

A colorful crayon drawing of a traditional house with a brown roof and yellow walls, surrounded by green trees and two people walking in the foreground. The scene is set in a bright, sunny environment with a yellow ground and a blue sky.

Nurrungu Walu Wukirringur Minhalaw

Minhala is a fictional character but the events in this story are based on real events of Elcho Island life in the late 1960s/early 1970s.

Valerie Dhaykamalu's children were consulted and requested that their mother be remembered in this story, stating that they are very proud of her. They have said it is okay for teachers and students to say both her Yolŋu and Balanda name when reading and talking about this story.



Shepherdson College

Njurrŋu Walu Wukirriŋur Minhala
Minhala's First Day at School

Language: Djambarrpuyŋu

Written and illustrated by Margaret Dhorrpuy, Emma Smolenaers, Evonne Mitjarrandi, Samantha Raparrk, Jean Yurranydjil, Heather Yeparrŋa and Shirley Walpulay

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Näthil baman' 1969thu, yothu gan
nhinan yäku Minhala. Nayi marrtjin
rälin mitjinlil nhanju gurrutumirr bäpa ga
nändi wiripunur wänanur nhakun yirralkanur.
Nayi gan bänju marrtjin wukirrilil.
Ga wannganymirr waluy nayi djälthin nayi dhu
marrtji wukirrilil. Ga dhuwal nhanju dhäwuny....



Dhuwal narra yäku Minhala. Narra yolŋu
yothu ga dhuŋgarraynydja dhiyaŋ narra
marrtjin räli wukirrilil 1969thu. Narra yaka
marŋgi nhä dhuwal yäku wukirri.
Gäthurnydja narra djälthinan marŋgithinyaraw
nhä dhuwal wukirri.



Galki djadaw'yunharay narra nuli näma
djilawurnha, nunhiyiny narraku
birayunamirra walu. Djudukurr! Djudukurr!

Djudukurr!
Djudukurr!



Njarrany gan njatha lukan wänjanjur bili
balanyamirriynydjä bänju gan birakpatj lukan
wukirrinjur. Njatha wänjanjur manymak mirithirr
balanya nhakun djilawurr mapu' ga bathanawuy
mudhunay'. Benjyiny njarra njäkul yindi rirrakay
nhakun balanya 'Dinj! Dinj!' ga barrarin njarra
rirrakaywu. "Way! Nhä dhuwal rirrakay yindi?"
bitjarr njarra yatjurr wanjan. Njarraku märi'mirrinju
gitkitthurr bala lakaranjal njarrakal, "Njunhiyiny
rirrakay wukirrimirra walu! Bondi! Yaka nhe dhu
witjarr'yun! Miss Thurlow-yu dhu njarrtjuna nhuna!"



Nunhiyi waluy n̄arrakal n̄ān̄d̄i'mirriṅuy gāṅal
n̄arrany wukirrilila. Bala n̄ayi marrtjinan
djāmalila, wiripuny yolṅu'-yulṅu ga
Mr Gullick-'tja. Mārram walal dhu nyoka' ga
n̄arirri' marthanayyu. Ga bāpa'mirriṅu n̄arraku
marrtjin munha-warryurr lanapuw
djaṯ'thunharaw n̄āthiliṅuwuy mutikay.
Gāna n̄arra gan nhinan wukirriṅur bala n̄arra
warwuyurra n̄ān̄d̄i'mirriṅuwnha.



Dhänur lupthunhanur naraku lundu'mirriju
mala marrtjin narakal bala bukmakthun
napurr girriny' nhirrpar wukirripuynha.
Bala narra nayanuny manymakthinan.



Bala napurr marrtjinan ḡal'yurra garramatlila wukirrilil ga marḡgikunhamirrnydja maḡḡa napurrḡ Guywaḡa ga Miss Thurlow. Bala ḡayiny Guywaḡany waḡan bitjarr "Nhämirr nhuma djamarrkuḡi'?" Napurr waḡan bitjarr "Manymak!" Ga Miss Thurlow waḡan bitjarr "Good morning children." Napurr waḡan "Good morning Miss Thurlow". Bala yurnha napurr marrtjinany ḡoylilnydja Western-lilnydja dhäwuw ḡänharaw. Ga maḡḡa Mr Davis-thuny ga Guthadjakay'tja lakaraḡal nhaku napurr marrtjin ḡoylil. Yurr bukumirriyanharaw Garraywal.



Narra ga n̄arraku lundu'mirriṅu mala marrtjin
bul'yunalila. Ga lukanany napurr gan
Akta-vite-nha yan. Ga b̄ayṅun wiripuny ṅatha.



Benjyiny napurr marrtjin Preschool-lila wiripuwal marŋgikunhamirrwal yäku Miss Buchanan, Miss Fletcher, Maypilama ga Rranu. Bukmakthu napurr manikaynydja dar'taryurr balandakurr ga Yolŋukurr. Ga wanganydja gan bul'yurr biyana yurr marŋgikunhamirr.



Bala napurr yapmaraṅal wukirripuy girri'
mala ga nhirpar wāṅapuy girri'.

Bala marrtjin ṅathalila. Marie Morris-dhu ga
wiripuy yolṅu'-yulṅuy gan bathar miyapunu ga
gätnipuy ṅatha napurrṅ. Guyumulyu gurrupar
djorra' napurrṅgal dhukunbuy. Beṅuryiny ṅarra
nhāṅal wuṅili' djorra'ṅur marthaṅaypuy! Bala
ṅarra waṅanan bitjarr, "Way! Dhuwal marthaṅay
dhapirrk! Yolku dhuwal marthaṅay?"

Gyumulyu lakaraṅal dhāwu napurrṅ John
Calvert-galaṅawuy ga Jimmy Monkey-puy.
Bala napurr ganyim'thunha!



Beṇur dāmbuy waluy walal djāmamirnydja
mala gulyurra. Bala ṇarra raṇilila marrtjin bala
nhāṇal ṇarraku ṇāṇḍi'mirriṇuny. Galkurr ṇarra
gan wāṇaṇur ṇunhi wanhal guyṇarr gan
dhārran guyaw rulwanḍhunharaw. Beṇuryiny
napurr djamarrkuli' gan ḷup-ḷup'thurr gapuṇur
rapinyṇur yurr Gulmannur.



Milmitjpany ŋarra roŋiyinan wukirrilila.
Napurr gan marŋgithinany Yolŋukurr
warrakanku yäkuw ga warrakanku dhurrpaw
Valerie Dhaykamaluwal. Wiripu napurr nhäŋal
Guymunnha, ŋayi gan marŋgikuŋal
ŋalapa_lmirriny miyalkkurruwurrunha nhaltjan
dhu girri' mala djäma.



miyapuni

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Ga bäyŋu ŋarra buluny warwuyurr wukirriŋur,
bilin ŋarra marŋgin nhä dhuwal wukirri.
Manymak mirithirr dhuwal wukirriny.



Nhä nhe ga dharanjan dhuwal dhäwu?

Do you understand the story?

Page 10

Nhä Minhalay lukan wänjanur birakpatj?

A. Djilawurr mapu' ga bathanawuy mudhunay'.

What did Minhala eat for breakfast at home?

A. *Bush turkey eggs and cooked food.*

Page 10

Nhä nhuma njuli natha luka dhiyanuny bala? Ga wanhal nhuma luka birakpatj?

What do you all eat these days? Where do you eat breakfast?

Page 10

Yol wanjan bitjarr gam' "Way, nhä dhuwal rirrakay yindi?"

A. Minhala.

Who said, "What is that big noise?!"

A. *Minhala.*

Page 10

Nhä nhe guyana? Yolthu bathar birakpatj Minhalaw?

What do you think? Who cooked breakfast for Minhala?

Page 12

Nhaltjan Minhala nayanu njurruru wukirrinur? Nhaku?

How did Minhala feel when she first went to school? Why?

Page 12

Yolku marrtjin dja'thunaraw lanapuw?

A. Bäpa'mirrinu Minhalaw.

Who went to chop cyress trees?

A. *Minhala's father.*

Page 16

Yol nhanju marngikunhamirr?
A. Guywana ga Miss Thurlow.
Who was her teachers?
A. *Guywana and Miss Thurlow.*

Page 20

Nhakurr nanyi marrtjin dar'taryunaraw?
A. Preschool-lil.
Where did she go to sing?
A. *Preschool.*

Page 18 & 22

Nhä walal gan lukan wukirriṅur?
A. Akta-vite, miyapunu ga gätnipuy ṅatha.
What did everyone eat at school?
A. *Akta-vite, turtle and food from the garden.*

Page 24

Nhaku djamarrkuḷi' ga Minhala gälkun ranṅur?
A. Nṅṅdi'mirriṅuw ga bäpa'mirriṅuw.
Why did the children and Minhala wait at the beach?
A. *For their mums and dads.*

Page 24

Nhakurr djamarrkuḷi' marrtjin lup-lupthunaraw?
A. Gapuṅur rapinyṅur yurr Gulmanṅur.
Where did the children go to swim?
A. *To the freshwater spring at Gulman.*

Nurruru Walu Wukirriṅur Minhala

Minhala's First Day at School

Page 4

Näthil baman' 1969thu, yothu gan nhinan yäku Minhala. Nayi marrtjin rälin mitjinlil nhanṅu gurruṭumirr bäpa ga ṅäṅdi wiripunur wäṅaṅur nhakun yiralkaṅur. Nayi gan bäyṅu marrtjin wukirrilil. Ga wanganyimirr waluy ṅayi djälthin ṅayi dhu marrtji wukirrilil. Ga dhuwal nhanṅu dhäwuny....
A long time ago in 1969, there was a girl named Minhala. She came to the mission with her family from another place. She had never been to school. One day she wanted to go to school. This is her story.

Page 6

Dhuwal ṅarra yäku Minhala. ṅarra yolṅu yothu ga dhuṅgarraynydja dhiyaṅ ṅarra marrtjin räli wukirrilil 1969thu. ṅarra yaka marṅgi nhä dhuwal yäku wukirri. Gäthurnydja ṅarra djälthinan marṅgithinyaraw nhä dhuwal wukirri.
My name is Minhala. I am a yolṅu child and I am going to school this year in 1969. I don't know what school is. Today I want to learn what school is.

Page 8

Galki djaḍaw'yunharay ṅarra ṅuli ṅäma djilawurrnha, ṅunhiyiny ṅarraku birayunamirra walu. Djuḍukurr!
Djuḍukurr!
Early in the morning, I hear the sound of wild jungle fowl, it telling me it is time to wake up.

Page 10

ṅarrany gan ṅatha ḷukan wäṅaṅur bili balanyamirriynydja bäyṅu gan birakpatj ḷukan wukirriṅur. ṅatha wäṅaṅur manymak mirithirr balanya nhakun djilawurr mapu' ga bathanawuy mudhuṅay'. Beṅuryiny ṅarra ṅäkul yindi rirrakay nhakun balanya 'Diṅ! Diṅ!' ga barrarin ṅarra rirrakaywu. "Way! Nhä dhuwal rirrakay yindi?" bitjarr ṅarra yatjurr waṅan. ṅarraku märi'mirriṅu gitkitthurr bala lakaraṅal ṅarrakal, "ṅunhiyiny rirrakay wukirrimirra walu! Bondi! Yaka nhe dhu wiṅjarr'yun! Miss Thurlow-yu dhu ṅarrtjuna nhuna!"
I eat breakfast at home because they don't give us breakfast at school. The breakfast at home is very good, bush fowl eggs and toast. Suddenly, I hear a big noise like 'Ding! Ding!' and I'm frightened of the noise. "Hey, what is that big noise?" I shouted. My grandmother laughed and told me, 'That sound is telling us it is school time! Quick! Don't be late! Miss Thurlow will growl at you!'

Page 12

Njunhiyi waluy n̄arrakal n̄āṇḍi'mirriṇuy gāṇal n̄arrany wukirrilila. Bala ṇayi marrtjinan djāmalila, wiripuny yolṇu'-yulṇu ga Mr Gullick-'tja. Mārram walal dhu nyoka' ga ṇarirri' marthaṇayyu. Ga bāpa'mirriṇu n̄arraku marrtjin munha-warryurr lanapuw dja'thunharaw n̄āthiliṇuwuy mutikay. Gāna ṇarra gan nhinan wukirriṇur bala ṇarra warwuyurra n̄āṇḍi'mirriṇuwnha.

My mother takes me to school. Then she went to work with other Yolṇu and Mr Gullick. They are going to get crabs and fish by boat. My father already left very early in the morning to chop Cypress with the tractor. I am alone at school and feeling lonely for my mum.

Page 14

Dhāṇṇur lupthunhaṇur n̄arraku lundu'mirriṇu mala marrtjin n̄arrakal bala bukmakthun napurr girriṇy nhirrp̄ar wukirriṇuwnha. Bala ṇarra ṇayaṇuny manymakthinan.

After a shower my friends come to me and we go and get our school uniform on. I begin to feel better.

Page 16

Bala napurr marrtjinan ṇal'yurra garramatlila wukirrilil ga marṇgikunhamirriṇyḍja maṇḍa napurrṇ Guywaṇa ga Miss Thurlow. Bala ṇayiny Guywaṇany waṇan bitjarr "Nhāmirr nhuma djamarrkuḷi'?" Napurr waṇan bitjarr "Manyamak!" Ga Miss Thurlow waṇan bitjarr "Good morning children." Napurr waṇan "Good morning Miss Thurlow". Bala yurrnha napurr marrtjinany ṇoylilnyḍja Western-lilnyḍja dhāwuw ṇānharaw. Ga maṇḍa Mr Davis-thuny ga Guthadjakay'tja lakaraṇal nhaku napurr marrtjin ṇoylil. Yurr bukumirriyanharaw Garaywal.

Then we go upstairs to school and our teachers are Guywaṇa and Miss Thurlow. Guywaṇa said "How are you children?" We said "Good!" Miss Thurlow said, "Good morning children" and we said "Good morning Miss Thurlow. Then we all went under Western Block to listen to a story. Mr Davis and Guthadjaka told us why we came downstairs, it was to give thanks (pray) to Jesus.

Page 18

N̄arra ga n̄arraku lundu'mirriṇu mala marrtjin buḷ'yunalila. Ga lukanany napurr gan Akta-vite-nha yan. Ga bāyṇun wiripuny ṇatha.

I and my friends go to play time. We drink only Activite powder mixed with milk and no other food.

Page 20

Benjyiny napurr marrtjin Preschool-lila wiripuwal marngikunhamirrwal yäku Miss Buchanan, Miss Fletcher, Maypilama ga Rranu. Bukmakthu napurr manikaynydja ðar'taryurr balandakurr ga Yolŋukurr. Ga waŋganydja gan bul'yurr biyana yurr marngikunhamirr.

Then we go to Preschool with other teachers: Miss Buchanan, Miss Fletcher, Maypilama and Rranu. We sing songs in English and Yolŋu Matha, and one teacher played the piano.

Page 22

Bala napurr yapmaraŋal wukirripuy girri' mala ga nhirrpär wäŋapuy girri'. Bala marrtjin ŋathalila. Marie Morris-dhu ga wiripuy yolŋu'-yulŋuy gan bathar miyapunu ga gätŋipuy ŋatha napurrŋ. Guyumulyu gurrupar djorra' napurrŋgal dhukunbuy. Benjyiny ŋarra nhäŋal wuŋjili' djorra'ŋur marthaŋaypuy! Bala ŋarra waŋanan bitjarr, "Way! Dhuwal marthaŋay dhapirrk! Yolku dhuwal marthaŋay?" Guyumulyu lakaraŋal dhäwu napurrŋ John Calvert-galaŋawuy ga Jimmy Monkey-puy. Bala napurr ganyim'thunha!

We take off our school uniform and put on our camp clothes. Then we go to lunch. Marie Morris and other Yolŋu cooked turtle stew for us. And we have nice fruit from the garden.

Guyumul gave me a piece of paper for my rubbish. I see a picture of a boat on the paper!

Then I said, "This boat is great! Whose boat is this?" Guyumul tells us a story about John Calvert and Jimmy Monkey. We are surprised!

Page 24

Benjür dämbuy waluy walal djämamirrnnydja mala gulyurra. Bala ŋarra raŋilila marrtjin bala nhäŋal ŋarraku ŋäŋdi'mirriŋuny. Galkurr ŋarra gan wäŋaŋur ŋunhi wanhal guyŋarr gan dhärran guyaw rulwaŋdhunharaw. Benjyiny napurr djamarrkuŋi' gan lup-lup'thurr gapuŋur rapinyŋur yurr Gulmanŋur. *From midday work and school stopped for everyone in the Mission. I went to the beach and saw my mum. I waited at the building where the big freezers are to put the fish. Us children swam at Gulman in the fresh water.*

Page 26

Milmitjpany ṅarra roṅiyinan wukirrilila. Napurr gan marṅgithinany Yolṅukurr warrakanku yäkuw ga warrakanku dhurrapaw Valerie Dhaykamaluwal. Wiripu napurr nhäṅal Guymunnha, ṅayi gan marṅgikuṅal ṅalapaṅmirriny miyalkkurruwurrunha nhaltjan dhu girri' mala djäma.

In the afternoon (2 o'clock) I went back to school. We learnt about animal tracks and names in Yolṅu Matha with Valerie Dhaykamalu. We also saw Guymun teaching the older girls how to sew dresses.

Page 28

Ga bäyṅu ṅarra buluny warwuyurr wukirriṅur, bilin ṅarra marṅgin nhä dhuwal wukirri. Manymak mirithirr dhuwal wukirriṅur.

I am not worried anymore, because now I know what school is. School is very good.



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