

Hinemihī,

If you break it down

It means a woman's way of greeting.

Mihī = welcome, knowing yourself enough to be able to welcome others into your orbit.

Hine always = all female. archetypal. elemental.

the whole freaking fairytale.

The kind of woman

That survives

Eruption

Burial

Manages rebirth

Or worse, being rendered tapu

Because you could cope with housing the dead.

Even in the context of being sold, like a whore,

Even if you are sent far from your people, and when you find yourself

On the other side of the earth. Beyond distance as you knew it, outside time and space

Confounding geographical stretches of the imagination,

How do you continue to be,

exactly

who you were destined to be

what is maori, (a word I mean to understand as natural)

in the most unnatural of environments

where they don't recognise you as living,

let alone breathing

let alone needing to be kept warm

by the breath of people

who don't see you as needing to be held

let alone, needing to hold,
and bringing separate people together
and transform them
via encounter
into unity.

the belly of an ancestor can swallow all kinds of difference
this belly, so hungry for people to fill her longing
enter into her atea
no matter who you are
so far from your turangawaewae, it stretches geographical imagination
even if you are considered so worthless, you could be sold,
even if you weathered the end of the earth, erupting,
weathering all kinds of unthinkable trauma.

All of that

And yet standing

Still.

Standing

Home

Away from home

Ancestor

Away from ancestry.

Breaking every rule

Always

and yet still standing

Demanding, even here,

The ability to

Fulfil destiny

To bring strangers
Together
In the alchemy
of space
under the strength
of a backbone
that refuses to be
ridgepole
that demands to be home
even in a country of strangers.