



**Mother/Daughter**

we are rata and pohutukawa  
starling feather paua shelled  
tough and craggy you grip

the cliffs in sleek red dreams  
invading me the strepitant sea  
overflowing reservoirs of darkness

you force feed milk and honey  
i open my flowering mouth  
spit Bastet's little black cat

you can never keep me  
quiet i answer back  
trapped in my high chair

you smack me waspishly  
and i mousey cower  
but move inland as planned

you tunnel me up  
you churn me inside out  
you squeaky clean our house

inspecting every purchase  
swallowing grimly bitter facts  
i am back on the pill

i will never have grandchildren  
you're rude and brutal  
retreating from me

in dependency



**Notes**

Briar Wood came to Britain in 1983 and lives in London. She grew up in Auckland, New Zealand, attended university there and taught high school English in the Waikato area. She is currently researching a D.Phil on the subject of modernism and feminist theory.