

# Law Text Culture

---

Volume 15 *Under the Eye of the Law: Mobile Peoples in the Pacific*

Article 2

---

2011

## time to write (for Larry) [poem]

Alice Te Punga Somerville

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ro.uow.edu.au/ltc>

---

### Recommended Citation

Te Punga Somerville, Alice, time to write (for Larry) [poem], *Law Text Culture*, 15, 2011, 8-9.  
Available at: <https://ro.uow.edu.au/ltc/vol15/iss1/2>

Research Online is the open access institutional repository for the University of Wollongong. For further information contact the UOW Library: [research-pubs@uow.edu.au](mailto:research-pubs@uow.edu.au)

---

## time to write (for Larry) [poem]

### Abstract

i need ten minutes to write this poem you need a couple of hours to work on your story between incoming calls and outgoing flights the best i can do is steal time from somewhere else: although you'll read a pristine email version of this poem there's curry from singh's on the page of this handwritten draft. there's no time to write, my friend.

**Somerville**

**time to write  
(for Larry)**

**Alice Te Punga Somerville**

i need ten minutes to write this poem  
you need a couple of hours to work on your story  
between incoming calls and outgoing flights  
the best i can do is steal time from somewhere else:  
although you'll read a pristine email version of this poem  
there's curry from singh's on the page of this handwritten draft.  
    there's no time to write, my friend.

i've had this pen and paper forever  
i started writing this poem in 1840  
wrote a little more when the land was confiscated 20 years later  
did some editing the day my great-uncle bled to death:  
italy, 1944, and dressed for the occasion  
added a stanza when our language fell away from my family not long after  
thought about adding a refrain in august a couple of years ago  
when the nz government apologised to my iwi

    grandad always told me i'd never see what i wanted  
    that my grandchildren would see the first real change:  
i used to think he was taunting me  
now i see my enthusiasm broke his heart before it broke my own  
his warning was a form of protection

there's no time to write, my friend

there's no time to write

maybe i won't ever finish this poem

maybe it's one stanza of a much longer piece

maybe your story is a chapter

in a novel

on a shelf

in a room

in a house

on an island

in an ocean