

I'm going to Madang
I'm going to Madang
I'm going to Madang
I want to take an X ray

I want to take an X ray
I want to take an X ray
I want to take an X ray
I can't take off my blouse

I can't take off my blouse
I can't take off my blouse
I can't take off my blouse
For you will see my breast

You will see my breast
You will see my breast
You will see my breast
I can't take off my blouse

translated from Graged by Addie Odai

Ilabo—you painted the moon with blood
Ilabo—is it war?
Ilabo—is it sickness?
Ilabo—where will it come from to destroy?
Ilabo—from North? from South?

Song about an eclipse
translated from Gogodola by Kamo Abaiya

Our election was good
soon we'll sit well
we'll take the name of USA
our ancestor's name

Election song
translated from Tungiak by Justina Livale

Sorry, my in-law, my in-law,
if I try to run away, if I try to run away
he'll catch sight of me with eyes like pussycat
the Kiap will give me a painful scar
and I'll stay very long in prison

He'll catch sight of me with eyes like pussycat
the Kiap will give me a painful scar
and I will stay very long in prison
sorry my in-law my in-law

Prisoners' song
translated from Bena by Maki Namabiro

A different plane
a different plane
machine roars in the middle
machine roars in the middle
name is helicopter

Plane is going
plane is going
propeller revolves in a different place
propeller revolves in a different place
plane is gone

weep weep let us weep
weep weep let us weep
we thought it was merely a stone
we thought it was merely a stone
but it carried away our wealth

Song of an old woman on Bougainville about a helicopter that collects rock samples
translated from Nasioi by John Bika

Hunger and starvation
there is too much of you
you always make us laugh
you always make us laugh

My body now is lazy
my eyes have gone to sleep
my eyes have gone to sleep
hunger and starvation

Song of a prisoner during a tribal war
translated from Vilirupu by Orua Hua

DISILLUSIONMENT WITH THE PRIESTHOOD

by Leo Hannet

When I was five years old, I thought priests were wonderful, because they wore trousers. They looked different from anybody else. They looked white and wealthy and they wore a variety of beautiful garments and everybody paid them special respect. Christianity had a lot of prestige on Nissan Island in those days. If there was a service at the other end of the island, we would all walk over there and attend it. I suppose it was the novelty of being a Christian that excited people. My father was one of the first converts in the village and as far back as I can remember I wanted to become a catechist like my uncle.

But it was not until I was ten years old, that I first seriously thought of going into the priesthood. That was the time of our first communion and it made an overwhelming impression on me.

We had been trained for this important event for a year and a half. We had learned the prayers by heart, and the formulas and the rituals. Again and again we had been repeating them word by word. We were told that we would receive Jesus into our body and that we would become new types of people.

Then one day we were made to get up very early. I lined up with about thirty others, proudly wearing the new laplap I had forced my parents to buy me for this day. To me this was the greatest day of my life, on which Jesus was going to enter my body.

I felt elated, yet I had difficulty even with this my very first confession. We were supposed to reveal every little thing that we had done. Whether we had hit someone or stolen something; and whether we had played up with some girls.

But in our society there was a lot of boy-girl sex play among the very young.

Boys of fifteen or sixteen would have to exercise restraint but we young ones were merely laughed at when we played around. To our people there is nothing better than *love* and they would not think of blaming small children when they played that sort of game.

I could remember that when I was about five years old, some older children had forced me to act this mother and father game—but now I was too ashamed to tell the priest about it. My mind had already been spoiled by this new ritual and I had been made to think of it in terms of sin. So I had to invent all kinds of little sins which I had never committed but which I "confessed" to the priest instead.

My real sin worried me for many years, and even in the seminary I kept thinking that I was finally going to tell it to the priest—but I never did.

After this first communion we had to go to communion every day for a whole week and after that we had to make our weekly confession. And still I kept making up sins to give the impression that I was not hiding anything. I repeated the same thing all the time: "I stole someone's food; I told a lie to my parents; I was lazy at school; I spoke badly of someone else; I talked too much; I didn't say my prayers; I didn't pay attention to what the priest was saying." Some priests were very hard on us and would make us recite the whole rosary. Others were more lenient and asked us to recite an act of love, which is a formula for inciting you to love someone. This was always followed by an act of contrition: telling God

that you were very very sorry for what you had done.

We had to learn all this in English, even though we knew little more English than "father". Much later, I discovered that for more than a year I had repeated, parrot like, the formula I had learned with my first confession:

Bless me father, I have sinned very much
this is my first confession . . .

When I finished my primary standard four, I was sent to the Marist Brothers at Kieta. During the first week we were given cards to fill in to say what we wanted to become, when we left school: priests, brothers, catechists, council men, kiaps and so on. I chose the priesthood without any hesitation.

Those of us who had chosen the priesthood, were immediately given special privileges. The brothers came and talked to us more often. They showed us more kindness. I did well at this school and after doubling standards five and six I was sent on to the preparatory seminary at Chabai on Bougainville Island. Here we were to get used to the idea of priesthood and were to practise obedience.

We had twenty-eight rules to observe: when to wake up, when to keep silent, how never to look a woman in the eye and very many small little rules, so many you could not avoid breaking them. For the first year I was terribly pious, observing everything as best I could, but during the second year I became rather lazy, because we spent so much time working in the garden.

There was a convent near the school, but of course we were never allowed any contact with the girls. We were never allowed to be alone with a woman, not even a close relative, without special permission from the priest. We were taught to keep aloof and that we must speak to women only of things that were holy. We were told never to look a woman in the eye, lest she might tempt us. We were to look past her into space.

Looking back now, I feel that in the priesthood one feels much more tempted by women than outside it. Many priests I knew seemed to look on women not as human beings, but merely as symbols of sex and sin.

But at the time I was not critical of these things. I worked very hard at my Latin in those two years, and my motives for becoming a priest became much purer. They were now based on religious ideas, and I was not merely seeing the priesthood as a status symbol as in my earlier days.

Becoming a priest now meant that I was to be the servant of no man, but that I would serve Christ who is God. I would be able to deal directly with God, I would hold Him, I would create Him by saying mass, I would use words that would make God come!

At the same time I was filled with some kind of missionary zeal. I must help to free my people from their benighted state of superstition, must save them from the sins in which they had wallowed so long. The European missionaries would leave one day, and we the local priests would have to take over the work. I saw my vocation.

At a certain time of the year we had a retreat. All school was stopped. We had to retreat to think about ourselves and to imitate the Saints. Some of the students took this very seriously and they would castigate themselves. One in particular beat his head with his fists every time his mind wandered during a service and he would use exclamations like "My God help me!" But the rest of us thought him a bit strange.

At birth I had been given Leo as my patron Saint, the Pope who had driven the Huns out of Rome. At confirmation I was given the patron of Saint Joseph, the husband of Mary, who was chaste and who never thought evil of Mary and who was a model of chastity. But I was much more attached to the Saints I had picked myself. The first was Saint Philomena, whose name was found on a stone in the catacombs. The myth says that they tried to force her to marry a man she did not love. But she suffered torture in order to remain pure. I was very dedicated to her, and it came as a deep shock to me later in Rabaul, when I was told that she had been thrown out of the

Church! I had always prayed to her and had even written off to Europe to get some more books on her life. She had been my intercessor with God, and now I had to be told, that Pope John had ousted all the "mythical" Saints from the Church and would recognise only the historical ones.

I was left with Saint John Viani the Patron Saint of the hopeless ones and the useless ones. Through him, God could still make use of those whom others considered utterly useless. But he frustrated me often, because I felt he was too high above my reach.

In 1958, after completing two years in Chabai, I was sent to the secondary seminary in Rabaul. I was to spend five years here till matriculation.

It was in Rabaul that my disillusionment with the Church first began. In Rabaul we became more conscious of the enormous difference in the standard of living between priests and pupils. In Buka we had accepted this as a natural order of things: as a privilege towards which one had to rise very slowly. But in Rabaul many of the students felt upset, when on a big feast day, we had to kill a cow for the priests, and after doing all the work of the cutting up we were merely given the head and some odd bits and pieces, while the priests enjoyed all the good meat. One of the seminarians got so annoyed that he sneaked out a letter to the Bishop of Bougainville about it. Of course, according to the rules of the seminary, all our letters got censored, but this one found its way out and the Bishop was very kind and wrote back asking why they were treating his boys like that? Naturally the Father was very wild with us for giving the seminary a bad name.

But these were minor matters. What really upset me in Rabaul was the discovery that the priests themselves were not free from racial prejudices. At the time there were two cinemas in Rabaul, one for natives and one for Europeans. The Fathers, trying to be liberal, I suppose, occasionally took some of the light-skinned students to the European cinema: the Gilbertese, some Papuans and one or two Tolais. We Solomon Islanders were told that we were too black!

But we did not only have two different cinemas, we also had two different masses: one for Europeans and one for natives.

I remember that once a Papuan came into the European mass, and he was literally chased out of the church by the Australian priest, who, incidentally, was a member of the Legislative Council!

The mission was placed in the middle of a large plantation and frequently I was sent to do adult education work among the labourers. But I found it very hard to talk to them about the kindness of God, when I saw how badly they were treated and how poorly they were paid. In fact the labourers on the mission plantation were no better off than the workers on the private plantations. They lived in large, rough dormitories and their food was cooked in a forty gallon drum cut in half. In those days they received ten shillings a month in wages. They had to start work very early in the morning and the brother in charge treated them roughly and would even beat them occasionally. I was deeply shocked to find many homosexual practices among the labourers. They were all married men, but the Church, that always talked about the holy unity of the family, forced them to live in dormitories and did not allow them to bring their wives.

When I returned to the mission station from the labour camp it always seemed to me that the Bishop lived like an aristocrat. He kept himself very remote from us and didn't even know the names of his students. Sometimes when he brought important visitors to the school, he had to feign familiarity with us in order to hide the fact that he didn't know our names.

Yet my disillusionment in Rabaul was not really with the Church as such. I still knew that our Bishop in Bougainville was very kind and I simply began to distinguish critically between different missions.

In Rabaul I first became aware of the jealousies between the different Mission societies. The seminary was a regional seminary; it was

not supposed to be attached to any mission but it was directly under Rome. It was the Pope's own seminary, yet the different missions were all competing. The Sacred Heart Fathers in Rabaul would always point out to us that by joining their mission we would be better off and have less financial worries than if we became secular priests. The Marists from Bougainville would come from time to time and tell us we must become Marists, because it was always best to go through Mary; and the Holy Ghost Society would tell us that it was better to go through the Holy Spirit because that would bring us nearest to the Holy Trinity.

All this was against the principles of the seminary. They were supposed to teach us about religion in general—not about their particular brand of devotions.

I had always thought of the priests as very very holy men, but now I began to see their jealousies and the competition amongst them.

In 1962, while I was still in Rabaul the famous Hahalis "affair" blew up. I was emotionally involved in the whole thing, because I had gone to school with Francis Hagai, who was one of the leaders of the Hahalis Welfare Society. At Kieta he had been the prefect in school when I was the youngest student there, and he always looked after me at the time.

The way I saw it, the Hahalis Welfare Society was merely out to improve the material lives of the people. The Church had started them off on this road with the foundation of the St Joseph's Welfare Society, which had collected money to build better homes. The people had been induced to become carpenters in imitation of the husband of Mary.

Thus it was the Church that had made people conscious of the need to better themselves. When the Government came and asked them for taxes, they wondered whether they should give away all that money (for which they would see little return) when they might in fact use it to build themselves better homes. Instead of paying the money to some remote government in Port Moresby the people decided to use it for something that would change their lives substantially.

But the Church took a very different view of Hahalis. From the pulpit they denounced all the Hahalis women as prostitutes and they interpreted the whole movement to be nothing but a "cargo" cult.

I felt that the priests had misunderstood the whole thing. I was deeply disappointed at the way in which they denounced Hahalis in public. It is completely against our custom to put a man to shame in public, because of all the family and in-law ties. I could not bring myself to believe that my people were as bad as the Church had made out. I loved my people too much. I knew that cargo cults existed. My father, like the rest of the people, had been involved in such activities—in spite of the fact that he was a catechist. Like most people of his generation he led a kind of double life. But I felt that the Church had lost touch with the people—that if they had given better leadership, instead of rejecting Hahalis outright, they might have led the people the right way. And so over the Hahalis issue my loyalty was split between my people and the Church.

For the first time also, I became very critical of the Administration; their attempt to solve the whole issue simply by flying in police was extremely insulting.

My awkward position between my people and the Church got highlighted every time I went home on leave. Each time the priests were giving me a little more respect, because I had risen a little higher towards the priesthood. They would give me special presents and invited me to meals at their table, but when I went there with one of my brothers they would ask me in and leave him standing outside. The better they treated me, the more aware I became of how they treated the rest of the people. Eating at their table, I could well remember the days when I was a house-boy in the mission. Often the priests were feasting when a boat with new goods had come in. I would stand there in the background and they would go on talking late into the night and

wouldn't care a damn whether I was hungry or not . . .

I was embarrassed, when they told me about the evil ways in which my people were living. They would not hesitate to tell me all about the sins of my own brother—to talk like that was completely taboo in our own society, but they either didn't understand that or they didn't care.

My senior brother, who was a kukurai and a catechist, got no such special treatment. When he had to go and see the priests they made a point of keeping him waiting. The church only paid him ten shillings a month and two sticks of tobacco for being a catechist, and the government only gave him occasional token gifts for being a kukurai. He became very bitter and once he told me: "Next time I shall go to the church naked, because clearly that is expected of me. Next time I will go to the government naked! I am forced to stay at home doing the work of the church and the government instead of going to the plantation to get money to improve my family. . . . "

The more I saw of the attitudes of the priests in Rabaul and at home the less I wanted to become one. But I was in a real dilemma, because my people trusted me and they thought that I was going to the highest secondary school in the Territory and they expected me to complete the course. So although I was beginning to have grave doubts about my future, I went on to the Higher Seminary in Madang. The decision was a hard one and at times I was even thinking of escaping it all by becoming a monk.

The rector of the Madang Seminary had come to Rabaul and told us about the different life we were going to lead in Madang. We were going to live in separate rooms and we were going to enjoy better food. We were going to be treated like adults and we were going to make our own decisions. However, when we got there, it was dormitories once again and we were treated like children once more and forced to obey all sorts of regulations. The Bishop explained it all away: we had to be modest, we had to practise the virtue of poverty and so on and so on. When we complained about the food we were told that we were too materialistic.

The Madang Seminary did one very important thing for me: the course in philosophy we were given enabled me to make more critical judgments. I became much more aware of the world outside the seminary. In Rabaul I only saw the conflict between the church and the village but now in Madang I was first conscious of wider issues. This was the time when the Bougainville copper issue first came up. It was also the time of Mr Eastman's U.N. Mission. All these things made us think a great deal about New Guinea as a whole, its political future, and its social problems. I was then much influenced by another student, John Momis, who had received all his secondary education in Australia. Together we formed a group of students to discuss these issues. But the priests disapproved of this: they were always blessing the *status quo*. They blamed Momis and me for the growing restlessness among the students. Finally we called a meeting with the Fathers and the students in order to express some of our views. The priests told us to talk openly and to air all our grievances. We took their word for it and told them exactly what we thought of the attitudes of the priests to New Guineans; how they supported the principle of double standards etc. etc. But the rector of the seminary took offence and he wrote back to the Bishop of Bougainville asking him to remove us from the seminary.

But the strangest part of it all was that though the priests were so critical of John Momis and Ignatius Kilage and myself, yet they used us as show pieces when important visitors came to the seminary. Sometimes they used us to prove that they were providing a liberal and progressive education. When the United Nations Mission came to Madang, Mr Eastman from Liberia said that we were the only *élite* group in the Territory and the seminary was about the only institution in the whole country that he praised. The priests were most ambivalent about the whole thing.

But we took our cue from Pope John, who

was a very liberal Pope and who wanted dialogue with all other religions and all other attitudes to life. So we believed that even as priests we should be open and that there was no subject that we should not discuss.

It was in this spirit that we started the magazine *Dialogue* as a means of communication with other tertiary institutions, like the Papuan Medical College and the Teachers Training College. I was chosen as the editor. The first issue we brought out was a very mild one. Our theme was *brotherhood*. We said that in spite of all the differences in the Territory we were all brothers under the skin. We also talked about the misuse of "freedom" in the world today and we criticised the corruption and the promiscuity of modern society. This went down well with the Administration and with the Church. We got many letters of congratulations from the Church and from people like J. K. Macarthy, Dr Gunther, Professor Spate and Mr Justice Minogue. Even some of the planters wrote in to express their approval. Several sent us money.

The second issue was very different in tone. This was the time of the Tonolei timber lease on Bougainville. The Administration had made the Buin people sell 500,000,000 super feet of standing timber for only $60,000, whereas previously they had paid the same amount of $60,000 for only 200,000,000 to the Vanimo people. This seemed blatantly unjust. Moreover a simple calculation showed that owners had in fact received a mere four shillings and sixpence per acre of good timber! At the same time the C.R.A. was negotiating for land on Bougainville to mine copper; and again the people felt they were not being given a fair deal. Only Bishop Lemay spoke up for them as usual.

I tried to express our feelings about all these issues in an article called "Now is the Moment of Truth". I said it was time we stopped patting each other on the back. We ought to start speaking honestly to each other. I was warning the indigenous people—to forestall any shock amongst them—that the white men were human after all, that they were not demigods or sacred cows, though they might assume such postures.

I criticised the Administration, who were always playing the role of our "father", but who in reality were selling us out to the C.R.A. and the Bougainville timber company. I pointed out that according to the United Nations Charter the Administration should be protecting the rights of the people.

I went on to accuse the planters, who were playing a divide-and-rule policy in the House of Assembly, forcing our people to agree with them, yet stabbing them in the back.

I said that the Church was always talking about the dignity of man and about the enhancement of the personality—but how could we enhance our personalities when we were left in the mud with no one to support us? When the Church was not living up to her own vows, must we still believe in Christianity? Or was the crucifixion merely a cruci-fiction?

I concluded that the Church, the Administration and the planters were all birds of a feather.

We printed one thousand copies of this issue and we sent it out to all the District Commissioners, the important people in the Administration, the Bishops and Church people and even to people in Australia.

At the time our rector was away at a conference. One of the priests saw a copy of the magazine and he was very upset. He said he had been unable to sleep that night and that he was disgusted with us. We still had 500 copies left to distribute and he wanted us to burn the lot. He spent a long session with us reading a section from St James, where Jesus talks about how we ought to be very kind to our fellow men. We reminded him that he had himself been very critical of the Administration only the previous day—and he felt extremely hurt.

We sent out the remaining 500 copies and soon we got letters upon letters of complaint and disgust. Planters abused us, Administration people complained, nuns wrote to say they would pray for us. The Bishop of Aitape—who had sent us money after the first issue—now

expressed his disgust. Only Justice Minogue wrote in to support us.

I was called before the District Commissioner and I was shown a telegram from the Department of District Administration in Port Moresby asking whether I was a Communist and whether this issue had been written under any outside influence. Some people blamed the American Negro priest for it all—though the poor man was a completely harmless and inoffensive man who wouldn't hurt a fly.

After this issue of *Dialogue* we fell very low in the eyes of the Church and the Administration and the Public. Even in Rabaul, seminarians received catcalls of "Dialogue! Dialogue!" from Europeans. Several people were sent up to spy on us, to worm their way into our confidence and discover the "outside influences" that had made us produce this issue of the magazine. Needless to say, all future issues of *Dialogue* were censored.

Great pressure was brought upon me to resign from the seminary. Of course, they could not kick me out, because according to the rules we had to resign voluntarily, just as we had joined of our own free will. After the *Dialogue* incident I decided that I would not return to Madang after my holidays. But my people persuaded me to go back for another year, so I returned and stuck it out until I came to the university in 1966.

However, throughout this last year I was already clear in my mind that the Church was not what I had expected it to be and that the priesthood was not for me. I knew now that I must lead a different life and that I would be able to help my people better outside the Church. While I still respected the priesthood as such, the ideal priest was nowhere to be seen. Moreover, I felt that too many of the church rituals had been over-institutionalized and that these things forced you to do a lot of acting and they did not help you to become a better person. Above all, I felt that the Church was not open and not frank and that they had rejected the dialogue and wanted to continue with their eternal monologue.

My main criticism of the Church was, and still is, their attitude to my people. The very idea of evangelism implies a condemnation of our people—it represents an attitude that does not permit us to be ourselves.

Now—several years after I have left the seminary—I am not sure whether I can still call myself a Christian. Perhaps I am more of a humanist. Of course, certain Christian values still remain with me: a sense of dedication; a feeling of obligation towards my people; the knowledge that my life is not my own. I still believe that there must be cause and effect in creation, that there must be some transcendental being—but whether he is the God of Christian worship, I don't know. I am also convinced that there is still a great need for religion in the world. But I no longer believe that Christianity is the only religion. During my seminary studies I have been much moved by Hinduism and other religions of the East. And thinking back on my very early childhood I gradually begin to see some meaning and purpose in the many traditional rituals and formulas my father taught me.

THE BALLAD OF ROROVIRI

A long long time ago
a man named Roroviri Siopa
was living in the place called Mola-ve-laua,
the place that is now called Malalaua.
Roroviri's children were altogether five
and their names are here: first Soro, a boy;
behind Soro, Tukefareapo, a boy;
behind Tukefareapo, Oanke, a girl;
behind Oanke, Siopa, a boy;
and behind Siopa, Oameta, a girl.

There was another man living
amongst Roroviri and his children.
His name was Lekilaka.
Lekilaka showed Roroviri where the best bamboo grew.
Lekilaka had the power to make bamboo grow,
but one of his legs was short.

In those days, when Roroviri and his children
lived at Mola-ve-laua they had to fight;
the Kukukukus and the Keke people
brought the fight to Roroviri's village.
Then Lekilaka grew a bamboo fence around the village
and during the fighting times
Lekilaka would hide behind the fence.
But then Roroviri grew tired of war
and one day he went down to Aposoi to settle.

The beginning of Aposoi was like this:
Roroviri and his children cut sticks
and they built a bridge and they crossed the river
and they settled at Aposoi.
But the Kukukukus followed down Meporo river
and they saw Roroviri's new village.

And they climbed along the stem of a coconut tree
and thus they crossed the river
and once again they gave fight to Roroviri and his children.
And the Keke people too discovered his village
and they continued to fight.

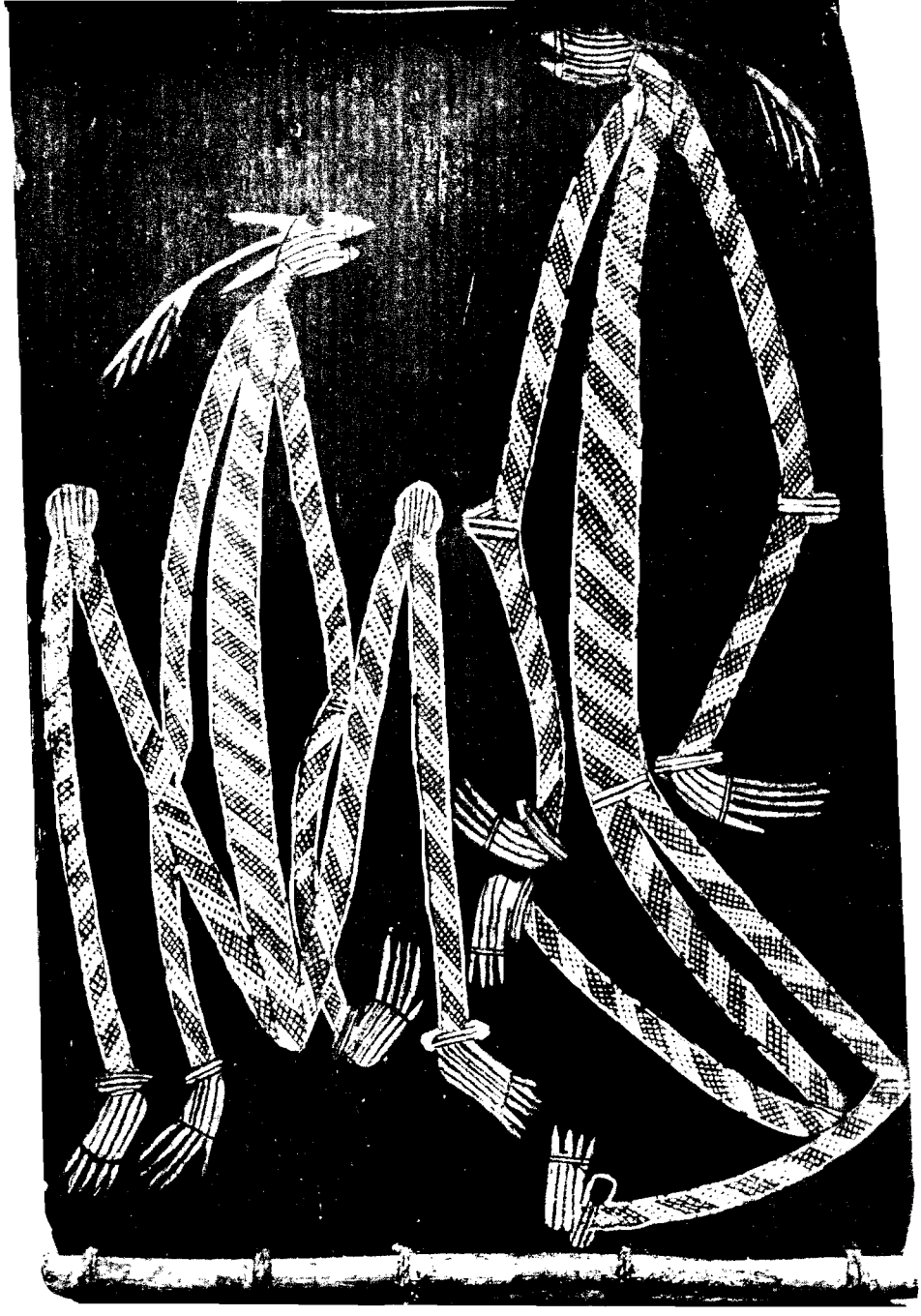
Then Roroviri left Aposoi and followed Meporo river
down to the beach and he went to Kavekauri
and he lived there.
And the Kukukuku people followed him once again
and they carried the fight to the beach,
but the Keke searched everywhere for Roroviri
and could not find him.

Roroviri left the life at Kavekauri again
and went to Somuke.
While he was living at Somuke he found a hunting ground
across the river at a place called Meporo Fere.
And another time came when Roroviri made up his mind
to cross the river and live permanently at Meporo Fere.
And when he was living at Meporo Fere,
the Kukukukus and the Keke people could not find Roroviri
and this was the end of the war.

While he was living at Meporo Fere, Roroviri's daughters
married two husbands from the Kaipu people
and his sons married three Toaripi wives.
They all moved away and left Roroviri and Lekilaka
behind in Meporo Fere.
Then one night Roroviri dreamt that Heovara people
were coming to fight him.
In the morning he told his dream to Lekilaka
and suggested that they should run away
from Meporo Fere.
But Lekilaka refused.

So Roroviri wrapped him in a fishing net
and he hid him underneath the house,
and he left him there.
The Heovara people came looking for Roroviri.
And they discovered Lekilaka in the fishing net
and they killed him.

When Roroviri returned he looked for Lekilaka
and he found him dead.
Then Roroviri was very sad
and he abandoned all thoughts of fighting
and he sat down at Meporo Fere
and just lived.



PAINTINGS BY YIRAWALA

PLATE 1 Two Mimis doing a rock wallaby dance for the increase of the species. The Mimis were little people who lived before the Aborigines in Arnhem Land. They were hunters and fishermen and had the same ceremonies as the Aborigines. Yirawala says that before the Mimis turned into rock spirits they passed on the cermonies to the Aborigines.

But another time came
when the Heovara people dressed up like Lavaus
and Roroviri thought they were returning to their homes
in the West and he came down from his house
in order to sell them some bows.
Roroviri thought they were real Lavau people,
but as soon as he came down
the Heovara people killed him.
And the Heovara people took his war string bag
and they burned the body of Roroviri
together with his house.

The Heovara people paddled back to their place.
But when they passed Ereukaepo
they saw Sarufa Soro
who was burning the undergrowth
beneath his coconut trees.
Then they told Sarufa:
"We shot down the cockatoo."
And Sarufa said in return:
"You will never shoot him down."

Then they showed Sarufa his grandfather's
war string bag.
And they threw water in his face with their paddles
and they rowed home.
Then Sarufa's heart was crying
and he swam across the river
and he went to Sevese Miai.
And Sarufa told Sevese Miai
how the Heovara people had killed their grandfather
Roroviri.
And they prepared the payback war.
And Sarufa and Sevese Miai fought well together
and strong
and their ancestors were fighting with them.

In the end the war finished
because a Toaripi man married a Heovara wife.
Then good times came
and Roroviri's descendants lived in peace
and they crossed to Lelefiru
and they built their village there.

translated from Toaripi by M. E. Maso

HOW I WIPED AWAY MY DAUGHTER'S FOOTPRINTS

told by Oa Maiu on tape and transcribed by Albert Maori Kiki

Those wooden stumps out there in the water—that is what remains of the bridge. The main road from Ihu used to lead across it, right through the middle of Pakovavu village. Further out, just where the gulls are circling now, that's where my house stood. I had lived there all my life. I saw my three children grow up there and all my grandchildren were born there. Now I have destroyed it all, have chased the people off their land, have swept away their houses, all because of Ari, my daughter.

I still cannot understand how it happened. Ari had always been a good daughter. She always respected me, always looked after me. She cooked for me right unto the last day of her life—even though it was her in-laws' duty to do so. In fact it was her very concern for me that brought on all the trouble. My son married a lazy girl, Mupa. She was useless and disrespectful. She roamed about the village, took lovers and never bothered to prepare any food for her old father-in-law. One day Ari started to quarrel with her:

"You lazy woman! Don't you know your duty to your father-in-law? Is it you or I, who is supposed to care for him? Yet you leave all the work to me. It is because you sleep around with so many men."

I could hear them scream at each other at the top of their voices. Mupa ran to complain to her brother Lavai. Then Lavai came and abused my daughter:

"Why are you abusing my sister? So you want me to reveal all your secrets? I know well enough that you have been sleeping with Eoe in the bush!"

I could not believe it was true. Ari was a mother of seven children, though she was still fairly young. And yet she could hardly deny it. She just stood there crying. As soon as the terrible news was out, Oa Kari grabbed a knife and ran to kill Eoe. But everybody was shouting and some were warning Eoe and Eoe escaped into the bush. The next day we heard that he had run to the district office to give himself up and to seek protection.

I must have been one of the few people who were taken by surprise. Oa Kari had known for some time but he kept quiet and attempted to kill Eoe. Twice he had invited him out on a hunting trip, intending to shoot him, and to pass it off as an accident. But Eoe had been very vigilant. He kept close to Oa Kari all the time and never gave him a chance.

Now Oa Kari called a clan meeting and demanded that Eoe be killed. All the elders were agreed on this, but some of the young men protested. These are new times, they said. In the old days, yes, he should have been killed. But now it is different. Now we have the white man's law. He will go to court and he will be sent to jail.

"This is no matter for jail," Oa Kari said. "He will go there for six months, and then he comes out and continues with the same thing. Death is the only answer." I had to agree with him, but in these days we have to follow the white man's law even when it is quite foolish. White man's justice is no justice at all. Eoe went to court, but the patrol officer would not even jail him. He said there was no evidence. No evidence, when the whole village knows about it!

Eoe stayed away for three months. They

said he had gone to Kerema. Then suddenly he returned to the village and flaunted himself before our eyes. He put up a house right next to Epe the magic man, and we all knew that he had bribed Epe to give him protection. Epe was too powerful for any of us, and Eoe knew quite well that as long as Epe was alive, we would not dare to touch him.

Ari was not so lucky. Her husband did not drive her out of the house—perhaps because of her seven children, and because she was pregnant again. But it was a sad life she was leading, because they would not speak to each other.

Then one day she returned from the beach, feeling sick. She had been out fishing all day, and she had been perfectly healthy all this time. But when she got home she lay down and she called her husband and she said: "Oa Kari, my husband, I am sorry, but I must leave you and the children. I am going. But I am glad to go, because I have been a great embarrassment to you and I have caused you great shame."

Within a few minutes, Ari was gone. For a whole week I sat at home and I did not know how to cope with my sadness. Then in the end I decided that I would wipe away Ari's footsteps from the sand.

There are two types of waves that belong to the Melare Kivae clan, and I received the magic to control them from my father. The third type of wave belongs to the Epe Havora clan. Theirs is called Iharu Apo. It produces a yellow kind of foam and I have no power over it. But the ones with the white foam, Ma Eapapo, the big waves, and Ma Hekai, the small ones, they must both obey my command.

I waited for the first moonless night and I prepared my *ee ipi hore,* my cassowary feather bush, and tied them on my bottom, ready to dance on the beach. I walked down to the sea, and I faced the water and called the two men who live in the sea:

Mitao and Tapi
come up and dance with me
come and take my feather bush
I will share it with you
you are the big wave
and you are the small wave
please come up and take feathers
and tie them to your bottom
Poro and Havala the two girls
are waiting for you
they have prepared your food
come and take it away
Mitao and Tapi
come up and dance with me
Opi and Pohe are on the beach
dressed in young palm leaves
they are waiting for you
with spear and killing stick
come and dance with them
they have prepared your food
come up and take it away.

As I was calling, I danced from the beach up to the land and back again. I danced around my house, I danced around all the places that Ari used to visit, along the paths she walked along when she was alive. I showed the waves where to go,

Then I sat down by the beach and I scratched the sand away with my fingers and sang:

Skilful fingers, fingers scratching the sand
Shell you are a girl, crab you are a girl
Skilful fingers, fingers marking the sand.

Early in the morning, I could hear that the waves were rising. Ma Eapapo and Ma Hekai were obeying my call. Before leaving the house, I called all the children and told them to play on the beach. I told them to play the game that is played when the waves come up. And they went down to the water and threw sand in the sea and they were singing:

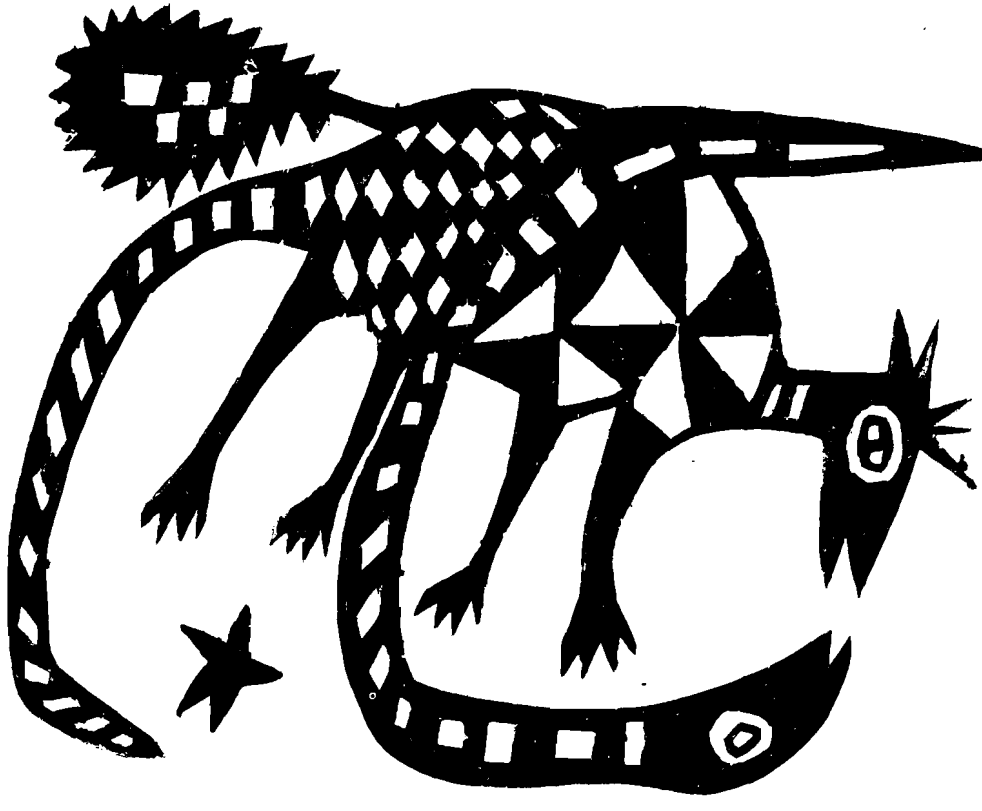
Swelling water you are
Breaking water you are
Swell up and come towards me
Hiss and whirl:
tiri laia tala laia
you are water you are water!

When the people in the village heard this, they knew that I had made the magic of the Melare Kivae clan. They knew that the waves would come up, would eat a little land every day, would surround their houses gradually and sweep them away. They were sad, but they did not fight me, because they knew that I had

been shamed in public and that my daughter had died, and that I had to wash her footprints away.

And as Ma Eapapo and Ma Hekai were taking away the first houses, the people moved across to the other side of the road, but the waves were not satisfied and they swallowed the road also and they took away the village on both sides of the road. And they washed away my daughter's footprints and they wiped away the painful memories and they made me calm.

But the people of Pakovavu were scattered and they had to build new homes in other villages and they grew angry with Eoe who had been the cause of all their trouble. And I know that one day their anger will make them defy Epe the great magician his protector and they will go and kill Eoe and I shall be satisfied.



THE OLD CANNIBAL WOMAN

A folktale retold by John Saunana

The rat and the crab were very good friends. One day, while they were on one of their usual excursions about the countryside, they came upon a tree whose fruit was very delicious; and its branches were heavily laden with bunches upon bunches of tempting red-ripe fruit.

When they reached the foot of this tree, there was some confusion as to which of them should climb it in order to bring the beautiful bunches to the ground. The crab said to the rat: "You are my choice to climb for the fruit, because your teeth are as hard as stone and as keen as the *nagi*; and I dare say that the long cords that attach the heavy bunches to the branches of the tree will snap at a mere bite from those teeth of yours."

But the rat said: "No! Although I would very much like to do us this service, my friend, it undisputably remains true, that I am no climber of heights." And like the crab before him he carefully proceeded to flatter his friend: "There is no sight finer than the sight of you clutching and heaving at those bunches!"

After this round of cordial exchanges the crab agreed to undertake the task of climbing the tree. And just as the rat had predicted, the boxlike creature, slowly ascending, presented a grand sight to his friend, the lazy person on the ground, who had retreated to a comfortable position some distance away. The crab had no difficulty in ascending the main trunk of the tree, because he was a skilful negotiator of the dangerous notches and the steepest approaches. But after some time, he became increasingly aware of a piercing pain in one of his legs. At that stage he decided to rest a little while so as to soothe the pain. But unfortunately the pain did not vanish, as he had anticipated, but the leg came out of its joint at the base. Before abandoning his fallen leg to his friend on the ground, the crab told the rat what had happened and instructed him to look after it for him thus: "My leg is falling down. Please don't eat it."

The rat promised that he would not eat his friend's leg, but that he would keep it tucked away dutifully, to await the crab's descent. But after some time the rat was tempted to taste the leg, and when he found it surprisingly edible, he began to eat large chunks of it. The crab, who was among the middle branches by then, heard the occasional cracking and explosive noises made by his friend below and he became very suspicious. "Rat, what are you cracking?" he asked. But the rat lied. He told the crab that the cracking sound was produced when he bit into the fruit which the crab had dropped.

Meanwhile the crab continued to make the rather tedious ascent to the highest branches. Sometimes he would vault from one branch to the next, if they were sufficiently close together; at other times, having stripped a branch of its fruit, he would descend the same branch back to its base, and then ascend the main trunk to the next branch. The higher he climbed the closer the branches came together so that the foliage was very thick and the leaves on the outer branches kissed and embraced each other so closely that they shut out the light. At times the crab was totally enmeshed within this darkness and could not see beyond the tip of his nose. He suffered considerably from the pain which his fallen legs had given him; and in this very tight situation it was unavoidable for many more to drop off, much against the will of the owner, when he was trying to force a way for his body to pass through the thicket. In spite of this, and though his body was

crying out for a good rest, he kept at his task until every one of his legs, with the exception only of his two large claws, had fallen away. The rat on the other hand stayed comfortably on the ground and was having an almost endless feast on his friend's legs.

However, the rat's joy was soon to be checked, because the crab decided now to make for the ground. Driven by the painful anxiety to have his legs refitted, he took a gigantic leap from the top of the tree and landed back-on on top of the sleeping rat. And wanting to lose as little time as possible without his legs, he hastily questioned the rat: "Where are my legs?"

The rat answered thus: "Your legs are in that cluster of grass near the base of that Mumu tree."

The crab eyed the space that had been indicated to him and then went and had a thorough search there. But although he searched only nasty black ants were there to be seen who bit him mercilessly all over his body. The crab was roused to anger by this treatment and challenged the rat to a fight. Although the rat was a little reluctant at first to accept, the crab did everything to entice him by swearing at him and calling him names. Both now steaming with rage at each other's taunts, they fell on each other and fought a merciless battle. They fought and they fought. After they had been fighting and rolling for the good part of half a day, they agreed on having a break and they were almost breathless for a long time afterwards, because they had unexpectedly landed at the foot of a Rakaraka tree. Now this tree has precious scented flowers which are much valued as a form of money.

When they had made this discovery, they patched up their differences and promised to forget the past. Then they began to weave the flowers in earnest, into lengths of money with which they were to buy a pig to celebrate their reconciliation and their good fortune. When they had woven sufficient lengths, equivalent to one hundred pounds or one *ita*, they started to look around the area and to enquire for pig owners who were willing to sell an animal worth *tai ita* or one hundred pounds. When the people heard the news, they shook their heads, whistled loudly to themselves and mumbled to each other to the effect that no one alive had ever heard of such a large sum of money being offered for a pig. And in any case "What pig is large enough to be worth one *ita*?" But the search went on unperturbed, till the rat and the crab found an old woman who owned a large number of pigs and there was one among them that was of such an immense size that it had become almost invaluable in terms of money transaction.

This old woman was an eater of human beings. The rat and the crab then went to her home with the money and asked for the largest pig she had. She agreed to the exchange and she called her pigs one by one to show themselves to the visitors and demonstrate how big and fat they were. Each time she called out, she took great pains to indicate whether she wanted a sow or a boar. This she did by calling the animals' sex organs in a monotonous chant. The rat and the crab listened in awe as the woman's chant filled the air, breaking the dreary silence of that place. "You, testicles, testicles! Here are your rings of cooked highland taro leaves. Come and replenish yourself." And immediately the first pig emerged and paraded before them, and the two friends anxiously asked whether this was the one they were going to buy. She proudly retorted that they had yet to see a pig. Pointing at the one before them she muttered: "It . . . is . . . a . . . tiny . . . thing, costs a mere ten lengths of money." And with the same chant she started calling out again, "You, vagina, vagina, here are your cooked highland taro leaves, come and replenish yourself." In response to her call there appeared a sow worth twenty strings of money; and after another call came one of thirty strings, and then that of forty, of fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty and ninety, all in their order of size. Meanwhile the two had all along been wondering where and when she was going to terminate her strange chanting and get down to business.

Again, the two eagerly wanted to know

which of the pigs parading before them was theirs, so they asked: "Which among the herd is ours to buy?" The old woman shrugged her drooping shoulders and said boastfully: "My sow hasn't appeared yet. You can be sure of one thing: it is much, oh! many times bigger than what you see before you now. In fact it is my best, and a personal pet. But I would like to warn you, as it is my duty to do so, that its coming will be accompanied by destructive wind, earthquake, thunder and lightning, such as you have never seen or experienced in your life time."

And then she called the tenth pig from its hiding place: "You, vagina, vagina, here are your rings of steamed highland taro leaves, come and replenish yourself!" Suddenly, huge black clouds took shape over the horizon and in a matter of seconds the entire surrounding was turned into a desolate and indescribable sort of place. Darkness quickly took the place of day; the wind roared with mighty speed blowing everything before it; the rain splattered down in huge drops; lightning flared, electrifying the trees that dared to withstand its force, and thunder drowned everything in a deafening roar.

Seeing that the two had become terribly frightened, the eater of human flesh assured them that everything would soon return to normal and explained that the mysterious event which they had witnessed heralded the coming of her last remaining pig—the one they were going to buy. When these extraordinary happenings had subsided, the rat and the crab paid the old woman *tai ita* for the pig, then killed it, singed away the hair on its body and lastly incised the belly to extract and dispose of the heart.

The rat and the crab extracted the intestines and threw them to one side. But the old woman secretly collected the waste in a basket and kept it near the good meat. Then she lied to the friends, saying she had prepared the best meat for them in the basket and that the rest of the carcass was unfit for consumption. Thus she in fact gave them the wastages, while she kept the whole edible meat for herself.

The two had not walked very long and far when the stuff in the basket gave off a nose-piercing stench of rotting excreta; and blow flies in their thousands hummed their hungry song after them. The rat did not however take much notice of the stench, because he thought it came from the underside of the basket which had been in contact with the pig's intestines. The crab, who was at the rear, on the other hand, had a certain suspicion as to the source of this pungent smell. He impulsively thought that the rat was having difficulty in digesting his meal, so that the nasty smell was being produced within the rat's digestive system and was continuously being expelled from his belly by the weight of the burden which they were carrying, and which was bearing down on his flatulent belly. But in spite of this horrible smell and the troublesome flies they walked on, because they did not want to look ridiculous by disposing of their money's worth of meat prematurely. And when they reached home they wasted little time in finding out whether the meat was good meat or bad meat but proceeded straight away with baking the contents of the basket whole.

At midnight, when they woke up to undo the oven, it became clear to them that the old hag had deceived them and had got the better of them. They thought and thought. Then finally they decided that it was not too late to reverse the situation and thus even the score. Said the rat and the crab to themselves: "Because the old cannibal has cunningly tricked us, we shall play a much more serious trick on the old hag." Their ambition was to prevent her from consuming the meat which was in her oven. It was not long before they followed the inviting smell of cooking meat to the old woman's house. Immediately they began to tear the ground and they pierced a tunnel through to the meat.

Having accomplished this feat the rat and the crab ate to their hearts' content. Not once did they stop until not even the minutest morsel was left in the oven. Then they pissed and excreted in the empty oven before they broke into the house and likewise pissed and excreted

into the mouths of the old woman's bamboo water containers and every empty vessel they could find. At last the old eater of humans dragged herself out of her sleep and with all the energy her drooping body could summon she laughed a laugh of mockery, remembering with pleasure and satisfaction her personal triumph and the misfortune of the rat and the crab. Then she stooped low and carefully dismantled the huge structure of the oven she had built the night before. However, to her great horror all the meat had disappeared and what awaited her eyes had already decomposed and gave off a powerful and pungent stench, which did not warrant a second glance. In the meantime the rat and the crab had managed to drag themselves away from the old woman's house. This made her very angry. She mumbled to herself: "Am I to be tricked and mocked by those silly creatures? No, no, and I say never! You two can be happy now, but your happiness won't last long—I will see that it does not last till tomorrow." And so saying, she quickly followed the road where the two had gone. The rat and the crab had by now reached their home. They however did not enter their houses, for on their return they found that they had grown too fat to enter their holes.

From a distance the two saw the old woman coming wildly towards them and they began to tear anxiously at the ground in front of their doors in order to escape her threat. The old woman saw that the two were trying to enlarge their holes, but she thought that it would take them a long time and therefore she did not bother to walk very fast. When the two saw that the old woman had slowed down they worked even harder than before. In the end they succeeded in enlarging their holes, but they did not escape altogether. They thought that they had to expose some part of their bodies so as to give the old woman a fair chance to fight them.

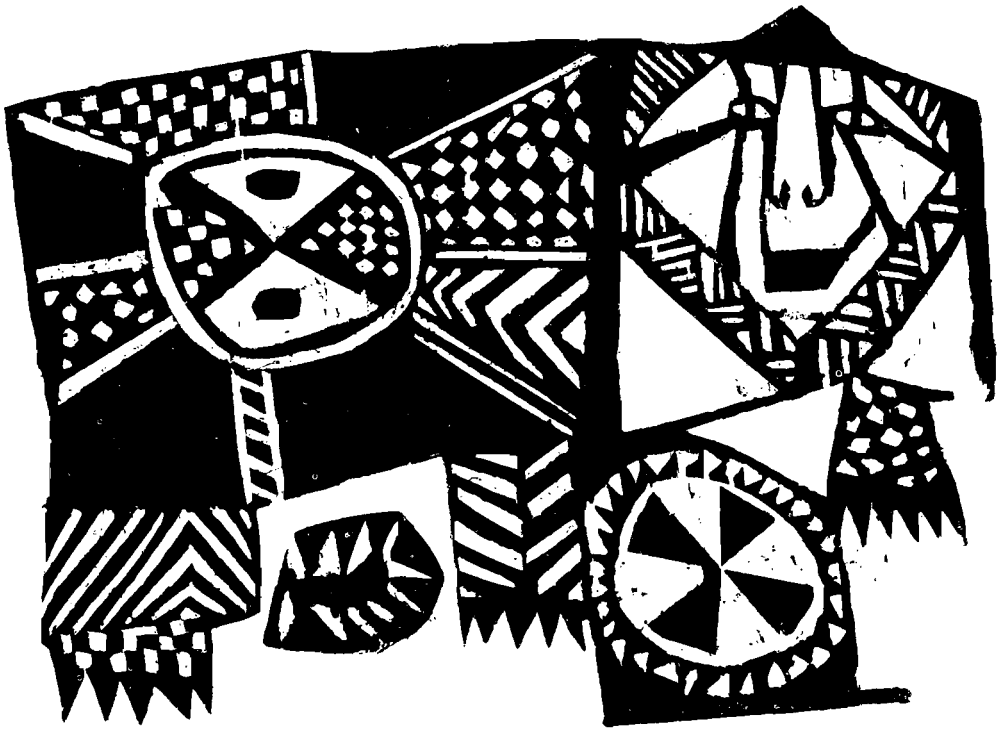
When the woman was only a short way from the rat and the crab she shouted threats at them: "You two thieves, if you have bones, show yourselves now! You two thieves, if you are still alive, get out of your holes!" But the rat and the crab took no notice of her angry words. Instead they merely remained dead still in silence. They did not make any movement whatsoever in order not to attract her attention. Their refusal to answer made the old woman even angrier than before. She scorned them for refusing to fight a foe who had gone looking for a fight at their very doors. "I never knew that you two were such cowards! Two shrinking old women."

The rat and the crab laughed and laughed. The two noticed the old woman pacing furiously forwards and then backwards in front of their holes. Then the crab mocked her saying: "You thieving old woman, what more brought you here? What are you here to get? Are you here to bring destruction to our home? What is there left to us that you have not cunningly taken away from our hands? Isn't your belly satisfied after you have twice deceived us already; first taking our money and then our pig too? What of ours do you still want to steal from us? Now we must warn you to come no nearer than you are. And if you are going to put your hands on one of us, we will combine our strength to put an end to your life!" The old woman did not obey the crab. She instead angrily put her hands into the hole of the crab trying to reach for it. But the crab had moved to a safe corner of the hole. When the rat saw the woman reaching out for the crab he shouted to the crab saying: "Bite, bite tighter, crab, don't let go till she's dead!"

While the old woman's hands were trying to reach deeper into the hole the crab carefully zigzagged its way nearer to the surface. At the mouth of the hole the crab saw that the old woman had completely blocked the only way out. She was sitting astride on the opening and her bottom covered the entrance and weighed down on the edges of the hole. The rat now chanted repeating its advice to the crab: "Bite, bite tighter crab, don't let go till she's dead!" When the crab heard its mate's encouragement, it stretched out its big claws in preparation for the attack. It bit wildly on the old woman's underthigh. She gave a frightful jerk of her thigh upwards and the crab slid on

the underthigh towards her bottom. The claws of the crab gripped hold of the hair on the old woman's vagina. The old woman tried to pull herself up from her sitting position, but the crab pulled her down strongly by the hair. Thus the old woman and the crab struggled and struggled. They struggled for a long time. Suddenly the claws of the crab touched the vagina. The crab bit at the vagina. It bit, bit and bit. The rat once again chanted its encouragement to the crab: "Bite, bite, grip and grip tighter, crab, don't let go till she dies!" Meanwhile the old woman cried out in great pain. She had been completely overpowered. The more the old woman cried and shouted out in agony, the harder the crab tightened his grip on her vagina. When her pleading for release became fainter, the crab gave it a last big grip with all his strength. When the crab released his grip on the vagina the old woman was dead.

And thus ends the story of the unfortunate old cannibal woman who had tried to trick the rat and the crab.



TWO PIDGIN SONGS FROM THE SOLOMONS

JAPANI HA HA!

Mi fulae olobaoti, longo Isti longo Westi,
Mi sadere oloraoni, kipimu Solomone,
Mae waka lukuluku, longo lan longo si
Ha!—ha!, Ha!—ha!, Japani ha!—ha!

Aeamu eafosi mi saena longo hemu,
Bikosi biki faiti, kamu longo Japani.
Mi lukimu wani fala samarini daeva daoni,
Ha!—ha!, ha!—ha! kaikai bilongo mi.

Aefosi longo Lungga kamu longo weneside,
Torowe baeke meli ana oloketa sigareti,
Go baeke longo Lungga gutibae longo kakeresi,
Ha!—ha!, Ha!—ha!, Japani ha!—ha!

Mi kamu folo daoni longo mae parasuti,
Enimi suti kamu bata misi olobaoti.
Iu rereremu kamu bata wea mi longo hemu,
Mi laf longo iu—Japani ha!—ha!

Japani wade simasimu everi aelani Pasifiki,
Amerika simasimu kapitolo Tokio,
Iu lukaoti mae fereni olomane i kiki baeke,
Ha!—ha!, Ha!—ha!—Japani ha!—ha!

CHILDREN'S SONG

Hoka laiseni longo Honiara hemi openi
Mi laikem baim suiti meleki
Bati tu leit fo mi nan sore tumasi
Wanpela Sande mi no Sande longo Honiara.

YIRAWALA

by Sandra le Brun Holmes

Yirawala is one of the few "old time painting men" left in Arnhem Land today. Nowadays almost anybody does bark-paintings for the tourist trade, but in the olden days only those who had been instructed in the sacred designs and in the law of the tribe could do such important work. Yirawala says with some contempt: "Some men do paintings for sale but these are only copies of things they have seen. Nowadays even young boys and girls make bark paintings on the Mission stations." He explains that "true" paintings are like the paintings seen on the walls of ancient caves.

Yirawala is one of the Gunwingu tribe, whose land is near the mouth of the Liverpool River. At the age of twenty he left his country because of a blood feud. He worked for a while at Malay Bay for a timber contractor; then after the death of his first wife he moved for a while to Goulburn Island. Finally he settled with his second wife Mary on Croker Island. He has a married son, a young son of about fifteen years of age and a grown up daughter.

Yirawala learned painting from his father, who demonstrated the various designs on rocks or crude pieces of bark, which were left to rot afterwards. As Yirawala was introduced to the various stages of manhood, his father showed him the sacred body paintings. Yirawala inherited the designs and the law of the Maraian ceremony, for which he is the Dua Moiety boss. He is also a leading songman and painter for the Lorrkon funerary ceremony.

Yirawala's work has not acquired the easy slickness of the work that is produced for commercial purposes. Some Europeans have considered it "crude" compared with the delicate craftsmanship of some decorative work that is turned out for tourists. But Yirawala's work is full of vigour and movement. It has a sincerity that is derived from its religious content. Aborigines describe him as "properly good painter old time way—him paint like that one Marwai." This is the highest praise a painter can receive from Aborigines, because Marwai was the mythical being, the Dreaming artist who began the cave painting. He is still considered the best painter and some rock paintings are said to date back to him.

(See Yirawala's work on pages 31 to 34.)

THE SUN

A play by Arthur Jawodimbari

CHARACTERS

Bunani	*a man from Towara village*
Dobana	*his wife*
Tunana	*Dobana's younger brother who has the magic of the sun*
Kamusi, Purere, Getapu, Maita	*young men of Towara village*
Geretu	*a dancer from Jinaga village*
Owade	*orator from Towara village*
Bundeba	*villager from Towara*
Sundara	*Bundeba's wife*
Kunja	*villager from Towara*
Embogo	*Kunja's wife*
Dancers	*men and women of Jinaga*

SCENE I

Outside Bunani's hut. Early morning. It is dark.
Enter a group of children, singing:

CHILDREN: Sun, why do you hide so long?
Sun shine, oh shine on us,
come out of your lime pot.

Sun, why do you hide so long?
Come out, we have slept enough,
come out of Tunana's lime pot.

Sun, why do you hide so long
in the darkness of your lime pot?
Come out of your mother's womb.

Sun shine, oh shine on us,
sun look into our faces
sun make us warm, make us laugh!

(During the singing the light gradually fades into bright daylight. Bunani is now seen in front of his hut, chewing betel nut. Dobana comes in, carrying a pot of food. Bunani looks up briefly, then goes on chewing. Dobana starts dishing up food.)

BUNANI: Hurry up with that food! You are very slow. I am tired of chewing betel nut.

DOBANA: Chewing betel nut? That's nothing new. Every night you stay up, chewing, till you finish the whole bunch.

BUNANI: Stop that talk and pass me the food. My saliva is dry.
(Dobana hands him a dish.)

DOBANA: There, eat it all. I am not hungry. These taros are tasteless. I wish we had some fish.

BUNAI: Can you catch fish? Or aren't you a woman? Why grumble about fish? Don't you see the waves are very rough these days? I am hungry for food, not fish.
(Bunani starts eating his food. Dobana too starts eating.)

DOBANA: The wind blows all the time, but we don't have any rain. Maybe the people of Beube are sailing to our place?

BUNANI: No, the people of Beube won't come till the moon falls behind the sea. But I think that the people of Busega are making the wind blow, so that we can't catch any fish for the feast.

DOBANA: Aeee . . . even if the wind didn't blow, you wouldn't go out fishing. You just talk about fishing, but you never touch the sea.

BUNANI *(angrily)*: Have you ever eaten a fish you caught yourself? You just shut up! And what about your brother? Ask him to catch some fish, instead of playing around the beach.

DOBANA: I see, you don't dare to face the sea yourself, but you want my brother to go out and catch fish.

BUNANI: He doesn't do any other work. So he might just as well catch some fish for you.

DOBANA: This is wife and husband talk. Don't bring in my brother. He is no longer a small boy, he is approaching manhood.

BUNANI: You are the one who started the talk. I don't like talking—but you force me to talk. You are a woman who says one thing one moment, another thing the next.

DOBANA: When is that feast going to be held? We have not brought our crops from the garden yet.

BUNANI: There is plenty of time. The feast will be held when the next moon comes out. There is no hurry. Many people have not brought their food crops yet. But tomorrow we will ask the young men and women to help us carry our food to the village. Our big men say that we must give more than what the Emoi clan gave us.

DOBANA: Yes, they talk a lot. They said they blinded us with their food crops. They said we can't give as much as they gave us.
(Dobana takes another bowl full of food and places it in front of Bunani.)

BUNANI: What's all that in the big bowl?

DOBANA: That is Tunana's food. He is young, and always hungry. I know. Take it to him in the men's house.

BUNANI: How many stomachs has your brother got? This food is just too much. He did not follow us to the garden yesterday. Why give him so much? Have you left enough food for the children?

DOBANA: He is not a pig or dog to eat your left overs. He does work in the garden, but yesterday he stayed home with the other young men. I put the children's food in the basket, before I dished up the food for us.

BUNANI: All right, let him sleep, play and eat all the time. You can feed him like a piglet in a cage.

DOBANA: If I don't give him food, who else will? He has no relative to go to: our parents are dead.

BUNANI: All right, give me the bowl of food and I'll take it to him.

(Dobana gives him the bowl and leaves.)

DOBANA: Go well. I must see what the children are doing. *(Exit.)*

BUNANI: What has the fellow done to deserve this amount of food? He has done nothing: except swimming in the sea and playing on the beach.

(Bunani transfers the taro to another bowl which he hides. He replaces the taros with stones and covers them up. Owade comes in, in time to see Bunani disappear.)

OWADE: A man walks proudly in the sun
a man walks angrily in the warmth.
He takes his good fortune for granted.
He does not know what jealousy will do,
to him and to the rest of us.
A man walks proudly in the sun
he is going to offend an orphan—
he does not know that an orphan is guarded
by anxious parents from the land of the dead.
A man walks angrily to the orphan—
he does not know how closely he lives
to the spirits of the dead.
A man carries our fortunes in a bowl of stones.
May his foot stumble,
may his mind falter
and his heart lose courage . . .
Sleep soundly men and women of Towara
the time could be near
when you no longer want to sleep . . .

SCENE II

On the platform of the men's house. The young men are talking idly.

KAMUSI: Friends, my sister told me that the girls will be challenging us in a moonlight dance tomorrow night. Girls from other villages are coming.

TUNANA: Is it high tide or low these nights? Last time two girls nearly drowned me. Other girls poured sea water on me and my necklace was thrown into the sea.

PURERE: Had I been there, I would have forced one of them to drink sea water. At that time most of our boys were fishing on the reef. I went there after fishing, but no one was around.

(Bunani walks in smiling.)

BUNANI: You all seem excited about tomorrow night's moonlight dance. Last time the girls said that they defeated the boys.

(Hands the bowl to Tunana.)

Here is your food, brother-in-law. I must go to the garden now.

(Exit Bunani.)

TUNANA: Thank you, my in-law.

GETAPU: Tunana, your brother-in-law must have been listening to our talk. I wonder how long he was listening . . .

MAITA: I hope he does not tell the girls, because we want to surprise them. Since they are inviting girls from other villages, we will invite boys from other villages too. We will let the small boys join in the dance; then we'll come later and surprise the girls.

TUNANA: This time I'll get revenge on these girls for what they did to me last time. But my friends, let us leave this talk. Come and eat with me. My sister has sent me a big bowl of food. I bet all of you are very hungry.

(They sit round the dish and pick out a stone. Each boy tries to bite it.)

KAMUSI: Aeee . . . this is stone! My teeth can't penetrate this solid stone. Where are the taros? My mother never gave me stone instead of taro when I was hungry.

PURERE: Who ever ate stone to fill his stomach before? Our friend of no shame asked us to share his unusual meal. After all this friendly conversation, he sets a bowl of stones before us!

TUNANA: My friends, I am sorry. I cannot understand how these stones got into the bowl. They can't be from my sister. They can't!

GETAPU: Aaah—shut up! You told us lies and I almost broke my teeth on this stone! You should eat some of your unusual meal yourself, before offering it to us!

MAITA: Our friend has planned to get rid of our teeth. Let us get out of here, before they bring us some more stones. I don't want to go home with my mouth bleeding.

TUNANA: My friends, I am shamed before you. I have no bad feelings against you. I can't understand why my sister gave me stones instead of food. I am sure it was not her . . .

GETAPU: That is not true. You and your brother-in-law want to get rid of our teeth.

TUNANA: Oh no! Believe me my friends, really, I don't know . . .

MAITA: Let's go! I suspect Bunani will be back with more stones . . .

(They contemptuously throw down their stones in front of Tunana. Tunana sits with his head bowed.)

TUNANA: Oh shame, shame!
How can I live with this?
No one will ever forget this day.
Whenever I show my face
people will say:
"This is Tunana, who fed his friends on stones."
I must leave this place
I will travel down the coast
till I come to the dark land of cannibals.
If they kill me—well let them kill me
and eat me.
But if they spare me,
I will give them the warmth of the sun.
(Tunana packs his belongings. He gets his large lime pot and puts his sun magic inside. As he does so the stage lights fade.)
Father, see the shame of your son!
Help me to get my revenge.
Before you died,
you left all the magic to my sister,
but to me you left the magic of the sun.
Now let darkness fall on this village!

Let the cold enter their bones.
Let the taros dry up in the ground.
Let the children die with hunger.
Let pale creepers entangle their houses.
Let all joy and happiness leave this place.
I will take my canoe and paddle to the east.
Better to be at the mercy of cannibals
than to endure this shame!
(There is darkness for a while and silence. Then from a distance the children's song is heard.)

CHILDREN: Sun, why do you hide so long?
Sun shine, sun shine on us,
come out of your lime pot.

Sun, why do you hide so long?
Come out, we have slept enough,
come out of Tunana's lime pot.

Sun, why do you hide so long
in the darkness of your lime pot?
Come out of your mother's womb

Sun shine, sun shine on us,
sun look into our faces
sun make us warm, make us laugh!
(After this song there is a very brief silence, then confused and anxious voices all at once while people rush on the stage.)

MEN AND WOMEN: What happened? He is not coming!
No sun! No light!
Something is wrong!
Tunana! Tunana! Where is Tunana?
I am afraid! I am afraid!
What shall we do? What shall we do?
(Amidst the shouting and confusion a solo voice is starting the song again, anxiously, nervously.)

WOMAN: Sun, why do you hide so long?
Sun shine, oh shine on us,
come out of your lime pot.
(The crowd joins in. They sing wildly, desperately:)
Sun, why do you hide so long?
Come out, we have slept enough,
sun make us warm, make us laugh!
(The song breaks off suddenly on a kind of desperate shriek.)

WOMAN: It's no use! It's no use!

MAN: Behind the black palm tree
the sun is hiding.
There he sits,
by the old woman,
the witch who kills our children.

WOMAN: Let us cut the black palm tree
till it comes crashing to the ground.

MAN: Let us kill the witch
let us kill the old woman!

MEN AND WOMEN: Let us kill her, let us kill her!

OWADE: Stop!
(He speaks with both sadness and authority.)
Don't atone for a crime with another crime.
The sun is gone from you for ever.
Tunana is gone!
Driven out of the village by shame.
The orphan walked out of our village
and the sun went with him.
From now on
the night will make its home
with the people of Towara.
The cold will follow us like our shadow.
Retire to your houses
and digest the last fat meal you have eaten.
From now on
lean days will commence in Towara!
Retire to your houses
to spend this long dreary night . . .
(Silently and slowly the people walk off the stage in different directions.)

SCENE III

Enter Tunana in an almost dark stage. He puts down his string bag, and mumbles to himself. He seems frightened.

TUNANA: I can go no further.
In this lonely place, I'll make my home. The sun shall shine on this land: but what will it see? Who lives here? Are there cannibals to kill me or sorcerers to bewitch me? But my eyes are heavy. I am too tired to build any shelter. Better not to make any noise, that might attract people. Father, protect me during my sleep. Whoever finds me here, let them accept me in their midst . . .
(Tunana falls asleep. Beating of drums is heard. First faintly, then louder. Warriors rush in with their spears. Some are beating Kundu drums. One of them sees Tunana. There is a shout and they dance a mock attack on Tunana. But the women come in and beg the warriors to spare Tunana.)

WOMAN: Spare him! Look at the necklaces of pigs' tusks round his neck! He must be a man of great importance. Let the stranger live among us and be one of us.

GERETU: Ah, this is true. We must not kill a man who sleeps peacefully on our dancing ground.
(The warriors retreat with a sigh, lowering their spears. The women sing and dance around Tunana. Tunana stirs. He wakes up confused.)

TUNANA: Am I dreaming? I fell asleep in a lonely place. Where did all these people come from? *(The women stop dancing and retreat to stand with the men. There is a moment of anxious expectation on both sides. Tunana reaches for his bag to get the lime pot. Instinctively Geretu raises his spear, but one of the women stays his arm. Tunana takes the sun magic out of the lime pot. The light fades in rather quickly. There are cries of admiration, fear and delight. Some of the women cover up their eyes. They begin to feel the warmth and give sounds of well-being and comfort. They throw off the bark capes in which they are wrapped. Suddenly they remember Tunana. They all kneel down facing him and they shout:)*

MEN AND WOMEN: *Oro, oro, oro, kaiva! Oro kaiva!*
Oro, oro, oro, kaiva! Oro kaiva!

GERETU: *(Steps out and gives Tunana a string bag.)*
Arise, our chief!
Who you are, we do not know,
nor where you come from.
But the wonder that you have brought to our land, is greater and more beautiful than anything we have ever seen. Stay with us, be our chief! Chew our betel nut and marry our women.
Stay with us, and keep your light with us, to warm our blood.
(The drums start beating again, and the women dance before Tunana. Tunana, somewhat overwhelmed, stretches out a hand, hesitantly, towards three of them in succession. Immediately he does so, the women sit down by his side. The dance stops.)

GERETU: Let these be your first three wives! Chief from the unknown land, bringer of light and warmth, rule over us! We all shall obey your command.
(The drums start beating wildly again and everybody joins in a dance to pay homage to Tunana, who sits centre stage, with his three wives.)

MEN AND WOMEN: *Oro, oro, oro, kaiva! Oro kaiva!*

SCENE IV

The sad note of a flute. Back in Towara village the people sit in groups in the dim light and deplore their fate.

BUNANI: Woman, aren't you tired of sleeping? Wake up and make fire. Our children are dying. They lie around like lifeless logs. They have had little food, since darkness fell on our land.

DOBANA: Where will I get the firewood to make fire? Go out and bring dry leaves of coconut trees. We have used up nearly all the rafters of the house. Before long the roof will collapse on us.

BUNANI: It is becoming more and more difficult to move around the village: these deadly colourless creepers seem to strangle every plant and every tree.
(A wailing sound is heard from afar.)
Can you hear that? It sounds like Kunja and his wife are crying. Maybe one of their children has died.

DOBANA: My eyes are still unused to this darkness. Whenever I open them, this thick wall of darkness closes in on them. I wish I knew where Tunana went. He left at night—so the land breeze must have guided him to the land of cannibals. Has he taken the sun

to shine on them? Will they have spared his life? Or will they have killed him and destroyed the sun for ever?

(Enter Owade.)

OWADE: Men and women, sleeping, sleeping, sleeping.
Boys and girls, sleeping, sleeping, sleeping.
Wake up, wake up, you have slept too long.
Wake up, your children are dying of hunger and cold.
Crawl on your hands and feet,
collect firewood and dry coconuts.

BUNDEBA: Where is the light of the sun? Shut your mouth, orator, and go away. What will your words bring us? I have lost three of my children. Now my eldest son is dying. Will your words bring them back to life?

SUNDARA: Let not the sun show his face. He will bring me great sorrow. Let him hide in his house till I die. All my lovely flowers are plucked and I am left with the thorns. Let me not live to enjoy the warmth of the sun, when my children can no longer see his beautiful rays.

KUNJA: We are too weak to paddle up the coast or down the coast. My stomach is as clean as the inside of a bamboo. Let the stalk fall on the ground where the flowers withered.

OWADE: Sleeping, sleeping, sleeping.
Men and women, boys and girls, sleeping.
Wake up! Wake up and rub your eyes!
It is not yet too late.
Pursue the sun! Search up and down the coast
and find out its new abode.
Find Tunana and ask his forgiveness!

EMBOGO: If you can see in the dark, pursue the sun and bring it back to us. We are perishing. Why do you cry like an owl in the gloomy night? Help us, we are very weak and sick.

BUNANI: And even if you find him, do you think Tunana will forgive? He has always been mean and useless and he will prefer to let us die.

OWADE: Be quiet, Bunani. Have you a mouth to talk, after you brought this calamity upon us? Were you not the one who offended the orphan, who drove him out with a bowl of stones?

(Grumbling voices all round.) Bunani be quiet. It's all your fault *(etc.)*

DOBANA: If you men are too weak or too cowardly, then I will go myself. I will find Tunana.

BUNANI: You can't! You are too weak. And what about your children . . .

KUNJA: You will lose your way . . .

SUNDARA: You will die in the dark . . .

EMBOGO: He will not speak to you . . .

OWADE: Let her go. Her father's spirit will guide her to see her brother.

DOBANA: I'll go. My father gave me all his magic, except the sun. Had I been a boy, he would have given it to me. But he had to give it to Tunana, who has always kept it near him. When he sees me, Tunana cannot refuse me. He will come down the coast with me and bring the sun back to us.

BUNANI: My wife, stay back and let me go instead. You cannot go to the land of the cannibals, and there is little strength left in you.

DOBANA: No, my husband. It was your unkindness that drove Tunana out. So let me go and atone for you. Let me go and ask for the restoration of the light. Stay well, my husband. Stay well, people of Towara.

MEN AND WOMEN: Go well, Dobana!

OWADE: Go well, Dobana, in search of the light.
May your hand be firm on the paddle,
may the land wind guide you along.
May you soften your brother's heart
for we have suffered enough.

SCENE V

A feast in Jinaga village. Very bright lights. Tunana surrounded by beautiful women. Other women dance before him. People sit around in groups, eating.
Dobana staggers in. She tries to make her way to Tunana, but people push her back. There is a quarrel, Dobana is pushed and falls to the ground. She shouts her brother's name desperately.

DOBANA: Tunana!

TUNANA: Who is that? *(He jumps up, raising his hands. Music and dance stop abruptly. He walks over to Dobana.)*
Sister!
(Everybody steps back, as he lifts her up and leads her to where he is sitting with his wives.)
Dobana . . .
you look sick. You are weak . . .
Rest and have some food . . .
(Several women rush forward with food dishes.)

DOBANA: My brother! I will not eat!
Let me talk first!
How can I eat, when my people are starving?
How can I warm myself in the sun, when my people
in Towara are cold?
Tunana! My children are dying!
Since you have taken the sun from us our taros do not ripen, our coconuts have neither flesh nor milk. Our men are too weak to go and fish—many of our children are dead!
My brother, come back to us. Restore the sun to our people.

TUNANA: That cannot be.
I was driven out in shame
from my own village.
What has befallen your village
did not happen through my fault.
These strangers have received me kindly.
They have spared my life,
they have made me their chief
they have treated me better than my own kin.
I cannot return to Towara.
But you, my sister, stay with us.

Be happy here, find a new husband,
bear new children.
Come now—eat and strengthen yourself.

DOBANA: No, my brother!
I cannot eat, while my children die.
Give us back the sun!
I implore you, by our dead father,
give us back the sun.

TUNANA *(visibly moved):*
My sister, never will I forgive Bunani.
But for your sake, and your sake only
I will save Towara.
For your sake, I will return,
and once again, the sun shall shine on good and bad alike. For your sake, the people of Towara shall live and Bunani too shall be saved.
(He turns to his people.)
My people! We must leave at once.
Prepare the canoes. Load them with food to feed the people of Towara. Let everyone get ready. Only the old, the lame and the blind shall stay to look after the children.
(Busy activity on stage as everyone is getting ready.)

TUNANA: Arise, sister! Let us walk to the beach. The big canoes are waiting. Let us set sail!

GERETU: Beat the drums, young men of Jinaga! Let the rhythm of the drum calm the waves. Let it inspire us to sail fearlessly across the sea.

SCENE VI

Back in Towara. Darkness. The people lie around weakly.

BUNANI: Two weeks have passed and Dobana has not returned. I should not have allowed her to go.

KUNJA: What will have happened to her?

EMBOGO: Poor Dobana. She has perished on the dark seas.

BUNDEBA: Bunani, you should have gone yourself. What if the cannibals killed her?

OWADE: You men of little faith. Nothing is lost. There is still hope. I can never believe that a great magician like Dobana's father will let his daughter die like that.
(A conch shell is heard from afar.)

BUNANI: Did you hear that?

KUNJA: What was that?

BUNDEBA: Someone is coming!
(The conch shell is heard again, louder. The lights fade in gently. Excitement among the people. They scramble to their feet.)

OWADE *(ecstatically):*
Stretch out your arms, people of Towara, the darkness is lifting from our land. Our sufferings are coming to an end.
(The conch shell blows the third time, very loud. Tunana and followers enter from centre back stage. A very bright light shines from behind Tunana almost blinding the audience. The actors on the stage appear like silhouettes. Dobana rushes to her husband.)

BUNDEBA: The light of the sun hurts my eyes! Oh I can feel the warmth flowing through my blood. But how dare I enjoy the light without my sons?

SUNDARA: Oh sun, if only you had come earlier, to rescue my child!

TUNANA *(turning back to his people):*
My people, go back and bring food, and feed these suffering people of Towara.

KUNJA: Look at the chief! Is it not Tunana, the playmate of my son, Kamusi?

BUNDEBA: How did he become so big? So important?

PURERE: Is this the same boy, whom the girls threw into the sea and made him drink salt water?
(Tunana's followers return with the food and they are beating the drums.)

EMBOGO: Let us not talk about our sons. Or we shall bring great sorrows on ourselves. Let us listen what this big man has to say.
(Tunana's followers give out the food.)

GERETU: Beat the drums, young men of Jinaga. Let us entertain our friends of Towara. Dance till your feet are heavy. Dance till your legs are wet with sweat.
(While the Towara people are eating, the Jinaga people dance. After a while Tunana beats his lime pot with his lime stick. Everything stops. Everybody listens.)

TUNANA: My promise to my sister is fulfilled.
I brought you food. I brought you warmth.
But now I must return to my new home.
For never again shall Towara be my home.

BUNDEBA: Stay big man, stay. Be our chief and live among us. Ask your people to bring their belongings and live among us.

TUNANA: We must return. My people are anxious, because we left our children, with only the old and the lame and the blind to guard them.

BUNANI: Stay brother-in-law, stay big man, stay. We'll work for you. We'll hunt and fish for you. We'll fight for you.

DOBANA: Don't leave us in darkness!
Why can't you stay here? The bones of our parents lie in this land. You are going to a land that is new to our ancestors.

TUNANA: My sister, I have returned you to the land of your fathers. All your wishes I have fulfilled. All your wants I have provided. But let me go and find my own happiness in Jinaga. As for the bones of our parents, let them stay with you. Their spirits are with me, and they can follow me to any strange land.

DOBANA: My brother, if you leave us—what will happen to the sun? Will we be left once more in the cold?

TUNANA: I will leave you—but the sun shall shine on all. No man is big enough to keep the sun a prisoner! Today, I'll break my lime pot and set him free. Released from bondage the sun shall roam the sky, removed from human reach.
And he will wander, from place to place and shine on everyone in turn!

MEN AND WOMEN: *Oro, oro, oro, kaiva! Oro kaiva!*

OWADE: This chief is truly great! Only a great man can resign the power of his magic, for the benefit of all!

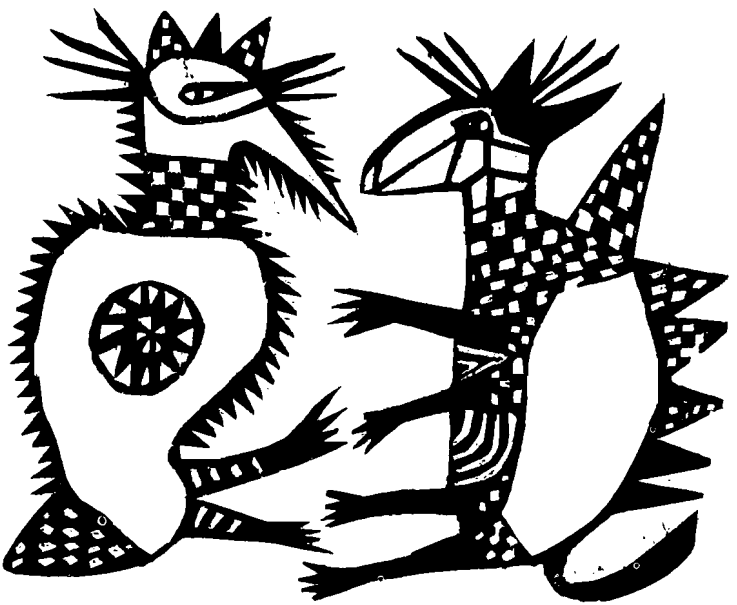
MEN AND WOMEN: *Oro, oro, oro, kaiva! Oro kaiva!*
(The drums beat again and everyone is dancing. Everyone joins in a modified version of the sun song.)

Sun shine, sun shine on us,
come out, we have slept enough!
Sun make us warm, make us laugh!

Don't hide behind the black palm tree,
don't hide with the old woman,
sun, come out and shine on us!

Come out of the darkness of the womb,
come, break the lime pot and shine!
sun make us warm, make us laugh!

Sun, roam over the sky, be free
shine on the good and shine on the bad
warm their blood, make them laugh!



BOOK REVIEW

New Guinea Poems, *by Stephenson Fox, published by the author, Port Moresby,* 1968. $1.20

"Publishing a volume of verse," Don Marquis observed in the *Sun Dial,* "is like dropping a rose-petal down the Grand Canyon and waiting for the echo." In the case of Stephenson Fox's *New Guinea Poems,* the resulting sound is more likely to be a loud, dull "clunk!" than an echo.

Stephenson Fox is doubtless well known to many readers of this journal as "Masta Pita", and a not-so-successful candidate who campaigned for the Eastern Highlands Regional Electorate in 1968 as a *"Masta bilong skulim ol long bisnis"*. He is also, as this slender volume shows, a modest, if self-publishing, poet.

The book opens, after the dedication, with a preface by R. W. Robson, the Managing Director of Pacific Publications (Aust.) Pty Ltd. His introduction must be one of the least kind, if accurate, such notes ever to appear in a book of verse:

> "The fussy reader will detect a lack of craftmanship. Many of the rhymes don't jell; much of the rhythm limps around painfully on three or four legs, where the purist will allow only two; sometimes a phrase has been twisted in a startling way to get in a line-ending that rhymes. But now and again, Peter achieves a bit of real poetry . . . "

Perhaps most usefully of all, however, Robson's very first sentence provides a first-class symbol for the type of poetry we are to read, when he paraphrases "a famous saying":

> "Some men are born to poetry; some achieve it; some have it thrust upon them."

The original, of course, comes from a speech in Act II, Scene V, of William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night,* when Malvolio says:

> "Soft; here follows prose—
> . . . but be not afraid of greatness. Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them."

It would be nice to know if Robson realised when he wrote the preface, that the paraphrase's original began "here follows prose".

The preface is symbolic in another way too: of the book's grotesque, almost parody-like, use of poetic forms and expressions, which are put to quite pathetic, if not downright incompetent, use by the imitating author. The similarity here between Robson and the poet Drayton in Sidney Lee's *Life of Shakespeare* is also fascinating:

> "Drayton pretended to greater originality than his neighbours, but the very line in which he makes the claim ('I am no pick-purse of another's wit') is a verbatim theft from a sonnet of Sir Philip Sidney."

Of like stuff is Stephenson Fox's most lukewarm critic, and applauder, made.

One fears that what Tom Lehrer once called "research", and what literary critics call the "influences" upon a poet, are really much the same: bad plagiarism, often quite openly acknowledged.

The literary influences upon Stephenson Fox have been diverse. He is obviously "a quick [but not] brown —". In his opening poem, "Birthday Sonnet", for example, at least three separate literary works are obliquely referred to in the final sestet alone.

There is, firstly, a delightful reference to the work of the men at the methylated spirits factory who must now, by law, add colouring to their product so that its drinkers will not confuse the contents of a bottle of "metho" with gin or water:

> "But now I've met my friend the lyric muse,
> And I can bottle happiness and "blues", . . . "

And then, after another two lines, we are with William Wordsworth and Lobsang Rampa:

"My muse now helps me with my inward eye
Record the scene of life as it flies by."

Lobsang Rampa is, of course, an Englishman who claimed to be a Tibetan mystic in his book *The Third Eye,* while Wordsworth, too, referred in his poem, "I wandered lonely as a cloud", to

" . . . that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude . . . "

Stephenson Fox's greatest skill as a parodist is revealed in "Sunset in Port Moresby", a poem which derives its subject matter from the cargo cult in the southern Madang District which focuses around Yali, and its format and metres from Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Kubla Khan". What a splendid, if unconscious, sense of irony it must have taken to paraphrase:

"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round . . . "

so that it becomes:

"In Papua did Muzzie Fox
A modern wooden home design
Built on a shelf cut from the rocks
Where laurabada laughs and mocks
Her with his misty brine.
O'er thrice five miles of azure blue
She looks and wonders at, its tropic hue."

The imperious beauty of Muzzie Fox (with "Her Madang houseboi by her side . . .")! the inventiveness of "thrice", instead of "twice", five miles! the magnificent Australian inflexion of

"The road to cargo's through the lapoon's tomb"

instead of Pidgin's *lapun*! and the lyrical climax, in which Coleridge's:

"For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise"

becomes the beautiful, and faintly moving:

"So long as magic is the old road,
So long will cargo cults replace the load"!

Obviously a nature-poet, Fox then passes on to "Sunrise in Milne Bay", with its oh-so-accurate rendition of "the Japs":

"Watching the shore with jaundiced eye . . . "

With their lids closed, they probably did seem to have jaundiced eyes, at least to the brave, colloquial "Aussie sentries". And then, in "Mamoo at Dawn", our poet—obviously a man with a concern for eyes—presents us with the novel image of "red-eyed birds among the trees" diffusing the dawn "with fruity song". Such is the behaviour, and appearance, of many birds after a solid night's drinking.

The physical environment of Papua and New Guinea is clearly a central concern of Stephenson Fox's poetry, for, on the very centre pages of his book, we find the "Elegy Written in Popondetta Mt Lamington Memorial Cemetery—May '55", a poem intimately, passionately, aware of the need to be faithful to one's country. Why else would the cows of Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard":

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me . . . "

have become the pigs of the Papuan poem?

"The crickets throb the knell of parting day,
The grunting pigs grub slowly near the trees,
The tapper homeward wends his winding way,
And darkness falls before the cool sea breeze."

The alliterative onomatopoeia of the grunting pigs grubbing is a valuable addition to the original's alliterative "weary way", which is here so skilfully transformed into "wends his winding way".

In one's haste to get on into the book, one must unfortunately skip over some long and complicated poems all too quickly. There is, for example, the wonderful line, in "The Old Native's Dream", in which a young Enga from Wabag thinks of the patrol made into his area in 1938 by Jim Taylor and John Black, and the poet observes:

"Black was the first white man he'd ever seen"

We lack the space here, however, to dwell on such conceits as John doing "the Highland Fling" in the preceding poem, for several poems still await us. There is, for example, the poem called "Sanguman", which—anthropologists will be surprised to learn—"is Native Sorcery or Witchcraft, practised on the mainland of New Guinea, particularly in the Okapa area", according to the author. Curiously, the Okapa sorcerer with whom the poet deals suffers from "Vailala madness", and practises "Pouri Pouri", which, one assumes, is a derivative of the Motuans' *puripuri*. Truly a curious combination for a sorcerer in the New Guinea Highlands who tries to bewitch people "with a needle long"!

But then, Papuans and New Guineans must surely be quite curious creatures if, as Fox says in "The Missionary", "none spoke the [local Highlands] tongue as well as" the expatriate missionary he describes as having lived in the country for twenty years. Not even the New Guineans spoke it as well as he?

There are, then, three sonnets, "Native", "Lake Kopiago" and "Birthday Sonnet to Millicent" (what does Muzzie think of this?), which obviously owe a great deal to Shakespeare's sonnet (number XVIII in my edition of the *Complete Works*):

> "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
> Thou art more lovely and more temperate . . . "

For his part, Fox compares "you to the scorching fire", "to Lake Windemere" (shades of Oscar Wilde, or an English lake misspelt?) and finally "to the glowing eve". As in the Shakespearian original, so each of Fox's three poems opens its final couplet with: "So long . . . ".

Before concluding this review, with a very apt quotation from Fox's poem "Success and Failure", one ought perhaps to comment on one final aspect of his work: the author's quite remarkable insight into the indigenous mind and society. For a man who not only speaks none of the Territory's vernacular languages, nor even Pidgin (according to James Simmonds in the *South Pacific Post*, 7 February 1968, page 7), after nearly twenty years in the Territory, it seems remarkable how clever Fox is in assuming the *persona* of a kind of person with whom he can never have conversed: a Papuan or New Guinean villager. Not only does he know how and what Papuans and New Guineans think, but he is capable of expressing what they dream (in "The Old Native's Dream", for example) in rhyming couplets. Still, as Robson says in his preface, Fox's poetry is "hard-wrought", and the author is himself aware that:

> "Success and failure wander hand in hand,
> As those who perservere will understand . . . "

And as one who has been sorely tried himself, this reviewer would venture to say that Fox's general failure in this book is a success of a kind—a successful demonstration that those who anxiously await a vibrant and expressive poetry dealing with the harsh, bizarre and humorous reality of Papua and New Guinea should look beyond the inward-looking, bookless sterility of expatriate society, to the bitterness, enthusiasms and excitements of the Papuans and New Guineans who really experience, and are beginning to write about, a past, a present and a future which are really theirs.

E.P.W.