

Reihana Robinson

Poem Notes

These poems form part of a long series where Rona who is woman of the moon has a voice and it travels through time and space to participate in contemporary and historic actions. She is liberated from her singular mythological role

Poet Notes

Reihana Robinson has been published in USA and Pacific. Her work explores social and environmental issues. She is an artist, writer and organic farmer. Auckland University Press published her collected poems as part of AUP New poets, 3 2008, and poems and stories have appeared in *Landfall*, *Takahe*, *Melusine*, *Cutthroat*, *Enamel* and anthologies including *Te Ao Mārama Contemporary Māori Writing*. She was the inaugural recipient of Te Atairangikaahu award for poetry.

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Rona does the Hula, A love song for Mr Moon

Come hula your hips to mine

All those naked babies have eaten the croissants
Grown to pimply adolescence
Not so cute anymore
Stealing and pillaging down on that
beaten planet

Come hula your hips to mine dear one

Anxious to bring war they don't know
what they are bargaining for
All the horrors are heading their way
and they are barely grown

Come hula your hips to mine

Why don't they see how song brings love
how dance roots them to their mother?
As toddlers they were so sweet
never causing sleepless nights
until the one that saved me

Come hula your hips to mine

Had I not woken to their cries
Had I slept through their demands
I would have suffered those tribal indignities
meted out all over the land
Weeping and wailing my only discourse

Come hula your hips to mine

Your grace has saved me for longer than time
Your love slunk a crepuscular trail
weaving my limbs and my heart
as if bat wings were my blanket my shawl
Look at what I left behind

Come hula your hips to mine

Other than saviour what can I call you?
Swooning I turn leave that hell to my back
I collapse into you with rhythm and rhyme
Sheets torn our bodies rolled into one
Sphere rolling through the skies
Spinning archaic love beyond time
Those ones left behind mistake tender
touch for weak spines
fall off their perches and plunge
down the escarpment losing their rhythm
Their stomps echo as they fall
Their tongues stuck between their teeth

**The hum of love jiggles Rona awake and she begins to observe
Pancreatic Cancer (PC) or All these gifts are true, there will be no
reciprocity**

First there is the skinniness of it
The belt that needs new notches
Bang bang goes the hammer and poof new nail holes
The belt cinches to drag the pants back in place
Blisters and patchwork splotches-
some tell-tale signs
It is the body attacking itself, all out war
as if it were an enemy
It is all happening inside or on the surface
and you have observer status only

Once domesticated your cells turn feral
see two where there is only one
Saliva dripping, haunches taut the war cell clenches its fist

-Ker-pow
and drops a left hook
straight to its mirror image that sits tense and docile
at the edge of the picture waving a white flag that
is no defence

Nowhere to hide
Prisoners savaged raw or cooked
Is this how mother earth is feeling-
the yin and the yang of it all?

Everything you have done with health up to now
Illness comes like an electric shock

Luckily Laurie visited my old stomping ground
saw wonders before she succumbed
Had I been able
I would have swooped down from the moon
to extract her cellular malignancies

Never a cripple never a taker always an explorer
There is no other word than manaakitanga
Generosity comes close as does kindness
Like I say, had I the power she would hang with us now
in a hammock on our lunar landscape
sipping maitais with decorated pineapple straws
an ukelele propped at the foot of her favourite banyan
chatting and cutting interesting items out of the
New York Times had we been able to get a subscription
Her Olivetti loving her fingertips typing out injustice
from here to Indian reservations
and feeding the now immortal Pikake who would stretch and curl upon her knee
Her daughters would be delighted by this enchantment
Alas I am no god so that light was stolen by PC

Then came the world's brightest statistician
In another life he would be my teacher and want to be my lover
Always skinny and curly-locked, life a dance and friendship the glue
Generosity in common
A mother to wish for
Finding what tool, in what room did in the victim
K for Kite a truly playful being
A light imprint and joyous
Mother earth claps her hands as he moves
to find true collaboration in Chicago and a love to make his heart strong
No vengeful bone in his lean torso perhaps he gave too freely
leaving stranded in a foreign land his grown love and son

A death blow felt in Cuba, Montpellier
Montreal, Tokyo, Auckland

And the shoreline and sea off Hahei
meet and mutter, rage with my Mister Moon's instructions
Even he is moved by random waves washing this shore
bearing K's memory in paua left and kina crawling
Sights shared and loved

A drop of C-137
chosen with an agent's helping hand?

Only I know the answer
With my owl agility, as if I have 14 bones
In my neck, I turn 270degrees in both directions
I see all things
He is one pulse not given time
Nowhere near enough time
Only warring leucocytes
Morphine the only palliation
No chance for a loop of jejunum
A handful of weeks is on offer
He came perilously close to the singular secret
given he was already a big fat koha to the earth

One day we will collide
It is this notion that keeps me from screaming

And now the farmer with his britches held with twine
his landscape pockmarked with sheep and goats
and the loveliness of gardens mostly his wife's work
Every step taken on the farm imprinted now in his
aching mind long fingers and big hands sharing
harvest and genes

To come will be the next ones, a child in Chicago
children living around Moehau

Such are my observations having woken from moist love
in the arms of my forever lover
I weep for the loss of such koha
Mother earth was happy in their presence

Their lives prolong hers
Poor humans know their death is theirs but Pandora's
curiosity released miseries beyond repair
How can hope remain intact shut up in that box?
How can a gift be a gift when it is locked away?
Had Epimetheus spoken of what was inside
she would never have peeked
So why did he keep all those troubles in a box to tantalize?
Athene's gift of wisdom could have
kept the lid on pain and plagues, disease and jealousy
These long ago spells have cast blame in one direction

Time to re-write songs using graphic notation
Scores for howling to the collector of woes