



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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*Naida Dwyer

JUNJIDI

"Hey!

Junjidi

out last night.

You see him, Teacher?

He down your house?"

(shake of head only)

I can't see Junjidi,

I'm sorry to say.

You have to be Aboriginal

to know them

and see them

and fear them

the way these little ones do.

I can only listen to their stories.

Junjidi don't belong in my culture,

but I do know Bogey Men.

* These three poems are from a collection written about Cherbourg. From 1970-1973 Naida taught and lived on the reserve with her family. Her husband, John, was principal of the school during that time. Currently, Naida is teacher-in-charge of the Special Education Unit, Kenmore, Brisbane.

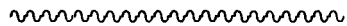
They chased me regularly
when, as a child
I stayed late
after cooking my apples and potatoes
in the coals of the fire
I made with my brothers
down in our paddock.
There, safe in the light of the fire
suddenly plunged into darkness
to get to the house
and leap up the stairs
and huff into the kitchen
to safety
and to my Mother.

Is my Bogey Man different
from your Junjidi?

My Bogey Man lurked
in corners
under beds
in cupboards
a million places
dark and sinister

Is that what a Junjidi does?

I never knew what a Bogey Man looked like,
never,
and I didn't want to either.
At least you know
a Junjidi is a Hairy Man.
You're that much up on me!



THE INTRUDER

"Hey! He Big Eyeing me."
Affront and concern,
I looked over yonder
to where he was pointing.
What was there to see?
What should I look for?
A dear little face,
a child I adored,
looking solemnly at me.
Peace seemed restored.

We carried on working,
then I heard it again,
"He Big Eyeing Me, Teacher."

What should I do now?
Ignore it perhaps,
and It'll all go away
and they won't know
I'm not sure how to act.

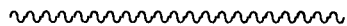
"Punch he face in."
(That got some action)
"What?
No punching in my room.
We don't hit each other."

Quiet!
Forgotten incident!
Working again,
then another voice yelled,
"He Big Eyeing me, Teacher."

I looked over right
at solemn brown eyes
ignoring me now
a five year old mite
unblinking
deep in thought
staring straight ahead.

"Stop looking at him.
Get on with your work."

The spell was broken
and peace was restored
but only till lunch time.
Then they sorted it out
much better than I
The Intruder.



WHITE

People say, "You're White!"

I wonder what they mean.
My hair is black,
my eyes deep brown,
my skin pale golden,
especially if I put it on white paper.
Yet I'm White, they say.
Are they talking about skin colour?

Now, what is a white skin?

I've never seen one.

So, why are people White?

And what is black?

Are Aborigines Black?

That's what they're called.

I've never seen a black skin on anyone.

Now, if Whites aren't white,

and Blacks aren't black,

why do people get so upset about it all?

And what about all those people

who aren't Black or White?

Are there any?

It seems to me the World is full of them.

I don't think of myself as White.

I'm just me,

and perhaps,

you can say that of yourself.

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