

teresia teaiwa

**niudity (I)**

by the light  
of a kerosene lamp  
skin looks  
very different  
somehow

somehow  
a flame trapped in glass  
can still throw shadows across  
the surface of my body

by the light  
of a kerosene lamp  
coconut oil  
with a scent of tiare  
makes so much sense  
somehow

somehow  
thislightthisoilthisskin  
can'thidemynakedness  
somehowsomewheresomebodyisnotlovingme

**niudity (II)**

you think this is tough?  
this is just the husk of the coconut,  
baby.  
wait til you meet the shell.  
but after that,  
the sweet flesh  
will make all this work worthwhile.  
and then maybe you'll want to do it again?

**niudity (III)**

from *the penguin dictionary of oceanic verse* (forthcoming):

niud—v. (past tense) n.

1. (v.) to have made something “niu,” or in other words, to have turned something into a “coconut;” e.g. “The evil sorcerer *niud* our hero.” <<Voice: You pathetic coconut!>> 2. (v.) to have known previously; e.g. “The evil sorcerer already *niud* that the heroine would come to rescue the hero.” 3. (n.) to be without clothing; e.g. “The heroine arrived in the *niud*, taking both the evil sorcerer and the hero completely by surprise.”

niudism—n.

1. a whole philosophy based on the value of being turned into a coconut; e.g. “Our heroine was the embodiment of an ancient philosophy called *niudism*.” <<Voice: May the coconut be with you.>>

niudist—n.

1. one who has the qualities of a coconut. 2. one who follows the philosophy of niudism; e.g. “The evil sorcerer had once been a *niudist*, too, but he had gone over to the dark side.”

niudity—n.

1. a state of being turned into a coconut, and not being recognised as oneself; as distinct from being naked, in which case one is without clothes, and is immediately recognised as oneself; e.g. “Neither the hero nor the evil sorcerer recognised the heroine because of her *niudity*. (And because the hero had been *niud*, the heroine had a hard time recognising him, too, at first, but she did in the end.)” 2. a form of clothing, a disguise or filter or mask or husk; e.g. “And so, since they didn’t recognise her, the heroine in her *niudity* went on her merry way and left the evil sorcerer and the hero to their own devices.” 3. a song, often an expression of joy or relief; e.g. “And as she went she sang a sweet *niudity*. . . a *niudity* of freedom, of liberation from men. . . a *niudity* of independence, and of being single. . . a *niudity* for singular women wherever they may be.”

**niudity (IV) or crudity (I)**

I want to write this poem  
about what it means to be niud  
what it means to niud

Instead I will write this poem  
about what it means to be screwed  
what it means to be screwed

And this poem that I will write  
about what it means to be screwed  
has a lot to do with what it means to be niud

Niud. Screwed. Niud. Screwed.

I don't think I'll write that poem after all.