

A WORLD OF PERPETUAL LONGING

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It looks like they touch when the cloud comes in and coats the mountains, I know. This is what Tāwh wants you to believe. It's actually just a curtain. Think: holding a friend's towel up in front of them while they get dressed after swimming. Think further: a steeple doesn't leave behind anything that would need tweezing out. Some days the ground freezes over and it is the sun that eventually warms it. New species get names, conservationists increase the population of kākāpō, buildings are assembled then moved on the back of trucks. There has to be space, something to stand on, and something to reach for. As a consequence, this is a world of perpetual longing. Nothing can be said without breathing in thousands of years of desire. When you tell me how you are happy to be home, and how when you were a kid you escaped to the beach, running over grass to dodge the prickles then running over sand to shorten the burn, your words are born from a kind of sadness that only the existence of life can justify. Think: the sky was bland at the bus station. I stood outside and waited for you to find a seat, yelled "Bye!" when you did. On my way home, I thought about the night before: climbing over you as you sweated, reaching along the walls with eyes unblinking, trying to find the light switch, your hands drawing dreams of lakes, wheels, and winds on my skin as you slept, the last thing you whispered before falling asleep. By the time you got to Whanganui it was blue as summer and the trees stretched as if it was morning. They were so close to touching. I sat there breathing and breathing.

