

## *The Boomerang*

A long time ago a little boy and girl were playing on the seashore. The boy was not yet old enough to be taken to the Bora where, after many months of hardships, he would begin training that would lead eventually to his being received by the elders of the tribe as a warrior. Like most children of his age, he liked to show off.

Then he made a bad mistake. He killed a little bird that he should never have touched. In fact he should have made a special effort to protect it, for this was his "Eurie"—his "meat".

Each person has his own particular Eurie given him at birth, and it is regarded as his second self. Should you be hunting with someone whose Eurie is the duck you must first ask his permission before you kill any ducks, or run the risk of being impaled on the end of the duck man's spear!

It is Yindingie—the spirit god and messenger of the higher god Beerall—who, when you die, takes your spirit to the bottom of a certain lake. Here you pass a guard at the mouth of a cave, then on past two more guards to the end of the cave. After going through certain rites as you did in the Bora, your spirit is ready for its journey into the east. Yindingie often comes to earth in the form of a large snake. You will remember that his sign is the rainbow.

Now when Yindingie saw what had happened he decided to punish the children. He came as a large serpent, picked up the children and began to swim out to sea. Hearing their cries the fighting men grabbed their spears and rushed to the beach. When they saw who it was they were afraid, that is all except one man, the father of the children. He threw his nulla-nulla. There was a great splash of water as it hit the serpent's head, glanced off, and came hurtling back towards him, and had he not stepped quickly aside, no doubt he would have been killed.

When next they looked towards where the splash had occurred, the

Yindingie and the children were gone, and in their place stood two rocks side by side.

On picking up his nulla-nulla, the father found more disappointment. Not only had he lost his children, but here was his best nulla-nulla, the one he intended to use on the next full moon when there was to be a war with a neighbouring tribe. He had spent weeks "hardening" it and getting it just so, for he prided himself as a maker of fine weapons. Now here it was quite flattened and bent out of shape.

In disgust he threw it at the rocks. But even before it had reached halfway, it circled in the air and came back to rest at his feet.

With a wild yell, the tribe gathered around to look at this new wonder. Time and time again it was thrown away and always it returned to the one who threw it. Many more were made just like it, and messages were sent to all tribes inviting them to come and view this new wonder, for the wise men reasoned that if someone could only throw one of these new weapons so that it circled the rocks, it would no doubt bring the children back.