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MOORAL AND MARJALI

(Two species of Seagull)

In the Yamminga time of long ago, Moorral (black and white seagull) and Marjali (white seagull) were womba (men). Moorral came from Koongabbu and was a Waddiabbuloo womba and Marjali came from Yalmbain (south) and was a Koalgurdi womba. They were travelling north and had killed two langoor (opossum) with their koorili lanji (bcomerangs made from koorili tree). At midday they came to a beega (shady grove) and Marjali said to Moorral, "Joonggeoc wanbirdim." ("Fire make.") Moorral replied sharply, "Nooroo kanna birdim janna jeera ngangga." ("Fire I will make but I will speak my own language.") Marjali said nothing, and Moorral made the fire, saying to himself, "Nooroo kanna birdim," again and again. He liked the sound of his own speech. When the langoor were cooked and eaten Moorral and Marjali lay down and slept.

By and by they woke up and went on travelling north, and killed more meat food. At Weerragin-marri they sat down and Marjali said again, "Joonggoo wanbirdim." Moorral became very angry. "Arrianga ngale ngangga jeea jeera ngangga, ngar kanna birdim nooroo, noora janna jeera ngangga." ("I don't want to speak like you," he said, "I will make nooroo; nooroo is my ngangga," and Moorral stood up ready to fight Marjali, but Marjali was lazy and he lay down and pretended not to hear. Moorral made the fire and he talked to himself as he made it. "I will get a clear place for the nooroo, and will get dry wood for the nooroo, and make good hot ashes from my nooroo." Each time he came to the word "nooroo" he raised his voice. He was challenging Marjali in this way, hoping for a fight, but Marjali kept his eyes closed and pretended to be asleep.

They ate the food and slept and travelled on to Jeeriba - Ngarrin and Marjali again said, "Joonggoo wanbirdim wallee anna birdee," ("Fire make and meat cook,") just like a song, for he was now ready to fight Moorral.

"Arriang milaa ngangga billai! jooa meejala booroo nga jeea."
"Don't you talk like that," screamed Moorai, "you go back to your own country. I don't want to say 'joonggoo, joonggoo'" and he mocked Marjali's speech, screaming out "joonggoo, joonggoo," like a woman.

Marjali was very angry when he heard Moorai mock his speech, and he said, "You are a no-good man, you are mocking me." Moorai laughed loudly, He was glad to have made Marjali angry at last and he said, "I am a northern man and you are a southern. We are much better men than you and can fight better and we don't talk like a woman," and again he mocked Marjali, singing in a high-pitched voice, "Joonggoo wanbirdim, joonggoo wanbirdim."

Marjali jumped up in a great rage and said, "You put on reerga (charcoal) and I will put on karmul (white pipeclay) and we will fight now." Moorai covered himself with reerga from his nooroo and Marjali got some karmul from a hole in the ground, and they fought each other with their koorili lanji. Moorai was too angry to fight well and Marjali hit him many times, calling out, "jiraa-jiraa," after each hit.

By and by they changed into birds. Marjali was all white, but Moorai had some reerga left on his body and the feathers where the reerga remained were black. Marjali could only cry out "Jiraa-jiraa," always, just as he had called out whenever he hit Moorai. Now Moorai the spotted seagull keeps to the north and Marjali the white seagull keeps to his own southern country.

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Long, long ago, Moorai (black and white seagull) and Marjali (white seagull) were womba (men). Moorai came from Koongabbu and was a Waddiabbuloo man and Marjali came from south (Yalmbain) and was a Koalgurdi man. They were travelling north and had killed two langoor (opossum). At midday they came to a beega (shady grove) and Marjali said to Moorai, "Joong-goo wanbirdim." (Fire make). Moorai replied sharply, "Nooroo kanna birdim janna jeera ngangga." (Fire I will make, but I will speak my own language.) Marjali said nothing, and Moorai made the fire, saying to himself, "Nooroo kanna birdim," again and again. He liked the sound of his own speech. When the langoor were cooked and eaten Moorai and Marjali lay down and slept.

By and by they woke up and went on travelling north, and killed more meat food. At Weerragin-marri they sat down and Marjali said again, "Joonggoo wanbirdim." Moorai became very angry. "Arrianga ngala ngangga jees jeera ngangga, ngan kanna birdim nooroo, noora janna jeera ngangga." ("I don't want to speak like you," he said, "I will make nooroo; it is nooroo in my language,") and he stood up ready to fight, but Marjali was lazy, and he lay down and pretended not to hear. Moorai made the fire, and he talked to himself as he made it. "I will get a clear place for the nooroo, and will get dry wood for the nooroo, and make good hot ashes from my nooroo." Each time he came to the word "nooroo" he raised his voice. He was challenging Marjali in this way, hoping for a fight, but Marjali kept his eyes closed and pretended to be asleep.

They ate the food and slept and travelled on to Jeeriba Ngarrin, and Marjali again said, "Joonggoo wanbirdim wallee anna birdee," ("Fire make and meat cook,") just like a song, for he was now ready to fight Moorai.

"Don't you talk like that," screamed Moorai, "You go back to your own country. I don't want to say 'joonggoo, joonggoo!'", and he mocked Marjali's speech, screaming out, "Joonggoo, joonggoo," like a woman.

Marjali was very angry when he heard Moorai mock his speech, and he said, "You are a no-good man. You are mocking me."

Moorai laughed loudly. He was glad to have made Marjali angry at last, and he said, "I am a northern man and you are a southern. We are much better men than you, and can fight better, and we don't talk like a woman," and again he mocked Marjali, singing in a high-pitched voice, "Joonggoo wanbirdim, joonggoo wanbirdim."

Marjali jumped up in a great rage and said, "You put on reerga (charcoal) and I will put on karrmul (white pipe-clay) and we will fight now."

They did so and fought each other with their boomerangs. Moorai was too angry to fight well and Marjali hit him many times, calling out, "jiraa-jiraa" after each hit.

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