

## The Maori Jesus - James K. Baxter

I saw the Maori Jesus  
Walking on Wellington Harbour.  
He wore blue dungarees,  
His beard and hair were long.  
His breath smelled of mussels and paraoa.  
When he smiled it looked like the dawn.  
When he broke wind the little fishes trembled.  
When he frowned the ground shook.  
When he laughed everybody got drunk.

The Maori Jesus came on shore  
And picked out his twelve disciples.  
One cleaned toilets in the railway station;  
His hands were scrubbed red to get the shit out of the pores.  
One was a call-girl who turned it up for nothing.  
One was a housewife who had forgotten the Pill  
And stuck her TV set in the rubbish can.  
One was a little office clerk  
Who'd tried to set fire to the Government Buildings.  
Yes, and there were several others;  
One was a sad old quean;  
One was an alcoholic priest  
Going slowly mad in a respectable parish.

The Maori Jesus said, 'Man,  
From now on the sun will shine.'

He did no miracles;  
He played the guitar sitting on the ground.

The first day he was arrested  
For having no lawful means of support.  
The second day he was beaten up by the cops  
For telling a dee his house was not in order.  
The third day he was charged with being a Maori  
And given a month in Mt Crawford.  
The fourth day he was sent to Porirua  
For telling a screw the sun would stop rising.  
The fifth day lasted seven years  
While he worked in the Asylum laundry  
Never out of the steam.  
The sixth day he told the head doctor,  
'I am the Light in the Void;  
I am who I am.'  
The seventh day he was lobotomised;  
The brain of God was cut in half.

On the eighth day the sun did not rise.  
It did not rise the day after.  
God was neither alive nor dead.  
The darkness of the Void,  
Mountainous, mile-deep, civilised darkness  
Sat on the earth from then till now.