1986

SURVIVOR

Lorna Goodison

Follow this and additional works at: http://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi

Recommended Citation
Goodison, Lorna, SURVIVOR, Kunapipi, 8(2), 1986.
Available at:http://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi/vol8/iss2/12
SURVIVOR

Abstract
The strangers passed through here for years, laying waste the countryside.

This serial is available in Kunapipi: http://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi/vol8/iss2/12
Yet when the winter waned
The time of love and joy and corn proved sweet and easy
The natives sang a song of welcome
As moving over gently, they swore
There’s room for all.
Gullibly the strangers thought
The promise of the Spring and Summer’s opulence
Would never fail
But now the land is vast and wide and cold
Suspicion, strife and envy greet them
From the circle to the island
The land is bone
Will this winter of opprobrium, want and discord never end?

Lorna Goodison

SURVIVOR

The strangers passed through here
for years, laying waste the countryside.
They took most living things
even some rare species
With half-extended wings
They took them all
now that genus is extinct.
(Lord) They were thorough in their plunderings.
So here the wind plays long mourning notes
on bones that once were ribs (savages!)
They broke them when they’d finished eating
and you know how creative God is with ribs.
That survivor over there
With bare feet and bound hair
has some seeds stored under her tongue
and one remaining barrel of rain.
She will go indoors
When her planting is done,
loosen her hair
and tend to her son
and over the bone flute music
and the dead story it tells,
listen for grace songs from her ankle bells.

Frederick D’Aguiar

EARTH

i

In the end we come to you and prostrate.
We bear the black mark on our foreheads
Once the Muezzin’s preserve.
You will open for our entry
Clean as a dive, and the rings—
A bark’s years-stockpile,
Will be all the pool widens.