

When i sleep at sea
I dream only of an underwater world

What happened to me?
Oh, I had a dream
Then I started to remember

My name is Rohani
I am a Bajau man
A man of the sea
A hunter

The Bajau people have been living at sea for thousands of years
The ancestors
I can feel their presence
They are here to guard our seas

Eighty years
I am eighty years old already
My strength, I no longer have
My breath, I no longer have

What if i become too weak?
What if i can do it no longer?
If i can no longer hunt
I might as well be dead
I have seen many things
I can tell you my story
The things I can remember

When I was still a little boy...
I remember going to the sea
My father
My father built the boat
One fathom in length
It was no longer than one fathom
Paddling, Paddling, Paddling

First time i dived, i was five years old
I was afraid
Many big fish down there

My father told me: don't you flinch in the presence of big fish
Even bigger fish than these you will encounter one day

He told me how to do it for myself
To manage my breathing carefully
Slowly, he said
Inhale
Then sink down slowly not in a rush
So you don't run out of breath
I was still afraid
But I braved it, I was determined

I really loved playing in the corals
I was just a child, so you can imagine what it was like

I kept moving like this, little by little, then it was gone

One day, when i was just 6 years old
I went out playing
Beyond the graveyard

I remember seeing someone at the bottom of the sea
He was looking for something
Where did he come from?
I didn't have a chance to see

I just whatech from the distance
But I couldn't go there
I didn't know how
It was too far, I couldn't reach there

They may appear as men
Seeking fish with their spears
But they are spirits,
spirits of the sea

In my heart I knew
I must go to the bottom of the sea

I was good at holding my breath
It is in the blood

When I was 20 years old
I went searching for big fish, trying to understand their ways

How do i hunt a big fish?

We were the first to hunt using spears
There is nothing but spears for us

My father told me
Do your work in the sea with care
Remember the sea spirits
You can't see them but you can feel them
If you meet with a sea spirit
Tell them: I seek my fortune, you seek your fortune
We are both seeking our fortunes
We are the same
We are brothers

Practise
Wherever you find yourself
Learn from what's around you
Understand what you have inside
Push too hard down there and you will die down there

You must study the fish
Don't rush in as soon as you see them, no no
Keep calm, when you've found a good position
Sink down slowly

We go towards them, they turn towards us
Then we are face to face

I had become a man (cuando ha cazado su primer gran pez)
I no longer followed my father
I had become a man
Now I hunted alone

I was still young then
I went out for a look around
I saw some girls, there were many of them
All very pretty
But none of them were for me
Then there was one girl, not so pretty, who caught my heart

She had a beautiful character, that girl
Most of the girls had pretty faces
But they didn't have a good character

If I was to marry one of them they would walk all over me

You're better off with the not-so-pretty one
The one you need
She will care for me, she is good
But those other pretty ones
When i go hunting they will go hunting as well

Marni, she was our first child
Then Awaina, another girl
Then the boy, Ruslim

I kept searching
Seeking out new experiences
I wanted to go deep, to twenty fathoms underwater
To experience it for myself
To know how it feels at the bottom of the sea
At 20 fathoms, what is it like down there? Is it beautiful?
That's what i needed to know

So much pain in my ears
What was i afraid of?
It was too deep
I'd never felt it before but I knew I had to go back to try again

I tried again
I forced myself
I went deeper
I went down there

Even more pain
My ears burst
And then i got there
The bottom of the sea

20 fathoms
Deep underwater
I was proud of myself
I was powerful
I was strong

I could go anywhere
I could hunt any kind of fish
I became famous in the Togean Islands
Oh, there is a great man in Kabalutan

They call him
JAGO

I kept searching
I left my village, Kabalutan
I crossed the sea
This is the way of our people
To explore and seek experiences

If i had just stayed in Kabalutan
My experience wouldn't have been complete
But because I traveled
I was a lot of things and had plenty of experiences
I went hunting through Banggai
Then i moved again to Pagoyaman
From pagayaman i moved to Marisa
From Marisa i sailed to Torosiaje
I was trying to earn one million rupiah for my wife
One million rupiah was a lot of money back then
It was huge

I went to work on a Japanese boat
I left my wife on her own
I learned how to trawl fish
That was one experience
Fish trawling on a Japanese vessel
They even used Bajau people from Banggai as translators
There were three people in charge of that big boat
Then we crossed the sea trawling for fish
There were many trawler nets, all were thrown into the sea
In the morning they were trying to lift up the fish
The boat couldn't barely manage it
All the fish were transported to Japan

The sea spirits became angry
My son, Ruslim
He went diving in Palau Salaka
With his uncle, my brother
It was on a Friday

I said: don't go
I can still feed you, buy you clothes
Dont go, just dont

I didn't get a chance to teach him
He turned away from me

He dived to 30 fathoms
To the bottom
My boy, he died
My heart broke
My child was dead
So all the experiences I got from my travels
I never got the chance to pass on to him
I lost my child
I went mad
I took a dagger and tried to kill myself

If we destroy their coral they destroy us
The sea spirits
They were angry
Many Bajau people died

There used to be plenty of fish
And not too many people
Now there are many people crowded like fish
That's certain... certain

Now we must hunt carefully
Go hunting where we've never been

They gave me the name JAGO
My name is Rohani
A man of the sea
A hunter

