

The Historical Ripple

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It was like nothing he had ever seen before...yet he had lived here his entire life, Goodoogba looked different from this height. He surveyed the land before him. "Pretty cool, isn't it Jiemba," Iluka let out softly scanning from left to right. Jiemba heard his brother but was stuck in a stare. To the right, a still billabong looked back at him. "Jiemba... you alright?", moving his head closer to Jiemba. "Yeah, yeah I'm fine," Jiemba shook his head and pulled away from Iluka, "Hey I'm getting hungry let's head back," Jiemba jumped to his feet and proceeded down the cliff face.

The stinging rays of the afternoon sun fell to a luminous glow from the rising moon, Jiemba laid in his bed staring at his half open window. Stuck in his mind like glue, the image of low-hanging trees and the stained water rippling with the wind's breath. Jiemba tightened his eyes shut to try fall asleep, when he could not hold them shut anymore, he opened them and the image was still edged into his brain. He swung his left leg across his body off the bed and sat on the edge of his bed, breathing heavily he wiped the sweat from his forehead and reached for the window.

He pulled at the window with all his strength and the window opened with a rush of cool air, he waited a moment for his eyes to adjust to the dim moon-lit night. Then he moved his eyes slowly up the mountain he climbed earlier that day, his eyes stopped and widened. He was stuck in a stare with a shadow. A shadow that had arms, legs and a dark face with a blank look, Jiemba stood with his feet rooted to the floor. He was frozen, he couldn't have move even if he tried. A soft creak of the floorboards broke the silence and forced Jiemba to lose eye-contact with the mysterious dark figure. Jiemba inspected his room, moving as little as possible. He turned back to the window to try identify the dark figure. The only shadows left was ones left from the tall paperbark trees that swayed back and forth, doing a dance with the breeze in the stillness of the night.

Jiemba kept his eyes fixed where the dark figure once stood, he built up the confidence to amble to the edge of his bed. He sat on the edge of his bed and stared while he reached underneath his bed to find his tired joggers. He looked down quickly and tied his shoes firmly to his feet, then resumed his stare at the mountain.

The moon illuminated the night and ascended higher into the sky, Jiemba removed the flimsy fly screen, he jumped onto the long gravel road and started up the road with his eyes locked to the rocky cliff face. He reached the bottom of the cliff and broke his stare, he scrambled up the loose rocks and reached a vast plateau covered in thick shrub with scattered wattle. Jiemba reluctantly pushed the shrub either side of him and proceeded slowly into the darkness left from the shadows of the tall sleeping trees. He stepped and sunk into soft dampened mud and a soft musty smell similar to rotten eggs screwed his face up.

Jiamba pushed the last of the shrub from his face with his left hand and he gazed upon the image from his head... the billabong. He examined the cloudy water confused to its significance. Jiamba's conscious caught up with him and he was disgusted in himself, he turned around and pondered excuses to tell his mum why he snuck out. A light playful scream made Jiembas left ear twitch. He turned to see nothing but several ripples giving the stagnant water life, a second bigger ripple started on the opposite side to the billabong.

Intrigued, Jiamba took a step forward, His foot slipped into the water from the bank. Jiamba looked down at his foot and followed the ripples made from his entrance to the water that grew as it spread over the water. His eyes followed the ripples until they rested on a shadow that stood in the water. Similar to the one he had seen before, he jumped back and lifted his foot from the water the shadow disappeared. Jiamba stopped for a moment, he felt less fearful, he stepped to the edge of the billabong. He rose his head and looked over the water. He slowly lowered his foot into warm disturbed water and prepared himself. His foot entered the water and he watched a time in history never seen before. He watched fellow aboriginal children that splashed in the water and elders that watched over them from the bank. The black silhouettes were unphased by Jiamba's curiosity, Jiamba slowly entered and got deeper into the water. He couldn't help but string a smile and continued towards his people.