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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]

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

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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.

This journal article is available in Law Text Culture: http://ro.uow.edu.au/ltc/vol15/iss1/2

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