

TAONGA TUKU IHO

poems that heal

written by

Maia Grace Pehi-Hannah & Phillipa Te Paea Pehi

illustrated by

Ani Alana Kainamu

[image for cover = kakano]

Dedication + quote?

Ani korero? [saved in images file]

Maia & Pip korero? Or the korero as appendices...? Allow the poems and pictures speak for themselves?

contents

PART I: TRAUMA & MAMAE	5
[A]	
Everything I had	
A prayer - <i>nga roimata</i>	
[B]	
Unclean`	6
Rejection	7
When you have been touched	8
[c]	
Rivers run red	12
Borderline	
Kia manawanui - <i>aroaha/manawa</i>	14
[D]	
Thoughts of a 14 year old girl	18
No use	
Whakama - <i>Hine nui te po</i>	21
[E]	
Burnt	24
Anger	25
Ode to an aging pedophile	26
PART II: HEALING BEGINS	30
[F]	
The broken and the brave	
Butterfly? Into life? - <i>purerehua</i>	
Depression	32
[G]	
Is there a cure?	33
Suicidal hope	34
Mama's chair	36

PART III: INTERGENERATIONAL HEALING 38

[H]

Reminder

Life after death –*he rakau*

What forever means 39

[I]

Free 42

Dream to be God –*te matua nui* 43

Pictures- in italics above

PART I: TRAUMA & MAMAE

Maia & Pip (teenager & mother) generations apart

[A]

EVERYTHING I HAD [Maia 2020; 17yrs]

Everything is heavy,

It burns in my chest.

The things I've kept to myself rattle around in my head.

I would tell you.... But I know you're too busy.

So, it keeps rattling.

I'd like to think it wasn't all for nothing but that's starting to be outweighed by doubt.

Sometimes the rattling gets deafening, and I just want to message.

Just to talk.

But I know you're busy

And you don't want to talk to just me.

And so, the empty rattling continues.

A Prayer

Pip [1991; 18yrs]

Tears fall twice

diagonal

blinding

death thoughts stir

in her brain

banished

with a sigh

She is without need

yet riddled with

want

reaching

reaching

reaching

Oh Lord. reaching

will no-one meet her hand?

[B]

UNCLEAN

There are alcohols I will not drink...

Why?

They remind me of hands that to the touch burned my skin so that I still feel them there
months after.

There are places I avoid.

Why?

Because the flashbacks of cold, hopeless nights where I could not move while my heart
broke along with my dignity.

There are men who's names make my skin crawl and who's voices make me want to hide in
the darkest of rooms.

I've stood in a shower for hours trying to get clean,
But it is as if the Filth has sunk into my skin never to come out.

I crave human contact but flinch when anyone tries.

Rape is no different than being pushed down a flight of stairs, except all the wounds are
inside the deepest corners of the mind.

Yet I assure you. They still bleed...

Rejection

Pip [1987; 13yrs]

Reach out your heart, let your soul float
And feel the pain in my pretence.
It burns your hand, so let your body dissipate
And find love in hidden corners of your mind.
Try to understand my furtive advances;
My eyes that search, forever without finding.
Twisted fate smiles crookedly on my floundering
Sense of right and wrong that blinds.

I may love, but it is like trying to romance
A shadow when I hide within.
It is like a river, flowing fast & strong underground
Running swiftly to a destination that
Is yet to be reached.
Is it so hard to love that I cannot relate to life?
Is it so easy to die that I can taste oblivion & death?
My emotions are debris flung on a river hidden.

I know what rejection is.
It is cold and uncompromising. It bites.
Lips clammy, close with the kiss of night
That makes you blind so you cannot see

The dawn shine in your eye.
It makes you deaf so that sweet music
Cannot wash over your mind with soothing sound.
It makes you dumb and stricken without speech.

I can feel life vibrate

Outside

These walls.

WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN TOUCHED

Pip [2021; 46yrs]

If affects you
Every. Single. Day.
There is no escape
From the stinking albatross carcass
Hung from your neck.

You cannot look at anyone
The same way
As you did
The day before

No-one Can be trusted
All want only one thing

To use you
Then discard you
Expecting silence in return
For the pain & shame
They gave you

No-one wants to know
Everyone will turn their head

As if suddenly
You have become unclean
Abhorrent
The stinky kid no-one wants to play with

And that's only at home

A home
That is no longer a home
Because you don't feel safe anywhere
Count the hours
The minutes
While everyone else sleeps
In case something wicked
This way creeps

And
'Out there'
Where all things betray
A battlefield
Where no-thing and no-one makes sense
Becomes a place you have to go
Because to stay
Is to live
With still rotting carcasses
Of all the screams & words unsaid
Locked in the closet of the womb
The unshared comfort & care
You expected
The tears & snot
Secretly shed

Destined for
Regardless of paths tread
A lifetime
Of secrecy
Of self-loathing
Of self-sabotage
And ever-increasing
Acts of desperation
To. Make. It. Stop.

The internal Berating Voices
The unrelenting Pain
The Guilt. The Shame. The Fury.
THE CRIPPLING FEAR.

Ever on high alert.
Ever afraid.

Until you somehow forget
With a needle
With a blade
With a noose- if you are lucky. ..

Or some survival mechanism
Miraculously allows you
To spiritually surgically remove
Huge tracts of who you are
Stuff them down so far
Hide them away
Until
You cannot feel yourself
Anymore

Allows you to begin to perform
Amazing feats of Conformity
And pleasing acts of Subservience
In an attempt
To be
All that They want you to be

Yet somehow
It all just keeps bubbling to the surface
The 'Ugly' the 'Filthy' the 'Unclean'
Even long after
You have forgotten
That you were not born this way

And no matter
How many times you have scrubbed
Yourself raw
How many times you have flayed
Yourself alive
Or sat with that noose
Around your neck
Desperate to not be
You
Anymore

You never feel clean

Until

If you are Blessed
A miraculous day comes
When after all those years
Of Suffering. Of Abuse. Of Pain.
There is a sweet sweet sharing
A hearing. A reckoning of the Soul.
When Some One
Hears your testimony
Sees the rotted rags of your self-loathing
Hears the clatter of cellar chains
And does not turn away
Takes a soft soft cloth
And with Great Love
Wipes years of Purgatory
Away

Does not call you Liar
Stays
Does not
Immediately treat you differently
Walk/turn/run
Away

Believes you
When after all these years
What was buried deep
Surfaces

Believes you
Even as the shock of Remembering
Leaves you desperately
Trying to forget
Again

Loves you
Even though a lifetime
Of this
Has led you to believe
There is nothing there
To Love

Gives you reason
To not only
Survive

But to Live

[C]

RIVERS RUN RED

There are scars that run down my arms, legs, hips...

Like dried up springs that once ran red down my frozen fingertips and softly hitting the
ground like crimson rain...

Each has a story, of dark nights with bright moons and empty silence, a winter breeze and
broken hearts.

I feel like an autumn leave slowly losing color, slowly falling apart.

Nobody notices me anymore, because leaves change color and fall in autumn right?

I feel as I am trapped in a cage, but this one is not made of metal.

This one consists of flesh and bone, I can't escape.

There is only one way to get free...

Let the rivers run red,
Let the autumn leaves fall,
Let the hearts break,
Let it rain crimson.

Borderline

Pip [1991; 18yrs]

Used as it is

it is ruby-red

moving like tomato juice

in the glass

drip, drip
panic grip
on my heart
a smart
as the hole is re-opened
life-force
bleeding
lost from the body

mesmerised
silence- everyone sleeps
except me
sleepless eyes
hypnotised
by the
drip, drip

no reason
is given except habit
of pain
real or imagined
all the same
convinces me
that I am not illusion
that life still accepts
me as one of her own

blood

sweet smell
forms a skin
turns black where it dries
on my arm

pretty sparkle as I hold
it to the light...

KIA MANAWANUI

Pip [2021; 46yrs]

When you think
I cannot take anymore

There is
More

When you think
There is no more pain you can endure

There is
In fact
More

When you think there is no capacity
No strength left

Any
More

You find
More

The next breath happens
The next heartbeat beats
The next day dawns

Though every part of you screams
They should not

FOR HER SOUL

He held her face

He held her down

He invaded every crevice
of her being
No matter where or how
Far she retreated

He found her

Violated
her
to
her
core

Repeatedly

His face, his voice
his hands, his tongue
his penis

Devoid of expression
Emotion

Taking
Taking
Taking

And leaving nothing in return

Because he didn't have to

Each time
tossing her aside
sweat-stained
come-stained
blood-stained

Like a tissue
A whore
A snot-stained torn
Delicate, intricate, lace-spun
Tissue

To painfully
Scrub herself clean
Yet each time

Coming back
Coarser
More stained
darker
more frayed
Less whole
more fragmented
Older
less bright

Until
One day
He stopped
Disappeared

She didn't even notice

So completely had she shattered
Retreated within herself
Every fibre numbed

Entirely

A robocon
A shell
A pretty empty imitation
Remained

Enacting
A performance
A service
An approximation of a human
Slave woman
Doll

For every person
she encountered

To be
Used
Abused
Discarded
Again
And again
And again

Never knowing

the ghostly entourage
of ancestors
birthing girl child
upon girl child
upon girl
upon
girl

seeds of rape & hate
passed
from one generation to the next

never healed

a gaping, seething, boiling
roiling
wound
from which
humanity
was now being birthed

only feeling the
RAGE
screaming forth
in tides of blood
frothing pink waves advancing, advancing
tsunamis of discarded dreams
aborted hopes & loves
abandoned, broken bodies
heaved heavenward
from the darkest depths

leaving behind
destruction [distraction]
fodder for the scavengers
When the waters recede
washing clean
the carnage of centuries

and silence

time & sun & decay & nature
picking clean the remains
until bleached bones
only remain

Then dust-

dust to dust
ashes to ashes

To be blown away
with a sigh

[D]

THOUGHTS OF A 14 YEAR OLD GIRL

Surrounded by midnight.
Emotions fragile.
Gripping bottles,
And mixing decisions.
Your constant distance
Is casting shade
In the wandering moonlight,
And I found direction
In this intoxicating loneliness,
It crushes,
But somehow,
Just somehow,
It heals.

No Use

Pip [1987; 13yrs]

No use fighting

no use struggling-

The more I do

The more I sink and flounder

In the way of life.

Where is the love

That is supposed to
Surround us?

I look up
and shining far above
The chaos that swirls around
Is a light.

It shines bright and full
On my upturned face.

A ray of hope
Falling on me.

Looks of pity
rain down like drops of ice
Freezing my antipathy firmly
In place.

Others ignore
As if I am a leper or outcast
When all I do
Is to try and help them.

I wonder what Jesus thought
when those he loved
Turned against him
Scorning his company
And disgracing his name.
Did hate ever cross his mind
Or did his sorrow
Swamp his anger?

Tears sliding down furrows

much used by shame or sadness

Burnt holes in my soul.

Feeling the pain of emotion.

Sobs racked my body-

Chest heaving with need

For a reason

To answer my reaction.

What was wrong!?!

Nothing really.

Only that everything seemed to close

In on my space;

The space I need to expand.

So where was the problem?

Just push them out of the way-

Get on with it.

No pushing

no use-

Suffocating, dying

Spiralling rapidly down

The path of self-destruction.

Please...

What was I going to ask?

What use would it have been?

WHAKAMA*

Pip [2021; 46yrs]

To be seen
To be heard

Is all you desperately wanted
All you ever craved

Yet
The thought of it
Caves you in

To be reached
Oh so gently
To be held
Oh so dearly

And yet the touch of human hand
Burns
Flinching, involuntarily, if any tries

Rather
Rough meaningless assignments in the dark
All you allow yourself

To be adored
To be cherished

Is all you know you can never have
Rather choosing those who use, abuse & abase

You

Hide
Retreat
Cower
Appease
Plead

So long in the dark
So long staring into the Void
Only your nightmares for company
That you come to believe
This is your reflection
This is

You

Cry out in pain
With the first ray of sunlight
As dawn
Crests the hill of your soul

Love feels like torture
When you've grown in the shadow
Of its absence

Yet
You

Arch towards
Rise towards
All that was never

You

Burning
Searing
Ripping
Tearing

Away

Then after
What seems
An Eternity
Healing
Crises & Pain

There comes
The close, heart-beating, safe
Cocooning-type of Dark

You

Wonder if you have died
Or are dying
For it feels like the Goddess Womb

You

Know the day when it comes
To Re-birth into
Te Ao Marama

And yet

You

Are afraid
Of the world of light & humans
Te Ao Hurihuri
That world of ever-changing uncertainty
Dark & light
Sorrow & Joy

Struggle to believe it could be any different
Daren't believe
There could be Love
In abundance for

You

Take a deep breath
Hear the words being sung to you
On this side of the Veil
As well as
Out there

You

Step out
Step up

Not as the Monster
You had thought You were
Rather

As
Beautiful
You

*Whakama is a psychosocial and behavioural construct in the New Zealand Maori which does not have any exact equivalent in Western societies although shame, self-abasement, feeling inferior, inadequate and with self-doubt, shyness, excessive modesty and withdrawal describe some aspects of the concept (Sachdev, 1990)

[E]

BURNT

Burned into my soul,

Burned into my mind.

Bruises and cuts burned into my skin, although they have long healed.

I felt myself slip into the turmoil of your life.

A verbal raging sea, I am but a damaged vessel drowning beneath the waves spat from a
mouth full of denial.

Brainwashed, confused, lost, worthless.

Now I feel all temporary structure falling away, as I collapse.

I've lost my mind.

Desperately clinging to pieces... desperately trying to glue myself together.

All efforts are in vain... you stole strips from me, ran off with parts of my mind, body and
soul.

Slut, whore, slag, bitch, hood rat, thief, cunt, cock-tease, Hussey, liar, rank, flirt, asshole and
disgusting.

All bullets aimed at an already frail heart.

Dragged from peaceful slumber, to broken glass, yelling accusations, blood and tears.

Hands stronger than I remembered as grip tightens around supple, bare skin.

Accusations of change made afterwards.

I am different

I am flawed

I am desperate

I am alone.

I am also a fucking fire, and I will burn you if you continue to stand too close.

From an unpredictable raging fire with emerald eyes.

To a churning sea with cold blue eyes.

Two elements which should have never been mixed into a beautiful disaster.

Anger

Pip [1988; 14yrs]

Shaking like leaves
before a violent wind,
my hands
try to contain my anger.

My back tenses;
threatens to break
under the tension.

The tears run
In quick succession,
trying desperately
to cool the furnace
of my rage,
the flames of my ire.

Red!

Brilliant red blazes
across my vision,
the tears adding to
the confusion,
eyes weeping like those
of the diseased.

Adrenaline pumping,
an amazing drug which
only serves as fuel.

The explosion!

An ecstasy of violence,
of force that must surely
match the heat of the sun!

And then the anti-climax,
the extinguishing of emotion
that leaves the body,
-the vessel
dry and empty.
Tears now-
only in self-pity.

ODE TO AN AGING PEDOPHILE

Pip [2021; age 46yrs]

O!
Lo and Behold!
He who once was
Resplendent in Charm & Wit
is rendered
Obsolete
Teethless
Harmless

Time's Steady
Inexorable
Hand
With chisel & hammer
Has whittled away
Any Veneer
Civil or Otherwise

A Living Breathing
Cliché
Perfect Counter-point
To your Lolita
Carefully
Oh so carefully!
Selected

Restless Ruthless Pursuit
of Cliff Richard's
crying, walking, talking
Living Doll
Brought to its Rude End

by nothing more
Glamorous
Than age spots
And a face
Increasingly
Unable
To cover the Ugly in your
Soul

All the while
Ye thought ye had
Cheated
Manipulated
'Gotten Away With It'
Guffaw, guffaw
Telling yourself
'She Wanted It'
Telling yourself
You
Couldn't
Help
Yourself

While helping yourself

Yet
In those
Still
Quiet
Insomnia Moments
Faces & Voices
of Time Past
Don't lie

She Meanwhile
Trapped in a Living Hell
The
Oh so many instances
she plotted to take her
Own
Life

Because of what you did

Clawing Her way back to
Living

To awake
One Day
Free! Oh my Lord!
Free!
Gazing upon whatever Sunrises
Father Time
may still kindly allow her
seeing them
Fill with Joy & Gold
Treasures
Held in Perpetuity

Reward
For refusing to
Give
Up

Glance Back
see you
Diminished
Repertoire & Repartee
Stripped
Your Empty Words
Leeched
No Youthful Vigour
to
Beguile & Beseech

Turn Away
Leaving you
Forsooth!
Faceless
Nameless
Nothing

Yet
There is still a small Matter of
Recompense
Owed
Against your Earnings
Taxation on your Soul
If you like

An Eternity in
Pain & Misery
Awaiting
A Mantle

Shrugged off
Shame & Guilt
Returned to Sender
An ill-fitting Coat
No longer
Required

PART II: HEALING BEGINS

[F]

THE BROKEN AND THE BRAVE Maia [2020, 17yrs]

Do you feel weak?

Cold?

Broken?

As if life is too hard.

Are you scared of the darkness that effortlessly swallows you whole?

Lost between a place of light and dark.

The thing most forget is...

Because of this pain,

Your cold turns to untameable fire.

Your weakness teaches strength.

You can never be brave without first being scared.

The broken and lost through struggles and pain have grown hearts of gold and a mind as
strong as steel.

Butterfly? Into Life?

for Jennie

23-03-91

So long restricted

so long held

by walls of black

encased

trapped within my diseased soul.

Yet spring calls

sets my blood on fire

turning the darkness into

grey

Will my wings be strong enough
to push away the chrysalis?

A crack appears

and I breathe the air

simultaneously

sweet and sour

but fresh

giving me relief from the

cloying mustiness

that has bred in my moroseness

It fed on my pain.

As the bonds fall away

my breathing eases

lungs no longer cramped-

my pain eases.

I can see the world of life-

will I stay here, dead in birth

secure in my pain and loneliness

Or will I emerge uncertain

yet free- free to live

free into life?

DEPRESSION

Pip [2022; 47yrs]

I can remember
the moment I realized
the colours
had drained out of my life
when they once again
came flooding back

surmising
they had imperceptibly drained
away
over time
a bath tub of colour
slowly leaking
through an imperfectly sealed
plug

hadn't noticed
the grey creeping back
the lethargy
insidious soul leprosy
spreading like a dark stain
into my world

until that moment
wasn't conscious
numbness masking
suppressing feeling
my interior life
a vast lack-lustre
emotion ocean

your little face
I can see
white pale
watching my every move
silently

I'm so sorry my darling

realized only today
the inheritance I passed on
as you absorbed all
I couldn't feel
and all
I couldn't say

hiding behind a smile
surface-deep

removed so far
from my body
only an automaton mind
in control

my heart
guarded more closely
than state secrets
my soul
absent wandering hills
beyond this world

a shadow of who I was meant to be
going through motions I truly thought
were the right sequence of moves
in this dance of life

because I didn't know
I didn't know
my darling wee girl

that I was showing you
how to be unhappy
how to settle for anything less than the best
how to not know yourself

how to not be

[G]

IS THERE A CURE?

This numbness feels like a mould spreading through my body,
Each breath I take dampens my thoughts, feeds this illness inside me.

Is there a cure?

Maybe it's the way the sunlight filters through oak trees on a warm summer day while the
birds sing without a care in the world.

Maybe it's the way the mist from a waterfall glitters with rainbows.

Or maybe it's the smell of water drying on hot tar seal, sweet yet so bitter.

Like life...

Sweet yet so bitter.

It is hard to see the beauty when the mould has clouded your vision...

Like a dark cloud over the world

Like someone has turned the lights out when you are trying to find your way.

But there is a faint glitter through the dark abyss.

I am slowly being pulled from the Filth, cold, dark that has been piled on top of me as to
bury me alive.

Is there a cure?

Suicidal Hope

Pip [1989, 17yrs]

Like a storm

depression comes in fury

then leaves me:

In an empty field

the rain has washed clean.

The clouds are muddy

but puddles reflect them falsely
in shades of cream.

A mirror echoes my face
but loses my loneliness somewhere
in the transition.

The grass is chrome green
birds' voices quiet under a weight
of silence,
the only sound a humming in the ears...

Or surrounded by darkness
a familiar hysteria gnawing at me composure
imaginary creatures sliding across
my vision, half-felt claws
closing around my neck-
and the moon, distant,
shedding no light;

I'm alone in the dark with the moon.

But like spring to a long, mouldy winter
or sun to a tiring night,
a warm sensation slips into my emptiness
for which I have no name except perhaps:

a love of life.

MAMA'S CHAIR

a poem for Maia Grace

Pip [2021; 46yrs]

I see you
My girl
Defeated
Feeling alone
Head bowed
Tears flowing
Hands clenched

I know it
Don't feel right
It ain't fair
That's why you sit there
In my chair

But darling girl
Beautiful One
Life is only
Such a fleeting moment
Of terrible all mixed in with the wonderful

A convincing mirage
Floating on the never-ending desert
An albatross alight
But only a moment
On the endless ocean

So get up
Stand up
My girl

Your life
Is not destined
For sitting in
Your
Mama's chair

As comfortable
As that space may be

It is not yours
In which to dwell

Come visit
By all means

Sit a while
Smile
Remembering those rare tender moments
Stroking your forehead
The times
I managed to comfort you well

Then
My Baby
Rise Up
Go forth into the world
Do battle
Make love
Run free & wild
Laughing
At all that seeks
To hold you
Down

Those who dare to condemn you
From the safety
Of their mama's chair

Howl at the moon
Drift naked down the river
Run barefoot on the sand

For before you know it
My Love
Your baby will be sitting there
In your chair

While you & I
Sit here
Remembering
Wistful-like
All the times
We lingered too long
In our own
Mama's chairs

PART III: INTERGENERATIONAL HEALING

[H]

REMINDER

Maia [2022, 18yrs]

Oh my darling,
It's true.
Beautiful things
Can have dents
And scratches too.

Life After Death
for Kerry

Pip [1986, 12yrs]

Your trunk
so strong and firm
holding your waving limbs.
Standing there for a thousand years
held up by roots
down deep.

It seems you hold a secret
whispered by your leaves
picked up by the grass
which answers you back.

Silently sleeping
rocking in the crook
of your arm
is a tui dreaming of nectar and
soaring through the air.

Awaking suddenly,
you hear the sickening thud
of an axe cutting deep
into your soul.

The precious bird
 flies away in fright.

Pain pierces the serene heart
of your being
as your mighty trunk
slowly creaks as it falls
to collapse.

 Instantly earthbound.

But a seed, the size of a fly
though as precious
as a gem,
buries itself in the ground
to become as majestic
 as you were.

WHAT FOREVER MEANS

for Maia

Pip [2021. 46yrs]

Tomorrow is never promised us
We never know what is next around the corner

However this I know
You and I belong together
Forever

The thousand million
And more

Images I have in my mind's eye
Of you
Will last
Forever

And that is only THIS lifetime

Each precious moment
So many
Etched upon my soul
Yet
It doesn't matter how many

I will forever
Be hungry
For more

Those that we have loved
And now
Move on
Beyond the veil
Likewise
Remain tattooed on our hearts
We carry them
Wherever and forever
We go

Each loss reminding me
To hug you tighter each time we part

But
There is NOWHERE you can go
That I would not follow

Into the abyss
Over mountains
Deepest ocean
Beyond the veil
Beyond the stars
The highest heaven
Into
Forever

Do you know just how precious You are?
Do you know how Magnificent You are?
Do you know how deeply infinitely Loved You are?

In this lifetime
You are the reason I have stayed
Continue to be The reason I stay
When some days
I just want to go home
Just want to close my eyes
And rest
Forever

My Muse
My Bridge Back to Self
My Inspiration
My Reflection
My Better 'New Improved' Version
My Everything
My Forever

I will forever
Be grateful and proud of You

My only wish for You
Is that you BE YOU
No worldly achievement or accolade or acquisition
Will replace that
Or affect
My forever love
For you

So as others come and go
In this lifetime
And into the next
You remain
Forever

And even though
The mere thought
Of losing you from sight in this life
Brings me to my knees
Starts a wail deep within my soul

I know
Neither Death nor Life
Can ever separate me from your side
I am with You
Forever

[1]

FREE

Maia [2021, 17yrs]

Vast oceans and foreign lands call my name.

Dangerous forests,

Stormy seas,

Soldering desserts,

And deep lakes.

I cannot be content with a “normal life”

I have no limits

I have no stopping point

My goals will never end.

I will travel the world,

Meet strange, new people.

I'll never stop taking risks.

I'll never fit into society's boxes or follow that thin white line

I will be free

I will dance in the rain while others seek shelter

I will be my own person

I refuse to be controlled

I will spend my life feeling the earth beneath my feet, the wind in my hair and the sea

breeze on my lips.

Where my fire cannot be dulled by how “I should be”

I'll be forever free

Dream to be God

Pip [1988, 16yrs]

My hand;
fingernails, knuckles, wrinkles-
dark shadow
against the sky;
grasping the clouds
in one broad sweep.

My tongue
caresses the curves
of the mountains,
consuming
ice cold of snow
in a burst of flaming
red.

My eyes flash beacons
into the night.
Like a candle within
frosted pane.
Signalling the wearied
traveller of the
universe-

PART IV: MOTHER LOVE SONGS FOR HER DAUGHTER

THE CALL

for Maia

And now
You've planted your heart
In the whenua

She runs rings around you all day
Every day
And curls up by your side
Every night

She is your
Poutokomanawa
Forever more
One more grounding Light
To remind you
This is the centre
Of your
Universe

Kahukura
Tupuna
Wairua
Papatuanuku

Calling you back

Awa
Maunga
Whenua

Calling you home

Kaitiaki you are

The vision passed from your poppa
To me
To you
Kaitiaki we are

The Collective Vision
Moemoea
Of our whanau, our people

Caring for the world
That has never stopped caring
For us

And please believe me
Taku kotiro
It was not from lack of trying
That we did not make it home before you
We climbed mountains
Did all we thought we had to do
Carrying the dream of you
Within our hearts
Always

And Defeated
And Exiled
And Homeless

We have all felt

Searching for a place to Belong
After our place
Was stolen
Was ripped away
So many generations back
No-one thought to
Remembered to
Tell us

Be still
Be quiet
Hear them Calling to you
Here they are Calling to you
Always

Karanga
Karanga mai

Calling us all home

