

A CAUTIONARY TALE – by Anahera Herbert-Graves

In the aftermath of the Crown's recent Te Hiku settlement, the following adaptation of a cautionary tale, first told to the [Waitangi Tribunal in September 2012](#), illustrates why it's settled nothing.

Mr Trusting has a car. His wife has an interest in it. He leases the car to Mr Crown for a certain price and on certain conditions.



After a while Mr Crown decides not to return the car. Instead he sells the wheels to Mr Crown Jr and gives the door panels to Ms Crown.

He then sells the engine to Ms Opportunist subject to return in case the police say it must be returned. But he holds on to the internal workings, fittings, windows and chassis.

Mr Trusting complains to the police who say, "You have an obligation to fix this issue, Mr Crown."

Mr Crown says to Mr Trusting, "I know I've done you wrong, but I need to provide parts of your car to other people I've also stolen from, so I'll give you some money instead. And because I don't have much, if you still want parts of your car back, then I'll have to deduct their value from the money I give you."

Mr Trusting is the kind of guy who is happy to accept anything that comes his way, so he says, "OK, I'll have the two front seats and perhaps the rear view mirror so that I can see what I used to have."

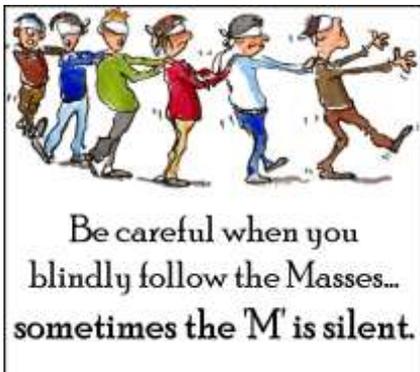
Mr Crown provides the rear view mirror, front seats and windows, but nothing to wind the windows down with because it's restricted by legislation. So Mr Trusting can't control the windows.



Mr Trusting's wife says, "Not good enough," and complains to the police. In the meantime Mr Crown has also given the chassis and the petrol tank of the car to someone else.

The police say, "Mr Crown, you must return the engine, chassis and petrol tank, because the Trustings need them to drive the car."

Ms Trusting also wants compensation for the rest of the car but Mr Crown replies, "I've offered you the front seats, rear view mirror and windows, and I think that's fair. Mr Trusting is willing to accept them, and so is everyone else I've stolen from. You should as well."



That is the end of the analogy. To keep the benefits from his theft of their car, Mr Crown elevated Mr Trusting and undermined Ms Trusting in the settlement negotiations. When Ms Trusting insisted on getting the car and compensation, Mr Crown walked away and blamed her for the breakdown of negotiations.

In the last years of her life, my mother was supported by Ms Trustings. Few Mr Trustings and no Mr Crowns visited her. On the eve of Te Rarawa's settlement, one man made a rare visit to ask her to attend. Graciously, she did.

But for anyone to infer that meant she supported Mr Crown and opposed Ms Trusting – that would be just another cautionary tale.