

BUTTERFLY KISSES

Kelli Te Maihāroa

This poem is for my treasured Apakura. It recounts the heartbreak of suddenly losing a loved one, signs of eternal connection, and human resilience to move forward together through grief.

BUTTERFLY KISSES

You tore my heart in two
And covered my spirit with yours
Through fate we have been separated
But our energies remain the same

My eyes now catch your waves
My nostrils ensnare your scent
My face is stained with your embrace
My mouth tempted by your butterfly kisses

If ever there was a time to believe
It is now
Stop crying you tell me
It's all going to be ok

I have to get out at the next stop
I can't come the full journey with you
Don't worry you say
You'll be back as usual

I feel you watching over me
Your butterfly kisses



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Kelli was a co-editor with Professor John Synott and Heather Devere for *Peacebuilding and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Experiences and Strategies for the 21st Century* book. She has published on Māori education initiatives, cultural revitalisation and indigenous peace traditions. Kelli is the great granddaughter of the Māori prophet Te Maihāroa from Te Waipounamu.

