

The seco

I knew she loved the other kids too. That was Nanny. Everybody loved her. Sometimes she'd reach for her tobacco and roll one of her thick smokes. They always made her cough. The smoke smelt funny and it lingered in the room with the smell of Nanny's Lavender water. And I'd go to sleep with my nose full of the smell that was her.

...the fire burns, the flame glows, I am warmed by it. The flame begins to flicker, the flame begins to waver....

I didn't know what a 'T.V.' was. We didn't have one. Nanny had a 'wireless'. Music came out of a wireless, music and a story called 'Doctor Paul'. Nanny listened to her story, we'd usually go down to the creek. Nanny to do the washing, and me to splash in the water. Sometimes I'd go under the water and when I came up Nanny would be doing a 'Haka'. Shaking the fist of one hand at me and patting her chest with the other. I thought she looked funny, but then she'd start coughing.

Together we'd hang the washing out on the fence, to dry.

Nanny always made our bread, I loved it and I loved her. She didn't hit me, she growled at me, she threatened me a few times, but she never hit me, not once.

...the fire burns, the flame glows and I am warmed by it. The flame begins to flicker, the flame begins to waver....

They told me — Nanny's dead.
I didn't understand — dead?
Cows died, flies too, birds? Yes they died.
But Nanny? my Nanny?
— yes they said — dead.
— Nanny's dead.

I heard some people talking. They said she died from 'T.V.' Lies! We didn't have a T.V. only a wireless.
How could she die from something we didn't have?

They put her in a box, and placed her in the whare-nui.
Her old friends sat around her. Sometimes crying, sometimes singing, but always, always wailing.
Eerie wailing that I grew to hate.
People came to see her and said goodbye to her
and then I understood.
She had left me.
And I buried my head in my pillow and cried and cried.

...the fire burns, the flame glows, I am warmed by it. The flame begins to flicker, the flame begins to waver, the flame grows smaller....

It rained then. Not heavily. Just like someone weeping. A lot of people came to say goodbye to her. A lot of old ladies in black skirts. I remember wondering if they had their skirts turned the right way around. I wore my frilly blue dress. They buried her on the side of a mountain.

I remember how wet it was that day, how wet and how cold. The family gathered to farewell Nanny, I guess they must have been cold too, but we held on to each other **tightly**, and we kept each other warm.

...the fire that is life is eternal.

No-one is absolutely sure of its birth,
though some have guessed.

...the fire burns.

sometimes the flame is bright, and gives out warmth
sometimes the flame dies down and warms nothing

...it never goes out completely.
there is always new life to keep the fire burning

...In a dimly lit kitchen, I sit in the col

I can't stand the waiting.
I always hate to wait though.
Amidst the flowers on the patterned v
second hand on the kitchen clock.
Ten past twelve. I try to write a poem

— how many nights like this have
spent so sad and blue
too many to remember
too many without you —

I sign my name beneath it, screw up t
turns over in bed and it creaks.
Silence.
I check to see if they're all right.

— my little boy my heart
my little girl my reason —

...tata ana au ki te tangi, engari, Keit

— the kids are fast asleep now
and I am all alone
the clock is striking one now
I wish that you'd come home. —

— I've often played this waiting ga
it's nothing new to me
yes everything is just the same
no nothing's new to me —

— I think of other happy times
of holding hands and kissing
and then of not so happy times
of wanting and of missing —

— a car goes past but it's not you
any my heart skips a beat
only the cats and dogs are about
along the darkened street —

I must have dozed off, because I am a
I open the front door and you come in
ask no questions, because of the lies
I go to bed. You are already asleep.
And again I wait... for sleep to come.

...Kei te tino makariri au....

Morning.
I always wake early.
I watch you sleep.

— this man who lies beside me no
unashamed in his nakedness
unaware I am looking at him and h
turns and scratches his leg —
— this man who lies beside me no