



How
Kiwi
Saved the
Forest

A tale from long ago

retold by
André Ngāpō

illustrated by
Isobel Joy Te Aho-White

*Ready
to Read*

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Note: This story about Kiwi is part of a longer tale. In the longer version, we find out what happened to Tūi and Pūkeko when they said “No”. Tūi was made to wear a tuft of white feathers to show he was a coward, and Pūkeko was sent to live in the swamp where his feet would always be damp.

Āe (aa-eh) yes

Aotearoa (ah-oh-teh-ah-ro-ah –
roll the r slightly): New Zealand

Haere mai (hi-reh my): come here

Kāo (kaa-or): no

Kiwi (kee-wee)

Pūkeko (poo-keh-kor)

Tāne-hokahoka (taa-neh hor-ka-hor-ka):
guardian of the birds

Tāne-mahuta (taa-neh mar-hu-tah):
guardian of the forest

Tūi (too-ee)

For more support with pronunciation, go to www.readytoread.tki.org.nz to hear an audio version of the text.



Long, long ago, in Aotearoa,
things were not as they are now.
The skies were filled with birds
swooping and soaring above the trees.
Brightest of all was Kiwi,
with his rainbow wings
and his long, thin legs.
Oh, how Kiwi loved to fly.

One day, a booming call
rang out through the forest –
“Haere mai. Haere mai!”
It was the call of Tāne-hokahoka,
guardian of the birds.

Kiwi and the other birds
flew down to the forest floor.
There stood Tāne-hokahoka
with his brother, Tāne-mahuta,
guardian of the trees.

“The trees are dying,” said Tāne-mahuta.
“The insects that live on the forest floor
are eating the trees. I call on you,
the birds of the forest, to save the trees.”

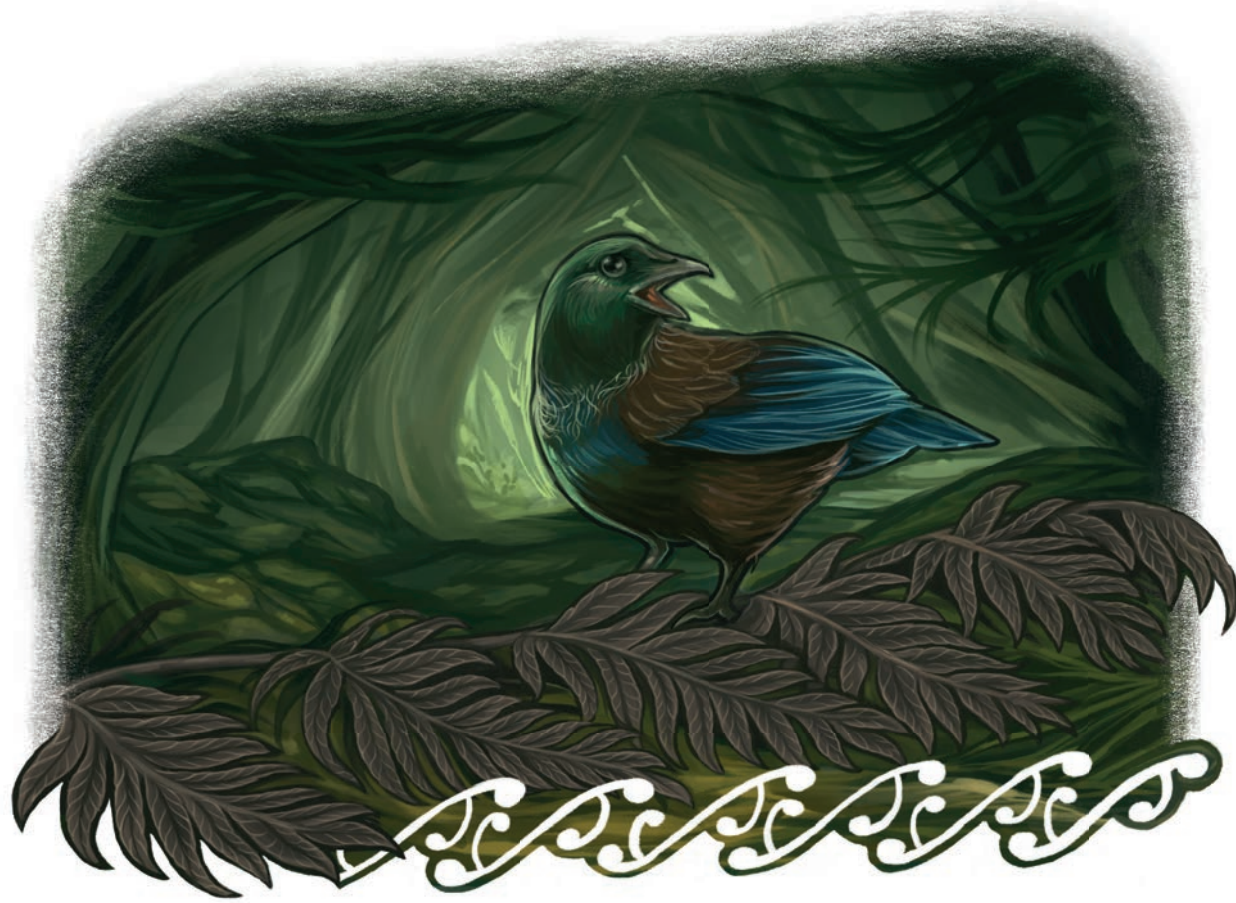
“How can we do that?”
squawked all the birds at once.



Tāne-mahuta replied,
“Come and live on the forest floor
so you may eat the insects
and save the trees.”

The birds were shocked and silent.
No one wanted to live
on the damp, dark forest floor.






Tāne-hokahoka looked at Tūi.
“Tūi, with your sweet song,
will you come and hunt for insects to eat?”
“Kāo, not me,” said Tūi,
turning his head away.
“I am afraid of the dark.”




Tāne-hokahoka turned to Pūkeko.
“Pūkeko, with your red beak
and feathers so blue,
will you save the forest?”
“Kāo, not me,” said Pūkeko.
“My feet will get wet and cold.”



And so it went. One by one,
each bird said “No” –
until only Kiwi was left.

“Kiwi, with your
rainbow wings
and long thin legs,
will you come down
from the skies?
Will you hunt the insects
and save the trees?”
asked Tāne-hokahoka.



Kiwi looked up at the sky.
Oh, how he loved to fly.
But he loved the forest too.
How could he live in a world
with no trees?
Kiwi took a deep, sad breath.
“Āe. I will do it,” he said.

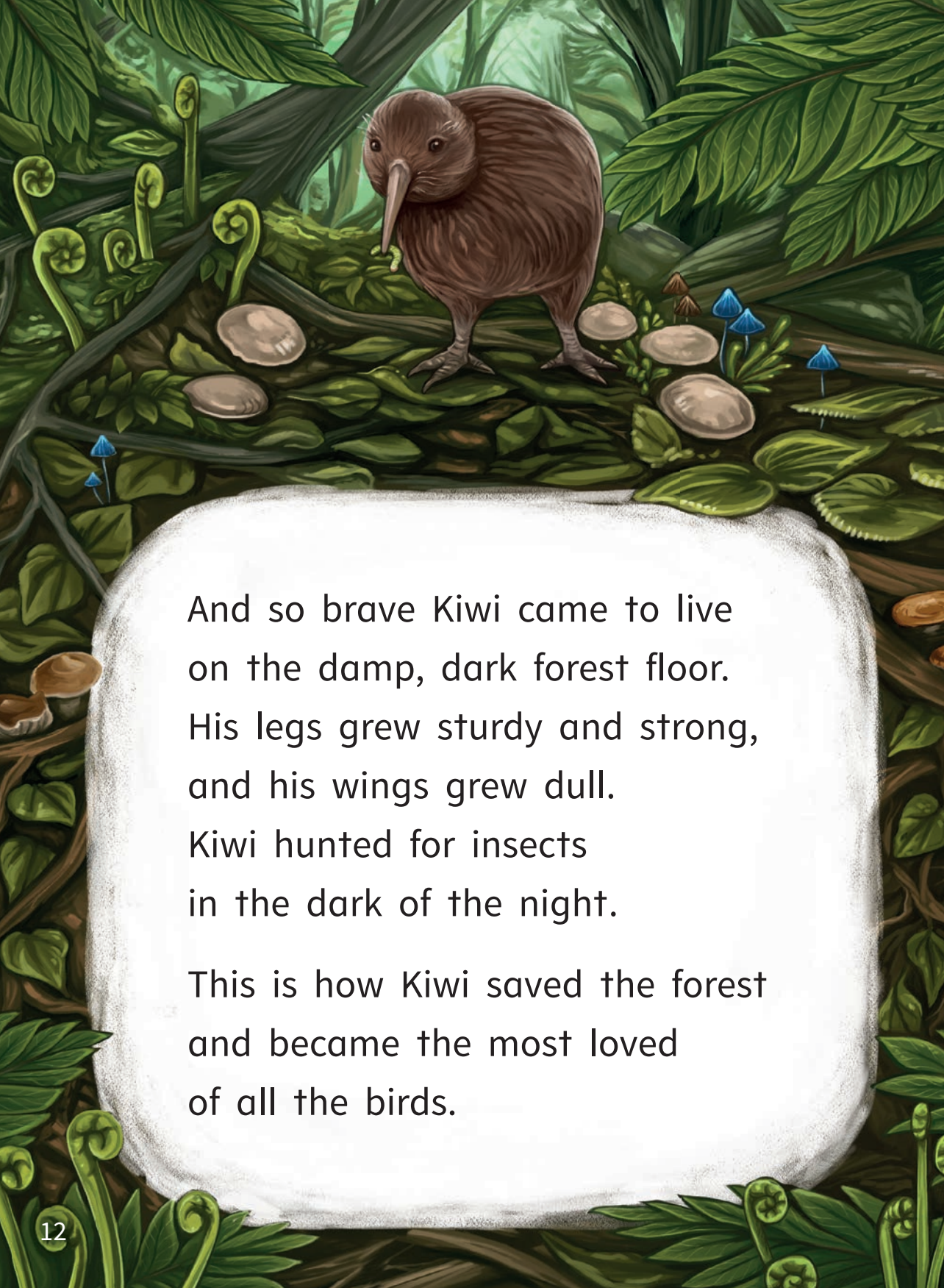
Tāne-hokahoka and Tāne-mahuta
were filled with joy.
But they had more to say.
“It will be hard for you, Kiwi,”
said Tāne-hokahoka.
“You will need to become a hunter.
You will need to grow strong, sturdy legs.”
“Āe,” said Kiwi. “I know.”



“And,” said Tāne-hokahoka,
“your beautiful rainbow feathers
will fade and grow dull.
You will never fly again.”



Kiwi’s heart sank. He loved to fly,
but he loved the forest more.
“Āe,” said Kiwi, sadly. “I know.”



And so brave Kiwi came to live
on the damp, dark forest floor.
His legs grew sturdy and strong,
and his wings grew dull.
Kiwi hunted for insects
in the dark of the night.

This is how Kiwi saved the forest
and became the most loved
of all the birds.

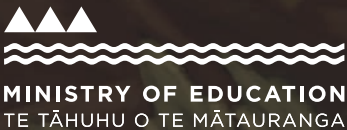
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