

## **Kua tau mai te pō**

He tāone tawhito, he tāone e noho apiapi ai ngā whare kōhatu. He kiwikiwi, he uriuri te tae o ngā whare e wāwahia ana ki ngā kuaha me ngā matapihi i hangaia ki ngā kōhiwi rākau. I taku taenga atu ki te tūranga pahi, e waiwai ana ngā hihi whakamutunga o te rā, e toro haere ai ki ngā tahataha o ngā whare e mātū mai nā. Tau hoki ana te anuanu matao. Ka kotahi atu au i te pahi, ā, kapi katoatia ngā whare me te korenga hoki o ngā rama. Ka hīkoi atu ki te pokapū o te taone, rapu ai tētahi moenga mō te pō. I te taha tonga o te pokapū, tērā tētahi whare manaaki tāpoi e tūwhera tonu ana, ā, ko tēnei nā, he hōtera rangatira. I te tirohanga atu, e wātea ana ki roto, kāore āna tūru, kāore āna tēpu, kāore he aha, hāunga i tētahi tēpu hōtera. Ahakoa e wāwahi rua ana ōku whakaaro, i kuhu atu mā te tatau nui. He tatau e hiahia ana ki ngā ringa e rua kia tūwhera. Kātahi ka tū i mua i te tēpu hōtera me taku pīkau, me he ika i te rākau. Ka rangona te whero e pā mai ki aku paparinga. He tokotoru e tū ana ki roto. He tokorua ki muri i te tēpu. Ka tū ake rāua i tētahi tumu, ā, kōtahi te tāne i tū i te taha.

He wāhine tētahi, pākākā ana ōna makawe, tōririki tonu ngā whatu e āhua parauri ana te tae me te tirohanga tītaha noa mai. Kua mau i a ia tētahi hūtu mangu e tika ai mō te wāhine, arā, ngā tarau roroa e kapi ana ōna hū, kua whītikia ki te tatua whārarahi, ā, ka mau kōti me te hāte pango, teitei tana kara. Ko tōna hanga e kaha whakawai mai i taku aronga, ko te painga atu, ka karo atu taku tītiro kia kua au i whakapōrearea. Ka tū ia i te taha o te tāne, e taurite ana tō rāua hanga, ā, he tāroa, he pūrotu. Pango tonu ngā makawe, kōmengemenge ana e heke iho ai ki ana pokowhiwhi. Me he rama kākāriki ōna whatu. Kua mau hoki te hūtu pango. Kōtahi te mea ka oho atu, kua herea ōna tarau ki te tātua i mau kōpine hiriwa e rite ana ki te waha taiki. Ka mutu, i te taha o te tēpu hōtera e tū ai te tuatoru. Ka mau pūeru e rite ana ki te tāne ki muri i te tēpu, engari, tē awhi tika ōna kaka. He poto ake te tāne i te tokorua rā, heoi, he kūwha nui rawa e riaka atu i ana tarau. Ko ōna waewae pāraharaha anō hoki e

tohu atu ai te manawarau o te tangata tutatoru. I te mutunga ake, he korokē rawa ērā tāngata, korokē rawa atu.

Ka hari atu taku pēke ki te tēpu hōtera e tū ai te tokorua rā. Pā karu mai te tāne me te mata hōmiromiro. Ko Maihara-nui i tū i te taha e pāhore mai ana. Menemene noa mai, kimokimo noa mai te wahine rā me ana kupu manaaki, me ana kupu wainene. Ka mea atu au, he iti noa aku pūtea, engari, ko taku, ka taea pea te awahina rātou mō tētahi moenga. Ka tere wheke te rae o te wahine me tana kanga mai, ānō nei ko au te tūtae kurī kua takahia e ōna hū. Heoi, ko te mea i tino whakaoho mai, i tino whakaara noa mai, ko te renarena o te kiri i tōna kanohi kia kitea atu ai ōna niho e tetē mai nā e karapotia nei me ngā ngutu whero rawa. Whero katoa taku mata i te whakamā me te pukuriri. Ka kī mai te wahine, ki te kore au e wehe, ka pau katoa au i a rātou. Ka tāhuri mai a Maihara-nui me ōna ringa e toro mai ai, ā, e mārama ana ko tana ko te whakawhiu atu. Kāore au i te tino maumahara i ahatia ā muri ake, heoi, ko te āhua nei kua whiu atu te meke ki tōna ihu pātiki, ki tōna ihu pakaru, me tana tino heipu. Ka totitoti te tāne ki muri me tana whākana ohorere mai, ā, i ōna ringa mau ai ia i tōna ihu whati noa me te toto e rere iho noa. Ko te toto me ngā kōiwi kua pūtārera e ranuranua noa rā.

Ka warea au ki taku kaniawhea, me te mōhio hoki kua tae te wā ki te oma, kātahi ka tāhuri atu me te pēke i taku ringa, rere atu, parahutihuti nei ki waho. Ka rere noa mai te tokorua, tetēā ngā niho, tiro hātana mai. Nō taku taenga atu ki waho, ka tere atu ki rahaki o te pokapū, ā, ko te katoa o ngā whare e pouri ana, kāore tētahi rama i kā i ngā whare. Tere atu au ki te kokonga o te pokapū āhua nui nei. Ka tū ki muri i te kokonga, tau haere ai, anipā haere ai, ngau puku ai. Kātahi ka kitea tētahi ara e huna ana i te ātea, ā, i te pito o te ara rā he whare tupuhi, he whare pūngāwerewere e kanukanu ana i te iwikoretanga. Ka tūwhera kē ngā kuaha kia iti noa te āputa, ā, i reira te rāpihi e takoto ana. Ka whakawhaiti au i a au anō kia

romia atu ki roto, kātahi ka uru tomo me taku pēke. He arapiki e rere ake i te taha o tētahi kauhanga roa, kauhanga pouri. Nā ngā hihi nō ngā rama o waho i mārāma iti noa mai, ā, ka waea haere aku karu ki te pōuri. Ka piki i te arapiki. Autaia noa ana taku taenga ki runga, kāore kau ōna kūaha, otirā, he kōpani kē kia uru atu ki te wāhi i raro o te tuanui. Ka whakatūwhera i te kōpani rā, me taku ūpoko e toro ake ai kia kitea ngā āhuatanga o roto. Waha ake i taku tueke, kātahi ko au e kake ake ana. Ka takoto i te papa, pau tonu te hau. Ka piki, ka heke, ka piki, ka heke taku uma, me te takitaki o te manawa e pāorooro ana i aku tāringa. Nāwai, nāwai tau haere ahau, me te mea nei, tau haere te ngenge nui. Rapu haere ana i tētahi wāhi e pai ai ki te whakatakoto i taku whāriki me taku peke moe. He wāhanga whaiti i te pito e popoto ai te hononga o te papa ki ngā heke o te tuanui kei rahaki i te kōpani. Nā, ka whakarite i taku moenga, ka mutu, ka kuhu atu ki te peke moe, ka tere warea ki te moe.

Oho torotika, oho hē nei i te rongonga atu i tētahi waea ringiringi e tangi ana ki raro, ko te āhua nei ki te pūtaka o te arapiki taua waea, tē kitea ia i taku urunga mai. Mataku rawa atu au, tū ana ngā pihi i te wehi noa nei. Ka unu atu i te peke moe, hīkoi atu ki te kōpani, kia hiki ai ia, kātahi ka heke i te arapiki me te tangi o te waea ringiringi e rarā ana i ōku taringa. Heke tonu atu ki te waea. I taku taenga atu, ka hikina te kakau, ā, ngū katoa te utu i te pehinga atu ki taku taringa. Ka meatia te kakau ki tōna pae, ā, ka hoki ake ki runga ki te tuanui. I te taenga atu ki te kōpani, ka ohore, ka mauri rere au i te kitenga atu kua katia te kōpani, me te mea nei, he rama o runga e whakaata mai rā i ngā pīere paku i te kōpani, ā, he rama i kore au i whakakā. Ahakoa taku kore pīrangi, ka huakina te tatau, kake ake ki runga. Whiu, pai ana. He ōrite ki taku wehenga. Ka tāhuri au ki te wahakaweto i te rama, kātahi ka wetohia. Nō te pouritanga o te ruma i tīmata ai te kata kikino rawa o te tokotoru, me taku tere huri whakamuri. Ki kō atu, ki muri he tokotoru e tū ana, mau ana rātou ngā awe mapara

kirikau, me ngā nihokati e kanapa mai i ngā hihi o te marama. Tūtū mai te tokotoru rā, he poto, he maihara nui tō tētahi, ā, he tāroaroa te tokorua kē atu me te mea nei, he mau kaki tō te tāne ki tētahi kauwae taika. E whākana mai rā me ngā niho e tetē ana i ngā ngutu e pakara ana me te hihiri. I ngā ringa he maripi roa e pīata ana. Ko te mea whakamutunga i rongo ai au i mua i taku oho, ko aua māripi e ngaungau mai ana, tīhaehae noa i taku kiko kia whakarere atu te oranga nei i tēnei ao tūroa. Inaiānei, he wairua kē tēnei e para ana i ngā kauhanga nui o Hine-nui-te-pō. Mō ake tonu atu.

**H C Duncan**