

## GUBOO

Oh, dear Guboo, I have a wish.  
I wish you wouldn't preach  
About the way to be a man or things to do.  
For when you spoke about your father on the beach  
And how the dolphin caught the fish,  
Why - that's the way to teach.  
It rang so very true.

You told us how one day your dad said:  
"Son, let's go and fish," and handed you a stick.  
You were quite young, waist high,  
And didn't say, "You're thick;  
How can you catch a fish with this?"  
You were quite quick a lad. For cheeking Dad  
It's you who would have caught the stick!

You, your Dad and old Granddaddy too,  
All took your sticks and spears  
Down to the cliffs above the beach.  
"Now we start to fish," Granddaddy said.  
"Keep the old man happy," so thinks you,  
"He's going daft." To prove that this is true  
He starts to sing. Your Dad joins in.  
Their song goes out to sea.

A while of this, you're bored and thinking how  
The whitey would commit them to the bin;  
Then Granddaddy walks down to the beach  
And starts to dance along the surf.  
For what it's worth, you dance and sing and -  
Begin to get a sense of awe; of something coming in;  
It's out there now, just out of reach;  
Something wild and free - Elusive for  
You've spent too long already in the whitey schools.  
Get back inside Dreamtime, and really learn to see.

Your daddy walks into the sea.  
He shades his eyes and looks beyond  
The sparkling glare, "They're coming, Son."  
You stare. There's nothing there that eyes can see.

Another time goes by, a little while,  
As all you three stand on the edge of land  
Three generations on this beach,  
With forty thousand years behind  
And very little time that's left  
To teach the Sacred Tribal Koori Law.  
A fish went past your knee.

Another fish and more; a shoal.  
Your Daddy's spear flashed light  
And a silver curl was twisting on the end.  
Granddaddy's spear flashed too;  
And as you watched a wave rolled back  
To leave five gasping fish.  
Their flapping fright was ended quick.

"Sonny, use your stick." Granddaddy cried,  
"A quick old whack. Lay him aside."  
"There are twenty hungry people in the tribe."  
So twenty fishes went and died that day  
Upon the beach. But how? You'd never guess  
However hard you tried. It's not a trick.

Granddaddy waded out into the surf up to his chest  
And crooked his arm. The dolphin, who'd done the work  
And driven in the fish, swam up and tamely lay there.  
Some old charmer that! He chatted to that animal  
In best dolphin, "Tchee, Tcht-Tcht-Tcht, T-T-Tee,"  
And it answered back the same.

"My eye. You could have knocked me down," you said.  
The old man sang him in. He'd called him out to sea.  
The dolphin had gone and heard that call, that wild thing,  
Had understood. And now Granddaddy stroked his head  
And the fish were there for free.

"That's how Granddaddy taught me. Wise old man!"  
"Not like the lessons in the whitey schools."  
"How to catch fish with a stick. Some trick, eh!"  
"Nowadays, that's how I like to teach."  
"There ain't no rhyme or reason to Dreamtime."  
"It's not something special, out of reach;"  
"Just a bit beyond what eyes can normally see."

Oh, dear Guboo. I have a wish. I'd like a taste of fish,  
Caught on that beach by a dolphin and a stick.  
Can you teach me?

"We waved that dolphin bye. He's a wise old feller, that."  
"He stays in the ocean sea." Wiser than us, Guboo  
Crawling and scrabbling on the land.  
"We stood there on the sand, with twenty fish to eat."  
"The dolphin turned a cartwheel in the sky."  
"Goodbye and thanks for all the fish."