



## *Michael, I thought you were dead*

**Michael Fitzsimons**

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- The cancer journey of a spiritual man
- Writing that is pragmatic, intelligent, irreverent, searching
- Poems of Wellington harbour

*I have a growing number of scars. A three-inch horizontal scar across the stomach, very tidy. Two more small ones either side of the rib cage and now one on the hand and arm to deal with a Viking inheritance. I look at them in the mirror. I hope they don't fade away completely. They are my body art.*

\*

*My favourite poet with a ponytail greets me warmly at the launch of his latest book of poems.*

Michael, *he says*, I thought you were dead.

\*

*Now the stars are burning brightly. I am an explorer of a world beyond the letterbox. By the time I get to Nelson I will be singing again. The heart asks only for more.*



Michael Fitzsimons is a writer and co-founder of Wellington communications and publishing company, Fitzbeck Creative. He's a proud member of the three-person South Wellington Poetry Society and his first collection, *Now You Know*, combined poems with photography and was recommended in Radio New Zealand's annual poetry highlights. Michael's latest publishing project is Joy Cowley's *Veil Over Light*. He lives in Seatoun with his wife, Rose, in a hillside house overlooking Wellington Harbour.

Michael Fitzsimons gets the news no one wants to hear and finds fear and uncertainty have taken up residence in his house, muting joy and putting the world as he knows it on hold. But in time he discovers that while his life might look like a shipwreck, there's a lifeboat waiting to take him away to a new place, where the most ordinary things gleam with their own extravagance and sorrow slowly gives way to moments of praise. To read *Michael, I thought you were dead* is to take up an oar and row the same boat a while – a ride not to be missed.



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