

you won't be able to prevent yourself becoming a
How to Domesticate
a Pirate Pakeha.

By Danielle Wood

the marae with enough clothing
Step onto a ship wearing a small black dress that is not enough to protect you from a wind that blows colder over water than it does over land. It forces you to seek warmth in the radiance of a man whose bare feet have the same rough hardness as deck timber and who smells of brine and varnish. In his sunbrowned face his smile is a white outlass. His eyes, predictably, are blue. Issue an invitation, but do not wait for it to be accepted. Look back over your shoulder as you walk the plank. Say I'll be expecting you.

embraced and smiles
Get used to being caressed by hands that make you feel as rare and precious as other things they've touched, like the horny shell of Jonathan the tortoise, who walked St Helena with Napoleon, and the purple hearts of ebony trees, both king and queen. Learn to fuck in a hammock, you on top, taut fabric curling like another skin around your knees and calves and feet. Fall in love with the feeling of poems reeling out of you like tunes out of his battered fiddle, some of them as bright and brief as phosphorescence, others as thick and durable as rope. You hope that in years hence you will be able to stick on these and still taste salt water.

our own culture, but you might not
When the time is right, begin to lure him ashore. Suggest a tent rather than a house (at this stage) and spend a year's worth of dawns in its pitched glow worms green. The poems from this time are, like your sheets, stained with pinda. You will never be able to wash it out, but nor would you want to.

Māori culture has that about it - draws you in, enfolds you, brings
Now accept a proposal of marriage that is offered to you on the palm of a hand, along with a freshly-shucked oyster. But then push your canoe away from the rocks, over the aqua shallows to the navy depths where you couldn't hear even if someone were shouting at you to come back to shore. Ostensibly, you don't like weddings. But out here, you wrestle with the Barbie doll sector of your soul. The part that tries to seduce you by whispering crimplene thoughts and scattering fake rose petals at your feet. You try to drown her, but her synthetic hair doesn't hold water and her plastic hollow limbs just keep bobbing to the surface.

Acquire a house, and jobs that mean you can pay for it and all the things it must contain. Oh brave new world! Who would have imagined the glory of choosing exactly the right bath tap! Each new purchase generates an invisible computer code, and the multiplying sequences of numbers encircle you, locking you tight to the world of debt.

you're one of us!
now one of us!
taku whānauka
Kia ora taku hoa,
taku whānauka

Live Literary Remixing in Federation Square

3.30pm - 4.30 pm, Saturday 30 August, Federation Square, Melbourne Writers Festival 2008

A live remix event run by Remix My Lit, www.remixmylit.com



literature that's Read & Write
www.remixmylit.com



How to Domesticate a Pirate by Danielle Wood is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-Share Alike 2.5 Australia Licence. You are free to copy, communicate and adapt the work for non-commercial purposes, so long as you attribute Danielle Wood and you distribute any derivative work (ie new work based on this story) only under this licence. For full terms see <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/au>