

## Meri Marshall

### Poem Notes

#### *Te Reo Māori*

This poem is about the drama inside my head that plays now and again when I am not feeling confident with my use of te reo Māori. While I go through the motions, the outcome is often the same and I resolve to myself that there are reasons why things are the way they are and despite that, I am strong in my knowledge of Māori tikanga and kawa and that I was born whole and complete.

### Poet Notes

Ko tēnei te mihi mahana ki a koutou e pānui ana i ēnei rotarota.

Meri Marshall is of Ngāti Kahungunu descent with tribal affiliations to Te Ati Awa, Ngāti Toa and Ngāi Tahu. She is a researcher and lecturer for Te Kura Māori, at Victoria University of Wellington, Faculty of Education. She has worked with in English and Māori medium education since 1979. Meri lectures in primary, secondary and early childhood post-graduate courses and is currently completing her Master of Education degree. Her research interests include literacy for Māori children, indigenous research methodologies and Māori education. Meri's first music CD of original compositions entitled *Celebrate from your Heart* was released in 2000. She is currently writing and recording a second CD of songs and continues to build towards her first published collection of poems inspired by life, love, people and transformation from within.

Nō reira tēnā rā koutou katoa.

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## Te Reo Māori

I think often about my reo  
or lack of it  
at times there is confidence  
at times there is not  
I stand tall most of the time  
but at times I mess it up  
a nervous wreck example  
shrivelled under imagined judging  
What's *that* about?  
As my knowledge grows  
and my being understands  
I step beyond this yoke  
of colonising oppression  
and decolonise  
this crisis of identity  
and become whole -  
as I always was