

## THE CHILDREN

(c. JACK DAVIS)

The children walked through the bush together,  
The girls apprehensive, wondering whether  
This or that had stings:  
Feminine, scared of crawling things.

The boys, playing tricks,  
Tickling them with black-boy sticks.  
One boy, brave with the ego of the male,  
Picked up a lizard by the tail,

Chased the tall blonde girl with the vacant stare.  
She screamed, ran like a frightened hare,  
But before he could reach her  
She found the safety of the laughing teacher.

Lunchtime came, all food became the same  
For all upon the ground  
And made an appetizing mound  
Of cakes and pies and custard tarts.

The lizard-boy, not brave now, played his part  
And placed beside the cake and ham  
A thick, stale slice of bread and jam.  
Dumbly he sat, staring straight ahead,

Embarrassed, wishing he were dead  
Or in some other place,  
The crimson rising in his face.  
Then suddenly he was aware

That there was someone there  
Kneeling at his side,  
The tall blonde girl, blue eyes wide,  
Fair hair framing the oval face.

And with a gentle grace that all could see  
She said softly: "Will you share your bread with me?"  
He looked at her and blinked away the tears.  
Suddenly the two of them were old beyond their years.

And in the bush surrounding green,  
He was a prince and she was his queen.

## THE BOOMERANG

(c. JACK DAVIS)

You cunningly contrived piece of wood—  
According to my people you should  
Return to me in a long, curving line:  
That is your purpose and that's your design.

But for me this is not so,  
Because I throw and throw.  
My eyes are bleary,  
I am arm-and-leg weary,  
Right to the marrow.

Why, oh why didn't my ancestors  
Invent the bow and arrow!

## WARRU

(c. JACK DAVIS)

Fast asleep on the wooden bench,  
Arms bent under the weary head,  
There in the dusk and the back-street stench  
He lay with the look of the dead.

I looked at him, then back through the years,  
Then knew what I had to remember—  
A young man, straight as wattle spears,  
And a kangaroo hunt in September.

We caught the scent of the 'roos on the rise  
Where the gums grew on the Moore;  
They leaped away in loud surprise,  
But Warru was fast and as sure.

He threw me the fire-stick, oh what a thrill!  
With a leap he sprang to a run.  
He met the doe on the top of the hill,  
And he looked like a king in the sun.

The wattle spear flashed in the evening light,  
The kangaroo fell at his feet.  
How I danced and I yelled with all my might  
As I thought of the warm red meat.

We camped that night on a bed of reeds  
With a million stars a-gleaming,  
He told me tales of Noong-ah\* deeds  
When the world first awoke from dreaming.

He sang me a song, I clapped my hands,  
He fashioned a needle of bone.  
He drew designs in the river sands,  
He sharpened his spear on a stone.

I will let you dream—dream on, old friend—  
Of a boy and a man in September,  
Of hills and stars and the river's bend—  
Alas, that is all to remember.

\* Noong-ah: An Aboriginal tribe of the southwest of Western Australia.

## A EULOGY FOR PEACE—by an OLD ABORIGINAL

(c. JACK DAVIS)

Why don't white man sit down quiet by fire?  
Not stand up and call other country-fella liar.  
What white-fella want to talk about fight for?  
Everybody have plenty, still want more.  
He have big house,  
Money in pocket,  
Yet he not satisfied:  
Want to make bigger rocket.  
One day, I bet, pretty damn soon  
Rocket go straight like spear,  
Put man on moon.  
Then, I bet, plenty trouble,  
Moon and earth burst like bubble.  
People go round like leaf in willy-willy,  
Tear their hair,  
All sorry and silly.  
White-fella and him piccannin die in city,  
Black-fella in bush, he feel pity.  
White-fella wrong, call each other liar,  
Should have sat down quiet and talked by fire.