

SKINNY dip

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poetry

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ANNUALink

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TERM 1



Free verse

school sucks but at least ur friends are there

u can only walk around the suburbs so often on bright days so hot
the concrete crackles n text ur friends at malls and fields and malls again

before u start to get bored of running
out of things to do &

miss the lush red first kiss of a fresh 1B5
and the girls in ur class with lip gloss scented stationery

& the boys who draw on their mates legs with sharpies &
also i guess learning new things everyday

school sucks but all my friends are there
spreading colds as quick as climate change

no one shares germs with me in the holidays

in the holidays my outside voice wears jeans with grassy knees
& watches compilation youtube videos on the highest volume

& i walk around the suburbs on days so hot the ice block
drips down my wrist with sticky fingers it feeds the crackling concrete

Vanessa Mei Crofskey



Begin with a mountain (山).

I remember shimmering peaks beyond the harbour back home,
Taratua, sugar-dusted on winter-blue mornings.

I remember a mountain hiding behind clouds above the town
where Mum grew up, Kinabalu, sacred mountain.

Begin with a body of water (水).

Dad took me walking every Sunday down by the Waikanae estuary,
where sand cliffs crumbled into the current.

Dad came here when he was little, too, where the river meets the sea,
where Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai are guardians of the land and water.

Where are you from?

I'm always avoiding the question.
I can give you the long answer or the short.

I was born in the city where rare yellow pōhutukawa drop
their lemon threads along the shore, where her aloes

spread themselves over the gravel, where congee simmers
on the stove and rain falls sideways on the hills.

Where are you really from?

Tauiwi means *visitor, foreigner, one who comes from far away*.

Hakka 客家人 means *guest people*.

Pākehā, tauiwi, Hakka, Chinese.

I hold all of them in me.

Where are your ancestors from?

Aunt Maureen drew a family tree. It begins in London in 1839
with Charles Plummer Powles and in Tasmania, 1845,

with Eliza Cay Adams. He proposed to her
inside a cream-coloured house at no. 22 The Terrace
while she was doing the dusting.

Remember how you came to be here.

I tried to draw a family tree but I couldn't untangle the roots.
When my grandmother, a young girl, stepped onto the boat

that would carry her across the South China Sea,
some records and memories were lost to the deep.

Acknowledge the people who were here long before you.

Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika, who travelled south
in waves of migration from their ancestral home of Taranaki

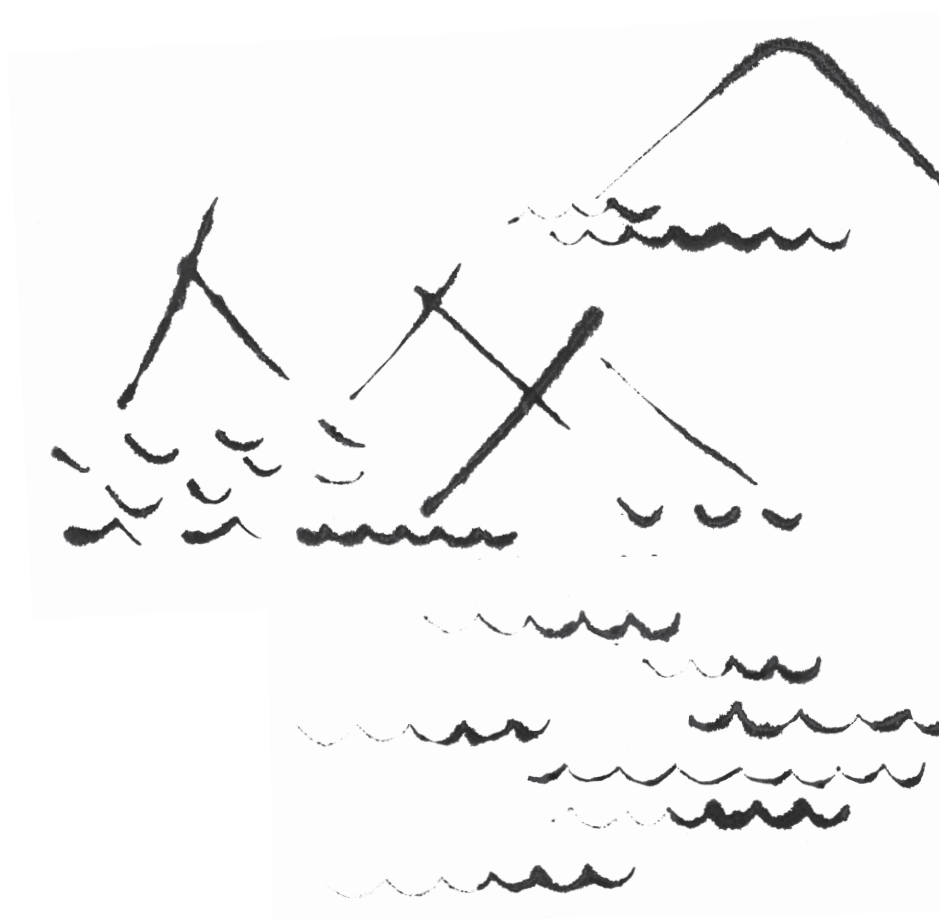
to Te Whanganui-a-Tara — who were then forced out
of Te Aro and Pipitea by the English.

Acknowledge this land that has welcomed you home.

Put 山水 together and you can see the harbour:
its cold waves, small islands.

They don't belong to me but I belong to them.
Some of us carry oceans wherever we go.

Nina Mingya Powles



Lunchtime Offence

In assembly, we are told bullrush
is banned.

So we crouch by the trees
hunt black beetles in the grass
yell and sprint
with fistfuls

to shove down shirts.

Lucy grabs Bao by the collar

Max tackles Thomas

I jump

on top.

Is that bullrush

you're playing? Mrs Moffat

stands over

our body tangle, her mouth

in a line.

Nah, we say,

brushing green-stained

knees.

Beetle crush.

Amy McDaid

x

x

z

Straying Focused

AM — Another Monday. On the
board: *Brainstorm BODMAS and give examples.*
Could BODMAS be to do with
diet? Isn't body mass a thing?
Every Good Boy Deserves
Fruit. All Cows Eat
Grass. Those are mnemonics. AHARS (Acronyms
Help Aaron Remember Stuff) is an acronym.
I just invented it. And
JIT-it. I often Just-In-Time it.
KISS stands for Keep It Simple Stupid, but,
LOL, lots of mnemonics don't. Does
My Very Extravagant Mother Just Sent Us
Ninety Parakeets help you list
our solar system's planets? Pluto's not even a
planet now. Could it be an acronym? I mean
Qantas stands for something.
Radar, laser, sonar, and
scuba are acronyms too. Saying
the letters is an initialism, e.g., TV, TGIF, and
USA. Remember Richard Of York Gained Battle In
Vain or Roy G. Biv? There's a rainbow outside now.
Where does it end? What's the question again? WYSIWYG.

James Brown