

Elis Juliana

BEKITA

Bekita dams a kanga shimis
pronka dreanta sal'i balia
k'un finura k'un koketa
kada paso na su tempu
kada zoya na midí
Bekita! Bekita!
Bekita! Bekita!

Hernan dí: E dams akí
ai ta flor pa hasi bunita;
yena sala ku pèrfume
hari saka djent'i oro
zoya renchi di makurá
Bekita! Bekita!
Bekita! Bekita!

Ma or'un pachi prufiá
a bai lamantá Bekita
pa é tuma'den k'e tumba
ela keda babuká
kon e mosa tantu lesma
por a pasa serená
Bekita Bekita
pa kén b'a mirá
Bekita Bekita
pa kén b'a tumá
Bekita Bekita
Bekita Bekita

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BEKITA ^[1]

Lady Bekita lifted up her skirt
And stalked into the ballroom
With a smile, with coquetry
With calculated steps
And complete body control
Bekita, Bekita,
Bekita, Bekita.

The gentlemen said:
This lady is just a pretty flower
filling the room with its perfume
smiling and showing her golden teeth
And swinging her red coral earrings
Bekita, Bekita,
Bekita, Bekita.

But when a gutsy old man
Dared to invite Bekita
To join him in the *tumba*,
He was flabbergasted
That such a delicate lady
Could sway her hips in total abandon:
Bekita, Bekita,
For whom did you take
Bekita, Bekita
Whom did you think she was
Bekita, Bekita
Bekita, Bekita

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[1] Bekita is the pet name of a young Jewish woman Rebecca. Although forbidden by her own social circle, Bekita slips away to join a *tumba*-party, which is primarily an Afro-Antillean cultural phenomenon. This Jewish woman stupefies everyone present by dancing the *tumba* just like any black woman would, by which she actually becomes a symbol of 'creolisation'. In the original Papiamentu version the poem has the rhythm of a *tumba*.