

## **Friendship, Changes and Exchanges**

There is only 2 months age difference between my friend Maria and I. We are two young women who have known each other for over 5 years and when I'm in Dili we live in the same house together. We only know bits and pieces of each others mother tongues so we usually speak Indonesian when we're hanging out....

### **Shaving**

I was sitting in my room shaving my legs one Saturday afternoon when Maria came in and sat on the bed. While we chatted she watched me shaving and gradually our conversation turned to what I was doing. We talked about social pressures and body image in Australia compared to Timor Leste.

The next day Maria came to me with her arms outstretched. "Feel this, it's so smooth and silky, just like your legs," she said with a cheeky grin.

Maria's husband came in and joined me in teasing her. I said, "Are you crazy? I told you it'll just grow back anyway so there's no point". He said, "Are you crazy? Don't you know only bad women and foreigners do that. Stop trying to be something you're not".

Maria argued that if it was ok for me, it was ok for her. She qualified this, however, by explaining that she just wanted to see what it was like, just once.

### **Rubbish**

We were on the way to the supermarket and Maria had some lollies. After unwrapping one and popping it into her mouth she dropped the wrapper on the ground. I was on to her quick as a flash. "Maria, how could you do that? Don't you care about your own city? Surely you don't want Dili to turn into a big rubbish dump (blah, blah)....."

She laughed at me, but picked up the rubbish. Then at the supermarket I bought things that would create more rubbish than Maria generates in a month.

*Anonymous*