

Alitjinya karungka rawa nyinara pakuringangi. Kangkurura pula nyinara milpatjunangi, ka Alitjinya karkararingu kangkuru rawa wangkanyangka, munu kulingka kunyu pilupiluringangi.

“Awarinatju, wanyumatju puta tjintjulu mantjila,” munu kunyu uranu mununku mangkangka tjintjulu wakaningi, ka wati wirtjapakanu malu, watjara, “Awari, awarimatju, malaringma.” Ka wanyu kulila, malu paluru piranpa—piranpa alatjitu. Munu kunyu iluru-ilururira yakutja kali kulu witira ma-tarararira pitingka tjarpangu. Ka tjitji panya kunggangku nyakula urulyarara pakara wananu,

Alitji was getting very tired of sitting in the creek-bed. She and her sister had been playing milpatjunangi, a story-telling game. They each had a stick and a pile of leaves, and took it in turn to tell a story about people in the tribe. The sandy ground was their stage: the leaves were the tribespeople. As they told the stories, each softly tapped her stick in time to the rhythm of her rising and falling voice, and every now and then they would sweep the sand smooth with the backs of their hands.

Alitji had become very bored as her sister's voice went on and on, and her eyelids began to droop. “Well,” she said to herself, “perhaps I'll collect some tjintjulu berries to decorate my hair.” This she did, and then began to pierce the berries with small sticks, and poke them through the strands of her hair.

Suddenly a kangaroo hopped past her, saying, “Oh dear, oh deary me, I'm late.” And the extraordinary thing was that he was white. A white kangaroo! He hurried on anxiously, clutching a dilly-bag and a digging-stick, and disappeared from view down a hole in the ground. In great surprise, Alitji jumped up and followed him, the tjintjulu berries bouncing

munu ma-wanara pitingka tjarpangutu, piruku pakantjikitjangku kulilwiya alatjitu. Munu kunyu tjarpara piti unngu ankula ankula punkanu, munu kunyu rawa punkaningsi kulira, "Ngati pulka manti nyangatja, munta, ngati wiya, purkarana punkani." Munu paluru tjaruringkula para-nyangangi, munu walu-nyangangitu, palu putu kunyu nyangangi marangka, piti panya unngu. Ka ngarangilta lau tjukutjuku tjutangka mai kutjupa kutjupa, ka Alitjilu punkara marangka lau kutjunguru maantjinu piti tjanmatatjara, palu mai mulya mulyararira ngalkuwiyangku wantingu, munu marangka kanyinying punkatjingaliangku anangu kutjupa tjaru nyinantja winyulpungkuntjaku-tawara. Munu kunyu rawa ukalingkula piti malakungku tjunu, lau kutjupangka.

"Kakari punkaninatju alatjitu. Ngati nyangatja putu kulintja. Panya itara katunguruna punkara tjukutjukunmankuku palu nyangatja ngati ngurpatja." Munu wangkara tjaruringkula wirkankuwiyatu palurunku wangkangi: "Kana ya:Itjingka wanyu ma-wirkankuku. Ngayulu tjinguru pana winkingga waitaringkula ilkari kutjupangka wirkankuku, mununtina tjintu kutjupalta nyakuku, pana nyangangka munkara. Kantiya anangu tjutalta kata kampa kutjuparira para-ngaraku ngura kampa kutjupampa. Kana ya:Itjingara tjanala wangkama? Ngayulu kulu manti kampa kutjupariku." Alatji tjitji paluru wirkankuwiyatu rawa alatjitu punkara punkara piruku wangkarinangi.

"Katju putjinpa? Watilarinyi tjinguru. ngaltutjara. Ka palunya nganalu paltjalku? Awa

about her head; down she went into that hole in the ground, never stopping to think how she would get out again.

Inside the hole, she went on for some distance, then suddenly began to fall, and went on falling for a long time. She thought it must be a very, very deep hole, but then she decided: "No, not so deep, perhaps; it's only that I am falling very, very slowly."

And as she fell, Alitji looked about her. She couldn't see anything below her, for it was too dark. But in small depressions in the wall she could see different kinds of food. There was a dish of bulbs called tjanmata, which were very good to eat. She took a handful of these as she fell past them, but they weren't ripe; sulkily she decided she couldn't eat them, and for fear of hitting someone below, she held them in her hand until she was able to replace them in another depression as she fell past it.

"Goodness, I really am falling a long way," she thought. "This hole must be deep beyond imagination. In future, if I fall from the top of a gum-tree, I'll think it's nothing compared with this." And so saying, she continued getting lower and lower without arriving anywhere, and began to talk to herself. "I wonder what I'll be coming to? I must fall right through the earth soon, and then I shall come to some other atmosphere. I suppose I'll see a different sun, out beyond this earth. And there might even be people—people who walk upside-down, perhaps, in that other-side place. How shall I speak to them? Perhaps I'll be upside-down, too!" Thus the child spoke to herself as she fell, still without arriving

putji putitja nya:kunanta wantikatingu? Palu nyangangka wiya ngaranyi nyuntu ngalkuntjaku, tjulpu wiya, linga wiyatu, munta minga wiyatu. Nya:kuna linga wangkanyi, munta minga, linga, minga. Nya: putjingku ngalkupai? Minga? Wanyu, munta, mingangu putji ngalkupai. Wiya, awa putingku minga ngalkupai, minga wiya, linga ngalkupai."

Munu alatji ngunti-ngunti wangkara wangkara kunkunarira tjukurmanu. Alatji kunyu ukalingkula tjukurmanu; mara witira pula anangi, Putji pula Alitjinya, ka watjanu Alitjilu, "Putji putitja, mulamulangkuni wangka, nyuntu wanyu minga ngalkupai? Tjukarurungkuni wanyu wangka." Munu alatji wangkara punkanu alatjitu, untjuntjungka punkara ngaringi, ka ukalingkuntja wiya, tjitji paluru rawa punkantjatjanu mala mulapa wirkanu.

Alitjinya pika wiya wirkanu, munu mapalku pakanu munu ira-nyakula maru kutju nyangu, panya pana uungu nyaratja, ka kunyu kuranyu piti kutjupa wara mulapa ngarangi ka palula ma-tarararingi Malu Piranpa yakutjatjara, kalitjara. Ka kulinu Alitjilu, wangkanyangka, "Awarinatju, malaringanyina, awari." Ka kunyu wangkara kampa kutjupa wanu para-pitjala wiyaringu, ka Alitjinya ma-wanara ala lipingka, kulpi puronytja wirkanu, palu wiya ngarangi Malu Piranpa, ka putu nyangu Alitjilu. Ka ala nyanga lipingka pintjantjara tjuta katu ngarangi. Ka tjitjingku para-nyakula ala utju tjuta katu ngaranyangka nyangu, munu paluru tji:lpa pulkangka tatira, ngura wiru mulapa

anywhere. She just kept on falling and went on talking.

"What about my cat? Pining for me, probably, the dear little thing. And who will feed her? Oh, pussy dear, why did I leave you behind? However, there's nothing here for you to eat, not a bird, not a lizard—no, I don't mean that, I should have said, not an ant. Why did I say lizard? I should have said ant for lizard . . . ant, lizard. What do cats eat? Ants? No, that's wrong—do ants eat cats? No, of course not. Cats eat ants—no, not ants, lizards . . ."

So Alitji went on dreamily talking nonsense to herself until she fell asleep. And then as she fell she dreamt. She dreamt that she and her cat were walking along hand-in-paw and that she was saying, "No, seriously, pussy dear, do you eat ants? Tell me truly." And just as Alitji said this, she landed suddenly on a heap of dead leaves. After the long descent the fall was over.

Alitji was not a bit hurt; she jumped up in a moment. She looked up, but it was all dark overhead. In front of her lay another long passage. In it the White Kangaroo was still in sight, hurrying along with his dilly-bag and digging-stick, and Alitji could hear him saying, "Oh dear, it's getting so late. Oh, deary me." She saw him disappear round a corner, and, following him, found herself in a large area like a cave. The White Kangaroo was nowhere to be seen, so Alitji began to look around her.

It was a large underground cave, with bats hanging from the roof and a number of small openings high on the walls, leading outwards. By climbing on to a

kurungku nyangu ma-nyirkira, ala utju wanungku, "Ngangari pika wiru alatjitu, palu ya:ltjingarana ma-pakalku? Ala nyangatja tjuku mulapa kana ngayulu tjtiji pulka." Munu kunyu tjturutjtururira para-ngarangi, munu kantunu kutjupa—"Nya: wanyu palatja?" Munu wana nyangu, "Ngangari!" Munu mantjira, tji:Ita tatira ala panyatja tjawara lipiningi.

Munu kunyu tjawara tjawara wana panyangka putu alatjitu lipinu, pana panya witu mulapa. Munu ukalingu munu piruku kunyu tjturutjtururingu. "Awarinatju ngura palatja ngangari itjanu alatjitu, inuntji yantji, ukiri lipi wanu, uru kulukulu ngaranyi kana unngu nyanga marungka nyinanyi alatjitu."

Munu kunyu nyangu kumpurarpa munu mantjina kulira, "Nyangatja nganmanpa wiya ngarangi." Munu kunyu nyangangi, "Mai wanyu nyangatja? Kumpurarpa palya wanyu? Panya tjtiji kutjupa tjutaya tjuni pikaringkupai muntu ngalkula."

Palu nyakula arka palyanmara ngalkunu, kumpurarpa kuru wiru. Palu ngalkula kunyu tjtiji paluru mutumuturingu munu palya ngarangi ala panyangka tjarpantjikitja, palu ngarala pataningi, piruku tjukutjukuringkuntjaku-tawara, "Tjinguruna kuwari tjukutjukuringkula wiyaringanyi tili purunypa. Palu tili wiyaringkuntja nya: purunypa? Wampanti, ngayulu nyakuwiya tili wiyaringkuntja. Nya: purunyarikuna wanyu?" Palu wiya, Alitjinya piruku tjukutjukuringkuwiya nyinangi munu wiyaringkuwiyatu wirtjapakana pukularira, ala panya wanu ma-pakantjikitja. Palu awari, panya

large root, Alitji was able to peer through one of the openings into the beautiful world outside.

"Oh, what a lovely place," she said to herself. "But how can I get out there? I'm such a big girl and these openings are so narrow." She climbed down and wandered sadly about. Suddenly she stumbled on something. "A digging-stick! Just what I need." And she climbed again on to the root and began to dig at the opening to enlarge it. But the ground was so hard that after a great deal of digging she had made little headway. Greatly discouraged, she climbed down again. "What a shame, it looks so beautiful out there. The green grass is full of flowers, and I'm sure there would be witchety grubs in those cassias. And here am I, shut up in this miserable dark place."

Walking back, Alitji noticed, this time, some wild tomatoes. "They weren't here before," she said, looking at them closely. "Are they really good to eat? I've known several children get bad pains from eating wild tomatoes that weren't properly ripe."

She tasted one carefully before finishing them all. No sooner had she eaten the last one than she found herself getting shorter and shorter. In no time she was small enough to be able to crawl through one of the openings, but she stood quite still just where she was, wondering if she would disappear altogether, like a flame. "But what does a flame look like when it has gone out?" she thought. "I have never seen such a thing. I wonder what I shall look like?" However, Alitji had by now stopped getting smaller, and she ran happily up to the little opening she had peered through before.