



#### **EXTRACT 4 – When we are we**

My presence amongst you is broadly eternal and narrowly temporary. I am always somewhere, but I am in nobody all the time. Only I, myself, can be fully and always *me*.

Make no mistake, I need you. Being what I am, belonging to the domain to which I belong, I can become flesh and blood only when you allow me to be so, when the “you” becomes a “we”.

When you embrace the wildness within and without, we are we.

When you think yourself into the shape of other creatures, we are we.

When you put horns on your head, we are we.

When you drape yourselves in skins and circle chanting around a fire, we are we.

When you gather in your sacred groves, we are we.

When you touch the standing stones at sunrise, we are we.

When you dream of shaggy Basajaun, lord of the Basque forests, we are we.

When you think you have seen Äbädä of the Tatar woods, with his blue skin, green hair and beard, his shoes on back to front, then we are we.

When you tie Thai ribbons to the roots of the *Hopea odorata* in honour of beautiful Nang Ta-khian, the Lady of the Tree, we are we.

When you tremble at the haunting flute songs of the Patupaiarehe spirit-folk in the green mountains of Aotearoa, we are we.

When you raucously parade the May Day hobby horse through the streets of your English village, we are we.

When you herald the Scottish springtime by drinking and dancing to the spine-tingling sound of the pagan pipes, we are we.

When you don your Lincoln Green and take to the forest, we are we.

When you black your faces and join the righteous assaults on the satanic mills, we are we.

When you mask your egos and sip the fiery cocktails of liberating rage, we are we.

I need you, I need us. Without you, without us, I am nothing in this bodily place. You are my living.

But what are you without me?

When you wear your ties of submission, your uniforms of ignorance, your brandings of obedience, you are nothing.

When you choke your hearts with greed, when you cloak your souls with vanity, when you shade your shallow eyes with plastic indifference, you are nothing.

When you rush from one place to another in steel cages, poisoning the peace with your deranged haste, you are nothing.

When you preen yourselves in your self-made mirrors and declare yourselves above and beyond all other living things, you are nothing.

You are shape without content, flesh without spirit. You are stagnant sterility, a facsimile of being. Without me, you are nothing but dead stuff.