

Tekst 3

De volgende tekst is het begin van hoofdstuk 1 uit de roman One Big Damn Puzzler, van John Harding.

ONE

The day the plane brought the white man was an important one for Managua. He was, as usual, occupied by his translation of *Hamlet* into language the rest of the tribe would understand, and he could have done without the interruption because this was the day he had set aside to work on the famous soliloquy. As the only islander who could even read, let alone write, Managua felt the burden of his culture upon his shoulders the way he imagined an old turtle bore the weight of its carapace upon its back: it was certainly a secure home, a comfort and a blessing, but at times like this, when he had a tricky scene to write, it was plenty damn heavy too.

Although he later swore about the coming of the white man and the disruption to his work that the resultant excitement caused – not to mention the anxiety to him personally – if truth be told, long before the whirring of the plane's three propellers stirred the torpid island air, his task was already suffering insufferable disturbances from his wife Lamua who once again had gotten herself into one big sweat about the pig.

Is be or is be not, is be one big damn puzzler he had written. He read it over again, allowing his lips to move so he could get the feel of how the words would sound, although he dared not permit even a whisper to escape him. The way Lamua was bustling about the hut, moving this and that (as though she might find the pig here! as if you could conceal even a bantam pig in this single, sparsely furnished room!), any sound from him would be jumped upon like a snake by *koku-koku* and taken as an invitation to conversation.

'I is tell you now,' she muttered. 'I is eat that pig if is be last thing I is do.'

Managua adjusted his spectacles and peered more intently at his *Complete Shakespeare*, partly by way of showing Lamua that he was ignoring her but also because the print was so bloody damn small. He must see Miss Lucy about some new reading glasses. This pair seemed to be losing all their strength, but then again that was only to be expected; he had had them for a couple of years and they were second-hand when he got them, or rather *second-eye*, he told himself. He smiled, congratulating himself on his little joke. It was the kind of joke Shakespeare made all the time, which just showed the benefit of reading the great man, and why it would do the islanders good to see *Hamlet*.

'You is better not laugh at me now, man', snapped Lamua, catching him a cuff round the head as she passed his mat. 'I is tell you, that bloody pig you is be so fond of is be good as dead.'

Managua squinted at the next line.

'*Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer*' was how Shakespeare had got it. Managua had looked up *nobler* in the dictionary and realized right away that it was one hard word to translate. The island didn't have any nobles. There wasn't even a chief, like he'd heard tell some islands possessed. When something

needed to be decided on, all the men just crawled into the *kassa* house and talked it over until everyone was agreed. If it was some little thing they indulged in some *kassa* first, which generally meant the matter got decided on pretty damn quick since no-one was usually in a mind to argue. If it was something important then they refrained from *kassa* on the grounds that they needed to think clearly. But if people were thinking clearly in different directions then they might grind a few *kassa* seeds, mix up the paste and keep spooning it down until they were all so out of their heads that no-one cared enough to argue about what they decided and just wanted to settle the thing plenty fast so they could really get stuck into the *kassa*. *Kassa* pretty much ruled out any necessity for nobles.

Lamua was sweeping now and a more disputatious person than Managua might have felt that a disproportionate amount of dust from the hard earth floor was ending up on his books, but he simply brushed it away and got on with his work.

Tekst 3 De volgende tekst...

- 3p 3 Geef van elk van de volgende beweringen aan of deze wel of niet in overeenstemming is met de inhoud van de passage.
- 1 Managua vindt het moeilijk om met de onontwikkelde eilandbewoners om te gaan.
 - 2 Managua houdt zich verborgen voor zijn vrouw, omdat hij niet gestoord wil worden.
 - 3 Dat Managua "Is be or is be not, is be one big puzzler" opschrijft, is te wijten aan zijn verstoorde concentratie.
 - 4 Managua ergert zich eraan dat zijn beheersing van het Engels voor een vertaling van *Hamlet* tekort schiet.
 - 5 Het gebruik van *kassa* door de mannelijke eilandbewoners zorgt voor snelle beslissingen.
 - 6 Lamua blijft proberen Managua te betrekken bij haar probleem van het verdwenen varken.
- Noteer het nummer van elke bewering, gevolgd door "wel" of "niet".