



The C.K. Thompson Collection

# RED EMPEROR

*by* **C.K. THOMPSON**



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(Member of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union)

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## FOREWORD

IT IS WITH a sense of responsibility and appreciation that I present to the girls and boys of Australia this story about a red kangaroo.

Ever since the first appearance some years ago of my book about Joey, the grey kangaroo, *King of the Ranges*, my publishers and I have been asked repeatedly for another kangaroo story. I need no better proof than that of the tremendous appeal our own Australian animals, and especially the most popular of them all, has to the children of the Commonwealth.

Many thousands of people, especially those living in the cities, have never seen kangaroos outside the Zoo, yet these marsupials are still very numerous in their wild state throughout Australia. Because they eat grass, however, they are gradually disappearing from many of their native haunts as these become fenced in for flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, as well as for agricultural purposes. The time may come when they will be found only in the wildest parts of Northern Australia. Millions have been slaughtered over the years for their skins. Kangaroos, of course, do cause damage and losses on station properties in some areas and have to be kept down lest their numbers increase beyond reasonable proportions, but I think everybody will agree that the various species should never be allowed to become extinct.

In *King of the Ranges* my readers were introduced to a grey kangaroo—the huge, dusky-brown marsupial that frequents the open forest country. In “*Red Emperor*” they will meet his cousin of the plains.

The red kangaroo is regarded as the most superb of the whole species and certainly it is the most striking in appearance as well as being the largest of all kangaroos. The male is brilliantly colored in wine-red, the fur on the throat and chest being pale crimson, while the back and sides of the female are smoky blue-grey, the under-surface of the body and the legs being white. The popular name for a female red kangaroo is “Blue Flyer.”

Among the many aboriginal names for the kangaroo are “*Arunga*” and “*Woonallee*” and these are the ones I have given to the main characters in this book.

Regarding the heights and sizes of kangaroos. It must be pointed out that measurements are generally made from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail and may be as much as nine feet. The *Royal Natural History* says that the record is nine feet seven inches, the kangaroo being a great grey. Many 'roos standing on tiptoe measure seven feet.

As to their speed and the length of their leaps, circumstances must be taken into consideration—whether they are travelling over flat ground, uphill or downhill. A large and active kangaroo can hop at twenty-five miles an hour and can cover twenty-five feet in one leap. Some have been known, when hunted, to jump fences eight feet high, though few will try to leap higher than five or six feet.

And now a brief word about the kangaroo as a sacred totem animal to the aboriginals, as mentioned in this book.

The marsupial has, of course, always been associated with the aboriginals. It figures in their legends, their rock and cave drawings and their corroborees. It has been “blackfellow tucker” since time immemorial, and the aboriginals use its skin, bones, sinews and teeth for their scanty wearing apparel, for many domestic purposes and for personal ornaments. As a rule, should any tribe have the kangaroo as its totem, or god, it is forbidden food. So is the snake, the possum, the eagle, or any other creature that is totemic.

But customs change among the various tribes in regard to the sanctity of totems. A group of aboriginals who have a particular totem believe that they descended from it since the “Dream Time,” which was when their legendary ancestors lived. Some tribes will never kill their totemic animal or bird if they should find it asleep, and if ever they do kill it, they do so very reluctantly, first giving it a chance to escape—like the “sporting” white man who will not shoot a duck sitting on the water or an animal that is not running.

In other tribes, however, the members will not, in any circumstances, kill their totemic animal; but some have no conscience, fear or superstition at all, and will both kill and eat it.

The kangaroo is essentially an Australian animal. Australians, who, travelling in foreign countries, have seen kangaroos in the zoos, have become more deeply homesick than through any other cause. The sight of lonely “kanga” thousands of miles from his homeland, has invariably turned the thoughts of human wanderers irresistibly to the land of the Southern Cross.

In conclusion, permit me to write that if Arunga the Red Emperor gives my young readers as much pleasure as Joey the Grey King has done, I will feel that I have achieved something worthwhile in the interests of Australia’s most beloved animal.

—C.K. Thompson



## CHAPTER I.

### WHAT THE KOOKABURRA KNEW.

WITH GENTLE fingers, the rosy hand of dawn parted the curtains of night and then withdrew so that the glorious face of the rising sun could dart glances of the softest gold over the silent bushland. For one long instant the world was an open album, filled with priceless etchings and then, in a flash, the heavens were all aglow and the tired old earth, stirring restlessly for a moment, awakened to continue the daily round.

In a little clearing surrounded by stunted trees, six red kangaroos paused instinctively in their grazing to acknowledge the coming of the sun. Theirs was a silent tribute: a dumb homage; but the jolly kookaburra, watching them from the limb of a tree above their heads, thought the whole thing was nothing but a huge joke.

Perched on the limb with a broad and jovial smile playing round his enormous beak, Jacky was amused. At times he found the inward merriment too great to control, for queer laughing gurgles escaped him, much to the annoyance of a surly mopoke which, three branches higher up, was trying to get some sleep.

The mopoke had been up all night and the hunting had

not been good. There had been a drought over the land, a drought that had driven the red kangaroos from the open plains closer in towards the mountains, and all the wild things had had rather a hard time of it. The mopoke during the night, had had one small bush mouse for supper and it was not enough. In a rather evil temper he had returned home to roost just before the sun had risen, and had hardly settled down to his rest before this irritating disturber of the peace—this big-beaked laughing jackass—had flown into the tree and had started to indicate that something was amusing him.

From a nearby clump of tea-tree, a black and white willy wagtail darted and, springing into the air, snapped up half a dozen insects in quick order. Then, as the kookaburra gave another amused chuckle, the little bird darted at him, circled round his head a few times and made a playful peck at the back of his neck. Jacky paid no attention to the little pest.

The wagtail dropped on to a twig and peered at him inquisitively, wondering, as he wagged his long tail from side to side, what the joke was. He had often heard Jacky roaring with laughter, with or without good reason; but on all those occasions the kookaburra had let the whole bush know why. It was rare indeed for the happy bird to keep his jokes to himself, and the inquisitive little wagtail wanted to know what the secret was.

Jacky could stand it no longer. He threw his head into the air and the sound of his laughter disturbed the bush creatures within a radius of half a mile. This was too much for the surly mopoke which, filled with resentment and wishing it was large enough to knock the roaring kookaburra off his limb, left the higher branch on silent wings and flew off to a quieter corner of the bush.

Now Jacky, in ordinary circumstances, was a kindly,



sociable bird—a really good fellow not in the habit of laughing at the misfortunes of others, but he was definitely tickled by the red kangaroos.

To a casual onlooker there was nothing out of the ordinary about them. To the wagtail, now engaged in singing “sweet pretty creature” to a lady wagtail in the scrub, the scene was commonplace. Certainly there was nothing in the little clearing to excite anyone—just six red kangaroos grazing on the rather scanty grass.

But the kookaburra, his dull brown and white body still quivering with suppressed laughter, saw and appreciated something that the willy wagtail did not.

These red kangaroos were out of their chosen territory being so close to the ranges. Droughts that had killed off the grass and dried up the waterholes on the plains had forced them to migrate towards the coast. There was nothing funny in that, though Jacky seemed to think so. He had been observing this little mob of red kangaroos for some days and had grown particularly interested in the leader, Rufus.

And he was indeed a magnificent animal, though poor living in recent weeks had thinned him quite a lot. Jacky, his eyes bright and alert, watched the leader closely.

The kangaroo was not grazing like his companions. He was standing to his full height of eight feet and gazing fixedly towards the distant range of mountains which reared their rugged peaks into scanty little clouds that hung in the sky as if some heavenly shepherdess had scattered unwanted balls of wool.

Jacky knew, as surely as if it had been written in kookaburra language, that the big red kangaroo was itching to investigate those mountains.

It must be confessed that Jacky regarded Rufus, the red leader as a fool; in fact he regarded all kangaroos as fools.

They were, in his opinion, shiftless, improvident animals, who wandered around in disorganised bands, sometimes without even an acknowledged leader. They had no homes, but went where fancy took them, sleeping in the open, or in patches of scrub, lazing away their days in the long grass, if there were any, or under trees during the heat of the day. They were, for the most part, timid inoffensive animals, but dangerous if hard-pressed.

Well, thought Jacky, if that red leader took his five friends up into those high hills, they would all run the grave risk of falling off the rocks down into deep gorges and breaking their legs and necks. If they had any sense at all—and the superior-minded kookaburra doubted it very much—they would leave the mountains in the possession of their rightful overlords: the wallaroos, the rock wallabies, the dingoes and the ever menacing wedge-tailed eagles.

Jacky allowed a sparkling eye to wander over the clearing below. In addition to Rufus and his mate, a very graceful female, there were his small son Arunga, two well grown males and another female.

Following the drought-stricken summer and the rather mild winter, early spring had brought with it a change in the atmosphere and it was high time that the red band thought of returning to the plains. This was no place for them.

But the red leader thought otherwise. As the wily kookaburra had guessed, the kangaroo had a tremendous urge to visit the mountains before he returned to the open plains. It was a silly idea, but old Rufus had it.

He looked around at his placid followers. All of them were now lazing in their favorite dustholes, except his small son, Arunga, who had left his mother's pouch and was hopping round the clearing nibbling the grass. He reached his father's side and nuzzled his flank. The old man paid no attention

to him, so the youngster continued to search for food.

Pausing at the foot of the tree in which the kookaburra was perched, Arunga rubbed his head against the trunk and then skipped back in alarm as a large goanna poked its head around the bottom. The goanna was as surprised as the young kangaroo and quickly shinned up the tree, an action which called forth insulting laughter from the watching kookaburra.

Arunga hopped into the very centre of the clearing, his ears twitching. First he looked at his mother who was lying in a dusthole half-asleep and then, with wrinkling nose, he swung his small head to see what his father was doing.

But the leader of the band was not there. The urge to visit those distant ranges had overcome him and he was blindly following that urge.

Arunga gave a few tentative hops in the direction his father had taken and then returned to the middle of the clearing.

High above in the clear blue sky, sailing slowly on outspread wings in the hunting circle, a great wedgetailed eagle saw him and, with tightly-folded pinions, threw itself into the killing dive.

The kookaburra, a wicked twinkle in his eyes, made a low, gurgling noise deep in his throat, ruffled his brown feathers and was on the point of roaring with hoarse laughter a farewell serenade to the departed Rufus, when a dark and menacing shadow blotted out the sun.

The laughter died in the kookaburra's throat as, flashing past the treetops like a feathered arrow, the eagle pulled out of its terrific dive as it reached Arunga. Steel talons already outstretched enclosed the small kangaroo and the wedgetail was aloft again before either the kookaburra or the rest of the red band had realised what had happened. One moment Arunga was in the clearing and the next moment

he had vanished.

And so had Jacky. All the laughter stricken from his great beak by what had occurred, he was fleeing swiftly through the bush seeking the safety of his own home deep inside a termites' nest.

## CHAPTER II. THE ANCESTRAL SPIRIT.

BAROONAH, medicine man of the Mooramoora tribe, was not happy. Things were not going well with him. Since the death of the venerable Oonduna, from whom he had learned all the secrets of magic, counter-magic, sorcery, the ways of evil spirits and of good, and the hundred and one arts which go to the making of an expert witch-doctor, Baroonah's reputation had not increased.

The ancient Oonduna had been a great sorcerer, much feared and revered by the tribe. He had swayed all the decisions of the Council of Old Men; almost all of his prophecies had come to pass; and as a rain-maker he had been second to none. When he died, respected by all, and his mantle had descended upon Baroonah, the son of his brother, the tribe had looked forward confidently to a continuance of the benign protection from all that was evil that Oonduna had given them.

But Baroonah was not a good medicine man. It was no use saying one thing and meaning another—he was no good. All his croonings, wailings, prayers and incantations had failed to save the life of Warranbul, son of the old chief Rarcamba. The lad had fallen ill and, in spite of all the spells

cast by Baroonah, had died.

When the Council of Old Men asked Baroonah for an explanation, the medicine man informed them that the totem spirit of the Mooramooras was angry with his black children. The tribe received this excuse with some doubt; in fact, some of the holder warriors were rather outspoken on the matter. It would never have happened had Oonduna been alive, they muttered. One especially daring warrior, Dingah, even voiced the opinion outright that Baroonah would never make a good medicine man and if he wanted to continue in his position he had better show some results.

Now medicine men are most intolerant of criticism and, for having voiced such a forthright opinion as that, Dingah had run the grave risk of having the bone pointed at him. Baroonah had toyed with the idea but had given it up for, to tell the truth, he was not certain that his bone-pointing would have proved effective.

During his comparatively short career as tribal medicine man, Baroonah had only once attempted to make rain and the results had been most disappointing. The trouble with Baroonah was that he was too impatient.

Now, had it been Oonduna, that wily old fellow would have waited until weather conditions gave promise of success. He had drummed it into Baroonah, but some people, white or black, cannot be told anything. They will never learn. Relying upon the aura of fear and superstition that surrounded the office of medicine man to protect him against mistakes, he had tried to make rain. The only result had been the drying up of the one waterhole then available to his tribe.

This, of course, was not Baroonah's fault. The season had been a particularly dry one and the waterhole would have dried up in any case. Old Oonduna would have held his hand until the weather signs he knew so well how to

read told him that rain was near at hand. He would never have attempted to "make rain" in the middle of a drought. But then Oonduna was a very wise old man while Baroonah was a very foolish young one.

And so things were not rosy for him. He realised that unless he could perform a miracle, or do some deed that would rehabilitate him in the eyes of the tribe, he ran the distinct risk of losing his position, possibly his life, for nobody had much use for a discredited medicine man.

Baroonah knew that if he were displaced, his most likely successor would be Karakara.

This Karakara was a serious young man who had dabbled in the magic arts but had not yet been fully tested. He had, however, one small success to his credit. When Rarcamba, practising with a new boomerang, had not displayed enough agility to dodge the returning weapon and had been struck down by a nasty smack on the side of the head. Karakara had treated him. At the time of the accident Baroonah had been absent in the bush collecting certain berries which, when mixed with dried lizards and boiled with the hearts of frogs, formed a strong protection against certain evil spirits that dwelt among the rocky ranges. Rarcamba's wound had not been serious at all, but Karakara attended him with the greatest care, thus winning the old chief's gratitude.

Baroonah brooded upon this and had evil thoughts about Karakara. The only positive action he took against his possible rival was to mention him insultingly to a certain evil spirit. This ritual involved digging a small hole in the ground and whispering Karakara's name into it at midnight. The evil spirit, which dwelt in the earth, must have been asleep, because nothing happened to Karakara.

The tribe, twenty-four in number, was camped temporarily at the edge of a swamp which abounded in frogs, snakes and

fish. There were also flocks of wild duck, cranes and ibis, all fitting material for the tribal cooking pots, and Rarcamba and his followers were in no hurry to leave the spot.

The Council of Old Men found the vexed question of Baroonah and Karakara a weighty matter worthy of much thought. And it was a problem that called for a swift decision. The responsibility of administering the spiritual and physical welfare of the tribe, however, could not lightly be bestowed.

Baroonah sat apart from the elders of the tribe, who were squatting on their haunches round a small fire, though the day was hot. Of Karakara there was no sign. Then Rarcamba addressed the Old Men, all of whom bent towards him with respectful ears.

“My brothers,” he said gravely, “we have debated this weighty matter from all angles and it is time we came to a decision. We have agreed that Baroonah is not a worthy successor to the mighty Oonduna, yet the only person qualified to succeed that revered one has shown us that he is not greatly versed in the magic arts. Be that as it may, however, Karakara has shown that he might be capable of great deeds in the future. Learning is, of course, not sufficient. Only experience can make Karakara great. Should we make him our medicine man, displacing Baroonah?”

“If Baroonah has shown us very little of his magic, at least he has been trained in the arts by the master Oonduna, and may yet become such as the old one was,” said the ancient warrior Unkurta. “We must be careful, brothers. I have no great love for this Baroonah, but I must warn you that Karakara knows practically nothing. Baroonah was the pupil of Oonduna and doubtless knows all his secrets, yet cannot practise them. Or so it seems to me. Could not Baroonah instruct Karakara? Or, could not Karakara travel to our kinsmen of the Jerribong tribe and there take service



for a season under the greatly-to-be-reverenced Jillangolo, so that he might learn his arts and how to administer them? For, brothers, saving Oonduna, there never was, nor is, a greater medicine man than Jillangolo of the Jerribongs.”

“The idea has merit,” said Rarcamba, addressing the ancient Unkurta, “but I am afraid that it cannot be. You forget that, under tribal law, it is not permitted that the spirits of one hunting ground visit the hunting ground of others. If Karakara absorbed the wisdom of the Jerribongs and came back to us, the spirits would be angry. No, brothers, there cannot be such mixing as Unkurta’s plan would bring about.”

The old chief broke off and thoughtfully poked the small fire with a long stick until he had it burning brightly. Then he resumed his discourse.

“Even if it were permitted,” he said, “what would become of our tribe while our medicine man was away?”

“Well, we are practically without one now,” said Dingah nastily, and was rewarded with a glare of hatred from Baroonah.

“Quite so,” nodded old Rarcamba. “Would we be content to submit ourselves to the doubtful mercies of Baroonah? No! However, Unkurta’s first suggestion has something to commend it. Baroonah shall teach his arts to Karakara. He shall impart all the tribal secrets gained from Oonduna to Karakara, who, perhaps, will make a better use of them than Baroonah has been able to do.”

“At least he could not be worse,” exclaimed Dingah.

“It shall be done,” said Rarcamba.

“It shall not!” roared Baroonah passionately.

This terrific blow to his prestige was really too much for the medicine man. Leaping to his feet, his black eyes blazing savagely, he strode into the very centre of the Council of Old Men. Only his position as the tribal medicine man protected

him from instant death. Had an ordinary warrior dared thus to interrupt the deliberations of the tribal elders, he would have paid for his presumption with his life.

“Hear me!” he shouted. “What is this shame you would put upon me, Baroonah, the chosen of Oonduna? I alone know the secrets of the Great One. I alone hold in my hands the destinies of the Mooramoora tribe. I will not teach the tribal secrets to this upstart or to anyone else.”

He stamped his foot with rage, anger almost overcoming him; and as he did so, he pronounced a frightful curse on the absent Karakara, spitting on the ground to add weight to his words. Then he glared at old Rarcamba, his eyes dilating and his lean body quivering with passionate anger.

“I curse you all,” he roared. “I curse your ancestors, yourselves, your lubras, your piccanninies and all their descendants for evermore.”

The old chief looked at him with a cold eye.

“Baroonah,” he said frigidly, “we fear neither your curses nor your spells. Already they have proved worthless. Also, your efforts to bring prosperity to the tribe have met with remarkably little success. You curse us, Baroonah, do you? Now, heed my words: Oonduna died too soon and, in dying, he placed a curse on us—a curse greater than any you can invent. And that curse of Oonduna’s was *you*, worthless and discredited Baroonah!”

The medicine man glared at him speechlessly. Never in the career of any witch-doctor had such an affront, such an insult, been offered. The whole sect always had been feared and respected, wielding power and influence even greater than the Council of Old Men itself. The statement of old Rarcamba was not only an insult to Baroonah, but a direct, deliberate and calculated smack in the eye to the whole mighty brotherhood of magicians.

“You shall pay for this, Rarcamba, and so shall you, too, Dingah,” shouted Baroonah, foaming at the mouth.

“I am willing to meet you, face to face, with spear or nullah-nullah at any hour you care to name,” said Dingah carelessly. “I am not the least afraid of you, you great windbag!”

“There are weapons more potent than spears and boomerangs,” said Baroonah with dark meaning.

“Perhaps,” returned Dingah, shrugging his shoulders, “but I am not the least perturbed, because you do not know how to use those weapons. That, my dear Baroonah, is the very reason why you are no longer our medicine man.”

“Curse you!” bellowed Baroonah, doing a one-man corroboree around the small fire. “Curse you all. May the eagles tear you to shreds. May little fish swim around in your insides until you are dead!”

“Save your breath, Baroonah,” counselled Rarcamba, while the rest of the Old Men muttered dark things about the medicine man.

“If you are so high and mighty, Baroonah,” went on the old chief, not troubling to hide a sneer, “give us all a sign of that greatness. As you know, in the long ago, before our people came to dwell upon this earth, their ancestors lived in the spirit world and were the parents of us who now are men. Before the Mooramooras came to live in this land they were kangaroos. That is well known.”

“Yes, that is well known,” agreed the Council, nodding their heads.

“Well, what of it?” demanded Baroonah.

“We of the Mooramooras have as our ancestral spirit Agnura, the red kangaroo, and Agnura has always been sacred to us, his descendants. Do I speak the truth?”

“You speak the truth, Rarcamba,” said the ancient

Unkurta. “The red kangaroo is our ancestral spirit and we may neither hunt nor harm him. It is forbidden.”

“Death would strike down the warrior who killed the red kangaroo,” nodded the chief. “Give us a sign of your greatness, Baroonah. Summon the spirit of Agnura so that we may take counsel with him.”

Saying this, the old chief threw an inspired but mischievous smile at the discomfited medicine man. Baroonah knew he was cornered. All his spells, magic, sorcery and witchcraft could not summon the spirit of their great ancestor. Even the mighty Oonduna would have been powerless to perform such a supreme act of magic.

Savagely he stood there in the centre of the sneering Council of Old Men, puzzling his brains and praying for a miracle to happen.

And fate came to his assistance in a most unexpected way.

As the elders of the tribe watched his deep embarrassment, the sound of loud and harsh screaming overhead distracted them. Looking skywards, they saw two great wedge-tailed eagles in savage combat. High in the blue the two big birds were wheeling and swooping like warplanes.

Their differences forgotten, Baroonah and the Old Men watched the battle. One great eagle seemed to be in difficulties. His antagonist was swooping and clawing at him while, in return, he could only beat his wings and peck back savagely.

Baroonah was the first to appreciate the reason. The bird underneath had some burden in its talons. What it was, Baroonah could not make out as the eagles darted and wheeled. The burden it carried made the lower eagle a rather easy prey for its attacker, who was not slow to take advantage of it.

Screaming harshly, the two birds fought round in circles

while the blackfellows below watched, absorbed. Gradually the contestants got lower and lower. Apparently their bone of contention was the object carried by one of them.

Baroonah, staring intently, discovered what the lower bird had in its talons. It was a small kangaroo. Would it be grey or red?

With a flash of inspiration and hope, Baroonah grabbed a spear from the ground and, with a strong arm, hurled it into the air. It was a magnificent and an unerring shot. The eagle that was carrying the small kangaroo took the shaft through the breast and came tumbling to earth, its huge wings beating wildly, causing a miniature hurricane. As it fell, it released its grip upon the kangaroo, which tumbled on top of a gonyah and then slid to the ground, to lie there in an inert heap.

Led by old Rarcamba, the elders rushed the big eagle with their spears. The wounded bird, hampered though it was with Baroonah's spear in its breast fought back gamely, but it was no match for a dozen blackfellows. It was soon beaten to death. The other wedge-tail with which it had been fighting had vanished into the heavens as soon as Baroonah had thrown his spear.

While this was going on, the medicine man had reached the small kangaroo and was examining it closely. The miracle looked like coming off! It was indeed a young red kangaroo. The small animal was not dead, but seemed to be rather close to it. A mauling by the talons of an eagle followed by a fall on top of a gonyah had not been conducive to good health. Still, it was not actually dead, and Baroonah, in spite of what the elders thought of his medical powers, felt confident that he could revive it.

A crooked smile played over his coarse thick lips as he carefully picked up the kangaroo.

Advancing to where the old men were standing round the dead eagle, he addressed them in a loud and triumphant voice.

“Hear me, you elders of the Mooramoor tribe,” he exclaimed. “You asked me for a sign of my greatness. You asked me to call up the spirit of the sacred Agnura from the skies! Behold, then. Here in my arms I bear Agnura from the skies. Note well that in touching the sacred body, I do not die. Therefore, who among you will dare to say that I am not a mighty medicine man, mightier even than the great Oonduna, who is no more among us?”

The old men looked at him. Truly, as he said, Baroonah held in his arms a red kangaroo and it had come from the skies. Agnura the red kangaroo was the ancestral spirit of the Mooramooras...

“What foolishness is this, Baroonah? It is merely a young kangaroo dropped by an eagle during a fight,” muttered one old warrior, but there was a lot of doubt in his voice.

“Down on your knees and worship our ancestral creator, our totem spirit,” commanded the medicine man in a new and powerful voice and, giving them all the lead, he reverently laid the kangaroo on the earth and knelt before it. One by one the elders did likewise.

And when, some seconds later, they rose to their feet again, Baroonah and the kangaroo were not there. The medicine man had taken advantage of their homage to pick up the animal and slip away with it to his own gunyah. There he quickly set about trying to restore it to life.

For, he told himself with an evil smile, if he could keep this heaven-sent young kangaroo in his possession, as long as he had it, his position in the tribe would be safe.