

Kōanga Ngākau

You are now ready, she decided, *for one of my deep purple dreams*. And geared me up for it her way—the samadhi jacket, the harakeke beanie, the INDIAN, the te tata o te Rangī number plate, her tail wind. *Ka hao te rangitahi*, she grinned, looking so very pleased with herself, shaking me down. *You will be in Te Pō within 10 minutes*. Ten of her minutes maybe, because I was already there, lying in tall grass where there was a rustling of wind, a humming of bees, the caress of a kaitiaki checking out my inner ear. Her valleys flowed with thoughtfulness and kōanga ngākau (joy), where it was always almost summer. The sound of Te Rā came bustling in from beyond, accompanied by a little yodelling effect, the echo of an echo. Then, there he was in person! He was really nice, and showed me a few of his moves. *This she likes*, he said, *with this, and this*. He hoisted his arms in a swirl, lifted his knees, sinking his arse to the ground while kicking out like a primo on Red Army pay. Then pulled me into his charade. We pinocchio'd our way across the stage together, arms secured aloft by strings, our heads nodding /to the left/ to the left/ to the left/ as we crossed the floor, encircled in light that would always be her, neither wanting it to end. Which it then did. *When all else fails take her bowling*, was the last word of his command, before turning back into night. So which Te Rā were you? I mused. There are so many now. Might you be her third man? There flowed magic abroad in the air, tumbling me into her pretty little square—Wiesse Rose. Everything went still and quiet, as if snow had just stopped falling through the night of the first ever day. Frost began to spread across her blood-white flowers, deepening their sibylline ardour and starting up a nightingale in the nearest kowhai tree. He sang of easeful death, and his great love for poetry and letters from home. The tune rang through me like a bell but was way too much to compute and I sat down upon the banks of his rivers of burble and wept.

Here comes my millennial hīnaki!