

**One Cannot Run Away From Trouble**

(This Degema short story, based on  
the Usokun dialect, is provided by Ethelbert E. Kari)

*The Degema data are transcribed using phonetic symbols that have IPA values.*

ékéŋ ɔ̀βu á'á'á. ɔ́mɔ́sɪ ɔ̀βu o=ɔ́úkó=n mámu ɔ̀ji mu  
town one be there man one 3SgPROCL=say=FACT that he that

ɔ́=ɔ́ine íŋ<sup>w</sup>añ kírése ɔ́=βón úfaj nɔ́ŋ<sup>w</sup>  
3SgPROCL NEG=want trouble as a result 3SgPROCL=take family his

ɔ́=βo tá=n mú úlúgbó-édzi ɔ́=ta jén a.  
3SgPROCL=take go=FACT to wilderness 3SgPROCL=go live CM

**'In a certain town, there was a man who said he did not want trouble. For this reason, he left the town with his family to live in the wilderness.'**

ɓaw á'á'á ɔ́kunú mé=ŋen mu úlúgbó-édzi jo máa kpeŋ  
they be there still 3SgPROCL=live in wilderness the until suddenly

té ɔ̀βu, ɔ́mómɔ́si náa nu úfaj nɔ́ŋ<sup>w</sup> e=ji ján nu eki  
day one man this and family his 3PIPROCL=come go to market

útom ɔ́kunú ɓaw é=ŋan=monu íɔ́jóm nu ɓaw me=ɔ́i a.  
because they 3PIPROCL=have=DE food that they 3PIPROCL=eat CM

ɓaw ε=βón εɔ́uŋ nu arárár βiβi ε=ŋán nú ékí jo  
they 3PIPROCL=take goat and things other 3PIPROCL=go to market the

ɔ́kunú ɓaw me=dej βo dé ínum nú ɓaw  
so as they 3PIPROCL=sell take buy something that they

e=δiné='én.

3PIPROCL=want=FACT

**'In the course of their living in the wilderness, their provisions ran out, and so one day he and his family left for the market to buy some food for themselves. They went along with a goat and other items for sale to purchase what they needed.'**

η<sup>w</sup>η ύδεjam árárár nú βaw ε=βό                      ηάη nú ékí    ηο,  
self selling things that they 3PIPROCL=take go to market the

βaw é=δeri                      μάμυ εβυη nú βaw ε=γούwά  
they 3PIPROCL NEG=know that goat that they 3PIPROCL=together

βο ηάη η ékí ηο ο=τά                      túw=té éβir ówej βιβι.  
take go FACT market the 3SgPROCL=go pour=PE oil person other

όόό nú όνο                      ό=ηάν                      éβir ηο ο=κπέρί=n  
time that one who 3SgPROCL=have oil the 3SgPROCL=tell=FACT

όμόμόσί ηο inum                      nú éβυη νόοη<sup>w</sup> ο=méné=en                      δο,  
man the something that goat his 3SgPROCL=do=FACT however

όμόμόσί ηο ό=δeri=móny                      inum                      kúwem δο  
man the 3SgPROCL NEG=know=DE something saying but

ο=δά                      δέη=dé όκpekpen mó=κπέκpen                      όnú  
3SgPROCL=TLPRT fall=PE pleading 3SgPROCL=plead one who

ό=ηάν                      éβir ηο. ίη<sup>w</sup>η ίγίρίρί-génam, όnú                      ό=ηάν  
3SgPROCL=has oil the sake compassion one who 3SgPROCL=have

έβir ηο ο=δα                      sár βέké                      ké=n                      όμόμόσί ηο.  
oil the 3SgPROCL=TLPRT pour throw away give=FACT man the

**‘While they were selling what they went to the market with, they did not know that their goat had spilled somebody else’s oil. When the owner of the oil informed the man about what his goat had done, he couldn’t say anything, except to apologize to the owner of the oil. Filled with compassion, the owner of the oil then forgave him.’**

óhó nú e=ḃírégén      ʒji ɓa      nú ʒji o=dʒó      ji=in  
time that 3PIPROCL=ask him where that he 3SgPROCL=stay come=FACT

do ɔ=dá      kótú kú ɓów n      ínì úlugbó-édʒí nú  
but 3SgPROCL=TLPR call give them FACT name wilderness that

ʒji nu ɔfaŋ      nóʒw e=dʒó      ji=ʼín.  
he and family his 3PIPROCL=stay come=FACT

ómómósí ʒo ɔ=dá      kél údów ínnum      nú  
man the 3SgPROCL=TLPR begin story something that

i=méné=ʼén      nú ɓaw e=βéké=n      ékeŋ ɓáaw  
3SgPROCL=do=FACT that they 3PIPROCL=leave=FACT town their

é=tá      dʒó=n mú úlugbó-édʒi ʒo o=dów      ké=n  
3PIPROCL=go stay in wilderness the 3SgPROCL=tell give=FACT

éwéj nú e=ḃírégén      ʒji ínúm      ʒo.  
people that 3PIPROCL=ask him something the

**‘When they asked him from where he came, he mentioned the name of the wilderness from which they had come. He then recounted to the people the story about how they came to live in that wilderness.’**

ɓáw tá tuləm      úɓaj kpeŋ, ómómósí ʒo ɔ=dá      kótú=n  
they go reaching house just man the 3SgPROCL=TLPR call=FACT

ʒɓitam nóʒw nu ímo      nóʒw ɔ=kpéí=n      mámu  
wife his and children his 3SgPROCL=tell=FACT that

awije    ɓaw ɛ=ɗá                                  me=kimine                    tá mú ékeɓ ɓaaw.  
morning they 3PIPROCL=INIPRT 3PIPROCL=return go to    town their

óhó nú ɗɓitam nóŋ<sup>w</sup> o=ɓirégén                                  ɗji ínum                    nú  
time that wife    his                    3SgPROCL=ask FACT him something that

i=ɓúur    nú ɓaw ɛ=ɗá    me=kimine  
3SgPROCL=be the cause that they 3PIPROCL=INIPRT 3PIPROCL=return

tá mú ékeɓ ɓáaw ɗɔ, ɓmómósí jɔ ɔ=ɗá    kpéí=n  
go to    town their then man                    the 3SgPROCL=TLPRT tell=FACT

ɗji mámu ɓaw ɛ=ɗá    me=kimine                    tá mú ékeɓ  
her that                    they 3PIPROCL=INIPRT 3PIPROCL=return go to    town

ɓáaw útóm ɗkunu íŋ<sup>w</sup>ajɪ í=ɓeke    ómíní ówéej  
they head because trouble 3SgPROCL NEG=leave child    person

i=jókúró,    ɓa nú óweɓ aɓɔ    aɓɔ.  
3SgPROCL=leave place that person be there be there

**‘As soon as they reached home, the man called his wife and children and told them of his planned return with his family the next day. When his wife asked him his reason for their going back home, he told her that he has decided to return home for the reason that trouble is everywhere - wherever a man resides, whether in the midst of people or in isolation.’**

ɗkunú awije ɔ=wíj    kpeɓ,                    ɓaw ɛ=súwáj    n  
as                    morning 3SgPROCL=dawn as soon as they 3PIPROCL=carry FACT

árárar ɓáaw ɛ=ɓéké=n    úlúgbó-édzɪ jɔ ɛ=jókúró  
things their 3PIPROCL=leave=FACT wilderness    the 3PIPROCL=go away

gbé=n    mú ékeɓ ɓáaw.  
go finally=FACT to    town their

**‘As soon as it was daybreak, they carried their belongings and left the wilderness for home.’**

ona ekurerí údow jɔ.

this end story the

**‘This is the end of the story.’**

The following abbreviations are used in the text:

3SgPROCL	=	3rd person singular proclitic
3PlPROCL	=	3rd person plural proclitic
CM	=	compensatory morpheme
DE	=	discontinuation enclitic
FACT	=	factative enclitic
INIPRT	=	Inceptive non-imperative particle
NEG	=	negative
PE	=	perfect enclitic
TLPRT	=	time lag particle