

Caroline Sinavaiana

‘Te Lavalava

‘Te lavalava teu teu fa’a Samoa
E sulu le siapo, e ma’eu, ema’eu le manaia
‘Ia la’u penina ma la’u pa’aga ‘ua malie o
Sau ia ‘ua ‘ou le toe fai lo to;

O le’a seu lo’u va’a e malolo,
Lafoia ia le taula ‘i fanua ‘ua leva le po.

Sarong

Adorned in a Samoan lavalava,
wrapped in tapa, you are striking. Your fine beauty
my pearl and my partner, it is pleasing.
Come here. I shall say no more.
My canoe will rest, its anchor thrown onto land,
and it’s getting late.

(Traditional)

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Sarong

for my mother and father

Trailing bright design,
your shawl of elegance unwinds—
its palimpsest of trees remembering
their lexicon of stars—
and swaddles my boat,
joining sailor to your shore.

Pacific Studies, Vol. 30, Nos. 1/2—March/June 2007

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