

ELIS JULIANA

CURAÇAO (1927–2013)

LANGUAGE: PAPIAMENTU

HAIKU

Pèn bira muda
pòtlot ta haña lenga
pa papia ku rei.

* * *

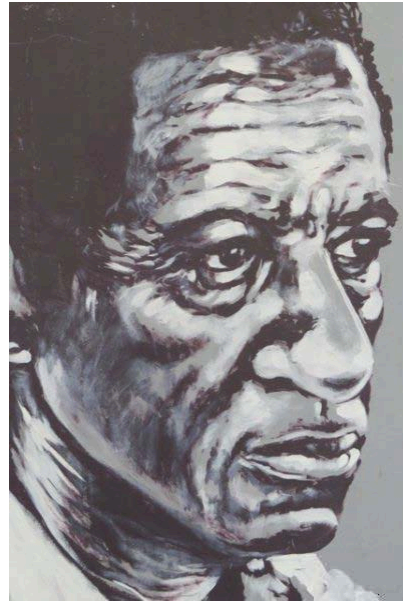
Ora di fia
ta bini na rudia
i bai ku avion.

* * *

Para ku drumi
riba webu di bientu
ta yama orkan.

* * *

Den mi kasita
mi no tin nodi buska
pa haña mi mes.



Elis Juliana was born in Curaçao, an island in the Caribbean. Just north of Venezuela, the island had been a Dutch colony for centuries. Juliana was a descendent of the colony's slaves, who worked in the island's salt mines. He and his family spoke Papiamentu, a rhythmic Creole language that blends Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, Arawak Indian, and several African languages. He grew up surrounded by poverty and shared a tiny shack with his mother, brothers, and sisters. Still, Juliana was a happy and imaginative child. He began writing poetry and joined a movement to document and promote Curaçao culture. One of his many accomplishments was introducing the Japanese poetic form *haiku* to Curaçao.

TRANSLATOR'S GLOSSARY		
WORD	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SYNONYMS
avion (n.)	the act or means of moving through the air under control	flying, flight, wings, airplane
bai (v.)	to move away from a place	goes, travels, journeys, leaves, departs
bientu (n.)	a current of air; may refer to emptiness	wind, air, breeze; nothing, infertility, void
bira (v.)	to change from one state to another	becomes, turns, grows, falls
buska (v.)	to try to find something by looking carefully and thoroughly	search, look, seek, hunt, beat the bushes
den (prep.)	enclosed or surrounded by	in, inside, within, in the middle of
di (prep.)	expressing a relationship between a part and a whole	of, from, since, to
drumi (v.)	to be in a relaxed and supported position	sleep(s), rest(s), lie(s), roost(s), sit(s)
fia (v.)	to give or receive something that is expected to be returned	loan, lend, borrow, lease, rent
haiku (n.)	the Japanese word for a short poem of seventeen syllables broken into three lines	haiku(s)
haña (v.)	to become aware of someone or something	find, locate, discover, pinpoint, recognize, uncover
i (conj.)	in addition to	and, plus, as well as
kasita (n.)	a shelter of limited size and simple construction	little house, small house, cottage, shack, cabin, hut, shed
ku (prep. / conj.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>preposition</i>—accompanied by or in relation to another person or thing 2. <i>conjunction</i>—used to introduce a new clause 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. with, by 2. that, which, who
lenga (n.)	the instrument or ability to express one's wishes, choices, or opinions	voice, words, courage, boldness, ability to speak

WORD	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SYNONYMS
mes (n.)	a person's essential being, especially considered as the object of introspection or reflexive action	self, being, person, I, myself
mi (pron. / adj.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>pronoun</i>—referring to the speaker <i>adjective</i>—belonging to the speaker 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> I, me my, mine, of mine
muda (adj.)	unable to speak	dumb, silent, mute, tongue-tied, speechless, at a loss for words
na rudia (phrase)	supported by joints between the thighs and the lower legs	upon knees, on bent knees, kneeling, crouching, stooping, bowing down
no (adv.)	used to form the negative	not, no, don't
ora (n.)	a certain point in the indefinite progress of existence and events in the past, present, and future	hour, time, when, moment, occasion, point
orkan (n.)	destructive storm with violent winds	hurricane, cyclone, disaster, gale, tempest, whirlwind
pa (prep.)	as a means to	to, in order to, for
papia (v.)	to say something in order to convey information, an opinion, or a feeling	speak, address, talk, converse, communicate, lecture
para (n.)	warm-blooded, egg-laying vertebrate that has feathers and a beak and can fly in most cases	bird(s), fowl(s), robin(s), chicken(s), dove(s)
pèn (n.)	an instrument for writing or drawing with ink	pen, quill, marker, sharpie, ballpoint
pòtlot (n.)	an instrument for writing or drawing with graphite	pencil
rei (n.)	the ruler of an independent state, who typically inherits the position by birth	king, ruler, sovereign, monarch, lord, royalty
riba (prep.)	physically in contact with and supported by a surface	on, upon, on top of, atop, above

WORD	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SYNONYMS
ta bini (v.) (<i>ta indicates present tense</i>)	to move toward or into a place	comes, approaches, nears, draws close, advances
ta haña (v.) (<i>ta indicates present tense</i>)	to call on someone or something to be present	rallies, summons, musters (up), gathers, unearths, awakens, sparks, discovers
ta yama (v.) (<i>ta indicates present tense</i>)	to be given a specified name	is called, is known as, is in fact
tin nodi (v.)	literally means <i>to have necessity</i> ; expressing necessity or obligation	have to, need to, necessitate, require, must
webu (n.)	oval or round object(s) laid by a female bird, reptile, fish, or invertebrate, usually containing a developed embryo	egg(s)

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

PHRASE BY PHRASE

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pòtlot ta haña lenga _____

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ta bini na rudia _____

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REFLECTING AND FINDING MEANING

Group Member Names:

Date: _____

Pick a scribe for the group, and work together to answer the questions.

What are the best parts of this translation, and why do you think they are good?

What elements of the original poem did you lose in the translation? What did you manage to keep?

Did you achieve something new with your translation, and if so, does it make sense in the poem or not?
