

**On joining Pasifika (25)**

**(for Jo)**

**Karlo Mila**

**From *Dream Fish Floating***

When I first met you  
we were learning to siva  
wearing lavalava tied in awkward knots  
our work clothes carefully folded away  
both of us  
learning a new dance  
both of us  
finding a different way to move  
through life  
We have hustled and bustled  
and power-walked well  
somehow  
sacrificing the grace  
and ease of movement  
our grandmothers held in their hands  
When we met  
both of us  
were trying to remember  
that earlier beat  
Both of us trying to reclaim  
a new dance from old memories  
both us standing shyly  
in the back-row  
trying to siva in our sports socks  
both of us searching for a rhythm  
we'd never quite  
been able to find  
within ourselves  
All of us trying to find time  
to tau'olunga  
to meke  
to tamule  
to siva  
into our truest selves

