

## 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.

