

Cheek

The crash comes
and I fly from the top bunk
along the hallway to the lounge
my feet not feeling the floor
and there they are
my father's hand
on my mother's white
throat. Call the police
like soprano
me slow dancing
toward the receiver
my father's hand stretched out
clasping me like you clasp the cheek
of an irresistible child
pulling me across the carpet
like a cutie.



Photo: Martin Hunter

Tusiata Avia is an acclaimed poet, performer and children's writer. Her solo stage show *Wild Dogs Under My Skirt*, premiered in Dunedin in 2002, has since been performed throughout NZ and overseas. Her first collection, also titled *Wild Dogs Under*

My Skirt, was published in 2004. In 2005 she held the Fulbright-CNZ Pacific Writer's Residency at the University of Hawai'i. *Bloodclot*, her second book of poetry, was published in 2009.



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