

An underwater photograph of a person swimming. The person's head is on the left, tilted down. Their right arm is extended forward, holding a coiled rope with orange, yellow, and green strands. The water is a deep blue-green, and there are many bubbles around the person's arm and head. The background is slightly out of focus, showing some greenery at the bottom right.

BY FRANCES ELIZABETH MILLER

DANDY SAVAGE

WHAT I DID AND WHAT I SAW

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COOLANGATTA, AUSTRALIA

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KAVIENG, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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F. E. MILLER

female asian australian explorer

*Despite all my needs being met, my longings remain insatiable.
The perfect wave. I am selfish. I want every wave to be mine.
Yes! I am an explorer! I am charting territories! None of them new.*

*We are a billion charts, which do I call upon? Yours tells the way, but mine
is right. And when I don't arrive, alas, I have finally discovered.*

DANDY

SAVAGE

I would think of Grace long after I had left the isles. No one had left an impression on me as much as she. On our final day of anchorage in the pouring rain and fully clothed, she swum out to greet us. With her she had brought three pomelos. She thrust the bag of fruit at me whilst we all clambered amongst the breakers. Having observed the bartering system on board the main ship, I was distressed at having nothing to exchange, but she seemed not to care. We had been some days at this anchorage. The day before, I had let her, Bilen and Lamonon play with my water housing and my hair, for both were new to them. They had giggled and laughed as they stroked my sun damaged hair, and stared in bewilderment as they pressed the trigger of my housing, and an image appeared instantaneously in the window. We took a selfie. They erupted. I unknowingly had snot hanging from my nostril. If they had noticed, they didn't care. Henry Williams, pastor of the local UC Church, had told me they had never met a Western Woman before. I was as much a novelty as I was a window to a world they may have heard existed but were not quite sure was true. We swam together some more, then it was time for us to leave. I waved goodbye. I couldn't explain we would be lifting anchor. My language skills were

inferior.

Grace waved and softly said goodbye, with a subtle expression suggesting she thought we would be seeing each other tomorrow. And I knew, I would never see her again.



Grace, surfacing

*At last I was roaming through a primeval forest, in a free country
which had never as yet owned a master.*

D’Albertis





Please, please! Come back on the path! You must not get a cut here!

I had not wanted to walk ahead of Douglyn. To walk side by side, I had diverted off the obvious path, worn vaguely thin by the passing of feet, but only a half metre from unkept wild forest. Douglyn paused solemnly, shaking his head, as if about to relay a higher truth that I had so obviously missed.

~~If you get a cut here...~~

He sighed.

~~If you get a cut here~~

~~It will never, ever heal.~~

I scuttled back onto the track, walking ahead of him.





WHAT I DID AND WHAT I SAW



Two is better than one, and one my dear friend, is certainly better than none.









I'm a vegetarian. Sometimes.

So actually, I guess, I'm not a vegetarian.

I hate corned beef, though I can't ever remember trying it.

I would never eat it. Unless there was nothing else to eat.

I have never known **having** to eat corned beef.

Noah, our chef onboard, had previously worked at a well-known restaurant in Byron Bay. A surfer himself, he had found his way onboard the Explorer due to a 'who you know' connection, and now found himself catering to the whims of a ravenous clientele. Perhaps it is a gross generalisation, but I have found it wise never to ask a surfer if they are hungry. Or more pertinently, only ask if you have the means to provide. Today, Noah cooked fresh caught lobster and crab. We paid the local fisherman four dollars a kilo for the pleasure, conveniently delivered to us at anchor. Apparently, this is four times the 'local price'

We pay it, and they smile. We pay it, and we smile.

I rolled the dry bag three times and clasped it shut. I then proceeded to put that bag within another. Both promised to keep my camera free from Pacific inundation. With what some might describe as the elegance of a dugong, I jumped overboard alone, and was struck immediately by the lucidity of the water, a seemingly inverted celestial world. I swam towards the rocky cave, my bag floating on my back, forcing me into a munted dog paddle as I balanced the survival of my camera with that of my own body, trying to avoid imminent pain as I crawled up the jagged rocks, waves striking at my back.

I had made land.

From my dry bag I retrieved my Balinese sarong and the flanno I had stolen from my father's drawers years ago, sprayed copious amounts of DEET over myself (having forgone Malarone despite a course being kept with my toothpaste on ship) and began to walk. I knew not where I was, nor where I was going. Through the forest I simply walked, sighting no human for the better part of a half hour. Suddenly the forest opened before me, presenting what appeared like a vast, concrete wasteland. And I was struck then and there, for I realised my nowhere is somebody's somewhere.







~~Please, please I am so sorry. If I knew you were coming, I would have cleaned up.~~

~~Oh I'm so~~ E M B A R R A S S E D

I didn't know anyone was on the island. But please, please, yes please. Come inside.







~~The Chinese.~~
~~They came. They built it. Then they left.~~

I wasn't on a perfect tropical island. The water colour was right, as were the sand and palms, but they didn't belong here. As far as I could tell, that image didn't belong anywhere. That place was back in the brochures on the shelf of the travel agent in Tweed Heads Mall.

The Americans had built two runways.

The Japanese had been next door.

Almost a century later the Chinese were building wharves for whom and what?

And us? Australians? Why were we here? Again.



~~This is how we do it...~~

~~To all my neighbours, you got much flavor~~
~~This is how we do it...~~

~~Lets flip the track, bring the old school back.~~
~~This is how we do it.~~

~~This is how we do it...~~

Some would have called child services and been as thoroughly perturbed upon hearing the no dial tone as they would the distress of the original deviance.



I cannot understand why the natives attack us. Our launch, the Neva, steers well clear of their villages. I would be friendly, not only from humane, but also from interested motives. For experience has taught me how useful the natives are in assisting a ~~naturalist~~ surfer to ~~form his collections~~ find waves. How many treasures I might have obtained from these people... What an advantage it would be for the natives to understand how many benefits they might derive from our acquaintance...

And as spoke D’Albertis, for shame did I hide.





The Goldmine.

We	discovered.	
We	extracted	turns.
We	dominated	the lineup.
We	took	whatever wave we wanted.
We	produced	rides of glory.

Our surfcraft is vastly

superior.

And yes, did I willingly partake!







WHAT I DID AND WHAT I SAW

Bilen put seaweed on top of his curly, blonde locks as if imitating some sort of Melanesian mermaid, which drew throaty laughs from his receptive audience. Fittingly, he was the only one with the waterman skills strong enough to maintain his position amongst us. Without our voluminous fibreglass craft though, I would dare suggest, we could not hold our position with him. The others respected him. They dared not interfere with his GLORIOUS MOVEMENTS.



WHAT I DID AND WHAT I SAW



~~Please go down there. That's where I am going to surf. Can I have your hat?~~

Michael's body was toned and athletic. The board under his feet made by Darren Handley, shaper to World Champions. A GoPro mount was attached to his board, as if suggesting some imminent moment that would need capturing and sharing with the world. He paddled effortlessly onto a steep wave, breaking in barely two feet of water over reef resembling barbed wire. He bottom turned.

Balanced. Powerful. Skillful.

Directing me where to photograph him from, I knew instantly this was not his first dance. He could have just as easily been a professional surfer back on the Gold Coast, earning his

way on the circuit, touting his wares for all to witness. In the recipe for success though, it was evident that he lacked one important thing.

Pants.

But of course, that was my assumption, as if I knew what he wanted or was trying to achieve. Michael asked for my hat again. I told him I currently needed it and would give it to him on the last day of our journey, my body being far more conducive to burning under the relentless tropical sun than his beautiful obsidian skin which resembled the night sky. To me, it seemed reasonable. And on the final day, with opportunity to give him my hat, I packed it deep within my suitcase and closed the zipper.





By the time I'd reached adulthood, I had already enjoyed the luxury of radio,
print, television, mobile phone and internet, as if to suggest arriving at adulthood
is not also a luxury.

Versed from youth in the narratives of the likes of the National Geographic
Society and Time Magazine; volcanoes destroying, regimes tormenting and
famines striking, I already **knew** the world.
Then they cry. They cry.

Why aren't they crying?
Where is my World Press Photo?







Geological changes are usually so slow as to be imperceptible, but sensitive instrument readings tell us that the island of New Guinea is moving steadily northwards. Moreover, some changes on the island can be witnessed in the course of a single lifetime...

Roy Mackay





Our boat is a fine specimen. Her only fault being an air-conditioning system so cold that I once awoke exasperated in the middle of the night for I had to put on a jumper to stay warm.





Nations do not have moral obligations. They have interests. Or so the internet proclaimed to me.

And I thought to myself, do humans?

On our penultimate day, our boat delivered books and learning materials mostly provided by guests to the local island, including the New South Wales History K-10 Syllabus at the request of a local school teacher. The exact system of education I received from Kindergarten in 1992 was graciously, if not inefficiently, being delivered in a likely revised edition to a school on a remote island of Papua New Guinea in 2018. I wondered if Putin or Xi Jinping would have approved of the material. I dared not voice the thought. Instead I said, how kind.

Jerome, one of the village heads, asked me to speak to the children of the island as some had gathered for a meeting of the newly formed surf club and to also receive the school

books. The night before at the sing-sing , he had suggested that hearing from a women would be important.

~~“It’s difficult for women here”~~ he remarked.

I cannot say if public speaking comes naturally to me. Having been enrolled by my parents in public speaking classes since I was about eight, and having participated in eisteddfods, debates and captaining my school thereafter, to speak in front of an audience has since caused me no stress. Perhaps the brutality of standing solo in a amphitheatre of judges and overzealous tiger parents at an age when my mouth was still being washed out with soap for my frequent outbursts, made any subsequent forays in public the more manageable.

And so, I stood in front of the thirty sets of eager eyes and hoped they couldn’t tell I was the same person who at eighteen had told a psychologist in a depressive state I was upset at my mother making my life too easy.

“It’s really important to go to school, “ I began. “It gives you opportunities to travel around the world.”

I hesitated momentarily, thinking of the irony that dropping out of school at seventeen had brought me to this very point in time, this very island that lacked the system I was now promoting but had purposefully eschewed, and not because I had planned to be here giving righteous, enlightening speeches. “If you have a sister or a friend that’s a girl, take them out surfing with you.” Apparently, I was addressing only the boys in the group.

“Lots of girls surf back in Australia. We all surf together.”

I briefly glanced at the two girls in the immediate audience, after noting some others standing in the bushes surrounding the gathering. I wasn’t going to mention how the G-string swimsuit had become the choice du jour for a large proportion of female surfers back home.

I was already lambasting myself internally for saying “take them out surfing with you!” I would be hung by any feminist, including myself, for such acquiescence to the patriarchy.

But no. I spoke like I believed every word I was saying.



“Ideologies impart meaning and their authority comes from their being taken-for-granted as unquestionable...”

Hollinsworth





DANDY SAVAGE

Today is Thursday the 24th of October 2018.

Culture and Community Test.

Part: D
Physical Education.
Name _____
of goan _____

Part: E
Religion.
Answer the questions.
1. Who is the Mother of Jesus? Julie / Mary
2. Jesus was the Son of? God / Adam
3. _____
4. _____

Part: C
Community Living.
Match each person with their roles.
✓ PC ✓
gardening
teach
church
community
cooking.



WHAT I DID AND WHAT I SAW



All barrels are sweet when your eyes are closed.





Thanks for having me Henry William, Florence, Cathy, Petpet, Docas, Christine, Julie Michael, Jacinta, Joshua, Josephine, Anna, Anna Kela, Jerome, Michael, Sylvia, Bernadette, Emmanuelle, Luke, Jennifer, Natcha, Jacinta, Michael, Nellian, Jo (Valle), Greg (Liah), Sebastian, Clement, Francisca, Angelina, Rose, Alberta Panatz, Nola Nguma, Alberta Katubu, Grace, Bilen, Lamono, Joanne, Maria, Christa, Liro, Marengi, Anna, Lucy, George, Ferdinand, Salatiel, Max, Michael, Ryan, Gerry, Dennis, Dantiel, Annie, Sebastien, Mark, Policam, Rose, Nancy, Rita, Nigel, Grayson, Elliot, Douglyn Joseph, Jeslyn, Enendy, Phillip, Clerry, Aldrin, Nildrin, Ophelda, Hannah, Derrick, Moses, Batlin, Kidley, Jaqueline, Mary, Godina, Sandra, Scholly, Jeffrey, Robertha, Sheelagh, Martha, Bonifacs and Kenneth

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