

Swansong for Aunty Ruby Langford Ginibi

Jeanine Leane

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Black Swan- you sailed many waters
Through times and tides that wait for no one
You swam strong
Sometimes with many through gentle tides
Times of plenty
Sailing smooth-
Waters calm and tepid
Full moon- pregnant with promise of
Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow

Times though, waters were cold and treacherous
Starless, moonless sky- dark with despair
Loved ones lost to the undertow
Gone

Winged and wounded
Gripped by grief
You sailed on to remember those
Lost

Telling their stories
Your finger in the sand
Long before you picked up the pen and
Made it mighty from your strength
Your words will be forever
As you pass beyond the horizon to the
Unchartered waters of the new world
Sail on Aunty Ruby- Black Swan
Wind at your back
Sun on your face
Peacefully on the placid waters
Higher on the rising tides

Jeanine Leane is a Wiradjuri woman from South-west New south Wales. A Doctorate in literature and Aboriginal representation followed a long teaching career at secondary and Tertiary level. Formerly a Research Fellow at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander Studies, she currently holds a post-doctoral fellowship at ANU. In 2010, Jeanine's first volume of poetry, *Dark Secrets After Dreaming: AD 1887-1961* won the Scanlon Prize for Indigenous Poetry from the Australian Poets' Union and her manuscript, *Purple Threads* won the David Unaipon Award at the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards and was shortlisted for the 2012 Commonwealth Book Prize. Jeanine is the recipient of an Australian Research Council grant for a proposal called *Reading the Nation: A critical study of Aboriginal/Settler representation in the contemporary Australian Literary Landscape*.