The New Zealand Curriculum

LEVEL 3

School JOURNAL

MAY 2021

TITLE	READING YEAR LEVEL
Stranded	5
Happy Birthday	6
Red, the Pig, and the Automobile	6
Kura Huna: The Art of Reweti Arapere	6
The Story of the Ventnor	5
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This Journal supports learning across the New Zealand Curriculum at level 3. It supports literacy learning by providing opportunities for students to develop the knowledge and skills they need to meet the reading demands of the curriculum at this level. Each text has been carefully levelled in relation to these demands; its reading year level is indicated above.

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Stranded

by Fraser Smith

Piki and Koro were halfway across the pipi beds when Piki saw the trucks. He paid them no attention. His sack was full of tāmure. Lugging it across the soft sand was hard work.

"I can't wait to tell Dad about our new spot," Piki said. "He thinks he knows all the best possies."

"Your dad has a bit to learn, eh?" said Koro with a smile.

They made it back to the car park, and Koro opened the boot so Piki could put his four big fish into the chilly bin. He was about to get in the front seat when again, the two trucks caught his eye. They were backing down to the sea, their trays full. From a distance, it was hard to see what they carried, but as Piki watched, a huge black tail slowly rose and then fell. "Look, Koro," he cried.

"Whales," Koro said. "There must have been a stranding. Come on, moko. They'll want help."

On the beach, Koro stopped to talk to some people from Project Jonah, but Piki went straight to the whales. He'd never seen one up close before. They lay on the trucks in a kind of sling, their bodies covered in sheets.

Down at the water, a man was filling buckets. “Are you strong, fella?” he called. “Want to give me a hand? We need to keep the whales wet so their skin doesn’t blister in the sun.”

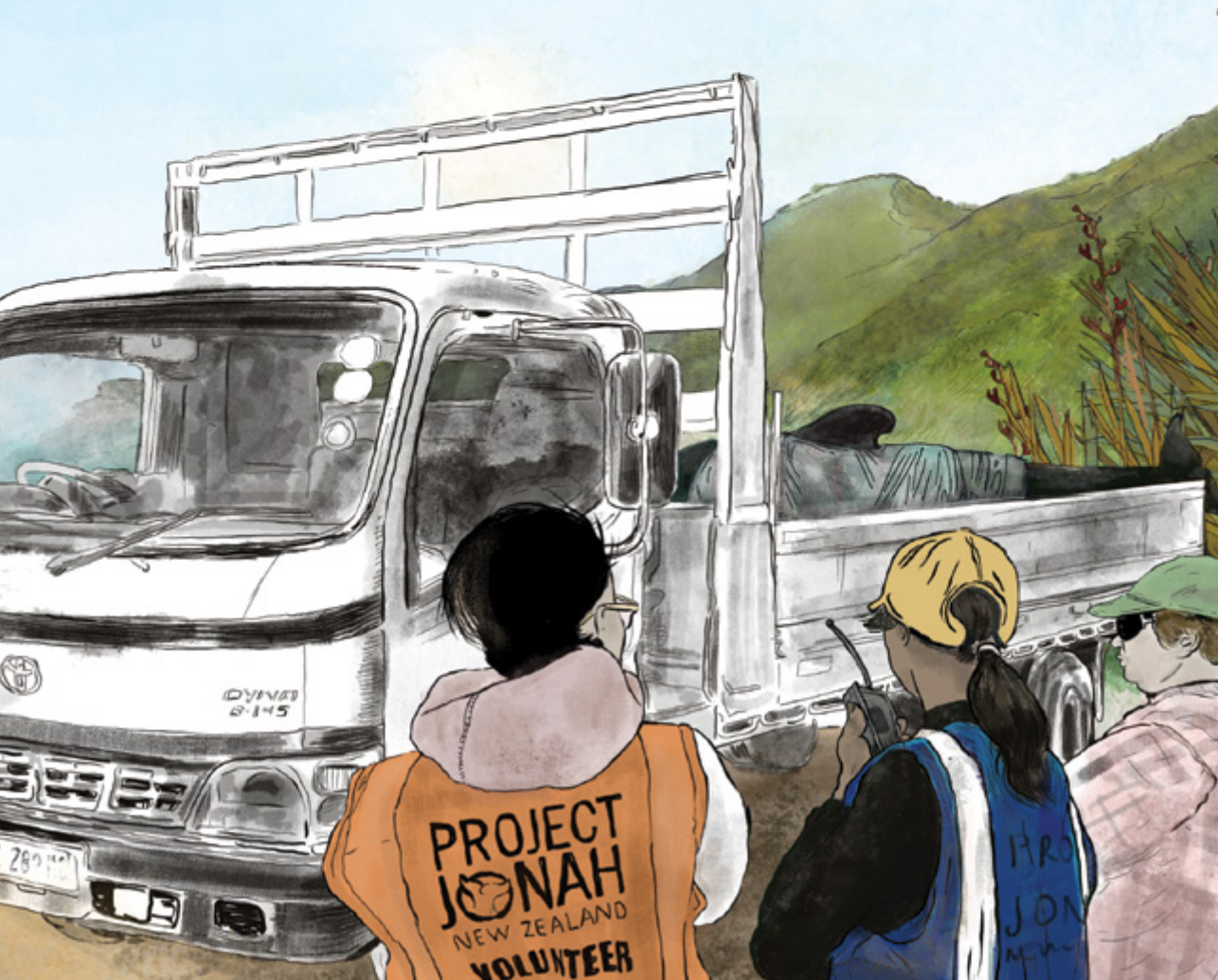
Piki was on his third run when Koro came over. “There’s been a stranding on Te Oneroa-a-Tōhē,” he said. “Somewhere near Ahipara. They reckon there’s about thirty whales.” Koro took one of the buckets. “The sea’s too rough on the west coast, so they’re trucking the survivors here.”

“What kind of whales are they?” Piki asked.

“Upokohue,” said Koro. “Long-finned pilot whales. They get stuck when the tide goes out. I’ve seen it before. One of them strands, and the rest follow. Whales stick together.”

“Like us, eh, Koro?”

“Āe,” said Koro. “Just like us.”




PROJECT JONAH

An hour later, there were twenty-two tohorā on the beach – and too many people for Piki to count. He and Koro were looking after one of the last whales to arrive. A digger had lowered it from a truck and into the shallows, and now they worked together in the thigh-deep water. Koro had named their whale Toho.

Renee from Project Jonah told them Toho was a teenage male. She was showing the people on the beach what to do. “The whales are disoriented,” she told Piki. “They’ve been out of the water for a long time.” She placed her hands on Toho’s flanks and began to gently rock him. “To restore his balance,” she explained. “Now you try, but stay clear of the tail. He might get agitated and slap it. You don’t want a whack.”

They had to wait for the tide to turn before they could refloat the pod. Renee said they’d take the matriarch out first. They would use her like a magnet to draw the other whales away from the beach. “They have a better chance of survival if they stay in their family group,” Koro explained after Renee had left.

Piki and Koro stood on either side of Toho – careful of his tail – and slowly rocked him back and forth. His skin felt like a wetsuit, smooth and rubbery.

“Did you know tohorā are ancestors?” Koro said. “The bones in their pectoral fins are like the ones in your hand.”

Piki looked at his grandfather dubiously. He bent to look at Toho’s bottom fin in the water, but nothing about it resembled a hand. Was Koro being serious?

“The finger bones are inside,” said Koro. “And a thumb bone. I guess that means we come from the sea, too?” Koro raised his eyebrows. “What do you say to that?”

“Pretty cool.”

“It gets wild out there. What if you had to go back?”

“I could handle it,” said Piki.

“Tough guy,” Koro teased.

Piki nodded. “I am tough,” he said.

But if Piki was honest, he was getting cold. Was Koro? It was hard to tell, and Piki didn't want to complain.

"Keep rocking," Renee called over her loud hailer. "Ten more minutes."

Toho slapped his tail. "Kia tau, taku whanaunga," Koro said. "You need to be calm. Not quite yet."

Piki watched as Koro placed a hand on the whale's head. He had a memory of Koro doing the same to him. It was something he did a lot, especially when Piki first went to live with him and Nan. That was three years ago, when Dad went away. He would be out next week. Home in time for summer – no longer stranded like the whales.

Koro began to whistle. Piki knew the tune and sang along.

Whitiwhitia e te rā
Mahea ake ngā pōraruraru
Makere ana ngā here.

Toho seemed to relax. He even blinked like he was saying hello. “I think he knows this one, Koro,” Piki said.

Now the volunteers were moving. The matriarch lay waiting on her pontoon. They’d watched as she was towed out into the bay.

“I think she’s calling,” Koro said. “I can feel Toho shiver.” He pointed at the water. “Take a listen,” he said to Piki.

Koro was right. The sea was ringing with sounds: high-pitched whistles, low grunts, clicks and calls. His grandfather smiled when Piki came up for breath.

“Āe?” he said. Piki nodded. “Those high-pitched sounds are direction finders. Whales use them to find their way.”

Piki wanted to shiver, too. The whales’ calls were one of the loneliest sounds he’d ever heard.

Then it was time. They watched the matriarch swim free of the pontoon. Renee called to them from the beach. “On the count of three …”

Piki and Koro eased Toho into deeper water. Around them, other volunteers were doing the same with their whales. They were all hoping for one thing. Koro stepped forward and began to speak. “Haere rā e te tupu tohorā. Haere ki a Tangaroa me tō whānau. Haere, haere, haere.”

Suddenly Piki didn’t want to look. He dived under, letting himself drift on the sandy bottom so he could listen to the whales. There were more calls. The matriarch didn’t sound nearly as lonely. He opened his eyes and saw a rush of water as Toho surged away.

Piki was filled with relief. If Toho hadn’t swum, the young whale might have called the others back. They’d have become stranded all over again. He stood beside Koro, and they watched as the whales grouped and circled. Slowly, one at a time, they spouted, sounded, and disappeared.

Back at the car, Koro found towels. They dried off and changed their clothes. “You were awesome out there,” Koro said. “I could see you were getting cold. You’re a natural in the water – like your dad.”

“He never rescued a whale, though. Eh, Koro?”

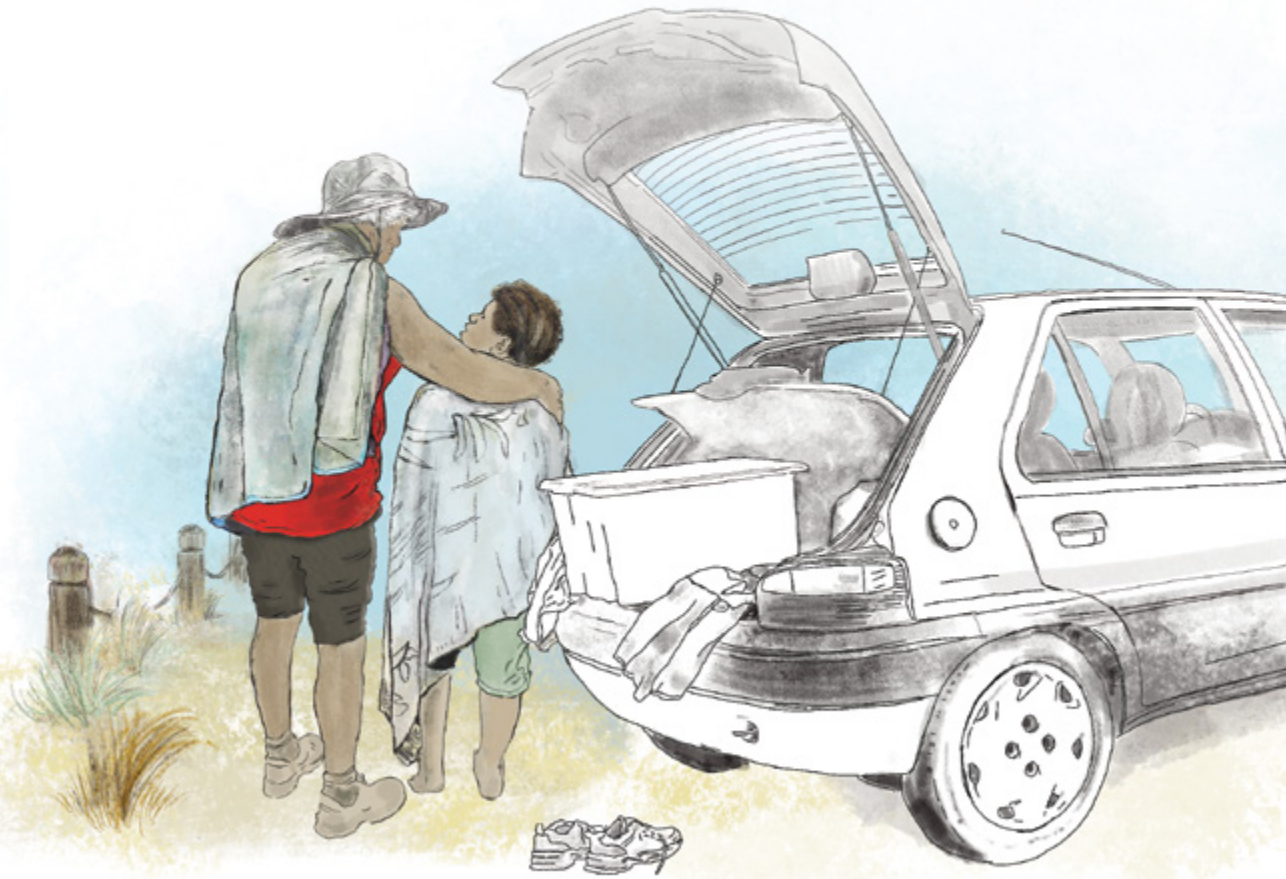
“Kāo. He’ll be proud when you tell him about today.”

Piki imagined sitting at Koro and Nan’s kitchen table, telling Dad about the stranding. His father would nod and ask questions, and Piki would explain about the matriarch and the rocking.

They were all going to live together for a bit. Piki and his dad and Nan and Koro, just until Dad found his feet. Then they’d look for a place of their own. Nan said it would be somewhere close by so she could keep her eye on them.

“Toho and his whānau should be well on their way,” said Koro.

Piki nodded. He thought so, too.



illustrations by Elliemay Logan

Kura Huna

THE ART OF REWETI ARAPERE

by Stephanie Tibble

When Reweti Arapere did art at school,
he was told black was a gloomy colour.
It made people think of sadness and death.
But at university, a teacher talked about
Te Pō, the underworld and the night.
Reweti already knew that Te Pō was where
he could find his tūpuna and the stars.
It was the place where everything started.
Reweti was reminded that black didn't have
just one meaning. If he looked with his
Māori eyes, it wasn't a bad colour at all.

CARDBOARD AND FELT PENS

Reweti has three iwi: Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, and Ngāti Porou. When he was born, kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori were still new. He was one of the first students to go to Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ōtepou in Tauranga, and one of his earliest memories of art comes from this time. "I heard noises coming from the shed next door. I looked and saw wood chips on the ground. They came from carvings of tūpuna. I remember wondering why people would do this."

Reweti doesn't make carvings. He much prefers drawing. He draws tūpuna, including atua, using felt pens and cardboard. Many people think these are strange tools for an artist, but Reweti says they help to tell the kind of story he wants to tell. "Felt pens are often used to draw moko on kapa haka performers. The moko represent tūpuna and their stories, an idea I really like, so I decided I'd use felt pens, too." Reweti also likes the way cardboard lasts only a little while. "It reminds us that the future is fragile," he says.

REAL ART

Reweti has always liked street art. As a boy, he was amazed by the way graffiti artists could own a space with their skilful work. Reweti would've been in big trouble with his parents if he'd ever tagged. Instead, he spent hours and hours practising 3-D lettering. Maybe he'd find a way to use it in his own work one day.

Graffiti is a part of Black American hip-hop culture, something Reweti and his friends related to. "We really liked that some hip-hop crews called themselves after the area code where they lived," Reweti says. "It showed they were proud of where they came from, even a poor suburb. I've always believed in being honest about who you are."

Reweti grew up in Welcome Bay in Tauranga (area code 544). As a teenager, he knew some gifted street artists. He thought their work should be more respected, that people should consider it real art. But who even decided what was real? Going to university helped Reweti think about this. It also helped him to decide what kind of art he would make. He would use his Māori eyes to tell stories from his whakapapa and stories from Aotearoa. For Reweti, these were the stories that mattered. They would be what made his art "real".

KURA HUNA

There is more to Reweti's art than meets the eye. Some people say his figures look like Transformers, but Reweti calls them pou kāri. They're a bit like 3-D versions of the carved figures in a wharenui. And like a wharenui, Reweti's art has kura huna – hidden treasure. Each piece of treasure has its own meaning.

Everything in Reweti's art helps to tell a story. Reweti's pou kāri often wear caps and sneakers. He's making the point that Māori art isn't stuck in the past. And if you look carefully, there are hidden animals in his work. Reweti also uses kōwhaiwhai patterns that reflect different life forms, including the birds of Tāne and the fish of Tangaroa. But he doesn't like the word "decoration" to describe these patterns. He says that kōwhaiwhai, such as mangōpare (the fighting hammerhead shark), are much more than decorations. He describes them as dream-like patterns that help an artist connect with the natural world.

Te reo Māori is another big part of Reweti's work. Sometimes he makes up words to describe his art, like kamo-whaiwhai (from "camouflage" and "kōwhaiwhai"). Kamo-whaiwhai is Reweti's own kind of kōwhaiwhai art. He uses patterns and colour to suggest the clothing of Tāne-mahuta as well as the connection between people and the land.

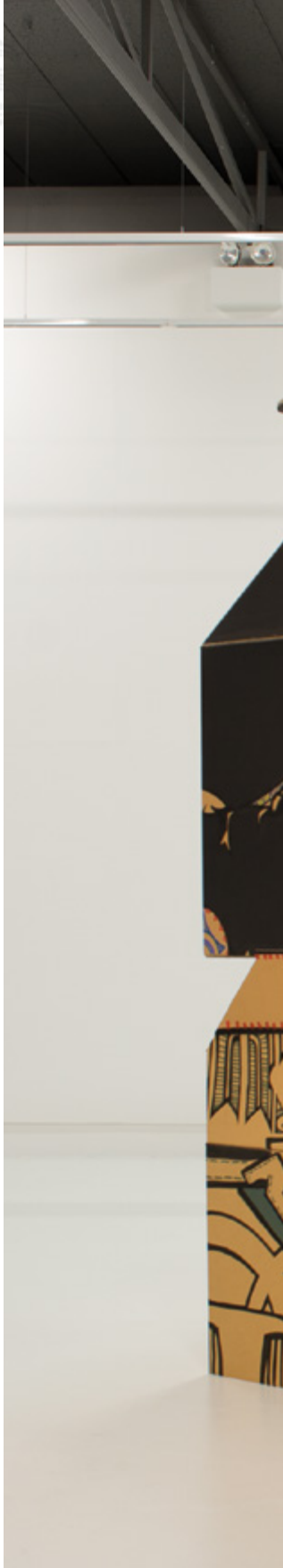
RANGIMATUA

Reweti's biggest artwork is called Rangimatua – a giant 3-D tiki made from cardboard boxes. Rangimatua is in the Dowse Art Museum in Lower Hutt. When Reweti was asked to make the work, he researched the place where it would go. It was a huge room. In the room next door, there was an important pātaka called Nuku Tewhatewha. "I liked the idea that Nuku Tewhatewha would be looking at my work," he says, "reminding us of the past."

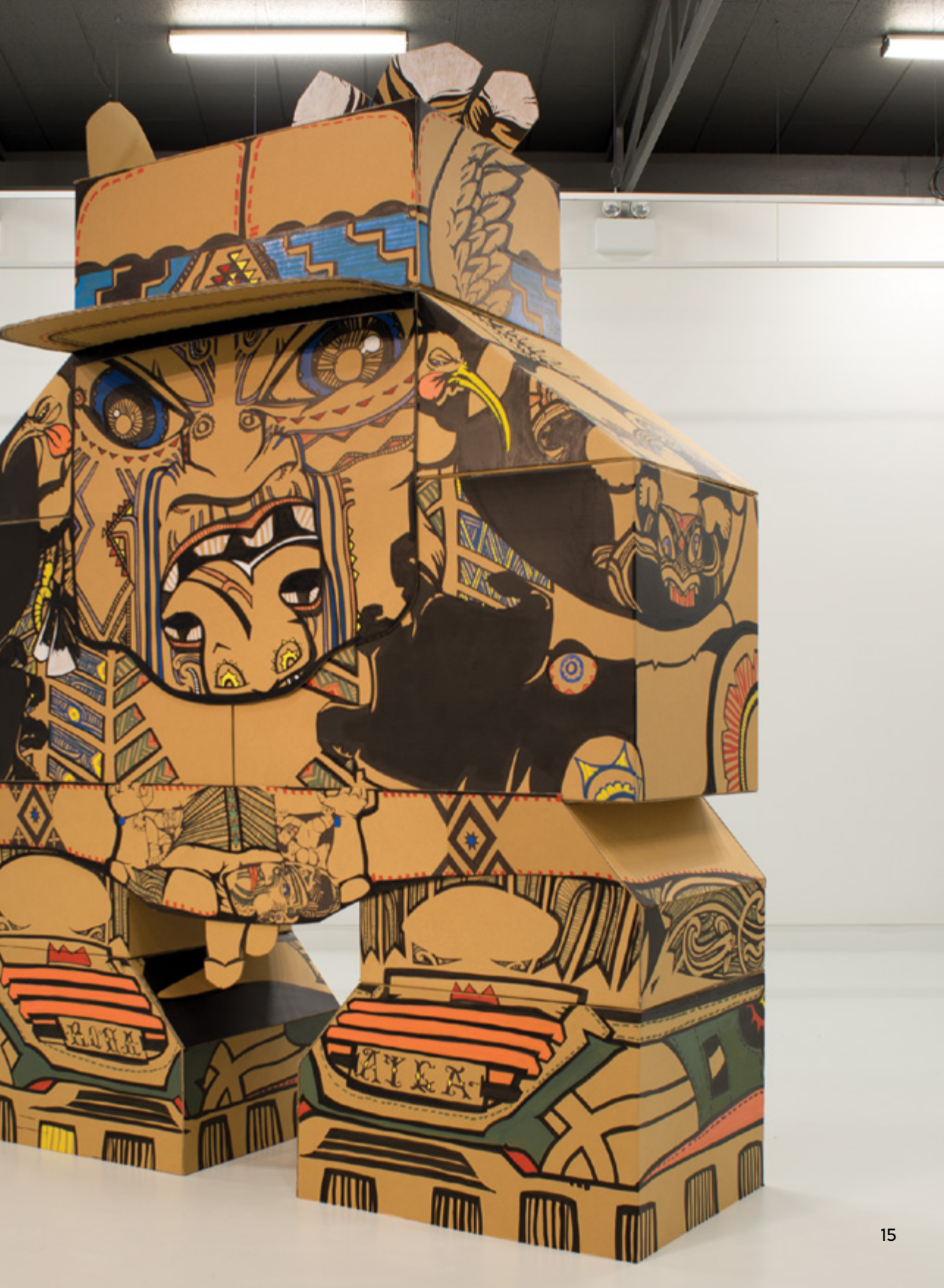
The name Rangimatua is made up of rangi, which means the sky, and matua, which means father or uncle. When he began making Rangimatua, Reweti was about to become a father. He thought about what this was going to be like and about the men who had helped him to grow up.

Reweti had to find giant boxes to make his pou kāri. In the end, he had them sent from a factory in Wellington. "I kept these enormous boxes in my tiny railway house in Palmerston North," he says. "They filled my entire lounge." Reweti says it was pretty chaotic having all these boxes and a new baby in the house. "My son learnt to walk around Rangimatua!"

People are amazed by the size and detail of Reweti's extraordinary pou kāri. Rangimatua stands tall and strong like a shelter. It includes lots of kura huna: kōwhaiwhai, huia, and words. These kura huna help Reweti tell the story of Rangimatua using his Māori eyes. The space between the legs is another part of the artwork's story. "I made this space just high enough for my son to walk through," Reweti says. "It's like an archway to the future. I like to include things about the past, the present, and the future."



Rangimatua, 2015, cardboard and felt pens ▶



URBAN KĀINGA

In 2009, Reweti was asked to take part in an exhibition in Wellington. The exhibition, at the City Gallery, was called Urban Kāinga. Various artists would show what this idea meant to them. Reweti made new kamo-whaiwhai figures. He bought new sneakers for the opening. He met other artists and was even on the te reo Māori news programme *Te Karere*. He says his mum was proud to see him on the telly.

Because of the City Gallery exhibition, Reweti was invited to a big arts festival in New Mexico. He was a special guest of the tangata whenua. Reweti admired the way local artists mixed old and new ideas. He also liked their cardboard boxes! He even put a label from one, "Hecho en Mexico" (made in Mexico), in the mouth of one of his cardboard tiki. "My carving tūpuna once put patterns on tongues," Reweti says. "So this was my own version of old and new."

THE WHAKAPAPA CIRCLE

Reweti says whakapapa is a circle: each generation experiences many of the same things, and many stories are retold. The traditions that influence Reweti's art are part of this circle, like the carvers in his whakapapa. "Before tūpuna Māori knew how to tattoo, the patterns they drew on skin could be washed off," he says. The knowledge of tā moko was brought to people by a tupuna called Mataora. Tā moko doesn't wash off. After careful thought, Reweti decided to receive a tā moko on his face, called a Mataora. If you look closely, you'll see kura huna from his art.

Reweti's grateful that he went to Māori-language schools. He says, "It helped me develop my own special way of seeing the world." Reweti uses his art to share this way of seeing. He wants people to know that you can tell your stories in your own way, using whatever you've got. "For me, working with cardboard was a happy accident," he says, "but it shows your best materials can sometimes be the ones in your rubbish bin."

Reweti says that making art comes with responsibility. "You have to look after the special stories you're telling." But he loves the way art can make people think in a deeper way. "This is what my tūpuna used art for, too." Reweti says he'll always retell the old stories, but he'll also tell new ones. It's all about keeping the circle going.

MAURI MAHI,

Scene: *The students are gathered backstage. Everyone is nervous apart from* **AMANDA**, *who's consulting her clipboard.* **KYLA** *is stretching.* **TE AHU** *is memorising his cue cards.* **HOKI** *is holding his rabbit.* **MISTY** *is sulking.* **TUCK** *is looking at his tablet.*

TE AHU (*quietly, to himself*). Mauri mahi, mauri ora. Mauri mahi, mauri ora. Mauri –

KYLA (*to* **AMANDA**). How long now?

AMANDA (*shrugging*). I don't know.

KYLA. Well can you check, please? I need to be warmed up.

AMANDA (*looking off-stage*). Not long.

TE AHU (*checking his cue cards*). Kia kaha e hoa mā.

HOKI (*pointing to his make-up*). Misty, is my face smudged? It feels smudged.

MISTY. It's hard to tell.

HOKI. This stuff is itchy as!

MISTY. Your face is ugly as.

HOKI. You can talk.

MAURI ORA

BY KATE PARIS

TUCK (*scrolling anxiously on his tablet*). Actually, can no one talk? I'm trying to think.

HOKI. Don't think. Just do – like me.

TE AHU (*bossily*). Kia tau. Did you not hear the man? Tuck's trying to think.

AMANDA. I agree. You're all too noisy.

TUCK (*starting to panic*). I can't find it. It's gone, gone, gone!

AMANDA. Can't find what? What's gone?

TUCK (*holding up his tablet*). My slide show. It's gone.

TE AHU. You had it just before.

TUCK. That was before.

HOKI (*suddenly worried*). What if he does a poo?

AMANDA (*confused*). Who?

HOKI (*scornfully*). Who do you think? Honestly!

TUCK. Can you just all stop talking? This is serious.

AMANDA. What's serious?

TUCK (*scrolling faster and faster*). I can't find my thing.

AMANDA. You all need to be responsible for your stuff.

HOKI. Yes, Mum.

TUCK. My slide show!

HOKI. Just make it up.

TUCK. What? Not possible. Can I swap places with you and Kyla? I need more time.

AMANDA (*holding out her clipboard*). You can swap with me.

TUCK. No way. Your job sucks.

AMANDA. Well for starters, it wouldn't suck if you'd shush.

TE AHU. All of you shush. (*He holds up his cue cards*.) Some people are trying to concentrate.

HOKI (*looking at his rabbit*). Uh-oh.

MISTY. Uh-oh what?

HOKI. He's twitching. You know what that means, right? We have a situation.

MISTY. Have we got time to go outside?

TUCK. What? No way! You won't come back …

KYLA (*anxiously*). Now *I* need to go to the wharepaku, and I don't have time!

AMANDA. Just wait.

HOKI (*holding out the rabbit*). Misty, can you take him for a bit?

MISTY. Yeah, right!

HOKI. Amanda?

AMANDA (*fake sneezing*). No. I'm allergic.

ALL. Ewww. Sneezing!

KYLA. Use your elbow.

TE AHU. Horoia ō ringaringa.

TUCK. Here.

He passes **AMANDA** *some hand sanitiser.*

KYLA (*jiggling on the spot*). I'm sick of this. And I really need to go. Now.

AMANDA (*shaking her head*). It's almost time.

TE AHU. How long? I can't remember a thing!

AMANDA (*looking up at the ceiling*). Like, two minutes.

HOKI (*relieved*). He's stopped twitching.

TUCK (*still scrolling and freaking out*). Can someone please, *please* help?

HOKI (*impatiently*). Look in your recents. Give it here.

He trades the rabbit for the tablet.

TUCK. Don't mess it up.

HOKI (*offended*). Do I look like a guy who'd mess it up?

ALL. Yes!

TE AHU (*clutching his chest in fake pain*). Ouch. Heart attack. Gotta go …

AMANDA. Look, you guys just need to calm down and sort yourselves out. (*She consults her clipboard.*) Kyla, are you ready? You're on.

KYLA (*outraged*). But I really need to pee.

AMANDA. Tough luck. Go. Now!

KYLA *takes a deep breath and exits.*

AMANDA (*reading her clipboard*). Excellent. Tick! We're on schedule.

MISTY (*looking off-stage*). It seems really quiet out there. It's kind of weird.

AMANDA. I wish it was quiet back here.

HOKI (*handing the tablet back to* **TUCK**, *who swaps it for the rabbit*). Sorted.

TUCK. Thanks, bro.

HOKI (*taking a bow*). No problem. It was in your recents.

MISTY. It's a miracle. Hoki actually did something useful for a change.

HOKI. You know who could do with changing?

AMANDA. No fighting. I already told you.

TE AHU. Nāna anō tōna mate i kimi.

MISTY. Huh?

TE AHU. Nothing.

AMANDA (*looking off-stage*). Are you ready, Te Ahu? This is Kyla's last bit. Then you're up.

TE AHU (*reluctantly*). Aē. Kua tīneinei au.

KYLA *enters, looking puffed and very upset.*

KYLA. That was awful. No one clapped.

AMANDA. You were great. Te Ahu, what are you waiting for? Go.

TE AHU (*stalling*). Nāianei tonu?

AMANDA. Yes. Nāianei tonu. Just go already!

TE AHU *exits.*

KYLA (*starting to cry*). I can't believe they didn't clap. Why didn't they clap?

MISTY. Don't cry. You're awesome.

HOKI (*to* **KYLA**). Do you want to hold Rāpeti?

TUCK. If they didn't like you, then they're going to hate me.

AMANDA. Look. No one hates anyone. They're just very quiet. Get it together.

KYLA (*still crying*). I'm the only one who does have it together.

AMANDA (*looking at her watch*). Te Ahu's halfway through. Hoki and Misty, are you guys ready?

MISTY. Ready as I'll ever be.

HOKI. Don't forget to hold the hat properly this time.

MISTY. Got it.

HOKI. That's what you said last time.

AMANDA. The rabbit? Ready?

MISTY (*holding Rāpeti up to* **AMANDA**). Actually, I think he needs to –

AMANDA (*interrupting*). No time. Here comes Te Ahu.

TE AHU *enters.* **HOKI** *gives him a high-five.* **HOKI** *exits, followed by a reluctant* **MISTY**.

TE AHU. Well. That was truly awful.

KYLA (*cheering up*). No claps?

TE AHU. Not a sound. I don't think they understood a word.

KYLA. Could you see Whaea?

TE AHU. I couldn't see a thing. The lights were too bright.

KYLA. I'm never, ever doing this again. Like ever.

TE AHU. Me either. I sucked.

TUCK (*trying to leave*). Right. I'm off.

AMANDA (*pulling* **TUCK** *back*). No. You're not.

TE AHU. At least it'll be over soon.

AMANDA (*looking off-stage*). Well, take a deep breath because here they come. (*She looks confused*.) Something's wrong. Quick, Tuck. Ready?

TUCK. No.

AMANDA. Tough.

She gives **TUCK** *a little push, and he stumbles off-stage.* **MISTY** *and* **HOKI** *pass him as they enter. They look shocked. Rāpeti has gone.*

TE AHU. What happened?

HOKI. Rāpeti gapped it.

MISTY (*doubtfully*). I'm sure he'll come back.

HOKI. Not if he knows what's good for him.

TE AHU. He didn't …

AMANDA. Oh, no! He didn't?

HOKI. Nah, he didn't. But Misty …

MISTY (*insulted*). What? I definitely didn't!

HOKI. No one laughed. You didn't hold the hat right.

MISTY (*outraged*). I didn't need to hold the hat right because there was no rabbit to disappear!

AMANDA. Just calm down, everyone. I have something to tell you. But let's wait for Tuck. He's nearly done.

KYLA. We're all done.

HOKI (*anxiously*). I need to find Rāpeti.

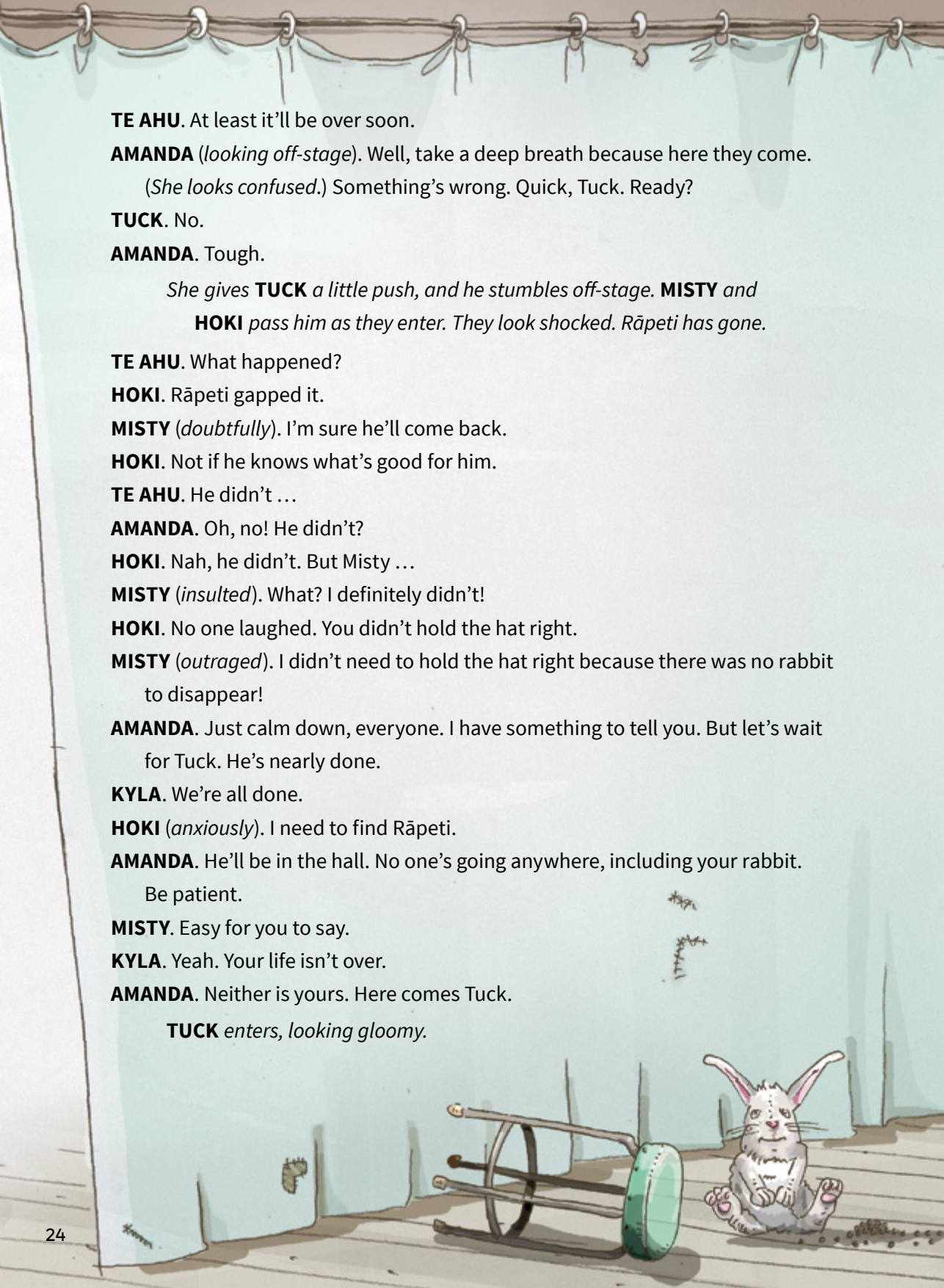
AMANDA. He'll be in the hall. No one's going anywhere, including your rabbit. Be patient.

MISTY. Easy for you to say.

KYLA. Yeah. Your life isn't over.

AMANDA. Neither is yours. Here comes Tuck.

TUCK *enters, looking gloomy.*



TUCK. That was terrible. No one clapped for me, either. Not even the teachers, and they clap anything.

AMANDA. There's a good reason for that.

KYLA. Yeah. Because we all sucked.

AMANDA. No.

TE AHU. Because they sucked? Worst audience ever?

AMANDA. No.

MISTY. Because they're scared of rabbits?

AMANDA. No. The reason they were so quiet is because nobody was there.

HOKI. What?

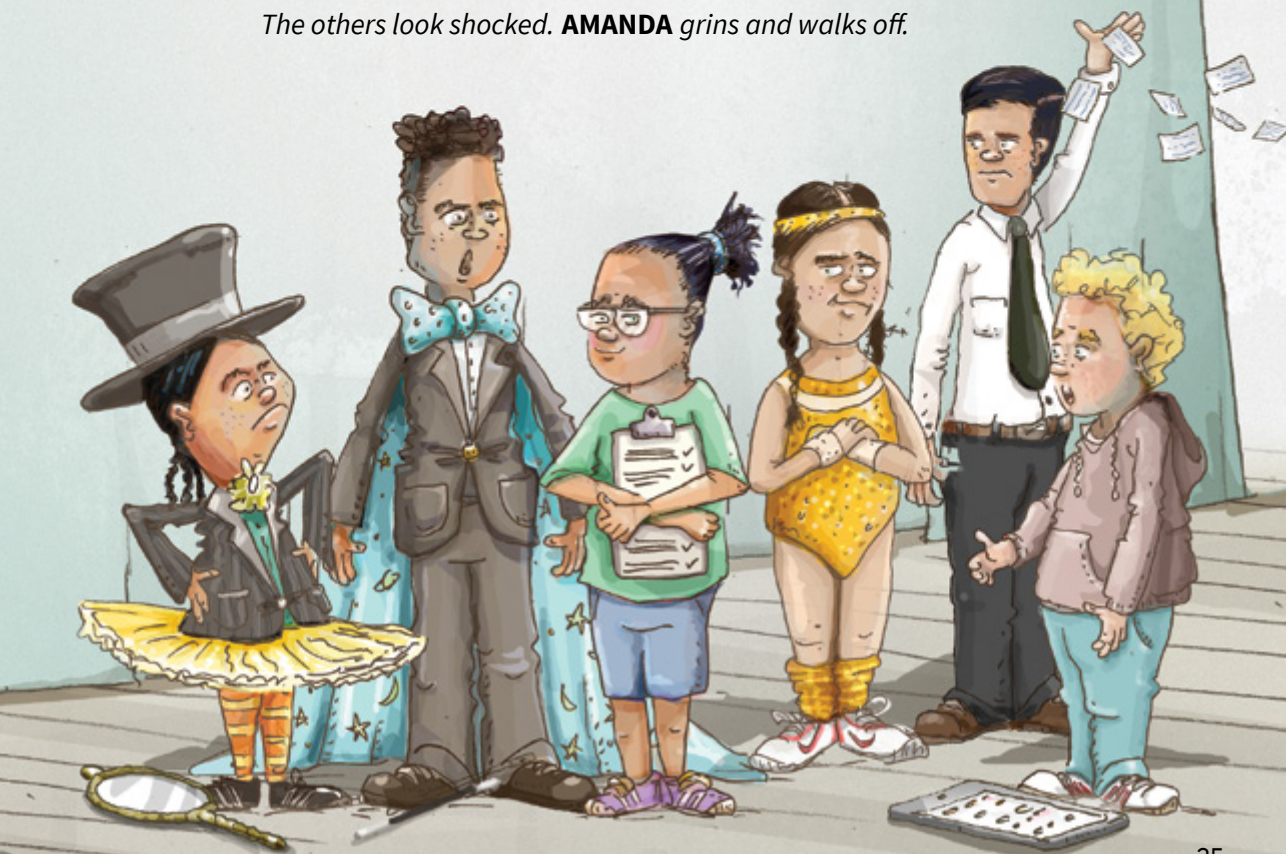
AMANDA. There was no audience. This was your dress rehearsal. Surprise!

KYLA. Why didn't you tell us?

MISTY. And if no one was there, why did you make us wait at the beginning?

AMANDA. I was making your experience realistic. There are always delays. Don't blame me – this was Whaea's idea. See you tomorrow for real.

The others look shocked. **AMANDA** *grins and walks off.*



illustrations by Paul Beavis

GRUMPY HUNGRY

I'm so hungry I could eat
more than I can chew.

My stomach sounds like distant thunder.
My tongue
is a salivating water slide.

I close my book and go into the kitchen,
ready for dinner but

instead of bowls steaming with rice,
I see Dad hunched over the chopping board.

He looks up and smiles.
"Dinner's nearly ready!"

Nearly?

He's slicing the onions!

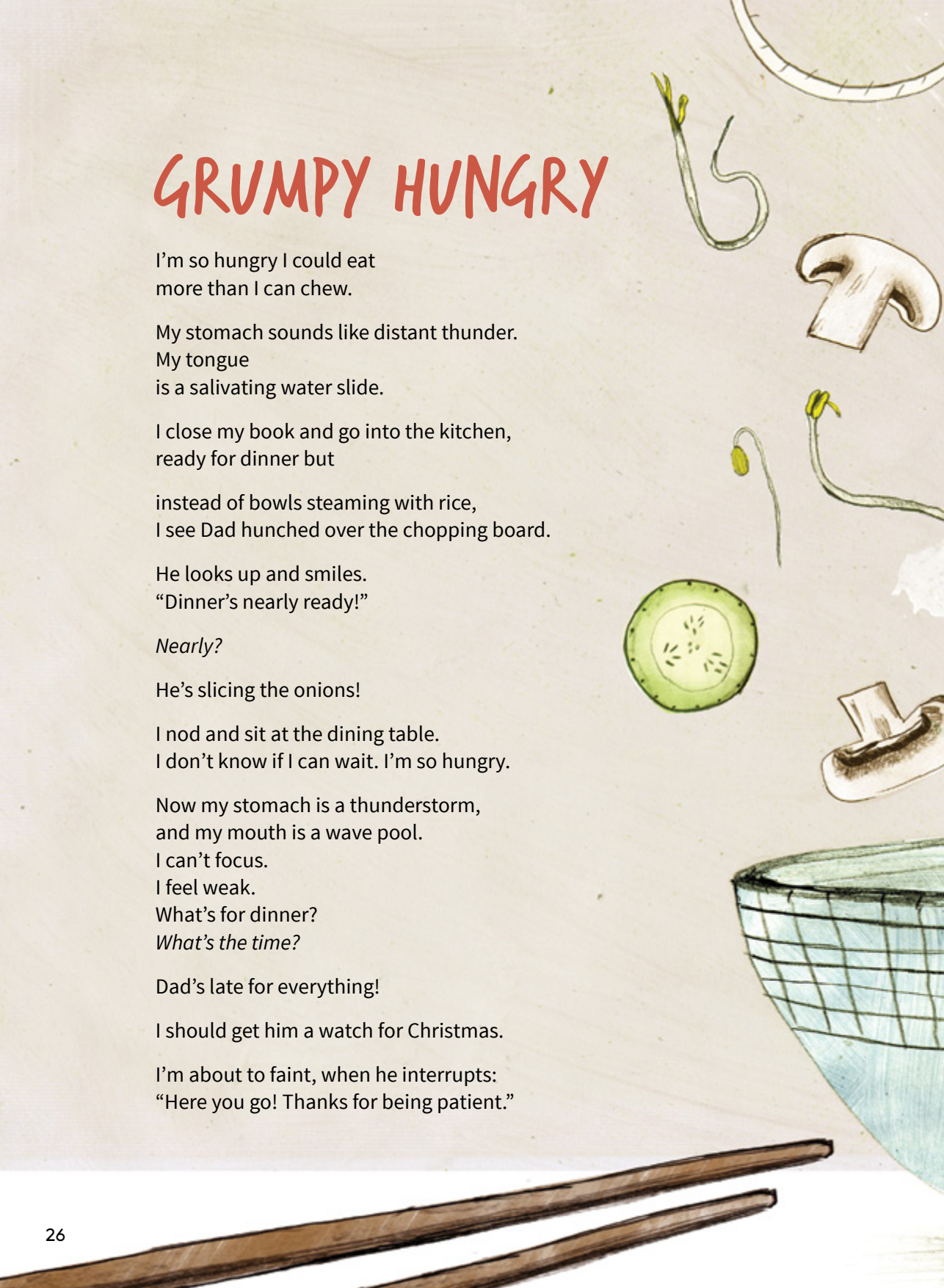
I nod and sit at the dining table.
I don't know if I can wait. I'm so hungry.

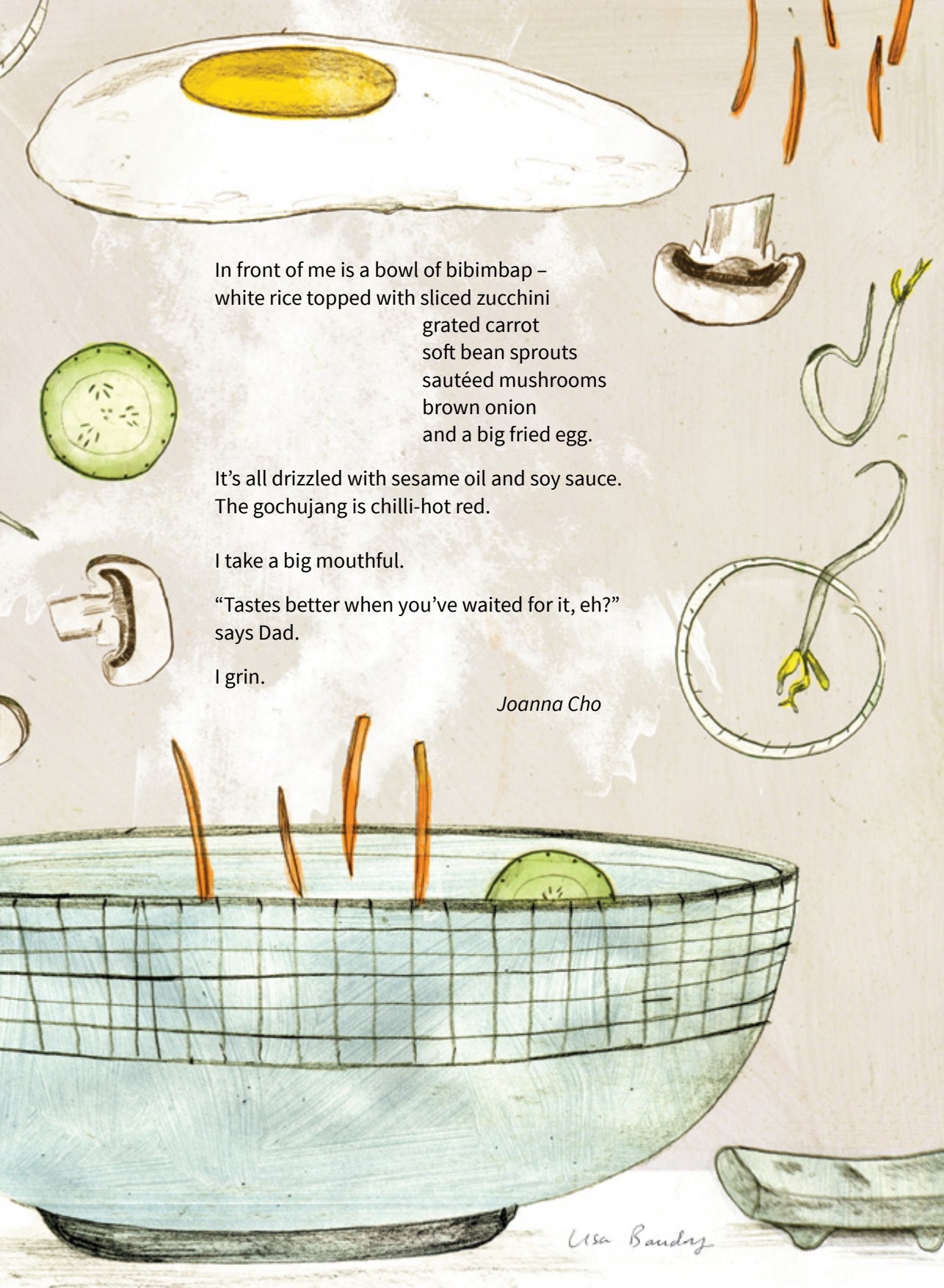
Now my stomach is a thunderstorm,
and my mouth is a wave pool.
I can't focus.
I feel weak.
What's for dinner?
What's the time?

Dad's late for everything!

I should get him a watch for Christmas.

I'm about to faint, when he interrupts:
"Here you go! Thanks for being patient."





In front of me is a bowl of bibimbap –
white rice topped with sliced zucchini
grated carrot
soft bean sprouts
sautéed mushrooms
brown onion
and a big fried egg.

It's all drizzled with sesame oil and soy sauce.
The gochujang is chilli-hot red.

I take a big mouthful.

"Tastes better when you've waited for it, eh?"
says Dad.

I grin.

Joanna Cho

THE STORY OF THE VENTNOR

BY KIRSTEN WONG

The night of 28 October 1902 was calm and clear, but the SS *Ventnor* was in trouble. Ever since it hit a rock the day before, the ship had been drifting and slowly sinking. Now, miles out to sea off the Hokianga coast, it was about to go under. The people on board scrambled to the lifeboats. With only seconds to spare, three of the lifeboats made it away from the ship. The fourth lifeboat wasn't so lucky, and thirteen people died that night. Also lost was the ship's precious cargo: the remains of almost five hundred men. Most had died many years earlier, long before the *Ventnor's* journey had even begun.

Chinese goldminers outside their cob hut in Tuapeka, Otago

GOLD RUSH

The SS *Ventnor* left Wellington on 26 October 1902, bound for southern China. On board were the remains of 499 Chinese men, most of them goldminers who'd been part of Otago's world-famous gold rush. The first group had arrived in 1866 to rework the goldfields that European miners had abandoned. For the Chinese, this was a chance for a better life. Times were tough back home in Guangdong province. There wasn't enough land to grow food for all the people. War was making life there even harder.

Many of the miners hoped to work for five years, save money, and return home. This plan worked out for some, but mining was dangerous work. Some men died on the goldfields. Others couldn't save enough to return home. Chinese graves became a common sight in Central Otago and, later, on the West Coast.

HUNGRY GHOSTS

Choie Sew Hoy

For the Chinese, both here and in Guangdong, these graves were worrying. They believed it was very important to be buried in a place where your family could take care of your spirit. If this didn't happen, you might become a "hungry ghost", lost forever in the afterlife and never finding peace. So the community took action. In 1878, it formed the Cheong Shing Tong (the Flourishing Virtue Society). One of the society's aims was to return all deceased Chinese to their families. In charge of this work was the well-known Dunedin business leader Choie Sew Hoy.

The society raised money, then began the huge task that lay ahead. Teams of men went to work in cemeteries around Otago, Southland, and the West Coast while government officials and doctors supervised. The miners' bones were treated, packed in coffins and boxes lined with zinc, and carefully sealed.

The first venture was a great success. In 1883, the SS *Hoihow* returned the remains of 230 men to their families back in China. The society had done exactly what it had planned. How could it not be confident about future work?

Chinese men in Central Otago around 1900

PASSAGE HOME

The voyage of the *Ventnor* took longer to organise. This time, teams from the Cheong Shing Tong went to cemeteries as far away as Auckland. Nine elderly Chinese men were to care for the remains during the voyage. In return, they were given a free passage home. There was also one unexpected passenger: Choie Sew Hoy. He had died in 1901, and his remains were on board with the others.

The *Ventnor* was only a few hours into its journey when it struck a rock off Taranaki. The ship continued north, but by the following evening, it had sunk. Among those drowned were the captain and five of the Chinese men. Two lifeboats made it to shore. The Cheong Shing Tong hired a ship to search the area and rescued men in the third lifeboat, but nothing else was found. The shocked community gave up hope.

The journey of the *Ventnor*

The *Ventnor*'s lifeboats on Ōmāpere Beach

AFTERMATH

For a long time after the sinking of the SS *Ventnor*, people as far north as Te Oneroa-a-Tōhē were surprised to find carefully packaged bones washing up along the coast. On the north side of the Hokianga Harbour, some Te Rarawa ancestors realised that the bones were from the *Ventnor*. They wanted to return the kōiwi (bones) to Auckland, where they had a better chance of reaching China. South of the harbour, Te Roroa ancestors took the kōiwi from the beaches to a burial place near their own urupā. It's said that gum diggers from nearby Waipoua helped by lending a horse and cart.

Stories of the kōiwi were handed down from one Māori generation to the next. The people of the Hokianga wondered if the Chinese would ever come back, and one day, they did. In 2007, some people from New Zealand's Chinese community learnt what had happened. "It was like a fairy tale come true," says Wong Liu Shueng, one of the first people to talk with iwi. In 2009, she took a group of descendants to the Hokianga. They wanted to thank local iwi and pay their respects to the ancestors.

Alex Nathan (left) and Peter Sew Hoy (middle) with Tom Joe, a member of the descendant community

WĀHI TAPU

One of the people in that group was Peter Sew Hoy, the great-great-grandson of Choie Sew Hoy. "Dad talked about the *Ventnor* on and off for years, but we didn't really take it seriously," says Peter. The trip to the Hokianga made the story real.

"We didn't have much experience with anything Māori," says Peter. "But the pōwhiri, meeting all the Māori descendants, seeing how similar Māori were to Chinese with their respect for the ancestors – it blew me away."

Alex Nathan, a Te Roroa kaumātua, took Peter to the beach where some of the bones were gathered. As they walked, Alex remembered the words of his kuia. "She said, 'Don't forget to look after the Chinese wāhi tapu.' She believed the places where their bones had washed up were just as important as if it had been our own ancestors."

The entrance to Hokianga Harbour

RELEASING THE SPIRITS

The Chinese descendants wanted to do something for Te Rarawa and Te Roroa. In 2013, they gave each iwi a special plaque to express their deep gratitude. More than two hundred people came to the unveiling ceremonies. The events brought peace and healing for everyone involved.

Te Roroa kaumātua Fraser Toi was the first to mihi the Chinese manuhiri. Like Alex Nathan, he grew up with the old stories. “My grandfather was part of the generation who found some of the boxes that came ashore in the harbour and landed below our home,” Fraser says. “Those lost Chinese … they’ve always been on my mind.” Fraser felt the ancestors’ blessing on the day of the unveiling. “A spiritual feeling was there all the way through,” he says. “True aroha and compassion – it was a lovely day.”

A LIVING HISTORY

To the north, Te Tao Maui and Te Hoko Keha of Te Rarawa have their own stories about the kōiwi. Before he passed away, kaumātua Peter Martin told the story that was handed down to him. He said that his people wanted to send the kōiwi back to the Chinese. The bones were sent to Rawene so a ship could take them to Auckland, but the crew refused to take human remains. The kōiwi were then given to the local police and were said to be buried at Rawene cemetery.

At Mitimiti, a bright red Chinese waharoa (gate or entrance way) stands on the Maunga Hione urupā. The gate, which looks out to sea, was built by Nick Grace of Te Rarawa. The iwi wanted to respect the ancestors and honour the history that connects the two cultures. “We see the waharoa as a sign or tohu,” says Nick, “placed there to call people back.” The waharoa is now an icon for the Chinese descendants and a special place where they can go.

MOVING FORWARD

The story of the *Ventnor* – and everything that’s happened since – has inspired songs, poems, documentaries, and even an opera. Now there is a memorial at Opononi, close to where the lifeboats came ashore. The memorial lists the names of all those who were lost. Meng Foon led the work on the memorial for the New Zealand Chinese Association and the descendants. He says that sometimes people ask why he’s doing this work, and he always replies, “It’s for our ancestors.” Meng says it’s all about respect. It doesn’t matter who you are or where you’re from. “You can be Chinese, Māori, Pasifika, European, African – respecting our ancestors is another way of respecting ourselves and those around us. It’s only then that we can move forward.”

▲ The waharoa at Mitimiti with Nick Grace (far right) and Meng Foon (second from left)
◀ Fraser Toi (right) greets Graham Wong (middle), a member of the descendant community

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

by James Brown

"Your birthday's coming up," said Mum.

"Mmm," I said. Birthdays were a problem. I didn't like parties, but I didn't want no one to notice, either. Plus my birthday meant having two birthdays – one with Mum and one with Dad. It was awkward.

"Would you like to do anything special?" Mum asked.

"Maybe Jeet could come round."

"Like he did yesterday and the day before?"

I explained that the day before, I went to his place.

"OK," said Mum. "It just doesn't seem like having Jeet over is very different from any other day."

"There would be cake."

Mum laughed. "There might be. What sort would you like?"

"Birthday cake."

Mum threw her tea towel at me. "You're not helping."

"OK. What about a cheesecake?" I'd had some at Dad's – it was surprisingly nice. It didn't taste like cheese at all.

I had a similar conversation with Dad on the phone a few days later except I asked him for carrot cake.

"Great. I'll pick you both up from school. We'll have fish and chips and carrot cake. Jeet can stay over as well."

I groaned inwardly. I couldn't say I'd rather stay at Mum's because he'd get all sad and grouchy. "Sure, after school pick-up," I heard myself repeating.

I kept putting off telling Mum about the new plan. Finally, I explained that Dad wanted me to go to his place on my birthday, even though it was midweek and he usually picked me up on a Friday. "But I can see you before school," I said.

Her face fell. "Oh," she said. "Well, I guess you were here last year …"

Portioning my time equally between them was hard work. Sometimes I'd just rather hang out with Jeet.

***

“Happy birthday!” Mum beamed as I emerged sleepily into the kitchen. Normally she was gone before I got up. “I was worried I’d have to wake you. On your birthday!” She enveloped me in a hug and managed to sneak in a kiss. Over her shoulder, I saw a cheesecake on the table.

“I won’t sing,” she said.

“Er, thanks,” I said. “I mean for the cheesecake.”

“You can have some for breakfast. I’ll have your present for you after school.”

“Cool, but no rush. I’m at Dad’s, remember? You can give it to me tomorrow.”

“Oh, yes, of course,” she said, too quickly.

I felt a weight lift from my shoulders when Mum finally left for work.

After school, Jeet and I waited for Dad. Kids streamed out the gate like water from our drain when it blocked.

“What are you nerds doing?” asked Tyler the loudmouth.

I didn’t want people to know it was my birthday. Jeet understood. He pulled out a piece of paper. “Conducting a survey,” he said.

“About what?”

“Gullibility. Want to take part?”

Tyler looked worried. “Will it take long?”

“No. In fact, you’re done. Thanks for participating.”

This game amused us until we were the only ones waiting. It wasn’t like Dad to forget a pick-up. I tried texting. No response.

"Maybe his phone's out of charge," said Jeet.

"He texted for my birthday just before."

"Maybe his car's out of charge." Jeet loved Dad's electric car. "Let's just go to your mum's. We can work on the *drain*." 'Drain' was our code word for tunnel. I brightened.

I let us in and texted Mum, although she was often too busy at work to check her phone.

"Happy birthday to you," said Jeet, handing me a small parcel. I unwrapped it carefully, saving the paper. It was homemade sweets from his mum and little sister.

"Wow, thank you. I mean, thank her. Them."

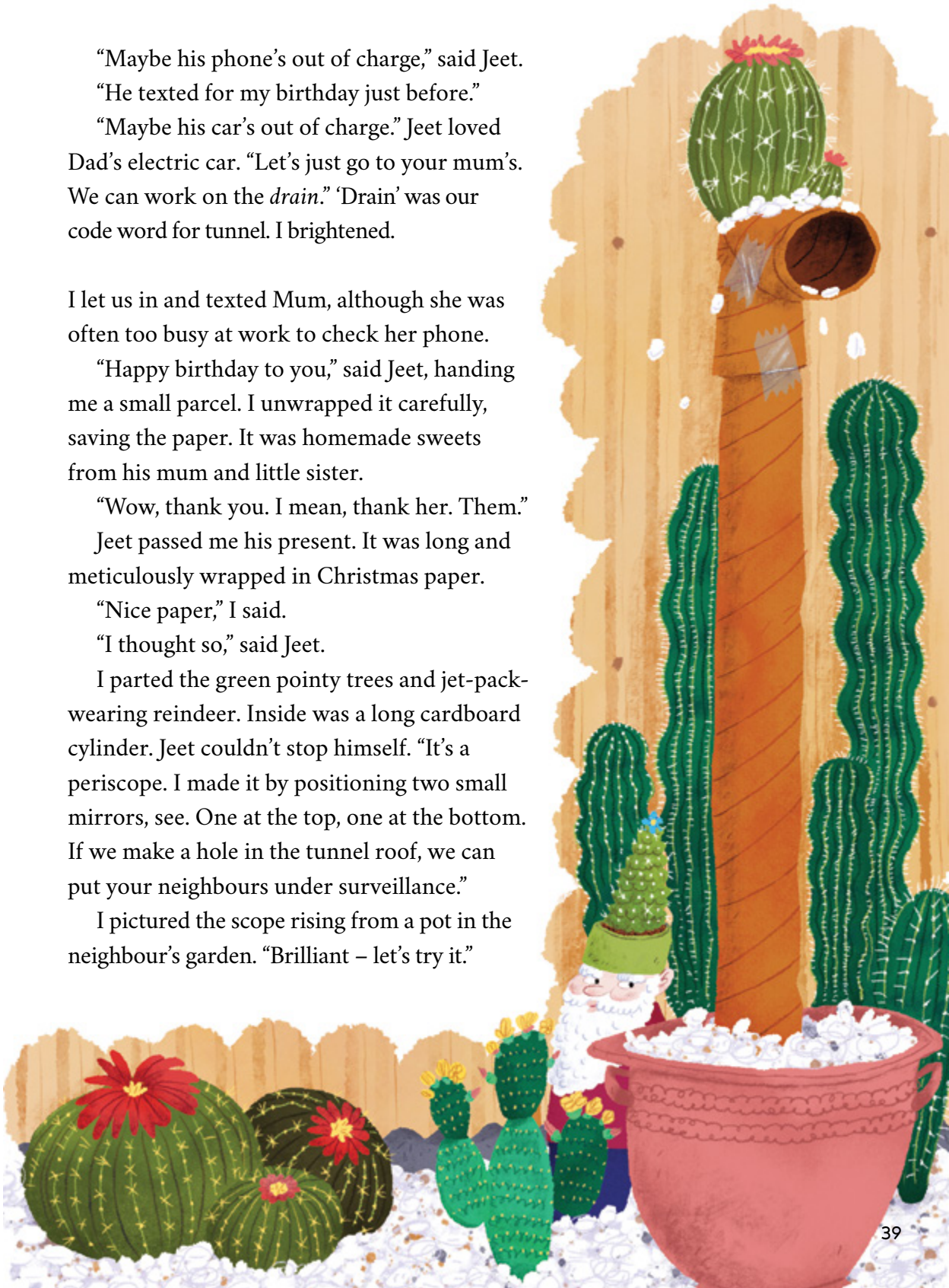
Jeet passed me his present. It was long and meticulously wrapped in Christmas paper.

"Nice paper," I said.

"I thought so," said Jeet.

I parted the green pointy trees and jet-pack-wearing reindeer. Inside was a long cardboard cylinder. Jeet couldn't stop himself. "It's a periscope. I made it by positioning two small mirrors, see. One at the top, one at the bottom. If we make a hole in the tunnel roof, we can put your neighbours under surveillance."

I pictured the scope rising from a pot in the neighbour's garden. "Brilliant – let's try it."



We went to the spot along the boundary where we were helping dig a trench for a new drain. Mum was freaking about the cost. I raised the scope over the corrugated-iron fence. The neighbour's dinky, manicured garden and house appeared in the viewfinder. "Coast clear," I said.

Behind our garage was a deeper hole for the drain's sump. It had planks on the bottom. Except it wasn't the bottom. Jeet jumped in and removed them. That was our secret. The hole went deeper. At the true bottom, a tunnel veered under the fence. It was about a metre long – so far. Jeet checked the roof supports and resumed digging. He filled a bucket with dirt, and I hauled it out on a rope and distributed it alongside the trench.

Jeet's muffled voice came out of the hole. "Whoa. Alien object." The tunnel wasn't big enough for two, so Jeet crawled out so I could crawl in. "In the roof," he called.

I looked up. A black polythene mass bulged near the last support. I gave it a poke. "I think it's lining their pebble garden," I said. The neighbour's pebble garden, complete with gnomes and cactuses, was directly over the fence. "Hey! If we make a hole, we could syphon some stones for our slingshots." Without thinking, I stabbed with my spade. A torrent of pebbles poured in. "Aargh!"

Jeet pulled me backwards. The flow subsided. We froze. "Check for bandits. I'll seal the breach," he said urgently.

I climbed out and raised the scope. No movement from the house, but one section of their pebble garden had drained like a galaxy into a black hole. Jeet emerged from the tunnel.

"Status?" I said.

"Plugged with four by two. Bandits?"

"Clear. But we have a problem."

I passed Jeet the scope so he could survey the damage. "Yes. Catastrophic surface failure," he confirmed. "Quick, the bucket."

He jumped back into the hole and started frantically shovelling stones. I hauled them up and stood on our recycling bin so I could tip them over the fence. By the fourth bucket, we relaxed a little. We had this. The pebble garden was a mess, but it was back. And some cactuses had gone, but we could solve that later.

We retreated inside. The sweets reminded me it was my birthday, and we began eating them. I checked my phone. "Aargh. Dad's not even in town. He never meant pick-up today. He meant Friday, like normal."

Jeet shrugged and started on the cheesecake. Then we went to play Polterheist, a really bad video game we liked.

It was dark when we heard the front door. Mum walked in, looking startled. "What's going on? Happy birthday. Hello, Jeet."

"Where've you been?" I said a little crossly.

She frowned. "I went to a movie because I didn't want to be here by myself on your birthday."

I explained the mix-up. "Oh, dear," said Mum. "Well, let's sort some dinner."

Jeet was looking out the window. "What if we attach a broom handle to the trowel so we can operate it from our side of the fence? And we could adapt a fishing rod to lower in cactuses?"

"Lower in cactuses?" repeated Mum.

"Kitkat's been pooing in the neighbour's pebble garden," I said hurriedly. "I think he's dug up a few of their cactuses."

Mum smiled. "The neighbours might notice you and your contraptions."

"Then we'll do it when they're not home."

"If they're not home, you could just nip over and replant the cactuses. Or ask permission even."

Parents never understood. "It'll need to be a night operation," I mused. "But no torches."

"You'll probably need your slingshots," said Mum.

I gave her a look. Was she making fun of us?

Jeet nodded. "And night-vision goggles. I've seen how to make them online." He sighed. "But you need a smart phone."

Mum handed me a parcel.

"Happy birthday. It's from me and Dad."

illustrations by Josh Morgan

Red, the Pig, and the Automobile

by Annaleese Jochems

One day, Red threw her knitting out the window, packed a basket of fruit, and went for a walk in the forest.

It was a crisp, bright day. Birds bounced on every branch. Red walked a little way, then sat down to eat an apple. Then a plum. Two birds and a squirrel joined her, and she offered them some fruit. They told her about a beaver's attempts to build an aeroplane out of twigs, and she laughed. She told them her thoughts on bed making. "What's the point of doing it each morning when you have to do it all over again the next day?"

They agreed. "Why have a bed at all?" asked the squirrel.

Red must have laughed loudly at this because someone appeared from the bushes. She saw a round pink nose. A pig nose. Then a pair of pink, pointy ears. When he'd revealed the rest of himself, she saw that the newcomer was most peculiar. Thick hair sprouted on his neck and arms. And his trousers were terribly ill-fitting, especially around the back. But he wore a little waistcoat, as pigs do, and his eyes were small and bright. So what else could he be?

Right away, the pig said, "Wow. A human. The smartest creature."

Sometimes, when you meet someone, you know right away that you don't really like them. You don't think you'll *ever* like them – even if they have paid you a compliment. But Red hated to be rude, so she said thoughtfully, "Well, I don't know if humans really are the smartest …"

"Oh, I *do* know," the pig insisted. "Humans are definitely the smartest."

The other animals were quiet.

"Would you like an apple?" Red asked politely.

"Oh, no, no, no," said the pig. "No. I never beg for food. Or share. I just take the things I want. I take as much as I like."

How odd. Red shrugged.

"In my experience, the only other animal that's maybe half as smart as a human would be a wolf," the pig said. He snuffled. "We pigs aren't smart. In fact, we're very stupid, which is why I need help with my automobile down the road."

"I don't know a great deal about automobiles," said Red.

"Sure you do! You're a human! Your lot invented the things."

Although Red was doubtful, she felt obliged to follow the pig. The small animals followed, too. Together, their party walked along the path: the pig and his strange trousers in front, Red with her basket, and the small animals at the back.

"There are lots of thieves in this forest," the pig said. "That's one thing you probably *didn't* know." He laughed and laughed, and kept laughing. He coughed and spluttered, and his laugh became a growl, rumbling up from deep in his stomach.

Red thought, *How could you expect someone to be nice when their stomach was empty?* "Are you sure you wouldn't like some fruit?" she asked.

The pig stopped laughing. "*Some* fruit? I have as much fruit as I like." He stood a little taller and added, "My automobile is very near. It's not much further at all." He pointed along the path, which was nothing like a road, and Red thought, *It'll have to be a very small automobile.*

Until that moment, the three small animals had been content to just follow along. But now, the birds and squirrel became agitated. They jumped and flapped. They were trying to catch Red's attention. Up ahead, she could see a turn-off, and this turn-off joined a second path – a much smaller one. This was what the small animals wanted Red to notice. The other path led to a spot at the edge of a cliff where a person – or pig – could stop to admire the view.

"Yes," the pig continued. "Thieves everywhere, many of them in disguise, and they often like fruit. There's always someone nice and stupid, someone gullible, who doesn't suspect a thing." Red knew she was nice, but she wasn't stupid. She wasn't *gullible*, and she was beginning to suspect something was up. If a person – or pig – were absorbed in sly thoughts and plans, they might not stop to look at the beautiful view. Or even notice it. They might keep walking.

"Where's your automobile again?" Red asked the pig.

"Just follow me." Now the pig laughed so hard that tears streamed from his eyes. He fussed about, looking for a handkerchief, then spent a moment wiping his eyes. While he was distracted, Red gently steered him onto the smaller path. They kept walking, and the pig kept laughing – now so hard that his ears and nose jiggled. It looked like they might bounce right off his head. He rubbed his teeth like you'd scratch an itch, at first just a little, then in long motions so that he lifted his lips to reveal glistening gums. Red noticed they were very long teeth, for a pig.

Now they were almost at the cliff. Red stopped a few steps before it. The pig kept walking, laughing, and rubbing his teeth. "Asked me if I wanted some fruit," he muttered to himself. "Asked *me*. As if anyone *asks me* anything."

And then he pitched forward and fell right over the edge. He tumbled and tumbled, flailing his arms and yelling. Finally he managed to catch hold of a branch. "How can this have happened to me?" he yelled. "To *me*!"

Red and the small animals looked down. The pig's waistcoat had come off in the fall. His piggy ears and nose too. They lay below him in a soft, pink pile. They could all see that the pig was half naked, and he was a wolf.

Eventually, he'd have to let the branch go and allow himself to land. But it wasn't much further to the ground. He'd be fine.

"Want a plum?" The squirrel said and threw one down, hitting the wolf on the back of the head.

The wolf kicked his legs and yelled something back.

"Will that be enough to teach him?" Red asked the small animals.

"Oh!" One of the birds laughed. "Oh, no. He's always doing this! He won't disguise himself for a few months. We'll accept him back into the community. He'll share and be polite, just like the rest of us. Then he'll forget this happened, and we'll go through the whole thing again."

illustrations by Daron Parton

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