

Talanoa Fogafala

Hear our voices



A poetry and art collaboration between the National University of
Samoa and the University of Auckland

Edited by Carol Mutch, Leua Latai, Jacoba Matapo
and Felicia Ward

Talanoa Fogafala*

Hear our voices

A poetry and art collaboration between the National University of Samoa
and the University of Auckland

***Talanoa Fogafala**

Jacoba Matapo and Tim Baice provided the Samoan title for the collection.

This is a proverbial expression which essentially refers to the sharing of stories/ conversations while lying on the mats. It refers to the deep reflective conversations which often take place at night, once the mats are laid out and before people go to sleep. Just thinking about the thematic nature of the poems, these are the sorts of stories (love, nostalgia, frustration, caution) we would reflect on and share with loved ones to gather their insights, thoughts and advice.

Published in March 2019

By *Te Whakatere au Pāpori* Navigating Social Currents Research Unit
Faculty of Education and Social Work
University of Auckland
Private Bag 92601, Symonds St
Auckland
New Zealand

Contact: Carol Mutch, Director
c.mutch@auckland.ac.nz

The poets and artists assert their rights to the ownership of their poems and illustrations.

ISBN 978-0-473-46990-0 [Softcover]
ISBN 978-0-473-46991-7 [Hardcover]
ISBN 978-0-473-46992-4 [PDF]

Contents

Preface

Voices of nostalgia

- Nostalgia *Peta (Elizabeth) Winchester Ravlich*
Where I'm from *Leua Latai*
La Pampa *Claudia Rozas Gómez*
Apolima Tai: Found *Fetaui Iosefo* Illustration *Lenora Rasmussen*
My grandfather's feet *Jacoba Matapo* Illustration *Lenora Rasmussen*
It's been a long time *Peter O'Connor* Illustration *Lenora Rasmussen*
Hat wearers *Leua Latai* Illustration *Lenora Rasmussen*
Do you have time? *Leua Latai*
Mr Savalivali *Leua Latai*
Sogaimiti *Jasmine Korja* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
A negro's passage to Samoa *Louise Mataia Milo*
A note from the past *Leua Latai* Illustration *Paese Papalii*
Manatunatuga *Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright*
In this life *Susana Tauaa*
Life perplexed *Tim Baice* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
Mrs Marapolsa *Leua Latai* Illustration *Lenora Rasmussen*
I miss you *Leua Latai* Illustration *Paese Papalii*

Voices of resistance

- Resistance *Peta (Elizabeth) Winchester Ravlich*
Being axed *Leua Latai*
Constantly axing *Tim Baice*
The neoliberal university *Carol Mutch*
Health and safety *Anita Latai Niusulu*
Typical Tuesday I *Anita Latai Niusulu*
Typical Tuesday II *Felicia Wood*
Overwhelmed *Anita Latai Niusulu* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
Brown skin academics *Fetaui Iosefo*
Beware *Leua Latai* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
Response to Beware *Peter O'Connor*
Being dumb *Leua Latai*
The Nofotane *Judy-Anne Alexander-Pouono* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
My .. *Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright*
Faaitiita le masima i meaai *Mema Motusaga*
The bane of my existence *Helen Tanielu* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
Watch out *Mema Motusaga* Illustration *Paese Papalii*
The greatest, the cleverest *Mema Motusaga* Illustration *Paese Papalii*
Free (Verse) *Jasmine Korja*
Response to Free (Verse) *Peter O'Connor*
I am "just a teacher" *Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright*
Teacher ? *Tim Baice* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
Just *Felicia Ward* Illustration *Lenora Rasmussen*

Voices of injustice

Cyclone Kita *Leua Latai* Illustration *Paese Papalii*
Coconut tree *Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright* Illustration *Lenora Rasmussen*
Daughter of Tane: A call to action *Carol Mutch*
Ili le pū – Hear the sound of the conch *Jacoba Matapo* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
Government pipes were brown, red and lead *Fa'aafu Taeleasaasa Matafeo -Yoshida*
29 sea smooth stones *Carol Mutch*
Remember my shadow *Jasmine Korja*
I am a free man *Diana Bethan-Scanlan*
Comprehending Island politics *Susana Tauaa*
My country is starving *Helen Tanielu* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
Be silent *Leua Latai*
The Plea of a Refugee Child *Judy-Anne Alexander-Pouono* Illustration *Paese Papalii*
Re: Plea *Felicia Ward*
Who will hear my voice? *Helen Tanielu* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
Tamaitai' thou art loosed *Fetaui Iosefo*
Who will hear your voice? *Peter O'Connor*
Thoughts of a father *Rooney Mariner*

Voices of love

Love *Peta (Elizabeth) Winchester Ravlich*
Oranges and apples *Leua Latai*
Shopping list *Carol Mutch*
My beautiful centipede *Louise Mataia Milo* Illustration *Paese Papalii*
Space *Jasmine Korja*
Raindrop *Leua Latai* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
Suasusu o le Tina *Mema Motusaga* *Edward Tauiiili*
Emma *Leua Latai*
A New Heart *Mema Motusaga* Illustration *Edward Tauiiili*
You Are *Mema Motusaga*
Lou Tina *Mema Motusaga* Illustration *Lenora Rasmussen*
Emma *Leua Latai*
The thought of you *Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright*
My Aly Girl *Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright* Illustration *Paese Papalii*
My choice *Mema Motusaga* Illustration *Paese Papalii*
Mother's love... *Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright*
My Lourita J *Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright* Illustration *Lenora Rasmussen*
O Sumu ma le pusa lavalava *Metita Va'afusuaga*
Now or never *Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright*
Response to Now or never *Peter O'Connor*
Love poem *Carol Mutch*

About the Poets

About the Artists

Preface

Carol's thoughts

This book began as most ventures do with a casual conversation – in this case about poetry – in the staffroom at the National University of Samoa (NUS). Leua and I had been discussing our involvement in post-disaster art projects. In her case, following the 2009 Samoan tsunami and in my case, the 2010-2011 Canterbury earthquakes. While we thought about how we could share our disaster experiences, our discussion turned to the poetry group that were meeting at NUS and their hopes of publishing their efforts. We decided to collaborate. One thing led to another. Leua talked to her poetry group to gauge their interest. She also asked some of her visual art students if they would like to illustrate the poems. Back in New Zealand, I asked Jacoba Matapo, the Associate Dean Pasifika, what she thought of the idea of some of our Pacific colleagues writing in response to the poems from NUS. She was enthusiastic and later organised a writing retreat to support Pacific poets who were interested. Meanwhile, I talked to some of my fellow Palagi poets who were also keen to honour our Pacific colleagues. I arranged for my research assistant, Felicia Ward, to help with the editing and layout – and, to my delight, found that she was also a poet.

The original poems duly arrived from Samoa. First, Felicia and I grouped the poems into themes – nostalgia, resistance, injustice and love. We shared the grouped poems with the Pacific and Palagi poets in Auckland. Our only instruction was to respond to a poem or theme they resonated with. Our poets could directly respond with a new poem or choose a poem they had already written that might sit alongside the Samoan poems. We took the title of the collection from Helen Tanielu's poem, "Who will hear my voice?" The poems were written, edited and matched. Then the illustrations arrived. The young artists had a similarly free choice to respond to poems that resonated with them – and their illustrations lifted the collection to a new level.

Grouping the poems into themes was somewhat arbitrary as some poems contained more than one of the themes. In the end, we tried to arrange them with poems that had a similar feel. Our first theme, *nostalgia*, includes poems that cross boundaries of time and place. The poems paint word pictures of interesting characters and leave the reader with a wistful memory or a wry smile. *Resistance* was the strongest theme. Poetry enabled the writers to speak back to power, to people and to politics. In the voices of *injustice* section, poets raise their concerns about the environment, disasters, poverty and violence. The poetry collection concludes with a change of mood. Poets shared their thoughts of *love* and affection towards God, family, partners and more.

This preface would not be complete without recognising the talented artists who brought a new interpretation to each of the poems they chose with their blend of traditional and contemporary illustrations. They add freshness and originality to the collection.

In re-reading the whole collection, alongside the illustrations, I am struck by the universality of what we have in common. Too often difference is a barrier that comes between people of different cultures, ages, genders or status. In this collection we are all equal. All our poems, our thoughts, our expressions and emotions are valid. I am humbled by the beauty of the poems, the courage of the poets and the talent of the artists. A Māori whakatauki expresses the essence of our collaboration:

Naku te rourou nau te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi

With your food basket and my food basket the people will live well.

Leua's thoughts

What I came away with from this project was the genuine response of the National University of Samoa (NUS) staff who submitted their poetry for this book. Through e-mails between friends, coffee, breakfast and lunch breaks with colleagues and friends I proposed the idea of a poetry anthology; the response was a pleasant surprise. Some submitting to the pressures to publish, to their first attempts at –poetry writing. Others found it therapeutically healing, whilst some found, through poetry, a natural urge to write their experiences and observations of life, love, pain, fears, anger and frustrations at the world and its injustices. Yet others saw poetry as a social commentary on the world and their cultural environment. A pen and piece of paper was the only thing that would silently listen and where they could truthfully say what they wanted to without judgement.

The NUS poetry group began with conversations between Helen Tanielu, Mema Motusaga and myself. Mema and I were having lunch one day and both learnt that we had been writing poetry as a hobby and decided to share our poems via e mail, then Helen joined in and we decided to ask our colleagues, Susana Tauaa, Anita Latai and Louise Mataia, if they were interested. It took some nudging and sharing of our poems to encourage others. It led to Susana and Anita forwarding their colleagues' poems, joined by Jackie Ah Hoy and Metita Va'afusuaga. In this way, we steered the compilation of poems written by our NUS poets.

I sought the wisdom of Seiuli Vaifou, our Samoan culture and language expert from the Centre for Samoan Studies on her thoughts of our poetry anthology, "talanoa fogafala" Seiuli loved the idea and emphasized the significance of openly *talking* and the disclosing of ideas with freedom, without fear and judgement: 'tatou talatalanoa' let us sit down and talk - meaning the collective sharing of ideas and coming together in the search of a higher truth, and 'fogafala,' on the overlay of mats. The Samoan alagaupu "*Tatou talatalanoa fogafala,*" coined beautifully by Tim Baice and Jacoba Matapo as 'Talanoa Fogafala,' for this anthology, encapsulates this collaboration and this edition of poetry between the NUS and UoA poets. Our 'Talnoa Fogafala' is a shared collective view where each poet has responded truthfully to life, despite our differences.

The NUS poets' eager response to the invitation and their excitement at the possibility of having their work published is obvious. There is great interest to continue writing, not merely for-publication, but as a commitment to sharing our thoughts and aspirations. The addition of the UoA poetry has given us a much needed boost in confidence. We appreciate the work of those involved in this journey to and would like to continue collaborating. Illustrating the poems came naturally, with the suggestion from Carol to have the NUS visual art students illustrate the poems. The proposal was well received. Lenora Rasmussen, Edward Tauilili and Paese Papalii volunteered and began working on the illustrations. Sharing with other poets both here at NUS and with the UoA staff has been a humbling experience in itself. We have come to the end of our journey and in reflecting on the experience there is much to be said on what has been accomplished. In the *fa'asamoa* (Samoan culture) when a great feat has been achieved we end by saying:

O lea ua fa'aifo i manu segaula o le aso.

The flight of the segaula has come to rest on this day with much blessings.*

Carol Mutch and Leua Latai, February, 2019

*Samoan native bird known as the blue crowned lory

Voices of nostalgia



Nostalgia

Hither, thither
The busyness of modern life
So called knowledgeable age
What knowledge
Whose knowledge
Indigenous awareness
Simplicity wither
Days of old illuminating my path

Here, there
Searching for the unattainable
Within one's grasp
What knowledge
Whose knowledge
What cannot be fathomed?
Which cannot be understood
Days of old illuminating my path

Hither, thither
Words of old resonating
From yonder, from the grave, whispers
Our knowledge
Your knowledge
Fathomed
Understood
Words of old illuminating my path

Peta (Elizabeth) Winchester Ravlich

Where I'm from

Looks like heaven cut up into multi-layered landscapes of oozing splashes of indigo skies

Brimming splashes of pink' n' red hibiscus strung across the heavens

Where I'm from

Feels like cotton balls, smothered with sticky marshmallows laced with sega'ula feathers

Smelling like pineapple pie, fluttering through my back-door step tickling my nose

As it reminds me of supper time

Where I'm from

Tastes like fresh moist chocolate cake layered with tiers of mouth-watering frosty whipped cream

Where I'm from sounds like

Raindrops playing tango on my window pane

Smothering the sounds of pain and overpowering atrocities

Stifled with suppressing undercurrent violence

Ready to erupt

Where I'm from

Leua Latai

La Pampa

(A response to 'Where I'm from')

I went to the desert and
heard the wind talk;
memory let loose upon
my other skin.

The chattering and
the heaving,
like charged fingers
pressed against my chest

and I was able to breathe
again.

Claudia Rozas Gómez

Apolima Tai: Found

(A response to 'Where I'm from')

Wayfind me
Find me
In the distance we see
the small caldera between
Manono and Savaii,
Sitting poised,
basking in all its glory
Apolima Tai

Wayfind me
Find me
Moana nui a Kiwa our vasa displaying
its splendiferous beauty
Each colour of the vasa
rendering whispered messages
beyond the shades of blue

Wayfind me
Find me
The winds against our cheeks
navigating us
Willing us
To lean into our Apolima Tai
Beckoning us
To feel Apolima Tai our home
Through our wind

Wayfind me
Find me
Apolima Tai our beautiful island
positioned
To receive
To catch
To cradle
To confront
To comfort
To restore
To revive
To resolve
Four generations coming home

Apolima Tai comes to her children
The land of our fathers fanua
The land of our forebearers
Apolima Tai where blood and land
intertwine to make who we are

Wayfind me no more
For I am
Found

JoFI



Lenora Rasmussen

My grandfather's feet

I have been told that I have my grandfather's feet,
which makes my family laugh.
Wide and unflattering.
Masculine looking;
an odd fit for women's sized shoes.

I have been told I have my grandfather's feet.
An intergenerational feature,
one my grandfather owned.
His feet carried him through life
Each step in knowing, connecting and being
Standing firm in his fanua,
with hopes for generations to come.

I have been told I have my grandfather's feet,
And I wonder now, from a distance
Can I walk the paths that his feet knew well?
Will I feel his connection to place?
Let me come to know of his hopes,
so that I too can stand firm in knowing "I have my grandfather's feet".

Jacoba Matapo



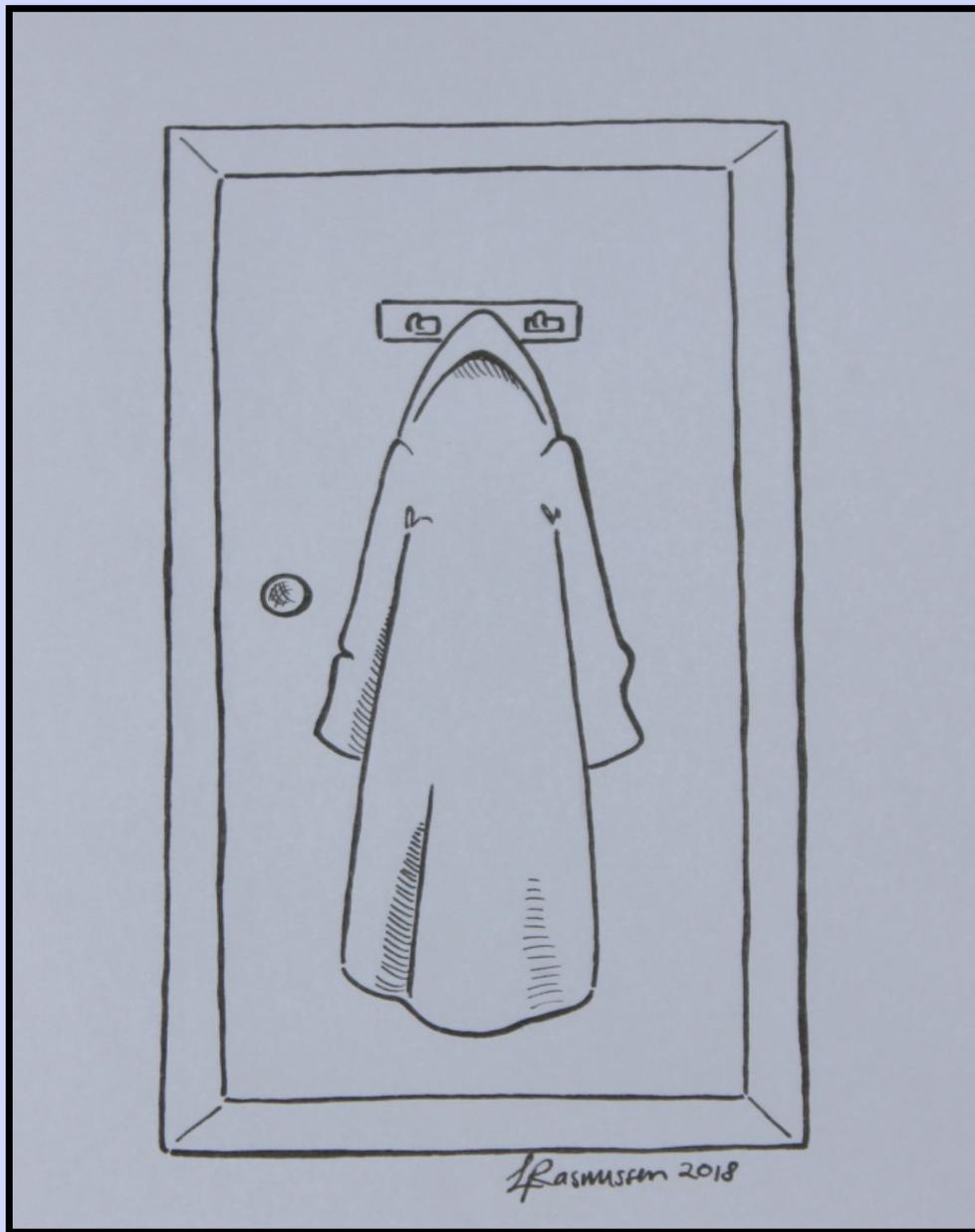
Lenora Rasmussen

It's been a long time

I can still
See your
Overcoat
On my bedroom door
Its shadow
Lying over me
Since I was a boy
We went fishing
You and I
Just once
Down at the
Shore
I can't remember catching
Anything at
All
I can remember
Sitting in the car
Looking up at you
You were my mountain
You told me old
Stories
You left me
In the heat of summer

I woke the next day
Your chair empty
Sat
But your coat still hangs on
My bedroom
Door.

Peter O'Connor

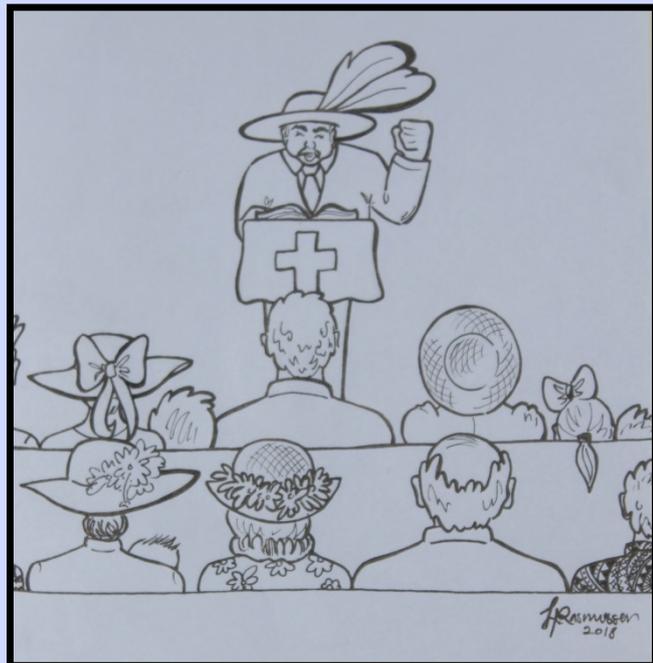


Lenora Rasmussen

Hat wearers

I grew up
Sitting behind hats and heads
Of all shapes, colours and sizes
Decked with lace and fancy ribbons
Amidst alleluias, amens and sermons
And imagined angels with hats
Flying around heaven
Raining hats
I would also sit there
Visualising our preacher
With a wide brimmed hat
With pink feathers, shaking his chubby fist
Blasting everyone to hell
In a hand basket
I would also play
Dress up
Placing different hats on different heads
And seeing how they would play out in my mind's eye
And wondered
What would happen if all the hat wearers were naked
With just a hat on
And didn't end up in heaven

Leua Latai



Lenora Rasmussen

Do you have time?

There is an old lady who lives in our village
Wrinkled, grey and toothless
She's up at dawn
Going from *fale* to *fale* with an empty bowl
"Do you have any *suka*?" she asks,
Although she's got more than you
"Do you have any *masima*?" she asks,
Hoping you'll chat for a minute or two
"Do you have any *fasimoli*?" she asks
Longing for companionship, drowned in her loneliness
"Do you have time for an old wrinkled woman who needs a friend?"
She finally musters the courage to ask

Leua Latai

Mr Savalivali

Walked by today
With his faded frangipani lavalava
Hitched up high on one side
Revealing fifty years of sinewy legs
Swish, swish, swishing down the street
Slip slop slapp'n' the concrete pavement
With his havaiana flip flops
Scavenged from a Chinese shop spewing plastic goods
Popping up everywhere in down town rural Apia
Cupping his bonelike hands as street urchins do
Selling plastic wares
Begging for a tala or two
Mr Savalivali continues wobbling on
An additional iconic emblem
Of progress

Leua Latai

Sogaimiti

The green-blue marks of the tufuga's tools run down his thighs
Patterns in shades of deep-ocean-dark and unsealed-road-like lines
Back to his ancestors and forward to his descendants
He is young and good in a way that makes it impossible to imagine he might ever
become old
angry...
drunk.
He speaks quietly like the 'shhhhhh' sound his teachers made when he laughed
too loudly as a child
His skin is brown like the soil used to be
and soft,
like it still is,
underneath the white man's concrete.

Jasmine Koria



Edward Tauiiili

A negro's passage to Samoa

Two negro brothers from XAfrica.
Became precious shackled pilgrims
Whose lives became entangled
In one of the 39,000 voyages across the Atlantic
For the name of commerce and wealth.
They wrapped their dreams in blue clouds for safe keeping,
and whispered their secrets to the jade wind.

There were once two negro brothers from XAfrica
Whose slave reality vaporised their shadows.
Auctioned, bought, branded
When a Massachusetts massa
unleashed brute hell with lashes
So to utter the names allotted.
They became rhythmic half-loved creatures,
Weary of endless moon beam washes
And a ruthless Lucifer rage
A feeding craving for them to pay.

There were once two negro brothers from XAfrica
Who broke free from their shackles
Yet never found their way back home.
So they parted ways in Jamaica
and never heard from each other again.

There was once a negro from XAfrica
Who followed whales to the Pacific.
To find new dawns at the trenches.
He lingered in Samoa a twinkle
Enchanted by a vanilla winkle
And found life's essences in its place.

There was once a negro from XAfrica
who longed for his home afar.
He planted a new family in Samoa
And made a new home on the beach.
He planned to travel to Levuka,
to show his two sons his arm's reach.
But he appeased Moana instead
and she gave him the peace he wished.

Louise Mataia Milo

A note from the past

I know it's not your birthday
But I thought the cat was so cute
So I bought her to remind you of Kitty
Who ran away when we went sailing
On Lake Michigan
Remember how she cried
When we accidentally left her on the docks of
Egg Harbour?

Leua Latai



Paese Papalii

Manatunatuga

Maimau le matagofie ole nei olaga,
Pe ana soifua mai pea papa ma mama,
Se manu e sologa lelei uma t o'u laasaga,
Ana iloa e faalogo i ia laua fautuaga
Talofa e, i si ou aiga,
Paga lea, ua lelea atu i le vateatea,
Lau fuarosa sa e tiu ai ile vasaloloa
Ua malaga atu ua e le toe iloa
Fua ole rosa e, ua le mautu
Poo le sau mai Saute poo Matu
O mai ia se'i fai se faatatau
Aua ole tali lava ua le toe sau.

Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright

In this life

Thinking about the many things I have yet to do in this life
Forget about achieving anything, there is just not enough time, in this life
To pause for coffee with siblings, friends and foes alike in this life
When I am preoccupied with many things in this life
Where Twitter, Facebook, Viber, and Facetime too in this life
Is ok, to keep in touch and learn of the passing of old mates in this life
I am reminded to live deeper in this life

Susana Tauaa

Life perplexed

(A response to 'In this life')

There's far too much pressure.
Most of which is in my head.
But the social pressure.
To maintain an online presence.
Whilst also being able to achieve in real life.
"It doesn't happen
unless it was captured on Facebook."
Freedom of speech is taken for granted.
Apps now give license to bully, and hurt.
Words turn to lethal weapons.
Screens act as both shield and dagger.
Keyboard warriors reign.
Humanity and social etiquette lose.
First world problems.
Ramifications for all.
There is life outside these walls.
When will we return?

Tim Baice

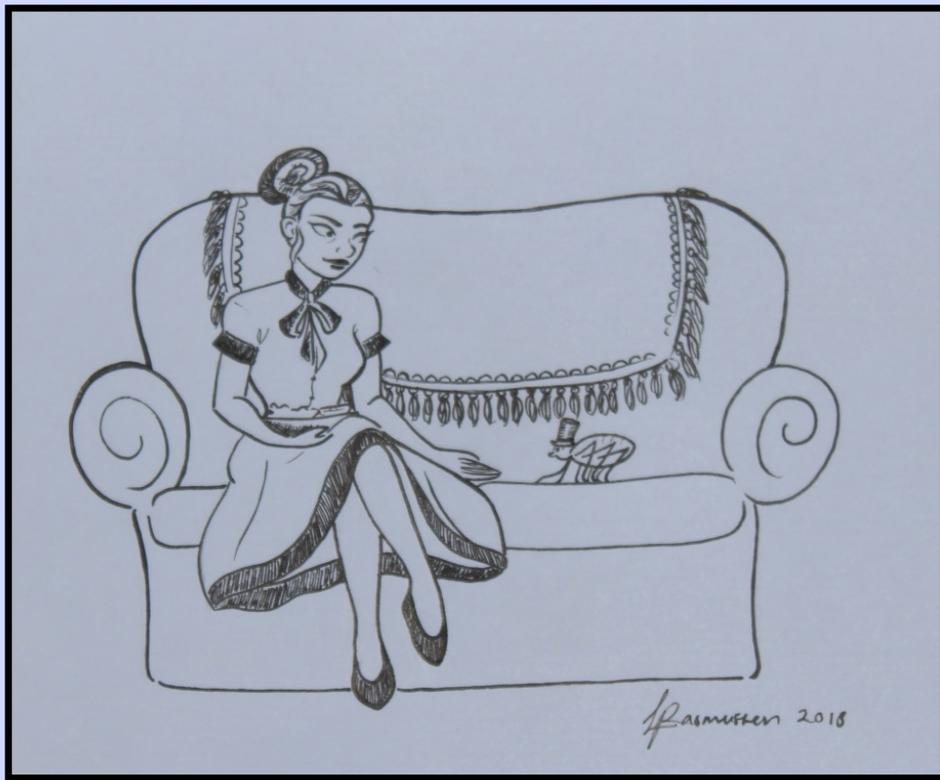


Edward Tauiiil

Mrs Marapolsa

Sat on her sofa
Eating her *falai eleni* and pie
Along came a spider
And sat down beside her
And with her English accent
She turned and said to her hairy friend
Come hither my spidery buddy
So he sat down beside her and
With her spool and webby thread
She spun, spun and spun him
Till he turned beetroot red
and ate him up dry

Leua Latai



Lenora Rasmussen

I miss you

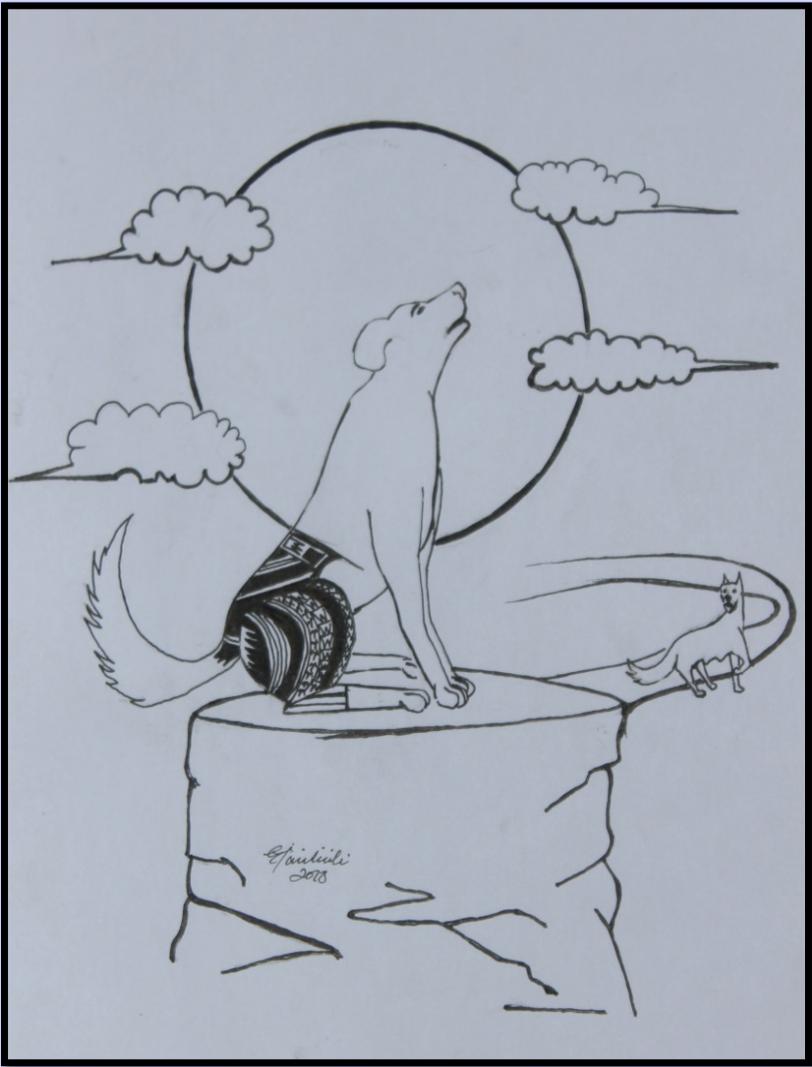
I miss you
In the white foams of the deep blue ocean
The north wind caressing my hair
Against the cold dark clear golden lit heavens
The scent of crimson sunsets and murmurs of
Southerly breezes at dawn beckoning
I embrace the fluttering memories of you
Etched in the velvety scents of the
Blooming trilliums
That you used to pick for me
That you once picked for me

Leua Latai



Paese Papalii

Voices of resistance



Resistance

Academia
Experiences
Equity
Progression difficulties
Barriers obstacles obstructions
Systems to overcome
People to change
Narrowed lenses
Voices suppressed

Bring it on
Strong
Warriors
Systems figured
Barriers obstacles obstruction
Overcame
People challenged
Voices emerging
Loud clear

Academia
Resisted
Conquered
On top
Affirmations declarations
Concrete
Real
Obliterated
Could not be oppressed

Peta (Elizabeth) Winchester Ravlich

Being axed

Is a nerve wrecking game
You play
Now and then
When reminded
Of the axe
Swirling above your head
Glistening in the sun
Just about to nick you
With precision
As it falls on your head

Leua Latai

Constantly axing

(A response to 'Being axed')

Change is the constant
The normal, I am told.
Restructure.
Reshuffle.
Reconstruct.
But no vision.
No guiding strategy.
Change comes.
And then comes again.
It churns.
Stirring up emotions.
But doesn't achieve.
Purpose unfulfilled.
The axe has evolved.
The guillotine has returned.
Fashioned for this world.
Ready, and waiting.

Tim Baice

The neoliberal university

(A response to 'Being axed')

No, you cannot enact your symbolic violence
 on my head and on my heart
Like Maya Angelou, "still I rise"

No, you can't turn me away
 from my passion and my joy
With your promises and lies

I can resist your accountability
 Performativity and mistrust
By looking deep into your eyes

You can measure, you can count,
 you can sort and you can rank
But I know your electronic spies

Call it neoliberalism
 Marketisation or NPM
Oh, yes, we know – we are wise

To your sham of excellence,
 Efficiency and effectiveness
No more, no more – I cut those ties!

Carol Mutch

Health and Safety

I received a notice stating there is a new position at work
A Health and Safety Officer
A couple of weeks later someone installed a fire extinguisher in my office on
behalf of
The Health and Safety Officer
Now and then I would receive email messages from
The Health and Safety Officer
About weather forecasts
Meter boxes and
Air cons that have been fixed

As I was teaching one morning I wondered about this
Health and Safety Officer
And his or her thoughts on issues such as
Un-emptied bins
The lack of soap in the toilets
The flies
The mosquitoes
The stray dogs...
My thoughts were disrupted by loud shouts, from the security guards to “get out
of the classroom”
They were conducting a drill on behalf of the
Health and Safety Officer
In our rush to get away from the classrooms
A colleague of mine slipped on the corridor
In the days that followed, my colleagues and I asked
Where is this Health and Safety Officer?

Anita Latai Niusulu

Typical Tuesday I

5:30 am leave home
6:00 am arrive at the office
Turn on the lights, they work!
Turn on the PC, it works!
Try to print lecture notes, cannot print!
Call IT, no answer
Draft an email, cannot send it
No network, it says
Twiddle my thumbs...
Log into the secretary's computer
Finally print and make copies
9:00am walk to class

Anita Latai Niusulu

Typical Tuesday II

(A response to 'Typical Tuesday')

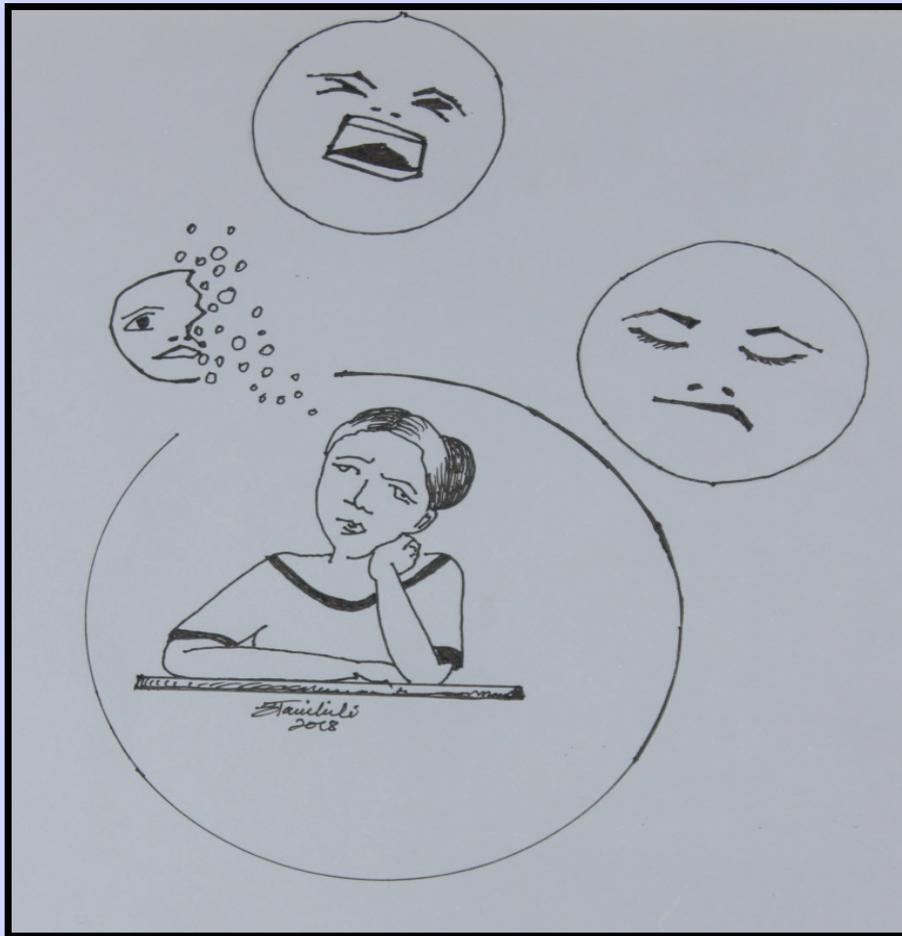
7.00 am leave home.
7.30 am arrive at the office.
Turn on laptop, it has enough battery!
Open up Google Docs, internet works!
Try to print class resources, cannot print.
Call IT, no answer.
Berate self for not printing last night.
Find whiteboard marker, no ink.
Go to stationery room, not open.
Convince colleague to lend me one.
8.45 am arrive at class.
8.46 am "Miss, gotta pen?"

Felicia Ward

Overwhelmed

Recently I have wondered what a bubble feels like
When it realises that it is about to burst!
Will it scream?
Will it close its eyes?
Will it faint?
Or will it just blissfully disappear into thin air?

Anita Latai Niusulu



Edward Tauiiili

Brown skin academics

(A response to 'Overwhelmed')

Brown skin academics
Busting to burst at the seams of
injustice

Brown skin academics
Busting to burst at the seams of
white fragility

Brown skin academics
Busting to burst at the seams of
progressive racism

Brown skin academics
Busting to burst at the seams of
Oppressive gatekeepers

Brown skin academics
Busting to burst at being used as eye candy for the
dominant academic promotions

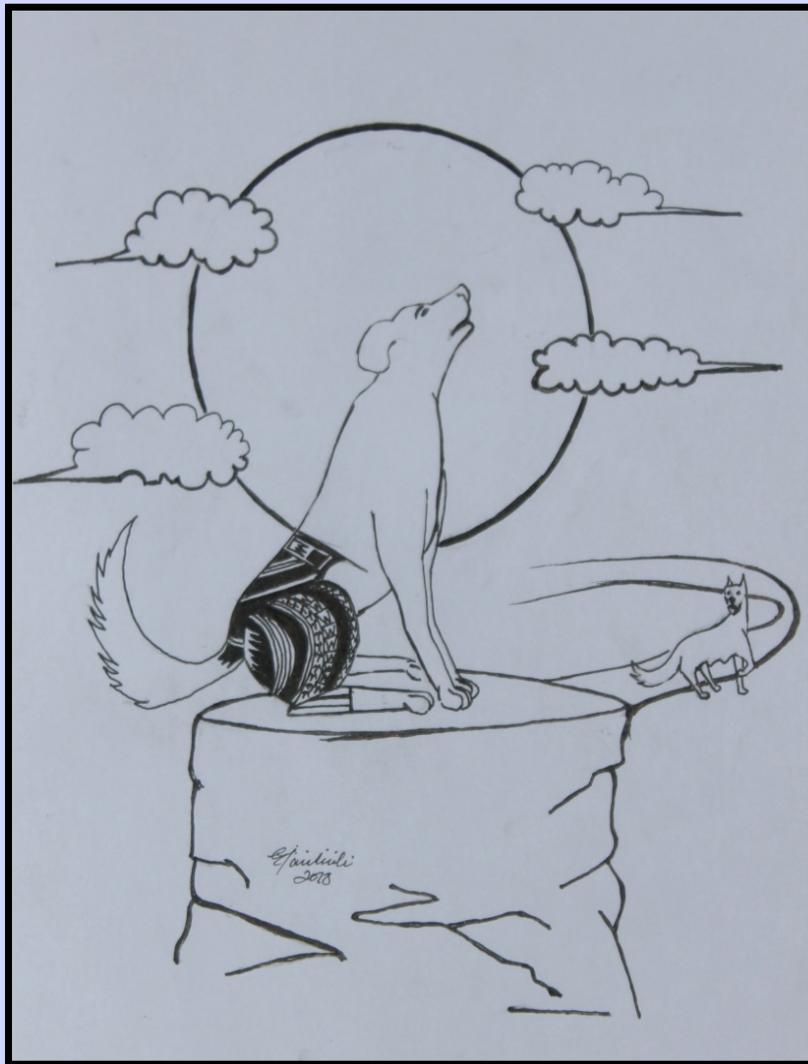
Brown skin academics
Busting to burst

JoFI

Beware

There's an erratic alpha dog
Who lives down the street
He likes to bark all day long
Strutting back and forth
Snarling and yowling at anything and anyone
Swaggering down the neighbourhood thinking he owns the world
His tongue drooling when the she-dogs prowl by
Wagging his tail and snapping his jaws
He's a menace when he's in heat,
So be cautious and wary
When there's a full moon

Leua Latai



Edward Tauiiili

Response to Beware

Be aware
Look out
For full moons
And dogs that howl
Look out for the rich with
their souls to sell
Look out for their bite
Worse
Than the strutting dog's bark

Peter O'Connor

Being Dumb

I could not join in and was barred from discussions
because I am too outspoken
and not good enough
but more than that
I did not know how to wait
Nor understood the process of dumbness
I became very confused
Then I began to feel dumb
I believed that the others perceived me dumb
and maybe they did
I think my peers thought I was dumb too
Maybe they thought they were dumb
And not good enough too
So they didn't say much
In case they were reprimanded and told they were dumb
It allowed for those who thought
I was dumb and my peers were dumb
To continue with the whole charade of dumbness
In an institution where one doesn't say much or being outspoken isn't
encouraged
One begins to think that the two factors are connected

Leua Latai

The nofotane

I am a *nofotane*
I am not a money tree
I can offer assistance
I can also be a BEE.
I am a *nofotane*
And a *paolo* too
Nothing wrong with *tautua*
But I expect it from you.
I came to serve my family
Four lives depend on me
The mortgage to pay, school fees no delay
And a baby waiting for his tea.
I am a *nofotane*
Fa'aaloalo is what I'm told
But please remember *alofa mai*
To those who can be cold.
I am a *nofotane*
Some words still puzzle me
Among them are *ai afu*, *fe'e*
And parasite times three.
I am a *nofotane*
Help - I will provide
Do not abuse me in return
Or else no one will decide.
I am a *nofotane*
I understand your way
Some things are mean and I may scream
And *kuli* you along the way.

Judy-Anne Alexander-Pouono



Edward Tauiiili

My...

Integrity you have robbed
Trust you have ripped
Love you have doubted
Purity you have defiled
Accountability you have invaded
Virtue you have speckled
Courage you have plunged
Faith you have crashed
My world you have crumbled!
My! My! My!

Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright

Faaitiitia le masima i meaai *

O le masima o se minerale taua tele
I le faagaioiina o neura, faamigoiiina o o tatou maso
Ao le faasoasoa lelei o le taamiloga o le vai o tatou tino
Peitai o se minerale e saua tele aua a tele ma ova le masima
Ua oso i luga lou toto, a maualuga la lou toto,
O le a tele le avanoa e maua ai lou fatu i faamai eseese ma le pe o le tino

E lei soona faatusa e le Evagelia le tagata o le masima o le lalolagi,
Ona e iai le faamoemoe ola mo le finagalo o le Atua i le lalolagi
Peitai, a ova ma le 2 poo le 5 kalama o le masima i le aso,
Ua tele le lamatia o i tatou i le toto maualuga, aafiaga o le fatu, pe le tino ma oo
ai i le maliu
O upu a le tusi afai e magalo le masima, e le toe iai sona aoga
Samoa e, tatou tutu faatasi faaitiitia ina ia umi ona aveia i tatou ma masima o le
lalolagi.

Mema Motusaga

* Prize winning poem for the Ministry of Health's commemoration of World Salt Day.

The bane of my existence

You are the bane of my existence
You ridicule
You mock
You put down my efforts
Disrespect
Contempt
Impudent and insolent
You are the bane of my existence

Helen Tanielu



Edward Tauilili

Watch out

There is a lady
Who seems to stand out from the crowd
She speaks too well
Every word spoken
Impresses everyone,
Her tales, marvel anyone
Perhaps all who sits amidst her
Her words raise interest
Confides all of her wisdom
How brilliant and knowledgeable she is of her work
True colours mysterious

Let me warn you, pause and listen
Hear her tales repeatedly,
Comprehend and analyse them properly
Learn it for your sake
A great talker, but no actions
Self praises, crediting herself with
The hard work and sweat of others
Turning leaders against junior employees
Pay much attention
For she lurks here and there
To steal and destroy
SHE is one great REAL PRETENDER
Great talker BUT a champion of no action
So watch out
In case you'll be fooled

Mema Motusaga



Paese Papalii

The greatest, the cleverest

She enters the gates
With a smeared face
A look clothed with warmth, soothing
A soft voice that impresses loving and kindness
Yet very misleading
The referencing of God
During review processes and scolding incidences
Pretending to be as fearful as a shepherd
Claiming to be the greatest, the only cleverest
The one and only with a great and strategic vision
Not just for the Ministry but the whole country
BUT three years has past
Such greatness has been portrayed
In nothing but an act of chopping,
Destroying one core Ministry
Very dear to prominent women
Grandmothers who paved the way
And fought great battles
For women to be recognised and be heard
Now demolished to pieces
Trashed long lasting working relationships
Turning staff against staff
Making others to leave the work they love behind
Three years of been the greatest, the cleverest
Gone with RED LIGHTs all over
Restructure not known,
Redesigning of all programmes
Nowhere to be traced
Blaming staff of being incapable
And causing her distress
Why, oh why the hatred
Unknown bitterness
Has revealed, faded in the beginning
But the continuous agony
Has made it obvious
And has been published, it's now out in the open
The cleverest, the powerful
It's not a sign of greatness
Not an impression of being the cleverest
But a portrait of complete failure
The greatest, Ms Cleverest
Do the right thing, be professional,
Do what a great leader would do
Own up to the mess that you've created
Own up that you came with an agenda
To demolish and destroy
In their incapability according to you
The staff have tried, submitted the work
But you have sat on it

Didn't make the call you should have made
WHY NOW?
Questioned the honesty and transparency of the staff
Were you?
Blaming the staff, to cover up
Your failure to deliver
Playing the blame game, an art you mastered well
Is that justice
What have you done to help your staff
Throughout the three years
Nothing at all, no capacity building
Just hurtful words
Comparing them with you
The ability, possessions, intellect
What type of leader does that?
The cleverest, the greatest
Do the right thing, be professional
Bring them in, talk with them
Tell them how to improve
Release them, so the triple blessings
Of the mighty God
Be in favour for your soul
Your burdened heart is out in the open
Release thy servants
So they may also receive the blessing they deserve
Mad Woman

Mema Motusaga



Paese Papalii

Free (Verse)

The tourist eating opposite me at the restaurant is talking through his white teeth

About disobedient little-big-fat Samoan and Tongan fruit pickers in New Zealand
(which is probably different from Aotearoa)

He likes the Vanuatu and Solomon Island ~~labourers~~ workers like he likes his
wine: bubbly and soft

But never mind about their bums, he says, big bums, big women with big bums
which they sit on at home

He grows his New Zealand till it is bigger than the bloody big Pacific pacified
Ocean;

until my Cordon Bleu is colonised

I try to excuse the man since he is old

I pretend he is walking past/away from me and I say *tulou*:

So I don't stoop *too low* and involve myself in the conversation behind us

The fork doesn't hurt and the knife doesn't hurt the way the piece of bread does,
shattering my teeth into pieces that fall onto a napkin I still can't fold correctly

The man's date is speaking in an accent about how, unlike *those* women, *her*
dresses from four years ago still fit

This pleases the man because he still wears his pants from four (hundred) years
ago

Men don't like women being bigger than them

I drown him out of (and in) the blue of my thoughts

And go to all the best beaches with Dan Taulapapa-McMullen

Who doesn't want (these sorts of) tourists either.

Jasmine Korja

Response to Free (Verse)

Don't excuse me because I'm old
That's no reason
To not know our history
Of this ancient ocean

Don't excuse me for my sins
If I sit here bloated beside the
Slim Blonde
Don't walk past me,
Tell me to my face

I'm old and white in and through
My bones
Tell me you like your tourists
like pebbles on the beach
silent, eventually washed away
leaving no trace

Peter O'Connor

I am “just a teacher”

I am not a celebrity or a political leader,
Neither a cop, doctor, nor a lawyer.
They said I am “just a teacher”
YES, I am a very proud teacher
FOR
I educate students
I uncover their talents
I expand their ideas
I build their characters
I shape their destinies
And guide them to the right careers
BECAUSE
They are future citizens
May be a celebrity, cop, doctor, lawyer
Or even a political leader.

Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright

Teacher?

(A response to ‘I am “just a teacher”’)

Unconventional.

Non-traditional.

“Academic Support?”

Ambiguous.

Superfluous.

Role ill defined.

Peculiar.

Anomaly.

But, fundamental to the success of Pasifika students.

Huh?

Insider sometimes.

Outside more often than not.

Committed to the same cause.

But never on an equal platform.

Tim Baice



Edward Tauilili

Just

(A response to 'I am "Just a teacher"')

Planner
Marker
Administrator
Resource maker

Nurse
Maid
Counsellor
Cake-baker

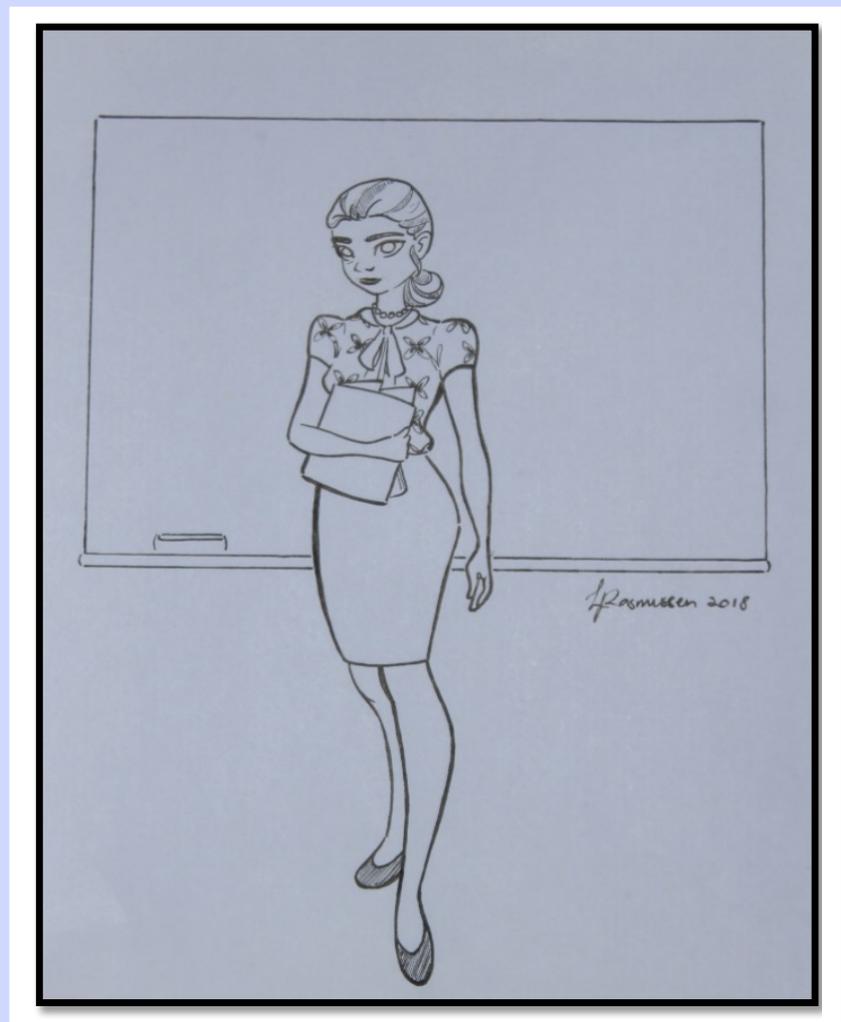
Cobbler
Detective
Seamstress
Cheerleader

Entertainer
Confidante
IT technician
Data-analyser

Bag mender
Cook
Mother
Future-citizen-maker

Just a teacher.

Felicia Ward



Lenora Rasmussen

Voices of injustice



Cyclone Kita

She came screaming out of nowhere
Her fiery mane whipping, uprooting the earth
Tearing the banyan trees blood red with anger
Nails scratching the earth's warm thin-skinned membrane
High pitched screams piercing, accompanied thunder bolts
Thrown against the bleeding sky
Drenching wetness scarring the earth with
Penetrating broken glasses cutting and stabbing the sea-green fields
Her deep moans puncture the seals of the peaceful lagoons
Leaving charred pitch black lesions across the land
And a painful silence in the aftermath of her wrath

Leua Latai



Paese Papalii

Coconut Tree

I envy you for you are solid and free
Every day you face the bashing waves.
Endure the beating rain day and night
Raging storms may come and go,
But solid you stand with no complain
You feel neither sorrow nor pain
Stand tall and strong
In this world full of wrong.

Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright



Lenora Rasmussen

Daughter of Tane: A call to action

I walk along the sea wall

The waves slap against the stones

The seabirds call and wheel skywards

I pause and feel at peace

But out beyond the reef

Tangaroa stirs and calls to me:

You – daughter of Tane!

You and your ‘Pacific Circle’

Your ‘21st century eduscapes’

Your ‘culturally responsive pedagogies’

Your ‘ontologies, epistemologies and axiologies’ – pah!

You – daughter of Tane!

Stop and look at what your words have achieved

My oceans are choked with plastic

My heavens cannot breathe

You trample on your Mother Earth

Your people have lost their way

You – daughter of Tane!

What have you and your Pacific Circle created?

A world of turmoil and grief

A world of conflict and destruction

Where children stare with empty eyes

At passers-by who turn away

With that, the waves crash against my legs

I feel the physical blow

I stand firm but my peace is shattered

My tears salty on my skin

My heart beating in my chest

I turn away

Ashamed

Dejected

A stone catches my eye

I marvel at its clarity

Its transparency

Its resoluteness

No! I cry, *There is still time*

There is still time

We can do it

*There **is** still time*

The sea is suddenly calm

Only a faint whisper remains

Time...

Time...

Time...

Time...

Carol Mutch

Ili le pū – *Hear the call of the conch*

Deep is the sound, felt in your body
Hear the call. Sensations under your skin
Stirring movement in knowing self
Calling upon ancestors, gods, spirit, time and space
Knowing does not belong to you alone

Deep in the earth, the call vibrates
Felt under the feet of those before.
Fanua with its own life forces and flows
Regenerates new life with old.
Knowledge has constraints, unlike the wisdom of fanua

Deep is the breath you take to blow.
The winds around you, share in your breath
To fill your lungs, give life to your blood and brain
Breathe in your knowing, breathe out your wisdom
Generate understanding

Deep are the waters of Oceania
Ili le pū, another voice calls
Waves of unrest, spirit unsettled
Our Oceania is dying, listen to the call
Knowledge has constraints, Oceania speaks
Knowing does not belong to you alone

Jacoba Matapo



Edward Tauliili

Government pipes are brown, red and lead

Government pipes were brown and red
Cylindered, hollow-metal spread ready to spear the dead
Brown red water slashing and rushing for my head
Up I took my baby, to protect from these whipping threads of dread
My son first up in the rafters could only ponder and fear to tread
While my eldest daughter, alive and brave, smiled at me with eyes forever
begged
That I be strong for their fear of the Dead
This shall consume us soon when over our beds
Tomoko, Tame, TC, I said
No matter what happens you pray instead;
Nay, never let go of the rafter you led
And close your eyes when you hear broken pipes and trees banged and bled
Crashing, thundering faith fled
The house shook until 4:30:10
Lelata, oh riverbed
Gone an hour's malevolent bridge bend
Lost broken and unkind friend
How can you torture and slash me without end?
I only ask what justice could recommend
That whoever should have cleared those logs be condemned
And hope you live without end
For immortality of this flooding would live until mend
Hearts of those who suffered and lost their daddies and friend
I now stare to blend
What life there is after Government pipes and dams descend
I whispered quietly to 'them'
"Come my children, let us ascend."

Fa'aafu Ta'ele'asa'asa Matafeo-Yoshida

29 sea smooth stones*

(A response to 'Government pipes are brown, red and lead')

I stand on Rapahoe beach and the sea breathes

In and out

In and out

And I grieve

I grieve for those who are gone

I grieve for a boy whose first day on the job would be his last

I grieve for the man whose beer still waits for him behind the bar

I grieve for the rider who will never sit astride his motorbike dipping low as he corners

I grieve for the young man who travelled the world to end his life in the place he was born

I grieve for the groom who will never wait for his bride to walk down the aisle

I grieve for the miner who stayed to finish a job that will never now be finished

And still the sea breathes

In and out

In and out

And I grieve for those left behind

I grieve for the mother who washes and folds the rugby jersey for the last time

I grieve for the baby who will never be held in his father's arms

I grieve for the little boy who looked up at his mother and asked if this was a bad dream

I grieve for the family who travelled so far but who can never take their son home

I grieve for the wife who turns over in the night to find the bed cold beside her

I grieve for the man who walked out of the mine but whose brother never will

And the sea breathes

In and out

In and out

And 29 sea smooth stones are drawn slowly down to the ocean floor

Carol Mutch

*For the 29 men who perished in the Pike River Mine disaster

Remember my shadow?

There's a greying in the rusty tin today
And a sail at the horizon's cross
There's a drizzle on the grassy green as well
And a chariot going to hell
There is music at Westminster as we speak
And an organ humming on
Trains are on their tracks by now
Drawing sweat from Tommy's brow

There's water in the mud down here
And crocodile skin
Lining the Kokoda Track
Painting all the angels black
There's a bloodied road in Ramu Valley
Where 'Mastah' said to go
So Mr King and Missus Queen
Can dye you all green

There's red sap in the *fale* posts
Right down the lines
Signing enlistment forms after school
Rule Britannia! Rule!
There are marching drills outside the village
Shaped like *tatau* ink
The harbour is a letter:
'Be strong my Feleni, and please get better!'
They're off to paper heaven
With tattered glory wings
Tommy, Fuzzy Wuzzy angel and Feleni fly
On a postcard to say goodbye
To Matilda who they loved
As she whispers quietly
'Come home, Les Darcy, darling!
Come hear the stadium sing.'

Jasmine Korja

I am a free man

My country is a land of God they say
So my children sweat all day in taro patches
And my meagre earnings pay my priests of God
And I am made a free man

My country is a land of God they say
So they beat my son
And leave him half dead on the roadside
But these were sufferings which profited the Good Samaritan
So I am made a free man

My country is a land of God they say
And my rulers war secretly amongst themselves
While my watchmen say that all is well in God's land
But I feed the greed of my men of God
And I am made a free man

My country is a land of God they say
But my children beg into the late hours of bitter darkness
And my limited earnings provide them no education
But my priests thrive on my finest cooked Sunday meals
And I am made a free man

My country is a land of God they say
But my children hunger and weep into the late hours of night
While my ministers sleep with bellies filled with good sustenance
And I am made a free man

My country is a land of God they say
So the rich get richer
And the poor get poorer
And the land of God has become corrupted
But they say that I am a free man

My country is a land of God they say
So their violations are hidden
And their injustices are not disclosed
But they will make me justly pay for my own transgressions
So I can become a free man

Am I truly a free man as though they say?
Does this so called land of God give me true freedom?
My mind questions as my heart feels otherwise
Am I truly a free man?
Again I ask
God give me HOPE

Diana Betham-Scanlan

Comprehending Island Politics

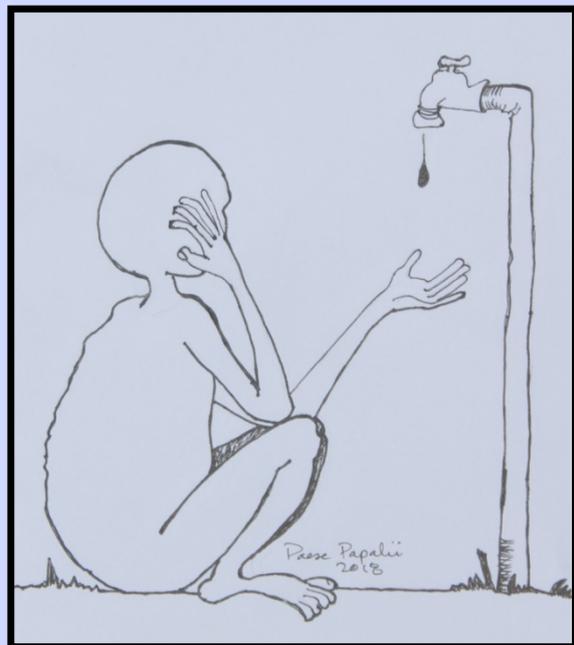
They speak of unfounded fears
Needless worries
Of one-party rule
Of dictatorial style democracies
Of a one-man-band
Singing solo to one beat
The sole performer of the *fa'atafiti, tauluga and aiuli*
They speak of tangible developments
In education, health, infrastructure
Of jobs and opportunities both near and afar
Big Man style patronage systems
Justified by the fa'a-Samoa of village, church and kin
Framed in the Basic Needs Idea
The perfect fusion of western thought and indigenous beliefs
And we believe.

Susana Tauaa

My country is starving

My country is starving
My people are dying
We have many immoral
Contaminated by greed
Infected by perversion
Willing to do anything for money
This for the ministers
This for the police
This for the doctors
This for the services they sell
This for the rich
Ready to abandon their integrity
Ready to sell their souls
While many are dying
Many are starving
Many without
My country is starving

Helen Tanielu



Paese Papalii

Be silent

Be silent
Be silent and don't utter a word
No I won't
I think that's unfair
Be silent
No I have a right to speak
Be silent
Be silent until you're spoken too
But
Be silent those are the rules
What rules?
Everyone knows the rules
Everyone knows you have to follow the rules
You can't speak before you're spoken to
So now it's time to move on
No, I'm not moving at all
I've got a voice and I'm going to use it
I've got a small voice and I'm going to use it
I've got a big voice and I'm going to stand tall and use it
Be quiet

No!
We're coming to speak with you
We're going to add our voices to your voice
We're coming to speak with you
We're going to together make our voice louder
We're going to together make our voices reverberate
We're going to together make our voices thunderous
We're coming to speak with you and stand tall
Until we're heard
And together bring change

Leua Latai

The plea of a refugee child

I'm a child of a refugee
I was forced to flee
From a life of tyranny.
Violence,
Political upheaval,
I see.
I just want to be free.
Please listen to me
This is my plea
Just welcome my family and me
And let us be.
All we need is a place to work
A place to be educated
A home to share
And the luxury of peace.

Judy-Anne Alexander-Pouono



Paese Papalii

Re: Plea

(A response to 'The plea of a refugee child')

Dear Miss C. O. A. Refugee,

We would like to advise that we have received your request.

Unfortunately

Due to a high volume of demand

We are unable to help

At this time.

Unfortunately

Your stated qualifications

Do not match our skill shortages.

Unfortunately

Our classes are full

So we cannot provide you with an education

At this time.

Unfortunately

We already have a housing crisis

And it would not be politically astute

To offer you housing.

Unfortunately

As you can surely appreciate

Our limited resources

Mean that luxuries

Are out of the question.

We appreciate your interest in us.

We wish you all the best

For the future.

Sincerely yours...

Felicia Ward

Who will hear my voice?

I am a survivor
of violence of different forms
Who will hear my voice?

In a space where there should be refuge
and from a person who has power and money
Who will hear my voice?

When he leaves to support the perpetrator
And blames it all on me
Who will hear my voice?

When I am told to shut up
And this is how I am supposed to be treated
Who will hear my voice?

Some are treated like kings and queens
Others treated like servants and slaves
Who will hear my voice?

My children exposed to this
violence, cruelty and savagery
Who will hear their voice?

I am a mother, a daughter, a sister
and a God fearing woman
I was subjected to family violence
Who will hear my voice?

Helen Tanielu



Edward Tauiiil

Tamaitai' thou art loosed

(A response to 'Who will hear my voice?')

In your acknowledgement of the deep violation
towards you and your children...
Tamaitai Thou Art Loosed

In your one word whispered to yourself of
(re)claiming your power...
Tamaitai Thou Art Loosed

In one word spoken to yourself that
You are the daughter of the most high...
Tamaitai Thou Art Loosed

In that one acknowledgement of the deep violation
towards you and your children
You are *heard* !
Tamaitai Thou Art ALL Loosed

In one word whispered of reclamation and power
You are *heard* !
Tamaitai Thou Art ALL Loosed

In one word spoken that
You are the daughter of the most high
You are *heard* !
Tamaitai Thou Art ALL Loosed

In one sentence written,
One stanza published
One word read
A breath of utterance...
Tamaitai you are heard
Heard to heal
Heard and healing
Tamaitai Thou Art Loosed

JoFI

Will I hear your voice?

(A response to 'Who will hear my voice?')

I have heard your voice
Long loud clear insistent persistent
Demanding my fullest
Attention
I understand your intention
For
I hear you sing, chant, rhyme, condemn, praise, pray
Will I hear your voice
Calling, shaming, naming, but not
Blaming
Your voice
Whispering, cajoling, begging, forgiving
Will I hear you voices
So mine might be in tune
With
Yours
I am your father, your son, your brother

Peter O'Connor

Thoughts of a father...

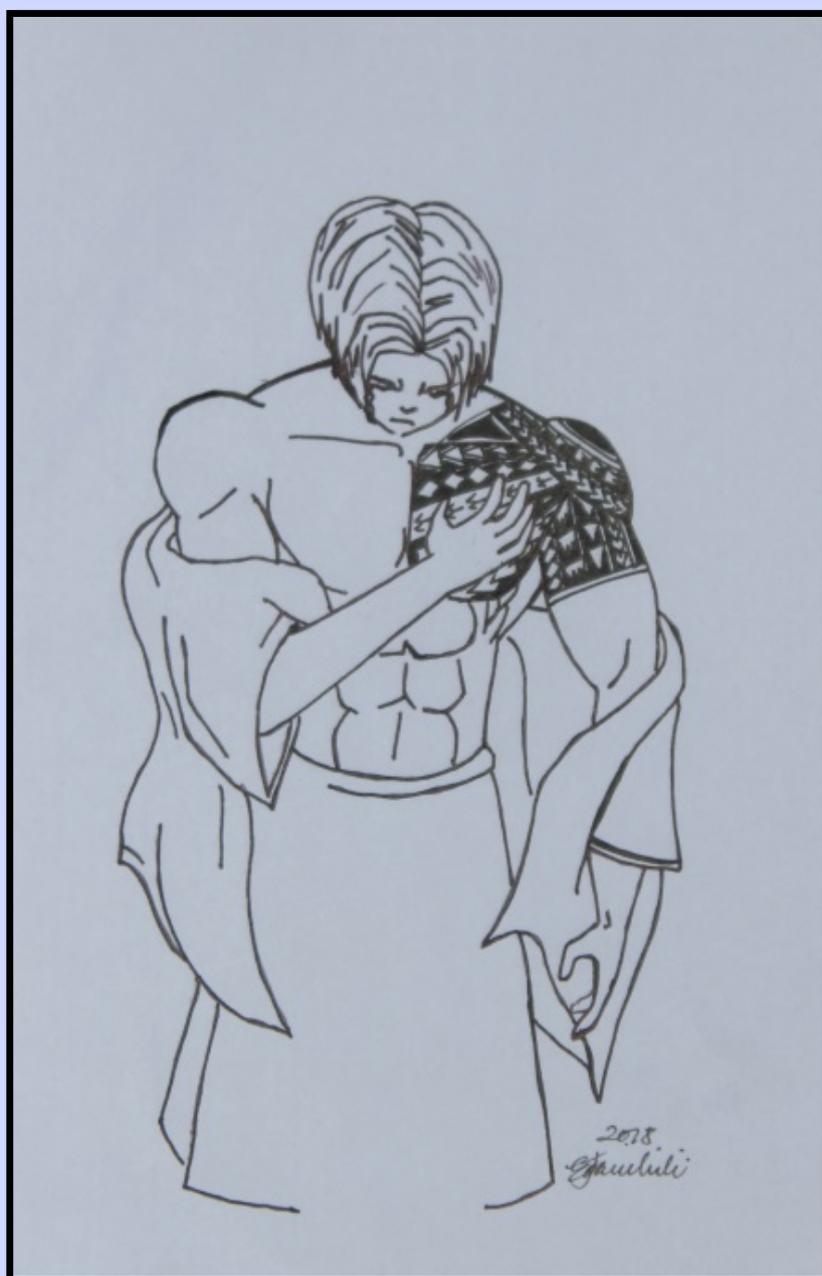
I took it upon my own self; that if I was a father,
I would give it all; (even if it meant being poor)
Even, if it meant moving into the in-law territories of indignity...
Trying to please them with my Tautua...
After ten years,
ga o le papatua o le solofanua!

I have served (seeing the eyes of my children)
It's in them, my peace of mind and satisfaction lay,
For a short time, there are moments, but
Words that only become dried up,
I would hate myself for it, to realize;
I was still the fool to her illusions...

Now, I, the abused,
Have become the abuser, the holder of the broom!
When her family held it, it was considered their God-given authority
Now, I'm putting my foot down, it is considered abuse?
Even if I have won, it is my heart that is at stake;
And my decisions: will they influence my children's fate?

Rooney Mariner

Voices of love



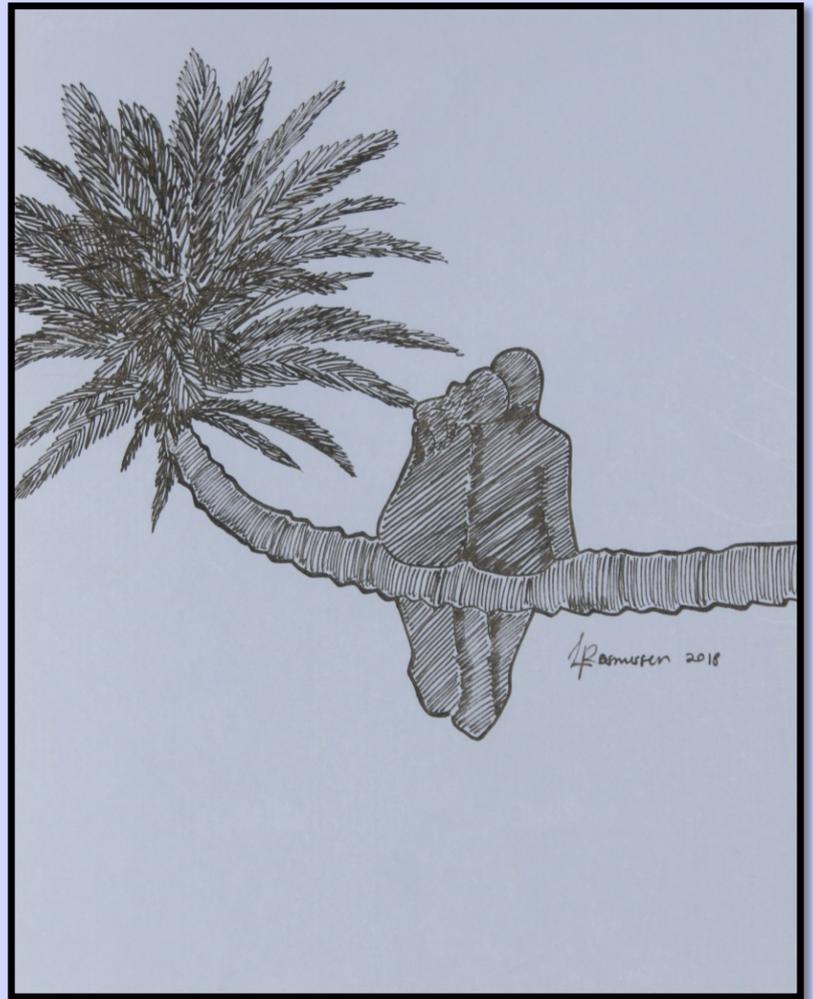
Love

Beginnings
Starry eyed
Rising emotions
From head to toe
Cannot breathe
Longings
Searching
Consuming
All yours

Mistakes?
Spoken words
Hurtful stinging
Heart shattered broken
Sliced within
Emotions
Unrecovered
Lost
No longer yours

Ultimate
Looking beyond
Questioning
Man on wood
Answers
Come
Approach
My love
Eternally yours

Peta (Elizabeth) Winchester Ravlich



Lenora Rasmussen

Oranges and apples

I have a niece
By the name of laeli
Who loves oranges and apples
Her huge brown almond eyes would light up
Followed by a squeal of delight
Transforming her face into blissful pleasure
If you happen to hand her an apple or an orange
Tatala tatala her word for “peel”
Impatient to wait
She grabs the apple or orange
And with exasperation and impatience
She digs in orange peel and all
Devouring it with insatiable pleasure
Savouring each morsel
With utter delight

Then with innocence looks at you for more!

Leua Latai

Shopping List

Two packets of smiles
One longing glance
Three started sentences
A quiet wistful trance
Two trays of thoughts
A quietly closing book
Two stretched out arms
And a hopeful look
One gentle touch
Two quiet sighs
I fold into your arms
As I close my eyes

Carol Mutch

My beautiful centipede

I marvel at your hundred legs,
That scuttles a willowy glassy fawn phenomenon,
across the ground.
With twinkling upraised masts,
Salutes my commonness.
And I retorted in a shameful cowardly shriek,
So my sister, sightless of your splendour
Would seek a sandal
To kill you,
For me

Louise Mataia Milo



Paese Papalii

Space

Overcrowding is like a box with too many other boxes inside it

People	These
Are	people
Everywhere-	are
In	your
The	kin:
Hallway	Who
And	is
Around	going
The rooms...	to
Even	tell
Behind	Great-aunt
The	to
doors	move
	WHERE?

Three's never a crowd in the third world

Jasmine Koria

Raindrop

A raindrop fell from the skies
Clinging to the tip of my nose
Kissing my lips
On its way downwards
Losing its grip
It gently slid off my chin
Leaving a hint of heaven
On my dry parched lips

I closed my eyes softly
And fell in love with
Its pristine blissful after taste

Leua Latai



Edward Tauiilili

Suasusu o le Tina

(Taufaga Solo Ministry of Health mo le faamanatuina o le Vaiaso e faatau ai le Suasusu o le Tina)

Le Suasusu o le Tina
Lou nafa tausī na toina mai i le lagi
E te tausī ma faapelepele ai le oloa taua, o lou tofi mai ia Tagaloaalagi
Minerale agagata ma tautele
Mo le oloa taua na foaina mai le Atua
O le suasusu o le tina na te puaina le manava ma le ola
Faavaeina sootaga mafanafana
Tautinoga o le alofa pulu naunau o le tina mo lana tama
Na te puaina le alofa e le matineia,
Ae a le poto ma le atamai e le mafai e se toa ona aveeseina
Ao le soifuaga fiafia ma le saoloto
Faavae mausali mo le ola tuputupu ae mo soo se tamaitiiti

Tina o lou suasusu
O le minerale taua lea mo le faafaileleina o lau tama i taimi o pepe
E soifua maloloina, laititi ai asiasiga i maota gasegase
E tupu mai le poto ma le atamai ma tulaga lelei ai taumafaiga a soo se tamaitiiti i
aoga
E faaitiitia ai le ono aafia i le faamai oti o le kanesa ma faamai pipisi
E taugofie ma faigofie aua o le meaalofoa foai fua mai e le Atua
E leai sau galuega e faia iai aua e mafanafana ma saogalemu i taimi uma
Sei tautua na ma oe ina ia faaoga tatau mo le soifua maloloina o si au tama
E le gata ina tele le taua mo le pepe
Ae aoga foi le galueaina o le suasusu o lou suasusu
E tuuitiitia ai aafiaga o oe mama mai faamai le pipisi
Ma toe faamafolafola ai lou fika lalelei
Ia foliga tutusa ma le vaitau ao lei fanauina pepe.

Manuia le faamanatuina o le Vaiaso e faatau ai le Suasusu o Oe le Tina

Mema Motusaga



Edward Tauiiili

A new heart

Create in me, a new heart
So I can see more of you
Learn more of your throne
Know more of your wonders

Search me oh Lord
Heal my aches, my wounds and my brokenness
Sanctify my heart
Cleanse me oh God
Purify my soul

Make for me a new beginning
Create for me a new memory
Most of all, create in me a new heart
A new heart, so I can see
Your righteousness

A new heart so I can see things, in your lenses
So I can forgive, seventy seven times
So I can give freely and endlessly
A new heart so I can love durably
So I can prosper in your awe
And so I can grow afresh in your magnitude.

Mema Motusaga



Edward Tauiili

You are

Oh Lord my God
How wonderful are you
How marvellous thou art
For you are
The Lord of Lords
King of all kings
God of all gods
You are worthy
You are worthy
You are worthy
To be glorified

Oh Lord my God
How wonderful are you
You brought me out
Of thy darkness
Shed light unto my soul
Now I am saved
Glory, glory
Glory to your name
May your name be praised, magnified
On earth and in the Heavens

Oh Lord my God
How wonderful thou art
For you have been
So faithful, to thy servant
In my loneliness
In my sorrows
In my frustrations
Moments of despair
In my pains, my struggles
My successes
You were always there
Oh how marvellous
YOU ARE

Mema Motusaga

Lou Tina

Na e tauave ia te au i masina e iva
Na e onosai i puapuaga o le tauaveina o au
Na e fanaua au ma le tiga
Peitai e te lei faafiti pe faavaivai ai lou alofa mo au
Na e fa'apelepele ma fa'afailele au
I le fia o tausaga
Na e onosai ma o loo onosai pea lo'u faalogogata
Lo'u faitio ma ou faaletonu

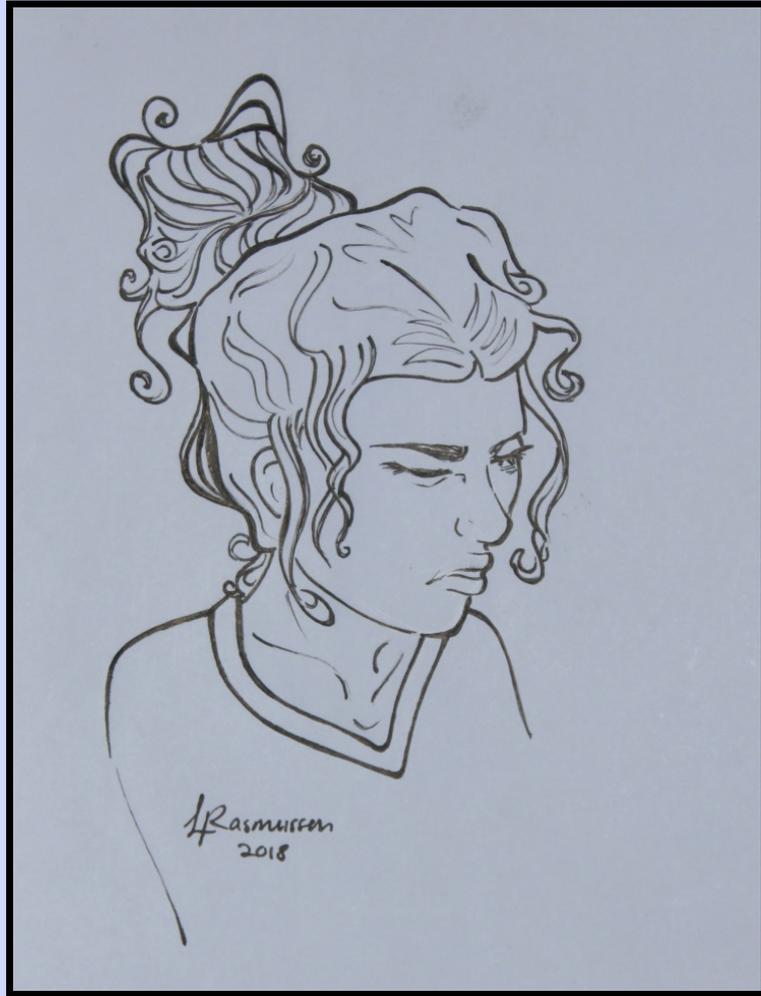
O oe o le alofa,
E le mafai ona faatusaina, e le muta
O le malamalama e susulu
Taimi e taugalemu ai ma taimi ou te malosi ai
O le mafanafana
Ou te sulu iai i ou mafatiaga
O le punavai
Ou te sulufai iai i lou galala

I le lelei ma le le lelei
E fai oe ma ou talita
E te faatau moa i taimi uma ina ia ou ola
E te togiola i au amio leaga
E te faatonu folau
I vaega e vaivai ma ela ai lau vaai
Tina ea,
Maeu le tele naua o lou alofa

O lou alofa
O Lou onosai
O Lou faapalepale
O Lou loto maualalo
O lou taupati ma finau tiga le mativa
O lou maosiosia
Ma ou tauau gagase
Ua ou saa ai i maa o malie
Tina ea, faafetai faafetai tele

A leitoa faatusa oe i maa taua ma penina tautele
A leitia saafi le fai salamo, tina lelei e o ai se ua ia maua
Leitia a faatusa oe i le Ola
Aua na e olaina ma puaina se isi ola
Leitia fai le upu a le atunuu
Ma faatusa tapenaga uma i tapenaga faafafine toaga
Tina ea, e atoatoa au tapenaga
O lou alofa e le mafai ona ou faamatalaina.
Faafetai, faafetai, faafetai tele lava

Mema Motusaga



Lenora Rasmussen

Emma

A soft billowing whisper blows through our corridors
Gentle, calming anxious nerves
Graceful, undemanding, pleasant and kind
At moments when full of doubts, anxiety plagues
Your composure a soothing anecdote
Dissolving the cruelty of vicious mellifluous spitefulness
Your gentle sympathy easing
The harshness of cold calculating
Egotistical ambitions of cowardly dominance

Leua Latai

The thought of you

God gifted me with four gorgeous young olives
The most precious and expensive gift on earth
Grace Talei: The choice of my heart
The evidence of God's mercifulness and grace over my life
And my journey in the darkest valley
Uelese Jason Tau: my only son
Elegant, unique in his own ways
laneta Hadassah: the princess-like
The connector, strong-headed young woman
The one who gave me the inner strength
The energy and enthusiasm to start my PhD well
The one who speaks the truth
Victoria Leaso: the congratulatory present
For finishing our Melbourne journey well
The one that bridges the gap of adapting back to returning home
The hardships of coming back to start up again from scratch
Hence her independent nature
Carries herself with pride
The one who has a helping heart
TODAY as I am halfway
Through my journey to Canberra then to Melbourne
My heart is aching, weeping
For I miss you all very much
It's weird travelling without you, my fantastic four
As we have always done the last six years together
Today, I will bow and pay tribute to you
Remembering the sacrifices you have made
So that I can read and write in a foreign land
Allowing me to be absent from the most important window of learning for any
child
So I may finish our calling that we left home for
Your joy was my motivation
Seeing you for five minutes was my inspiration to fight on
Grace, Uelese, laneta and Victoria
I miss you all
I am indebted to God for gifting me with you
May you grow up to be children who fear God
Today I pay tribute to the sacrifices you have made
Thank you and Mummy misses you all.

Mema Motusaga

My Aly Girl

My cuddling princess
My escort
My teacher
My helper
My baby
Growing into a tough youth
But has a soft heart that liquefies my soul
Oh how I will miss you when you go
Please hurry back
I love you my child

Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright



Paese Papalii

My choice

(Dedicated to my eldest daughter: Grace Talei Misilei)

Glossy skin, black curly hair
Brown eyes, intact figure
You the choice of my heart

You my first child
My first experience of motherhood
And to all the mistakes of being a young parent

People have questioned your existence
Your colour, your natural beauty
Your loving and caring nature

You have grown to be a fine individual
Talented, intelligent and gifted yet very humble
You the choice of my heart

You the living testimony
Of God's grace and unfailing love
For me your mother, us your parents

I pray for God's hand upon your life
I pray that you are able to forgive your mother's
shortcomings
In raising you my darling daughter

Whatever questions that come your way
I want you to know
That you are the choice of my heart

You are God's precious gift for me
The living testimony of God's enduring love
Hence your names GRACE and TALEI

You are the choice of my heart
I love you and will love you
Until my last breath

Mema Motusaga



Paese Papalii

Mother's love ...

Deeper than deep the sea,
Higher than the tallest trees
Knows no boundary,
Demands no salary
Works 24-7 without a whine
Mother's pure love divine

Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright

My Lourita J

Today you are turning 8,
Taking a step of faith
In obedience to the Master's call
To be baptised in his precious
name

May our Heavenly Father pour out
his blessings
Upon your life everyday
So you may walk in his ways

Keep trusting in the Lord
No matter what you face
Keep Jesus Christ in your life
And live in his sweet grace.

Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright



Lenora Rasmussen

O Sumu ma le pusa lavalava

E nofo Sumu i lona aiga faatasi ma ona tuafafine e toalua ma a la fanau. Ua tetea ma lona toalua, o le teine o le nuu tuaoi ae toafa la la fanau. O le teine matua ma le tama laitiiti ua i Niu Sila, a o le isi toalua oloo †Samoa nei lava. Ua nofomau foi i Niu Sila le teine sa la nonofo.

Na 85 aso o alu Sumu e malaga-i Niu Sila e asiasi-† i lana fanau † i Aukilani, ona faatonu lea o lona afafine oloo nofo lava † i le aiga o lo latou tina e tapena atu lana pusa lavalava e i ai uma ona solo taele, ieafu ma ona lavalava e tuu ia te ia sei toe foi mai Niu Sila ona toe aumai lea. Na sau le taavale a le toalua o lona afafine e ave atu le pusa.

Ua alu fiafia le alii, aua o lea toe feiloai ma lana fanau, ae silisili ai le fiafia i le avanoa e toe mafuta ai ma le fanau a lona afafine ua fai si leva o valavala ma nai tamaiti. E mafana tele la latou mafutaga ma tamaiti nei e toatolu, e toalua tama ae toatasi le teine, aua na fananau uma i Samoa. Ua aloalo fiafia mai foi tamaiti i le malaga a lo latou tama matua. Soo se taimi lava e malaga atu ai, e matala ai foi ni isi tulafono a lo latou tina e saisaitia ai latou. E le gata i lena e tele foi nofoaga 86 aso na ave i ai latou e tafafao ai.

Na toeitiiti atoa le tausaga o le tafaoga, aua ua faigata foi ona taumavae ma le fanau. O le isi foi itu ua tele le fesoasoani i si ona afafine i le vaaiga o lana fanau ma nofo i le fale, a o toesea i galuega. Peitai ua matua lagona le toe fia foi mai i Samoa i ona nafa faatamatane i lo latou aiga. E malaga ua toeitiiti opo uma le fanua i Saumalefala i talo, fai, ufi ma fualaau aina. E aumai pea iai lona mafaufau i eleele sa galulue mai ai matua ua mavae atu. O lo latou faasinomaga, ma a valetuulima e iu lava ina faoa, aua e iai lava le aumatapopoto-i mea nei o fanua e pei o lo latou tuaoi. E le gata i lea ua amata ona puta ona e le lava lana gaioioi aua e le taitai faatusalia le mamafa o ana galuega i lana faatoaga ma galuega oloo ia faia nei i Niu Sila.

Na mautu le tonu i le isi aso ole a toe foi mai Sumu i Samoa. E eseese lava lagona i lea taimi, aua e ui i le faanoanoa i le motusia o la latou mafutaga ma si ana fanau, a o lea toe oo mai i Samoa i lona aiga ma ana galuega e **masani** ai. Na taumavae ma si ana fanau i loimata.

Ua fiafia le taunuu mai i fanua. O Samoa lava e tasi pei e lei alu ese i le iva masina. Sa api i le isi potu o lo latou fale palagi, ae sei tapena lelei lona faleoo ua leva ona tuua. Na maea alu e vaai lana fanau ma tufa lona oso, ae sei aumai lana pusa lavalava ma ana mea e fa'aaoga. Na tuu i ai le tupe e totogi ai se taavale e aumai ai lana pusa. Ua fiu e tatali le pusa ona toe alu lea i ai. E vaai atu lo latou aiga o tosotoso mai le uilipaelo oloo faatietie mai ai le pusa lavalava. Na ave i le taavale ae foi mai i le uilipaelo! Na tagi talatala Sumu ona na ave atu le pusa o tumu i solo, ieafu ma lavalava, ae foi mai ua augapiu ma se mea i totonu. Ua gaogao le pusa! O aga faiaso lava nei a fanau i matua, ae na o le ote lava o matua e tau atu ai le le fiafia peitai e faigata e le o ni isi o fanau.

Na toe tau amata le aiga o Sumu i aluga, ieafu ma solo na ave ane i ai e ona tuafafine. O le faiga lava lea o aiga, e felagolagomai aemaise i taimi e moomia ai le fesoasoani. E laki foi ona na sau ma lana atopau tumu i lavalava mai lana fanau i Niu Sila.

Metita Va'afusuaga

Love poem

Love is a simple word
But its meaning is not
When it holds all your dreams and hopes

Love is an angry word
When it is carelessly thrown
With the aim to hurt and maim

Love is a gentle word
When you hold your newborn
Cradled in your arms

Love is a dizzying word
When you look at each other
And the world stands still

Love is a bitter word
When the light has dimmed
And the ashes grown cold

Love is a liberating word
When you choose
To let your soul fly free

Love is a harsh word
When it is bound in duty and honour
And traps you in a prison

But with you...

Love is a calming word
It soothes my fears
And gives me strength

Love
is
you

Carol Mutch

Now or never

I've gone to many funerals
AND what a shame!
That we always wait,
Until our loved ones are called upon,
Then we declare our love.
We had all the time and years;
But never say how we feel.

SO,

If you want to say I love you,
Say it Now!

If you want to say thank you,
Say it Now!

If you want to say I am sorry,
Say it Now!

If you want to give a hug,
Hug Now!

If you want to give gifts,
Give Now!

Often times we say
I'll do it tomorrow.

BUT

Life is too short
There might not be a tomorrow.

SO

DO IT NOW!

Ioana J. Ah Hoy Wright

Response to Now or never

It's now or never
Reach over
take me by my hand
Tell me you love me
Tell me I'm yours
Tell me
It's now or never
I'll look only for a moment more
If you want me
I'm yours
I'll tell you
It's now or never
forever more.

Peter O'Connor

About the poets

Ioanna J. Ah Hoy Wright. I am a Lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the National University of Samoa. Poetry gives me an opportunity to communicate my emotions. It is therapy for my soul.

Judy-Anne Alexander-Pouono. I am currently a Lecturer in the English and Foreign Languages Department at the National University of Samoa. I write poetry as a form of social commentary.

Tim Baice. I am from Sataoa, Safata and Siufaga, Falelatai. I work as the Pasifika Success Coordinator in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland. This was my first time writing poetry. Jacoba has encouraged me to use poetry as another avenue to express my thoughts and feelings. Since this initial endeavour into poetry, I have submitted two other poems in celebration of International Human Rights Day (December, 10th).

Diana Betham-Scanlan. I studied in several areas at different universities. I completed my master's degree in Educational Leadership at the Auckland University of Technology. I am currently an English Lecturer at the National University of Samoa. I love writing poetry as it provides inspiration and healing for me and it enlivens my soul.

Claudia Rozas Gómez. I teach in the School of Critical Studies in Education at The University of Auckland. Prior to that I taught secondary English in South Auckland. I am originally from Iquique in the north of Chile, a small port nestled between the Atacama Desert and the Pacific Ocean. I enjoy trying to write about the thing without writing about the thing, which is kind of like poetry on a good day.

Fetaui Iosefo (JoFI). I am the daughter of Sua Muamai Vui Siope and Fuimaono Luse Vui Siope. I am a Samoan woman born and raised in Aotearoa, the land of my cousins. Poetry is part of my DNA. It is their norm passed through their ancestors and it is my sacred duty to pass on and with my aiga. I work for the University of Auckland as a Professional Teaching Fellow at the Manukau campus.

Jasmine Korias. I am an English lecturer at the National University of Sāmoa. I'm physically present in Apia, Samoa but my heart lives wherever the books I read take me. I began writing poetry at twelve years old, when my father scribbled the phrase 'cause-effect-solution' on one of my neglected schoolbooks.

Anita Latai Niusulu. I teach Geography at the National University of Samoa. I find poetry 'liberating' as it allows me to express my thoughts freely without the confines of grammar, law and society in general.

Leua Latai. I am an artist, poet and an educator. I am a Senior Lecture at the Faculty of Education -Teacher Education Department at NUS. I teach Art History and Visual Art Education. Poetry frees my soul and inspires me to breathe one day at a time.

Matafai Rooney Mariner. I am a Lecturer in English for the English and Foreign Languages Department at NUS. I write poetry to express what I cannot say out loud. I write about my life experiences. Poetry to me is life, love, struggles, promises, identity and faith. It is one of my greatest passions; writing and expressing poetry.

Fa'aafu Ta'ele'asa'asa Matafeo -Yoshida. I am a lecturer in Sociology and Anthropology in the Social Science Department of the National University of Samoa. I am Samoan and have lived in Samoa all my life. The poem I wrote was based on the heartache and wrath I felt in the aftermath of Cyclone Evan and the flash floods in December 2012, that happened right next to our house where my family lived next to Lelata River. I hope it will never happen again.

Sau'i'a Louise M.T. Mataia Milo. I teach History at the National University of Samoa. Poetry is the language that consoles and inspires me to journey through the changing tides of history.

Jacoba Matapo. My journey in Pacific education is woven as a collective fabric (lalanga) connected to fenua and my ancestors, which I celebrate through poetry. I am a Samoan/Pasifika academic and am the Associate Dean Pasifika at the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland.

Mema Motusaga. I am a gender specialist, a practitioner and an advocate of human rights. I served the Government of Samoa for many years through the Ministry of Women, Community & Social Development. I am a Senior Lecturer for the Faculty of Business & Entrepreneurship and the Centre for Samoan Studies at the National University of Samoa. Poetry is one of my hobbies.

Carol Mutch. I am an associate professor in the School of Critical Studies in Education at the University of Auckland. I am originally from the West Coast of New Zealand's South Island but reside in Canterbury and commute weekly to Auckland. Poetry is not something I can control. It wells up and demands to be heard. I am merely its scribe.

Peter O'Connor. I am a professor of education in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland. I make and research theatre in and along the margins. When attempting to live a poet's life I sometimes write poems and share them.

Peta (Elizabeth) Winchester Ravlich. I am of Cook Island, French, Tahitian and English descent. Educated and brought up in Rarotonga before moving to New Zealand after getting married. Mentor and tutor for Pasifika students at the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland. My forté is Early Childhood Education. I love writing poetry because I can express myself honestly in a manner where words are careful chosen to encompass a variety of emotions.

Helen Tanielu. I am a Sociology and History lecturer and head of the Social Sciences department, Faculty of Arts, National University of Samoa. I hail from the Samoan villages of Vaiala, Moataa, Saleaula, Satoalepai, Safotu and the Tokelauan Island of Atafu. Poetry is my way of expressing the emotional

meanderings of a mind and soul trying to seek refuge in an often-harrowing world. It is a solace.

Susana Taua'a. I am an associate professor in Geography at the Faculty of Arts, NUS. Writing poems is a challenging exercise and one of the many things on my 'bucket list' that I needed to achieve. Now, that I have two poems published, I will not stop.

Metita Va'afusuaga. I am a language linguistics lecturer and I teach Samoan Language and Culture at the Faculty of Education, National University of Samoa. Writing poetry and short stories is a favourite hobby of mine.

Felicia Ward. I am a high school English teacher and Masters student at the University of Auckland. Poetry is one of the most beautiful, yet most misunderstood forms of art. It allows for the poet to reflect on, question and challenge what is happening in the world.

About the artists

All artists are students at the National University of Samoa.

Paese Papalii: I am a first year Foundation Certificate student with the Faculty of Education. I enjoy drawing and painting. I am very interested in the Arts and hope to pursue a career in teaching and continue with a degree in Art Education at the National University of Samoa.

Lenora Rasmussen: I am Lenora Rasmussen. I am 18 years old and a undergraduate student at the National University of Samoa. I major in English and minor in Visual Arts. I have a passion for art and plan to one day make a career out of it especially in the fields of photography, animation and graphic design.

Edward Tauilili: I am a first year Foundation Certificate student at the National University of Samoa and hope to pursue a degree in Fine Arts and continue with a career as an illustrator and professional artist.

