

# *Living In The Territory*

Words & Music: Pat Drummond

For Graeme Mibus

Dateline: Gove, Northern Territory 27/6/87

Staying for any length of time in a true wilderness makes you understand a little of the 'sacredness' of land; a concept well developed among Aboriginal people; but less so in a civilisation more used to imposing upon, rather than adapting to, the landscape. My time in the Northern Territory with Graeme was a seminal experience in my understanding of the sustainable use of land. The sheer beauty and bounty of Arnhem Land was almost indescribable. Here was a paradise that had been inhabited and used as a food source for, perhaps, forty thousand years and yet, was more verdant and productive than most of the land my own culture had occupied for a mere two centuries. There is much in the attitudes of the 'Children of the Bush' that we, as modern Australians, will need to appreciate if we hope to survive the next century.

He made his way from Melbourne with a devil on his back;  
settled down at Nhulunbuy and never went back.

Chorus: He's living in the Territory;  
sailing on the face of the South East breeze;  
living on the bounty of the Arafura Sea;  
living in the Territory.

There's a big Trevaly waiting in the middle of the cove;  
the Mackerel are working in the harbour out of Gove.

Chorus:

Dalewoi Bay is like a paradise born of the black man's dream;  
Crocodile slides on the bright white sandbars;  
mud crabs running in the bottom of the streams.  
The bright red flash of a Mangrove Jack  
and a gold-spotted cod on the reel  
Lord, I swear that that Manta was an acre square  
as it slid in under our keel.

**It's seven hours flying out of Botany Bay  
but it's a hundred thousand years away.**

**Chorus:**

**There was a girl down south he cared about.**

**He said he'd go back one day;  
but the day's so long and night's so warm  
and the years just rolled away.**

**He closes his eyes some times at night  
but her face has grown so dim  
that the white man's memory drifts away  
on the tide of the black man's dream.**

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