

An Introduction To My Country and My Lifestyle:

A Story Based on The Reality of Life

by

Wanpis Kaupa

My country, Papua New Guinea, is located in the Southern Hemisphere, between the equator and the Tropic of Capricorn. Papua New Guinea is a tropical country. To the south of my country is the continent of Australia. To the east is the Pacific Ocean, where I was born to be with my family on this Earth.

Papua New Guinea is mostly a natural environment, but there is evidence all over the land of people's activities. People have built villages, towns and cities. They have also built aeroplanes and ships, roads and airports. They have built ports for the ships too. This development is a reality on this Earth.

The 1940's to the 1970's were my grandfather's times. His 'Good Olden Days' were when he was younger, during World War Two. His name was Taul Kaupa. He was from the highlands in Simbu Province. Simbu town is located near Wara Chimbu. There is a river running down the highest mountain, and in general the environment is very mountainous. After Mount Everest this area has the highest mountain in the world. My mother is from Ialibu in Southern Highlands Province, which is K20 PMV ride away from my father's place also in Ialibu. The climate of this area has to be one of the coldest in the entire world.

My parents were married in the 70's and they lived happily together on this planet Earth. I am the fifth of ten children, and I was born on April 20th 1980 in my father's place. I did my Grade One in 1989 in Mt. Hagen town, where my father worked as a carpenter to support his family's lifestyle. When I was born, I was named Wanpis Kaupa in honour of my grandfather. He was a strong and brave warrior.

In 1995 I did my Grade Six in Kagamuga Primary School, near the airport. In 1996 my father was transferred back to his home land again, because the company that he was working for closed down. This is the time when I did my Grade Seven, so I got transferred to do my secondary schooling at Muaina Secondary. This is in the Kamtai District, where our home is. In 2000 I did my Grade Ten and I was selected to National High School in Kainatu. I graduated from there in 2002.

Suddenly there was big fighting in my area between my tribe and another tribe. The fighting lasted continuously for three solid years. Fighting took place in the village, and we used bow and arrows to fight for our land against the other tribesmen. I will never forget my experience in battle, fighting for my land during this time. This is my life's reality, and I'll never forget it.

All this time during the fighting, I completely forgot about my education. The fighting took up three full years of my life and my sister was really very sorry because I was always out fighting the other clansmen. I fought with my tribe because here in Papua New Guinea we still keep our customs and our culture, and our traditional way of life is still alive.

In 2002 I flew down to Port Moresby city after my sister sent me a ticket to my local post office with communication that I should leave the village. When I arrived in Port Moresby I stayed with my sister and my husband in 8 Mile Settlement.

My current reality is that I am now a single man and I am the President of the 8 Mile United Action Youth Association. I have been the president of this community organisation for five years now. The organisation has a partnership with international NGO, Marie Stopes.

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