

Papatuanuku

When I read this poem, I thought about how Maori always said that Mother Earth was a woman, who loved Sky Father and had children together. In this case, the poet Tuwhare talks about the relationship that humans have with Papatuanuku and that when we walk over her, “**with our sore ever-loving feet**” we are stroking, massaging and caressing her “**spine**” and “**...she loves it!**”

This made me feel kind of proud to be Māori, because our people always thought that we had a relationship with Papatuanuku and are taught to look after her by our Kaumatua and Kuia. When Tuwhare said that Papa squirms and “**...wiggles in delight**”, I pictured the earthquakes that happen all the time and it makes her seem more alive than just rocks and soil.

A Death at Sea

When I read this poem, I felt really icky inside. It's not nice to think about how cruel the ocean can be and if you drown that your eye-sockets will be “**picked clean: mouth and ears pulsing with maggots**”. I didn't think that a poet would talk about such things that people usually avoid thinking about. It's a bit like he's prepared to 'keep it real'.

I liked the way Tuwhare described the boat being caught between “**black fangs of rock**” because it sounds like a hungry animal eating the remains of the boat and body. By using personification, Tuwhare gives animal features to the rocks, which adds a sinister feel to the poem.

The other part of the poem that was interesting was when Tuwhare used the words “**and bring back my bonnie to me, to me...**” because it was uncomfortable hearing a folksong in such a dark poem. But I think that he wanted to make us think that loved ones still have hope that the person who has drowned will return from sea alive.