

## Chapter 6: The Amazonian Mood

A man of the Minj Agamp was always hospitable towards his brother-in-law. You Ate's wife, You Did, was a Konumberga woman, and he frequently entertained her relatives. Their daughter, South River, had married a Konumberga man, Westerly, and had gone to live at Konmil. But Konmil is not far from Kondambi, and when You Ate and You Did moved to the temporary village on the edge of the ceremonial ground for the duration of the Pig Ceremonial, South River visited them so often that it was hard to say whether she was living with her husband at Konmil or with her parents at Kondambi. Westerly asked her grumblingly to spend more time attending to his pigs and gardens and preparing his food. But soon his sister Small Cold returned and took over these tasks. Small Cold was a big, strong girl who had been married to a coastal native stationed as a policeman at Minj. Her husband had been sent back to Goroka, so she had gone home to her brother at Konmil. She drifted into the habit of preparing Westerly's meals.

You Ate had given Westerly some land near Kondambi, in the hope that his son-in-law might settle there and help him in his work. The gardens were bearing, and Small Cold often came to Kondambi to gather food. There she saw Good, a young Kugika man with whom she had carried leg before her marriage. She watched him dancing, and told You Did that she wanted to marry him. You Did was delighted at the prospect of having yet another Konumberga ally among the women of the Kugika. Whenever Small Cold visited Kondambi, she would go to You Did's house and talk to You Did and South River. She spent more and more time at Kondambi.

Early one morning, Westerly sent Small Cold to Kondambi to get some sweet potatoes for him to eat while making geru boards. These were small boards, about six inches square, which the Agamp decorated with colourful geometric patterns and wore for certain dances of the Pig Ceremonial. They were known by the name of the great spirit concerned with pigs. Westerly worked all day at carving his boards. Small Cold had not yet brought him the sweet potatoes by 4.30, and he was hungry. He stormed down to Kondambi and found her gossiping in a leisurely way with You Did and South River.

'Starve me, would you?' he screamed, beating Small Cold several times over the head.

South River helped Small Cold and shouted insults at her husband. You Ate helped South River, and You Did urged them on. A great crowd gathered.

Westerly was afraid to hit South River, as a man had recently been detained in jail for beating his wife and Westerly wanted to participate in the Pig Ceremonial. He kept shouting that he was only angry with Small Cold, his sister.

South River mocked him and tugged his hair, dragging the skull-cap and traderings from his head. Then, holding him by the hair of his head, she threw him to the ground. Westerly was a slight man, and South River was strongly built. She let him scramble to his hands and knees, and then she thrashed him on the buttocks with a stout stick. Twice Westerly collapsed, sobbing, and pretended to be seriously hurt. South River continued to mock him.

The crowd of Kugika who had gathered on the ceremonial ground to watch the fight found it an hilarious diversion. They gave a triumphant cry when South River threw her husband to the ground, and they urged Small Cold to help her. Young Dog, whose wife was a sister of Small Cold and Westerly, came forward to help his brother-in-law, and Two Stay, *tultul* of Burikup subclan, tried to separate the women from Westerly in the interests of good order. Two Stay's wife, Apron, rushed at Westerly with a stick, but her husband restrained her.

When Westerly collapsed, crying, South River heard him sob out that he was only cross with Small Cold, not with South River.

'Small Cold is not your wife!' she cried. 'I am your wife. If you want someone to dig sweet potatoes for you, why don't you ask your wife? That is my work, not Small Cold's.'

'Yes, why did you hit me?' Small Cold asked him. 'Am I your wife? Haven't you got a wife? You're afraid of your wife, so you ask your sister to dig sweet potatoes for you. Am I your wife?' she continued mockingly.

'You harlot!' Westerly screamed, rushing at Small Cold. 'You don't heed anything I say.'

'Why should I heed you?' Small Cold mocked him. 'Am I your wife?'

South River intercepted him in his rush at Small Cold, pummelling him with her fists and then hitting him with a stick she grabbed from You Did.

Dog helped Westerly, overcome with pain and fear, along the track from You Ate's house to the ceremonial ground. The women followed. As You Did was passing the new fence around her house, she tested a paling she knew to be loose, moving it and putting it back. She did not look back at South River as she did this, but it was plain that she meant her daughter to see that one of the palings was loose. South River, following her, pulled out the paling and swiftly attacked Westerly with it. Westerly drew his hatchet from his belt and waved

it at his wife, but she was not intimidated. She knew that he did not want to go to jail at this stage of the Pig Ceremonial. Westerly raised his hatchet in earnest, but Dog and Two Stay held his hand and rushed in front of South River.

‘Whose hatchet are you holding, anyway?’ mocked South River, trying to snatch it from him. ‘I think it is *my* hatchet.’

Westerly knew that he was beaten, and he began to walk from Kondambi in the direction of Konmil.

‘Wait until you are at Konmil tomorrow,’ he warned his wife. ‘I shall kill you with this hatchet then.’

South River danced around playfully and continued to mock him until he left.

He returned ten minutes later to retrieve his skull-cap and trade-rings. South River began to mock him again, and another fight seemed to be threatening. Then You Did brought the skull-cap and two rows of trade-rings from You Ate’s house and gave them to Westerly. Westerly objected that he had been wearing three rows of trade-rings, not two. He noticed that Konangil was wearing a *negints* bird’s wing in his hair, and recognized it as one he himself had been wearing when he came to Kondambi. Konangil had snatched it during the fight. Westerly alleged that Konangil had probably stolen the trade-rings also. He lunged at the young man, but Konangil dodged swiftly and ran away laughing.

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In 1963 the Burikup men gave a party for Westerly. He was now a man of substance. He worked at Minj as cook at the native jail and was a prominent member of the native community on the Station. He drank beer regularly at the Minj Club and was indistinguishable in his dressing from the important Konumberga councillors with whom he associated. The Burikup were obliged to give a party for him as an expression of their gratitude for his helping some of them when they had been in jail. The Burikup men jailed had included two distinguished war magicians who, by virtue of their special position in the Kugika community, were unable to eat food cooked on the same fire as other people. Westerly, being You Ate’s son-in-law and therefore a relative by marriage to all the Burikup, went to the trouble of cooking individual meals for the two sorcerers in order to prevent them from breaking the taboo or starving.

Flowers were strewn to mark the path to the party house at Gwaip. The house itself, an open pavilion roofed with kunai grass, was furnished with a long trestle table and lined with benches. Cigarettes, sticks of trade tobacco, and rolls of newspaper hung from the roof and the table was crowded with food. Plates of cooked pork jostled with thick sandwiches. The Burikup women were crouched over fires outside, making tea to serve in pannikins. They panicked

when Banana told them that many more Konumberga were coming that they had expected: Westerly had invited the president of the Council and several other important men who could be expected to eat a lot and drink more tea than the Burikup could provide. There proved to be plenty, however, when the guests walked in single file along the path of flowers and entered the party house.

You Did was wearing the dress she had obtained from the missionaries, as she always did when she was to be in the presence of people from other clans. Her daughter, South River, was helping her. This woman was almost unrecognizable as the harridan of eight years before who had beaten up her husband. Her fuzzy hair was cropped close to her head, signifying that she had accepted the teachings of the missionaries, and she always wore a dress. She was trying to persuade her mother to become a Christian too, and You Did was confused and distressed: she had admitted to a missionary that she had killed another woman in a brawl a long time ago, and had been admonished severely, as she told me, for being a murderer condemned her to go straight to a big fire after death unless she was first baptized and received everlasting life. You Did did not want to live forever, as she would be lonely after all her pagan friends and relatives died, but she was terrified of being burnt. South River did not seem to share or sympathize with these anxieties.

The same year, when the Kugika had been dancing towards Minj in readiness for the food presentation, I had seen South River guarding a reluctant bride. The two seemed to be standing quietly side by side as they watched the dancing, the prim wife with cropped hair and old-fashioned, ill-fitting dress, and the new bride with gleaming skin and fluffy new strings and shiny ornaments. Only from behind could one see how a large kerchief belonging to South River bound their wrists together to prevent the girl from escaping.

Love had been the wife of Stone Flower, a Koimamkup man, for several years. She tended his pigs and gardens well, and she cooked his food regularly. She had borne him a son, a little boy of three who still sucked at her breast. Stone Flower had no complaints, but he was a moderately wealthy man and wanted a younger wife. Both his brothers, Tree and Girl Wealth, had married Konumberga women, and now he negotiated to marry a Konumberga girl himself. Love had belonged to Kambilika clan, an old enemy of the Konumberga. She had at first been hostile to Staying and Daisy, the wives of Tree and Girl Wealth, but she was the sole representative of her clan and gradually she had learned to live at peace with these women.

Making, the girl Stone Flower had betrothed, was beautiful by Minj standards. She was plump, with a round face and swollen breasts. She had gone to a Ngeniga man, Grieving, wanting to marry him. Grieving had formerly been a household servant at Minj, and he gave her handkerchiefs and scent. Making's parents

complained to a patrol officer who was conducting a census in the area. He elicited the information that Grieving already had another wife, a Konumbuga woman who had also been betrothed to the Kugika. He ruled that the second wife, Making, should go to the man her parents had chosen for her. Her parents notified the Kugika and bathed her with pig's grease.

Girl Wealth and another Koimamkup man went up to the mountain above Konmil to fetch Making. Apron and North Clan, two Konumbuga women of Making's subclan who had married Kugika men, accompanied them, with Apron's little son astride her shoulders. The Konumbuga bathed the two women and the little boy with grease and decorated them nearly as splendidly as they had decorated Making. Making walked sullenly back to Kondambi with them, plumes waving and a new bush knife clutched in her hand. Her brother, Strong Bamboo brought a live pig and a cooked one.

A crowd gathered in the cooking grove while Strong Bamboo explained to Stone Flower that he must guard her carefully in case she ran away to Grieving. Stone Flower, who knew that Love resented his acquiring a new wife, said that Making would sleep for three nights with North Clan, who belonged to her subclan. Then she would sleep with Daisy and Staying until Love had learned to accept her. Strong Bamboo stayed with Stone Flower for three days, then he and North Clan bathed Making again with pigs' grease and gave her to the Koimamkup. The next morning, Stone Flower told Love to go with Daisy to find a pig that had strayed. Love flared at him.

'You send me to look for a pig so that you can walk about with this new wife of yours and sleep with her,' she accused him. Then she flounced away to get vegetables from her gardens.

A couple of days passed then Love had a prolonged quarrel with Stone Flower.

'I have been married to you a long time and everyone knows me,' she declaimed. 'Everyone knows me and listens to what I have to say. I am just like a boss-boy<sup>1</sup> or a Government officer!'

Stone Flower and the assembled company laughed loudly, but Love continued.

'I have been with you a long time,' she asserted. 'If you want to walk about with this new Konumbuga woman, you can walk about somewhere else, not at Kondambi. My clan fought the Konumbuga, so I don't like cooking food for the

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<sup>1</sup> Mihalic (1971:75) spells *bosboi*: a native overseer, work foreman in a village, leader of a line or team (see Mihalic, F. 1971. *The Jacaranda Dictionary and Grammar of Melanesian Pidgin*. Milton, Qld: The Jacaranda Press).

Konumbuga. All these years I have been married to you, I have cooked food for the Konumbuga. Now you have got yourself a Konumbuga woman, and I don't like it.'

'You don't like the Konumbuga?' Stone Flower mocked her. 'What were you doing, then, when you came with us the other day and mourned for the Konumbuga man who died? Practising illicit magic?'

'For years,' Love protested, 'I have been your only wife and I haven't quarrelled with you. I have stayed with you and borne a child. You can't give any of my pigs to the Konumbuga when you kill them. If you do, my son Tree will see. He is a big child now.'

Everyone laughed, for it was well known that little Tree II was only three. The laughter became ribald and uproarious when Stone Flower taunted Love, 'You're cross with me. If you get cross with me, I'll sleep with the Konumbuga woman, not with you.'

'All the other women told me to hit you and be angry with you,' Love told him, looking confused. 'They told me not to let you acquire a new wife when I have cooked for you so long. Why do you want a new wife, anyway? Aren't I enough? You think to yourself: "Love can cook my food, and I shall sleep with the new wife". But for a long time I have been your only wife. Now either the Konumbuga woman or myself will have to go. I'm not going to stay with you while you have this other woman.'

'Before,' Stone Flower said to the crowd, remembering, 'I had two other wives, [space in original] and another girl whose name I can't remember. I myself sent them away. I myself got rid of them. Now Love says that she will leave me. She does not wait for me to send her away.'

'I didn't see these other wives,' Love said, meaning that they were before her time, 'or I would have sent them away. Why don't you hit me, if you're so angry? Daisy objected to Girl Wealth getting another wife, and he shot her through the leg with a spear.'

'Yes,' Stone Flower answered, 'and Girl Wealth went to jail. If this were any other time, I would do the same. I am not afraid of going to jail. But now I want to celebrate the Pig Ceremonial, and I don't want to go to jail. So I am not going to hit you. If you are still cross with me after we've killed the pigs, I'll hit you as much as you like. The Konumbuga woman will still be here.'

'You're a wicked man,' Love grumbled, her anger rising. 'I'd like to kill you ... I'll kill the Konumbuga woman ... I'll leave you ... I'm going to kill a pig.'

'You're not going to kill one of my pigs,' Stone Flower objected in some alarm.

'It is my pig,' Love told him. 'I'll kill it if I want to.'

Apron began to support Stone Flower on behalf of her clanswoman, Making. Earlier that morning, Stone Flower and Love had argued about the ownership of a Bird of Paradise plume the Ngeniga had given them. The Ngeniga had named Love as the recipient, meaning her to give it to her husband. Daisy had supported Stone Flower.

'The Konumberga women always help one another,' Love grumbled. 'That is why Daisy won her fight over Girl Wealth's second wife. Girl Wealth will never get another wife, from now until he is an old man. But everyone heeds what I have to say. I am just like a boss-boy. The Government officers know me, and they will give me a brass badge to wear on my head.'

Stone Flower and Love quarrelled again the next day, and Stone Flower punched his wife in both eyes. Love went outside early the next morning, with both her eyes painfully swollen, and hit Making. She chased the girl on to the ceremonial ground. Staying, emerging from her house, was angry because none of the Konumberga women had come to Making's assistance. She herself went away to get a stout stick. North Clan, Daisy, and Apron helped Staying to belabour Love. Love, hopelessly outnumbered, was trying to defend herself. You Did and Red Paint came to her rescue. They were Konumberga women by birth, but there were already four Konumberga women helping Making so they themselves decided to help the Kambilika woman who was alone. They tried to prevent Staying and her clanswomen from hitting Love. Staying had already given Love a scalp wound, and blood was flowing freely. A couple of the men tried vainly to separate the women.

'I'm going to report you to the Court of Native Affairs,' Love shouted, seeing Stone Flower approach, 'for hitting me yesterday and causing this blood to flow'.

'I didn't cause the blood to flow,' Stone Flower protested, knowing that he could go to jail. 'One of the women hit you this morning.'

Girl Wealth was standing with his arms folded in a determined way and a smug expression on his face. He had recently been released from jail, and was not going to be drawn into women's fights.

Sugar and Tree intervened. Tree grasped Staying's arm as she was hitting Love, and she slewed round and tried to hit him with the pole she was using. North Clan pulled Sugar's hair, and Apron helped her to chase him.

Staying and Love, charging each other with poles, cried 'Go hence! Go hence!' as they approached. This was a battle-cry the men used in warfare. Staying cried out that You Did and Red Paint, who were defending Love, were traitors to their clan. At last Staying looked at Love, cowering and bleeding, and announced that the Kambilika women had had enough. The women went to their houses.

Tail passed me on his way to the Penkup houses.

'Did you know,' he asked in his gossipy fashion, 'that Stone Flower sent away his other two wives because Love fought them? There is no doubt that Making will have to go.'

Making's parents heard about the fight that had taken place, and they came to stay with the Koimamkup and help their daughter. Love hit Making again, and Stone Flower was so angry that he pulled some of the thatching grass off his wife's house. One of the Koimamkup women told me that there would be a big fight that night. Making's parents and all the Koimamkup would help Making, and Love would call out for all the Penkup and Burikup to help her. Before the white men came, the woman continued, the new wife's whole clan and the old wife's whole clan would come to help them and there would be a great fight between the women. Now that fighting was banned, only the parents came to help the new wife. No member of Love's clan had come to help her. But the fight did not eventuate. Making's parents stayed for a few days and then went home.

One day Love resumed her quarrel with Stone Flower, telling him that she wanted him to send the girl home.

'I have had six wives,' Stone Flower said in an exasperated tone, 'and you sent away all the others.'

'I was with you,' said Love, 'when the casuarinas were planted at Kondambi. See how big they are now!'

'Never mind,' Stone Flower replied, 'you can go. I want Making to stay, and in a little while I want to get another wife. I can't get more wives while you're here, because you fight them and send them away. I have had six wives, and you have sent the other five away.'

'I only sent four of them away,' Love objected. 'You yourself sent away two wives. Were there five or six of them? The first was a young girl of Ngeniga clan, who left before you slept with her. The second was a Konumberga girl. The third was a Ngeniga who is married to another man now. The fourth was a very young girl; she left when she was still a young woman. I was the fifth. You sent the sixth away yourself.'

'With the name Love,' Stone Flower said jokingly, 'which means "man" in Neo-Melanesian, you think you are a man and can send away wives as you wish'.

'"Love" is a name of the Agamp' his wife replied. 'My parents were in love before they married, and they named me after giving love or carrying leg. They didn't know the Neo-Melanesian language. My name means "love" or "carrying leg".'

‘Well, you can’t carry leg now,’ Stone Flower continued. ‘You’re an old woman. Go back to your relatives, and I’ll take our son, Tree II.’

‘Tree II is my child,’ Love objected. ‘I can’t go away. I’ll have to stay.’

‘He is my child too,’ said Stone Flower, ‘and I mean to keep him. You can go. I don’t want to lose Making, and I want to get other wives soon.’

Their argument continued for an hour, Stone Flower commanding his wife to gather up her belongings and go back to her relatives and Love remonstrating that she had been married to Stone Flower a long time and did not want to go. She began to plead with him to let her stay, because she did not want to leave her child. But Stone Flower was adamant. Finally, he gave her a beating and she left Kondambi. She returned the next day to feed little Tree II, and went back to her relatives that night. Several days later, she stayed at Kondambi instead of returning to her relatives. She did not fight with Making. When I left Kondambi it was not clear whether Love was going to resign herself to being one of two co-wives instead of being Stone Flower’s only wife, or whether she was going to obey her husband’s command to leave her small son with him. The new bride, Making, seemed firmly entrenched. But when I came back to Kondambi in 1963 Love was again Stone Flower’s only wife. She remembered Making, who was now married to another man, as one of the girls she had driven away. Stone Flower was under the impression that Making had run away to another man in preference to staying with him, and he shrugged indifferently when asked whether Love had caused her to go.

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Ko II, the young Konumberga girl who lived with the Kugika, had been with her mother’s brother, Shield, of Penkup Damba subdivision, ever since her own father had died. Her brother remained with the Konumberga. He told Shield that he wanted to exchange Ko II for a bride for himself, but the uncle replied coldly that Ko II could choose a husband when she had carried leg and found a man she liked. He assured her brother that he would give him the marriage payment when that happened, so that he could use it to obtain a bride for himself.

Ko II had been carrying leg with Good, a young man of Baiman subdivision in Penkup subclan. She went to stay with him and told him that she wanted to marry him. Good was agreeable, but Shield objected. He said that he did not want Ko II to marry yet. When Good pressed him to give a reason, he said that Good belonged to Ko II’s mother’s subclan and was too closely related. She should, he said, marry a man of Burikup or Koimamkup subclan. Good would be marrying his ‘own’ cousin, not a classificatory one. Good rejected this reason, saying that Penkup was a large subclan and he belonged to Baiman, not to Damba, subdivision. The subdivisions were as large as the subclans in

some groups, he said. Shield was insistent. He had a way of being insistent. A squat little man with a rugged, determined look, he was known as Bozip Shield because the earliest Government officers had appointed him a *bosboi*. He still wore the white bone ring of office on his forehead, although there was no longer any place for a *bosboi* in a system of *luluais* and *tultuls*. Big Insect helped Good to bathe Ko II with pigs' grease and give her back to Shield with three red Bird of Paradise plumes, two yellow Bird of Paradise plumes, one Princess Stephanie plume, and some other valuables.

Ko II went to stay with Good again a couple of months later. Good had built three houses at Kondambi, one for each of his two wives and one for his mother, Guardian. Big Insect had built houses for Indoors and Goodly nearby, but his wives continued to live at Weeping Bamboo. Big Insect's male visitors used the house he had built for Indoors, and he let the young people hold courting ceremonies in Goodly's house. Good slept with Ko II in this house and the little man who had been sleeping there while Goodly looked after his pigs good-naturedly retired to a communal men's house.

Good's mother, Guardian, was a wizened little woman with a round face and an [word unclear] sense of humour. She did not concern herself with the young people's doings. Her friend and age-mate, Outsider, had found some edible fungi and the two women were cooking them for a private feast. The fungi were of a kind that the Minj people believed responsible for producing a kind of madness when eaten at a particular time. Men became aggressive and ran amuck; women became light-headed and insisted on dancing. Both Guardian and Outsider had experienced the 'effects' of eating the fungus in season. They had made their menfolk decorate them splendidly, and had danced on the ceremonial ground holding spears and hatchets. It had been an exhilarating experience. But the time of the 'mushroom madness' was over now and the fungus should not have had any of these strange effects. Good was therefore alarmed when he heard that Guardian and Outsider had gone mad through eating fungi.

When women were experiencing the collective hysteria associated with mushrooms, they used to boast of real and imaginary love affairs. I knew that Guardian, who must have been nearly fifty, had had an extended affair with Raggiana, *tultul* and orator of Penkup subclan. Raggiana had told me that he was the father of Good, not simply in a classificatory sense, and I had asked Guardian whether this was true. 'How can I tell?' she had said, dissolving into giggles. 'I slept with my husband, and I slept with Raggiana. I don't know who his father was.'

Guardian was now a widow. But when the two old ladies had finished their meal and staggered hand in hand on to the ceremonial ground, she declared publicly

that she was married to Raggiana. Further, she asserted laughingly, Bozip Shield had raped her. She demanded, in a mood of great hilarity, that the people should call the *luluai*, Big Insect, so that he could hold a court about it.

The crowd, which had quickly gathered, recognized that she was hysterical. People laughed at her, and no one bothered to call Big Insect.

'Where is Raggiana? Where is Shield?' she cried. She called out for Raggiana to come. Some of the men tried to address her, but she threw stones at them.

Raggiana appeared at last, hearing his name. Guardian chased him and threw stones at him. He retired, laughing, to a distance.

Bozip Shield came on to the ceremonial ground, looking very puzzled. His generous lower lip dropped when he was addressed by Guardian, blinking her eyes at him flirtatiously, 'Oh Shield! Naughty, naughty Shield!'

The *bozip* did not immediately grasp that the widow was hysterical. He stood bravely before her and denied her charge. He seemed afraid lest people should believe that he had raped her, but the crowd rocked with laughter. Outsider alternately helped and fought with Guardian. At one stage Guardian hurled a stick as though it had been a spear.

In the evening, Outsider cooked some bean leaves in Guardian's house and they ate together. They both seemed in good spirits and light-headed. Guardian continued to talk about the men she would marry and the men who had captured her. Outsider said sullenly that she did not want to marry.

More than a month passed, then Bozip Shield told Big Insect that he wanted to marry Guardian, as she was still a widow. Guardian protested that she was an old woman and did not want to marry anyone. In that case, Shield asserted, Good would have to give him a compensation payment for the death of Ko II's mother, who was accidentally killed a long time ago in a fight with Guardian.

The case was discussed the next evening in Big Insect's cooking grove at Weeping Bamboo. Big Insect had the most to say. He stressed that the Penkup, particularly the Baiman subdivision, women were mostly childless and there were few male children to carry on the line. Guardian had two male children, Good and the little boy Man Bamboo. So, having done her duty, she could please herself whether she married again or not. If she wanted to marry again, she could please herself whom she married.

Shield protested that he had plenty of work and only two wives to help him.

Big Insect replied that Shield should be the last person to claim Guardian because he had no children, even with two wives. Big Insect asked whether

it was true that Shield had stated that he would take Ko II back if Guardian would not marry him. Shield replied that it was not true that he had said this, but that he would indeed take Ko II back. The Baiman subdivision should make reparation for the death of Ko II's mother.

'Guardian's husband has been dead a long time,' Big Insect stated. 'Long ago we told her she ought to go to another man. We suggested Raggiana, but she said she would get into strife with his other wives. We suggested [space in original] and she would not go to him. We suggested the Konumbuga or the Baiman, but she would not go to them. Has she changed her mind? Let us hear what Guardian herself has to say.'

'My husband has been dead a long time' said Guardian. 'When he was alive, I used to hit him if he did no work. Now he is dead and I have no man of my own. I am an old woman. I don't want to go to Bozip Shield, but I shall go to him if he is prepared for the consequences. If I marry him and he does not work hard, I shall strike him as I used to strike Good's father. Tomorrow morning, let Bozip Shield do some work—make a fence, or build a house. We can talk more about this in the afternoon. If he has worked well, I'll marry him.'

Guardian walked back to Kondambi. The *bozip* did not undertake any special project to demonstrate to her that he was a good worker. But later, after I had left New Guinea, he renewed his efforts to get the widow to marry him. Guardian was evidently persuaded, but Shield's own wife, who had ignored his attempts to win the widow when they seemed to be fruitless, now tackled Guardian and broke her finger in a brawl. Guardian decided that she would be better off as an unattached widow, and by 1964 she had not acquired another husband.

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