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ABORIGINAL VIEWS

GUN-GUWARR - OLD CUSTOM

This is a book of twenty-four stories by Raymond Bandeedye and Charlie Djordila of the Burarra language group in Arnhem Land. The stories are presented in Burarra, with a brief English translation (provided by K. Glasgow of the Summer Institute of Linguistics) following each story. The stories are illustrated. The book has been produced by the Department of Education, Darwin.

NGUBURRA-WUCHICHIYA.

Muguya gipa a-ni, minpa a-bona balija rrapa gornabula, minpa gun-gata aburra-wuchichiyina aburra-ni. Ngardawa gipa a-wengginana, a-wena gun-nerranga minpa balija rrapa jichicha. Rrapa minpa mu-menga, a-wuna balija. Rrapa minpa a-nana ana-bamuna, a-borruwurra jichicha. Rrapa minpa wurra an-gata ana-bona, a-wuna minpa jichicha rrapa minpa gornabula. Rrapa gama minpa jiny-bona balija nula. Ngardawa an-gata gala jama a-ji wurpiya abuwucha. Gun-nerranga a-bamapuna, a-wena nula, "Arlay, guwa. Ny-mangga jichicha." Ngardawa ngaypa ngu-borruwuja gala a-yulkaka nula jichicha. Minja balija mun-delipa, abu-wu barra. Rrapa gun-nerranga a-wengginacha, gala a-bawa. Ngika wupa. Wurra jarra minpa an-gata an-molamola.

Rrapa gun-guwarr a-wuchichiyina a-ni. Ngardawa gun-gata gipa a-wuchichiyina a-ni. Gala a-yinmiyina a-bawujuna. Rrapa wurra gu-borruwurra a-ni. Ngardawa marn-gi. Rrapa minpa a-bona minpa jichicha, rrapa gala a-yinmiyina a-barnjingina nula. Wurra a-wu barra minpa gornabula ana-ganja rrawa. Rrapa ngardawa gu-borruwurra a-ni wurra an-guyinda.

Rrapa nipa jal a-ni burdak gu-rrima barra a-ni. Minpa a-wuchichiya a-nirra. Gun-nigipa gala gu-bawa. Wurra gu-rriminga a-nirra. Rrapa mola rrapa burdak gun-nirda gu-borruwuja a-nirra. Ngardawa gu-borruwurra a-ni, gun-nigipa gala gu-bawujuna.

Wurra burdak rrapa gala a-yinmiya gu-bawa. Rrapa gun-nirda wupa gipa a-ni. Rrapa minpa gala gu-bawa. Burdak gu-rrimminga a-nirra. Gala a-bamapunguna nula. Ngika. Wurra a-gurrumura nula nipa an-gata a-wena nula, rrapa gala a-yinmiya gu-bawa.

Gun-nirda wupa ganapiya.

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First he was already there, like he went for food and wallaby, and like they gave to each other. Because another man asked him for something like food or fish, he got food and gave it to him. And like when he saw someone coming, he thought 'fish'. And when that man came he brought fish or wallaby and gave it to him. And the women went for food too. And if one man didn't work, they gave to him anyway. And if someone forgot, they said to him, "Hey, come here. Get some fish." Because I think, they didn't hide fish from him. If there is just a little food, they will still give to him. And if someone asks, he doesn't refuse him. No. But rather that man is a good man.

And it was their custom to give to each other. Because already they had given to each other. They couldn't depart from it. And they kept that custom, because they knew it. And like when he went for fish, and he couldn't fail to put some down for someone. But he will give to him, like wallaby that he brings to the camp. He remembered that man.

And he still wants to keep this custom of giving to each other. He doesn't forsake it. He holds on to it. And he remembers it still. Because long ago man remembered and didn't forsake his custom, so still he can't forsake it. That's how he lived, and he can't forsake it. He still holds on to it. He doesn't forget to give to him. No. But he puts it down for him, that man that asks him, and he can't forsake this custom.

That's it. It's finished.