

Pamela Mordecai



## Caliban Calypso

OR ORIGINAL PAN MAN

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### CHORUS

*And, too, we come from island  
So we know you Prospero  
Fancy yourself as high priest  
Sporting cape and wand and so  
  
Serve up you own-a pikni  
As a sacrifice  
Is want you want you kingdom back  
No mind the price  
  
You never give the girl a chance  
To organize she own romance  
You fraid Miranda get to understand  
That the island man-of-words is Caliban.  
You fraid Miranda get to understand  
That the shaman man-of-words is Caliban.*

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### I

On high hillsides or as he floats  
over the blue in small bright boats  
see *homo Caribbeanis* grin  
at how he's fecund, revelling in  
how the ting-ting can spring  
the fire in him wire still crackling.  
  
"So, how much pikni you make, man?"  
Him can't answer you back  
but him quick to tell you  
woman is a leggo-beast — "so slack!"

//  
Calabash

C H O R U S

II

And Sycorax? Perhaps  
each island woman  
mated and devastated  
by some regional ramgoat  
persuaded that the family plan  
is a conspiracy to kill black man?

See her in travail with her lot  
She's had them out —  
they're all she's got  
her witchery the alchemy  
to conjure food inside a pot.

C H O R U S

III

Of course, till now we don't determine  
who imprignant Sycorax  
a matter upon which the bard  
not giving any facts. Hole in  
him head as far as any memory of that.

But if you check the niggergram  
the chat have it to say  
is backra massa rape her  
put her in the family way!

C H O R U S

V

As for the creole boy child  
him tongue twining with curses?  
Muttering glossolalic nonsenses  
him find him can decline  
him pain in verses; start spirits with words;  
that the birds, if him call them, will come.

When him listen, him heart flutter  
for him hear the calling stones;  
the rattle of creation waking  
bones reaching for bones.

//  
Calabash

The sound prickle him body,  
it make him head start rise;  
him bruck a stick and clean it off  
and start lick galvanize.

C H O R U S

VI

So man when the music reach you  
and the rhythm start take hold  
and you feel the need to bring  
the little chap in from the cold,

consider meditation  
and the fruits that it can bring;  
remember breed and grind  
is two very different someting.

C H O R U S

VIII

*And too we come from island  
So we know you Prospero  
Fancy yourself as high priest  
Sporting cape and wand and so*

*Serve up you ownna pikni  
As a hapless sacrifice  
Is want you want you kingdom back  
No matter what the price*

*So poor Miranda never understand...  
But you better know say that we understand  
That the island man-of-words is Caliban —  
So we jumping when we hear him playing pan  
For we love that man-of-words, that Caliban.*

