

Peter Newson

The Pohutukawas

We have three mighty trees around the batch,
when they're in flower the roofs like red thatch,
and then the blossom turns our tank water pink,
and after plenty of rain it begins to stink,
the gutter leaf traps that won't stop the flowers,
the felt filters brews up and the water sours.

One of these trees is growing out over the sea,
the roots defy gravity and it's amazing to me,
it's not split down the middle and lying in the tide.
The second is hollow, its entrails gape wide,
the roots breaking up concrete, a void below,
it hangs over buildings and one day it'll go.

Our third tree is growing straight up and strong,
a few indigenous creepers that think they belong,
no match for the height of twenty meters or more.
the roots travel so far, they know the score,
searching for nutrients and fresh water to be,
a strong ancient species, a part of our history.

The first tree I mentioned I'm sure we can save,
involves serious pruning and it will have to be brave,
Cut back the overhang and take the stress of the roots,
it will soon come away and grow lots of new shoots.
The second's prognosis with imbalance and dry rot,
is a maybe, but, new shoots on the up side it's got.
No worries with the third, it's going to be fine,
So homes for the Tuis, for a very long time

Their Royal Crimson blossom at Christmas time,
the nectar so potent it must taste like wine,
territorial Tuis with iridescent blue/black coats,
wearing their white bow ties at their throats,
we watch all the dogfights like an aerial war,
hear their raucous cries as they dive and soar.
The usual melodious songs of the day,
come back after victory to awaken the Bay.

The favourite place for the children that come,
the swing on the branch that gives so much fun,
when the tide's high, swing out as far as it goes,
then jump of and hope they don't land on their nose
Such fun the tree gives to the children who play,
it's been here so long it's become part of the bay.