



# SCHOOL JOURNAL

AUGUST  
2020



TITLE	READING YEAR LEVEL
Taranaki Views	4
The Story of Taranaki	4
Magō!	4
Come and Meet the Water Whānau	4

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## CONTENTS

### – ARTICLE –

- 2** Taranaki Views  
*by Steph Matuku*

### – STORIES –

- 18** The Story of Taranaki  
*by Hone Rata*
- 28** Magō!  
*by Hio Kelemete*

### – POEM –

- 26** Come and Meet the Water Whānau  
*by Kerrin P. Sharpe*



# Taranaki Views



**by Steph Matuku**

(Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāti Tama, Te Ātiawa)



# The legend of Taranaki

Long ago, Māui caught the great fish Te Ika-a-Māui, which became the North Island. His brothers argued over the fish and tried to cut it up. Their cuts became mountains and valleys. Rain filled some of those cuts and made lakes. Great forests grew.

In those days, Taranaki Mounga\* was known as Pukeonaki. He stood in the centre of the North Island with the other great mountains: Ruapehu, Tongariro, Ngāuruhoe, and Pihanga.

Pukeonaki and Tongariro were both in love with gentle Pihanga. The two mountains fought over her. Tongariro won, and Pukeonaki fled to the far west of the island. There he stands today, waiting for his chance to return to Pihanga.

Those who came to live in the shadow of the mountain called him Taranaki. He is a guardian, a protector, and a source of life. Taranaki Mounga is special.

*\* Mounga: Mountain (a Taranaki iwi pronunciation and spelling)*

# Taranaki – the volcano

Taranaki Mouna is part of the Pouakai Range. The mountain is 2,518 metres tall – the second highest peak in the North Island. It was formed more than 120,000 years ago.

Taranaki Mouna is a “stratovolcano”. This is the name for a volcano shaped like a cone. Scientists have studied the layers of rock on the mountain. They now know that it has erupted lots of times in the past. The last eruption was in 1854. There hasn’t been any sign of activity since then, but scientists think there will be more eruptions in the future. Taranaki Mouna is a **dormant** volcano – he is not dead. He is only sleeping.

Taranaki Mouna from the the top of the Pouakai Range. On the left of the photograph, in the distance, are Mount Tongariro, Mount Ngāuruhoe, and Mount Ruapehu.



# Scientists on Taranaki

In recent times, Taranaki Mouna has always been peaceful. It's easy to forget that one day, it will probably erupt again. To help us to know if an eruption is going to happen, scientists have put **seismometers** on the mountain. These measure and record any volcanic earthquakes or ground movements. GeoNet staff also collect **samples** from the mountain and make observations. Any changes on the mountain, such as a landslide, gas escaping from a hole, or chemical changes in the water around it, could mean that an eruption is on the way. This data should give us lots of time to prepare.



# Plants and animals on Taranaki

When a volcano erupts, it throws out a shower of rocks, **lava**, and ash. Over thousands of years, these materials turn into very good soils. This means that plants grow well around Taranaki Mouna. On the lower part of the mountain, there are forests of leafy shrubs and trees. Higher up the mountain, the plants are smaller and tougher. This helps them to survive in the colder, windier conditions.

View from Taranaki Mouna lookout







Toutouwai/the North Island robin  
(one of the native birds that can be  
found in Te Papakura o Taranaki)

Te Papakura o Taranaki is the name of the Taranaki Mouna **National Park**. Scientists have counted over forty different kinds of birds in the park. This includes twenty-eight kinds of native birds. There are also many plants, insects, and small creatures that are very rare and only live in Te Papakura o Taranaki.

To help protect these plants and animals, the Department of Conservation spends a lot of money trapping, poisoning, and hunting **predators** and pests. They also work to get rid of weeds in the park. Many volunteers, community groups, and schools help to take care of the mountain's special environment.

# Naming Taranaki

Taranaki Mounga is named after Ruataranaki, one of the first ancestors of Taranaki iwi.

Although the mountain already had a name, when Captain Cook sailed by in 1770, he called it Egmont. He named it this after his friend the Earl of Egmont. (Egmont is a place in Ireland.) At that time, European explorers usually gave places new names and ignored the names that **tangata whenua** had already given them.

Two years later, a French explorer named Marion Du Fresne decided to call the mountain “Pic Mascarin” after a volcano in France, but that name didn’t stick.

Then, the name Egmont began appearing on maps. Soon, Mount Egmont became the “official” name for the mountain. However, Taranaki Māori battled to bring back the original name. In 1986, after a lot of debate, the New Zealand Geographic Board decided that both Taranaki *and* Egmont would be the official names for the mountain. Then, in January 2020, the name Egmont was dropped. Taranaki Mounga was restored as the mountain’s only name.

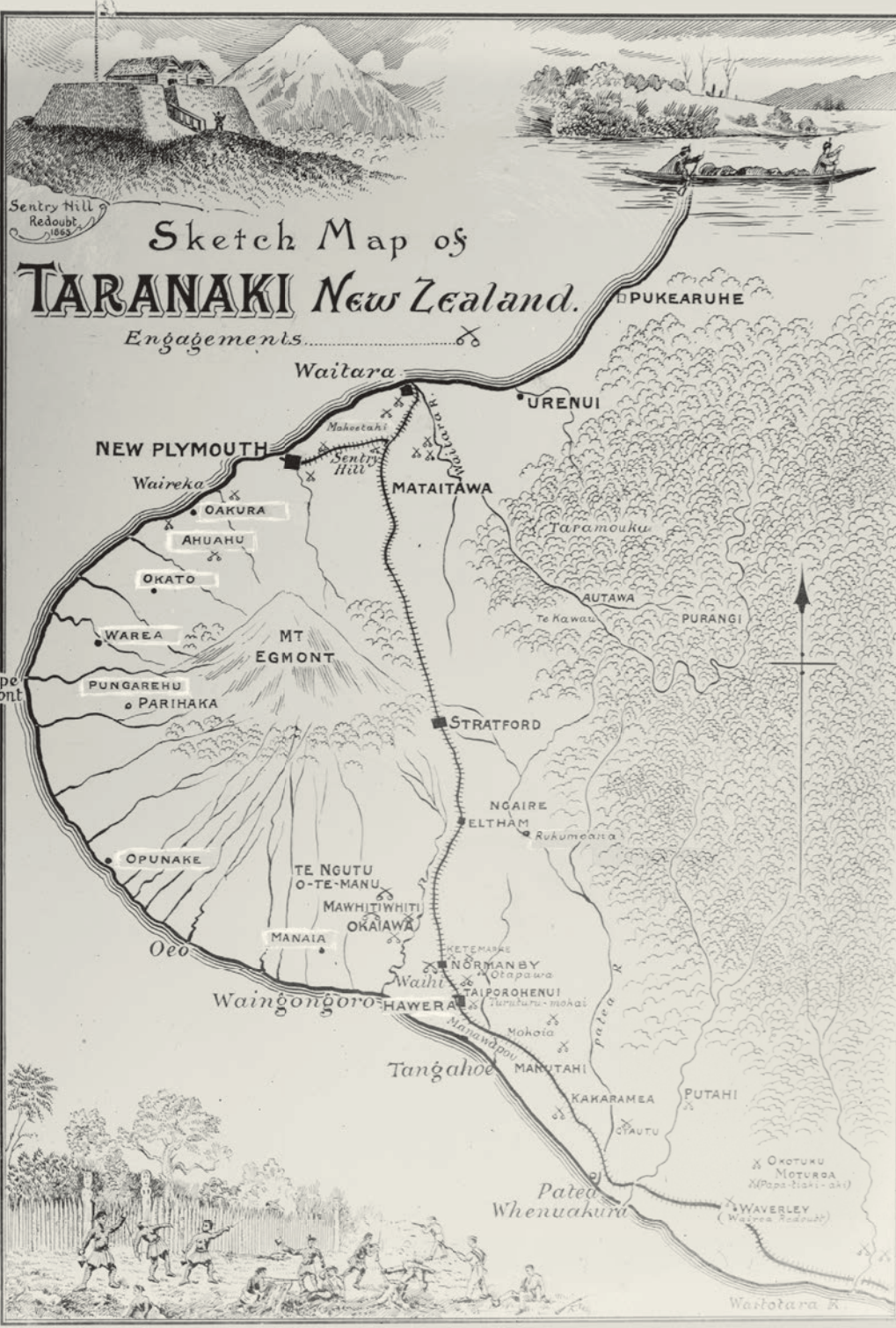
Soon, Taranaki Mounga will be granted legal personhood. This means that the mountain will be seen as an ancestor and a citizen. It will have the same rights as you and me. Nobody will own it – it will own itself.

A 1920s map of the Taranaki region, showing Taranaki Mounga as Mount Egmont

Sentry Hill  
Redoubt.  
1863

# Sketch Map of TARANAKI New Zealand.

Engagements.....



Cape  
Egmont



# What does the mountain mean to you?

Taranaki Mounga isn't just pretty to look at and to photograph. For iwi and hapū, and the people from the Taranaki region, the mountain means much more.

Tui MacDonald works for Taranaki Mounga Project. The project aims to protect the environment, **mauri**, and mana of the mountain.

“We help to get rid of stoats, ferrets, rats, possums, and goats,” Tui says. “These animals eat our native birds and plants. If we get rid of predators, our native plants and animals will live and grow.”

Taranaki Mounga Project needs lots of volunteers to help. Every two weeks, the volunteers tramp through the bush for three or four hours to check traps. There are now a lot fewer predators, and the area is free of wild goats.





The project also carries out bird **translocations**. The eggs of native birds, such as kiwi, are taken from their nests and hatched in safe places. When the birds have grown, they're tagged and put back into the park. These bigger birds have a better chance of staying alive in the wild.



Tui says, “Māori are the traditional custodians of our land, so all the things we do have a Te Ao Māori focus. From a Māori point of view, iwi and hapū are looking after their ancestor.”



Tui loves walking in the bush. It's a time for her to relax and enjoy nature. “What we do will never end because there will always be predators. But in a way, that's good – we should always be looking after our mounga.”

**Top:** A kiwi

**Middle and bottom:**  
Releasing native birds  
back into the park

**Page 10:** Checking traps



Nigel Ogle created and owns the Tawhiti Museum near Hāwera. He makes models and displays that tell Taranaki stories, from the musket wars to farming and cheese making.

“We’re looking for ways to connect people to the stories we’re telling,”

Nigel says. “We make the displays look like a local landscape. They have the kinds of trees and bush you see in Taranaki. We also use pictures of our mountain in the background so that people know straight away that this is where the story takes place. The mountain is such a strong image. It’s an easy way to immediately connect people to the region.”

Part of a display showing a scene from the New Zealand Wars



Students at Green School in Ōakura help with predator control and bird translocations. They also tell people why it's important to protect the mounnga.

**Sophie**



*“The mountain means home to me. I like to protect our native animals by setting possum traps.”*

*“Whenever we come back after being away, and I see the mountain again, it’s like a relief for me that I’m home.”*

**Kora**



**Samantha**



*“We went to a sanctuary in Taupō and brought home a kiwi. We put it back in its nest on the mountain. It was so special.”*

*“Rats can kill two or three birds a day. Stoats kill even more. Since I’ve been trapping, I’ve saved thousands of birds and eggs.”*

**William**





Vicki Fairley works for Venture Taranaki, an organisation that helps to promote the region to visitors. She says that Taranaki Mouna attracts lots of tourists. A lot of people want to climb it or walk its many tracks and trails. And of course, it's beautiful to photograph.







Ivan Bruce is the president of the Taranaki Alpine Club. He guides groups of climbers up the mountain and uses the cliffs and slopes to practise rock climbing and mountaineering. He says, “As a climber, you use the mountain to test yourself. It’s a really good

mountain to train on. It’s not an easy climb. It’s quite dangerous in some parts, especially if you’re climbing in winter.”

Ivan has noticed that there are more people wanting to explore the mountain, but that means there’s more rubbish left behind. More people also means more **erosion**, which is a problem because it can make slopes unstable and dangerous.

“I have a strong feeling of respect for our mountain. If you go climbing, and you’re unprepared, you could get hurt. People have died up there. The weather can change in an instant. It’s better to be safe than sorry.”



Wayne Capper is a Kaitiaki Whenua ranger for Taranaki iwi. His work involves helping to control predators and weeds and looking after archaeological features on the mountain.

“The mountain helps our farming and brings tourism to the region,” Wayne says. “These things provide financial support for our families. He is also our identity – as tangata whenua the mountain is our ancestor. He is the heartbeat of Taranaki. The rivers and streams are like the arteries of the heart, feeding life to our community. Our mountain gives us crystal-clear water. But as soon as the rivers leave the National Park and move through farmlands and towns, they become polluted. The mountain provides so much for us, and we need to give back. He is like a father figure, watching over us. If we look after our mountain, he’ll look after us.”



Taranaki Mouna means different things to different people, but all agree it's special. Is there a place in your town or region that you feel is special, too?



## Glossary

**dormant:** as if sleeping; not active

**erosion:** wearing away of the land

**lava:** melted liquid rock

**mauri:** life force, spirit

**national park:** an area that is protected by law to preserve the landscape and the birds, animals, and plants that live there

**predator:** an animal that hunts and eats other animals

**sample:** a small piece that scientists collect to test

**seismometer:** an instrument to measure ground movement


**tangata whenua:** local people; the people who belong to the land in a tribal area

**translocation:** the movement of animals or plants from one place to another

# THE STORY OF TARANAKI

by Hone Rata  
(Ngāruahine, Taranaki)





Spring is here. I can feel everything waking around me. I can hear the pīpīwharau singing in my korowai. There is cold snow on my head, but it is beginning to melt. I can feel the awa flowing underneath the snow. I look east. A blanket of cloud surrounds me, but I am tall. I can see over it. I can see the dark outlines of Ruapehu, Tongariro, and Ngāuruhoe far away. Tongariro glares at me. His anger still burns strong.

The sun rises behind my love, Pihanga. She looks like a green jewel rising from the land. I smile at her, and then Tongariro rumbles. I can feel it through the earth. Steam rises from his summit. The steam becomes a cloud that covers the rising sun. It covers Pihanga too. Sadness washes over me.

It seems like only yesterday that I lived in the centre of Te Ika-a-Māui with those other mountains. We would tell stories and play-fight. Ngāuruhoe and Pihanga would laugh at us as we made fools of ourselves. I was called Pukeonaki then. I was young and about to fall in love.

I did not know what I felt at first. I just wanted to spend more time with Pihanga. To talk with her more. I was always looking at her. The green cloak of her forest was beautiful. She was beautiful. Then my friend Rauhoto told me, “You love her, Pukeonaki.” She also said, “But you better watch out – Tongariro loves her, too.” Rauhoto has always guided me well.

As time passed, the play fighting got rougher. Tongariro and I would both try to show Pihanga that we were the strongest and bravest. Sometimes Pihanga would shout at us. She didn't like the fighting. She said that she loved us both and wouldn't choose between us.

But my love only grew stronger. Pihanga and I spent more and more time together. And Tongariro grew jealous. One day, he said, "Pukeonaki, we must settle this. We must fight for Pihanga. Whoever wins will marry her!"

Pihanga frowned. "You cannot win me that way," she said. "I will choose the one I marry!" But we did not listen. I was angry and jealous too. So I accepted the challenge of Tongariro. Pihanga turned her back on us as we prepared to battle.



Tongariro drew great balls of fire and molten rock from the earth. He hurled them at me. My sides became covered with deep cuts and burns. I called lightning and storms from the sky and blasted him over and over.

Ruapehu and Ngāuruhoe cheered us on, excited by the fight. But then they grew silent. We struck each other again and again. The fight lasted all day. Finally, we both grew tired. Our blows were slower and weaker. We drew apart and looked at each other. Our anger hid our pain. Ruapehu and Ngāuruhoe seemed frightened. Pihanga still looked away. I was so weary I could barely stand.





I could see that Tongariro was getting ready for one last attack. Lava boiled in his crater, and thick black smoke poured into the sky. He attacked suddenly, and I was too slow to stop him. His fist cracked a great split in my summit. I was dazed, and he kicked me over.

When my head cleared, Tongariro was standing over me. I knew I was beaten, and I could see Tongariro was still angry. Rauhoto whispered in my ear, “We have to go.”

She hurried away towards the west. My legs were shaky, but I followed. My steps cut a great valley in the earth. I could hear Tongariro shouting, “That’s right! Go, Pukeonaki! You have lost, and if you come back, I will finish the job!”

I looked back at Pihanga. For a moment, she looked over her shoulder. Her face moved from anger to sadness then back to anger. Then, she looked away again, and my heart broke. Tears ran down my slopes and started to fill the valley.



All through that long night, I followed Rauhoto. She moved west, and then south. My tears flowed so much that I could barely see. They created a great river behind me – the Whanganui. If you look, you will see it still follows my path from Tongariro to the sea.

When Rauhoto reached the coast, she travelled north-west. I followed, but as the sun began to rise, I saw two other mountains inland. They were Pouakai and Patuha. I asked if I could watch the sunrise with them. They let me sit, and I began weeping again. Pouakai put her arms around me as I watched the sun come up behind my old friends. Rauhoto continued to the mouth of the Hangatahua River, where she rested.

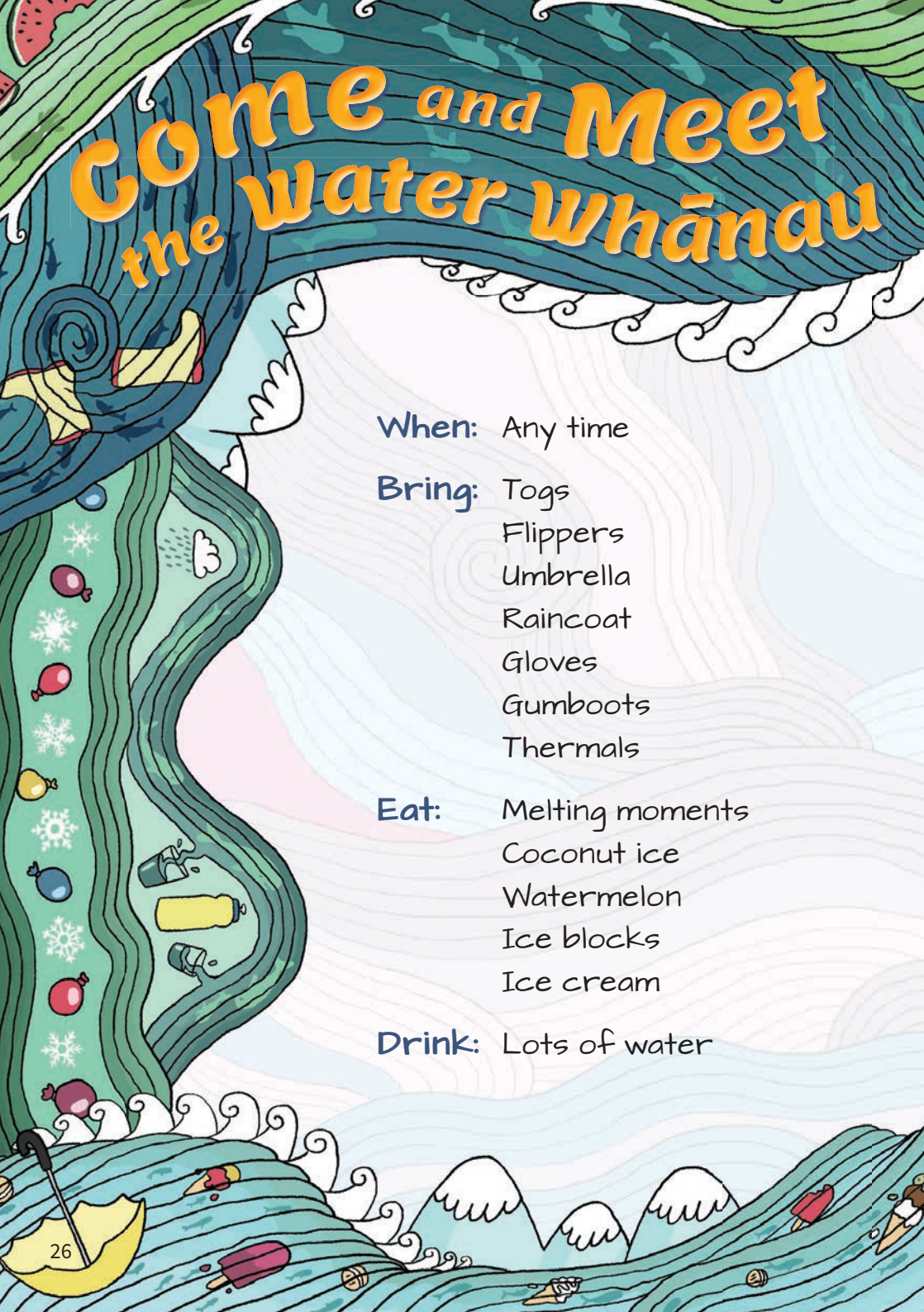


So it has been for many years. The people who have come to live here have called me Taranaki. It is my duty to watch over them with Pouakai and Patuha. I still love Pihanga, and I think she still loves me. Rauhoto tells me that I must grow stronger and wiser before I can return to her. But one day, I will. Rauhoto says she will tell me when the time is right. I will march straight back to my friends. And I will fight if I have to. For now, though, I rest and gather my strength. Pouakai says she may not let me go, but I think she will. The love of Pihanga calls me.

*illustrations by Taupuruariki Whakataka Brightwell*








# Come and Meet the Water Whānau

**When:** Any time

**Bring:** Togs  
Flippers  
Umbrella  
Raincoat  
Gloves  
Gumboots  
Thermals

**Eat:** Melting moments  
Coconut ice  
Watermelon  
Ice blocks  
Ice cream

**Drink:** Lots of water



**Activities:** Water play  
Water recycling  
Water balloons  
Snowboarding  
Snow angels  
Snowflake cut-outs  
Rain dancing  
Rain painting  
Rain spells  
Ice sculptures  
Ice skating  
Ice hockey

**Imagine:** Water travelling day  
and night to join  
Moana-nui-a-kiwa

**Remember:** To protect and care  
for our water whānau

*Kerrin P. Sharpe*

An illustration of a young girl with dark hair, seen from the side, looking out over a body of water at sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a golden glow on the water and sky. In the distance, several fishing boats are visible on the water. The girl is wearing a purple top. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

# Magō!

by Hio Kelemete

Telehia looked out to sea. It was dawn, and the sun's rays sparkled on the tops of the waves. In the distance, she could see the fishing boats. The tautai, the master fishermen, were heading out for the day. They could see a taumanu, a flock of feeding seabirds, beyond the reef. Her father's words echoed in her head. "The taupulega have closed the lagoon. No fishing, no swimming. Everyone must stay away from the water."

She shivered. The council of elders wouldn't close the lagoon without a good reason. Motuhaga seemed very quiet this morning. The water in the lagoon looked still and deep.

On her way to school, Telehia couldn't stop thinking about what her father had said. She was deep in thought when her cousins caught up with her.

“Hey, Telehia. Did you hear about the lagoon?” asked Ata. “Te hē believe ni?\* What are we supposed to do now? I mean, no swimming? We're surrounded by water, but we can't jump in. That's just nuts!”

“I know,” Telehia replied. She kicked at a piece of shell on the path. “But something big must have happened for the lagoon to be out of bounds.”

“Mum said there were some weird shadows in the water,” Meli said. “But I reckon it will just be those stupid boys trying to scare everyone. They think they're funny.”

“Nah, I don't think so,” replied Telehia. “They'd have to be crazy to do that again. They got in so much trouble last time.”

**\* Te hē believe ni? – Can you believe it?**



“What if it’s a giant squid,” said Meli. “They have big, long tentacles. It could grab anyone who puts their foot in the water and pull them under.”

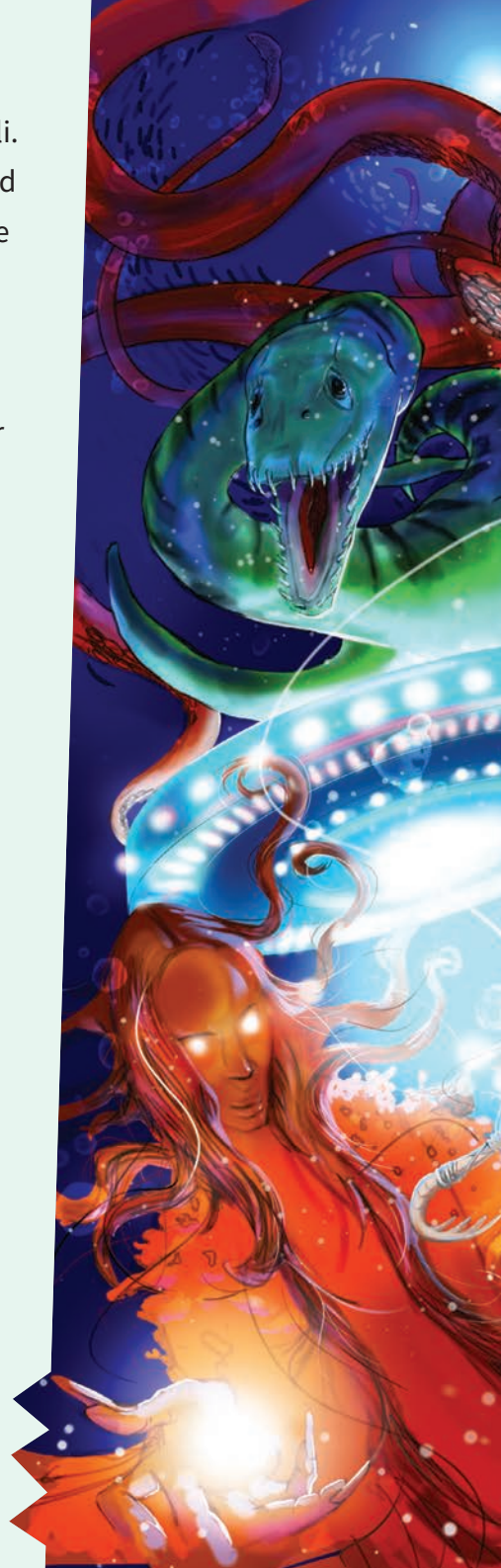
“Maybe it’s one of those dinosaurs from that movie,” said Ata. “Maybe it escaped, and it’s decided to make our lagoon its new home.”

Meli rolled her eyes. “Yeah, right! Maybe it’s an alien invasion and a spaceship landed in the lagoon. They’re going to invade Nukunonu first, and then the rest of the world!”

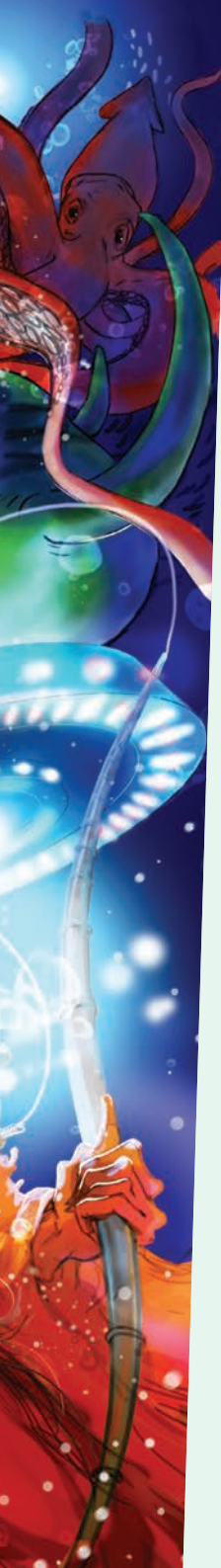
“Well you never know – it might happen,” replied Ata.

Telehia winked at Meli. “I know what it is,” she whispered. “It’s the witch Afinemata. She’s coming to get you, Ata. She wants to teach you a lesson for taking Falepola’s clothes while he was swimming last week. The poor guy had to run home in his undies!”

“Afinemata?” said Ata. She looked pale. “Do you really think so? Well, in that case, I’m never going swimming again!”







A few days later ...

“Hey! Telehia! Meli! Did you hear the news?”

Ata came running up to where Meli and Telehia were standing on the jetty. “Some scientists are here from Australia. They say it’s a magō in the lagoon! A shark – a whale shark even! Harmless as. They said that maybe two came in with the tide but now there’s only one. Te hē believe ni?” Ata always spoke quickly when she had something exciting to share.

“We heard,” said Telehia. “We came down to see if we can see it.”

“Lucky it’s not an alien invasion or a dinosaur attack,” grinned Telehia.

“And it’s not Afinemata coming to carry you away,” added Meli.



“I knew it wasn’t anything like that,” said Ata. “I was only pretending to believe you. Couldn’t you tell I was just joking?”

“My mum said it’s only a young magō and it’s growing all the time,” said Meli. “Soon it will be too big to get out of the lagoon by itself.”

“How do you think they’ll get it out?” asked Ata.

“Maybe they’ll have to cut a hole in the reef,” Telehia replied.

“They could use a helicopter and carry it out in a sling, ni?”

“Maybe they could build a big water slide.”

“What if they dropped a huge stone into the lagoon? The wave it made would wash the magō out over the reef.”

“I’ve got an idea! What about ...”

The sound of their voices carried through the evening air as the setting sun’s rays sparkled on the tops of the waves.

Illustrations by Vaitoa Baker

### ***The Real Magō***

“Magō!” is based on a real event. In May 2018, a large creature was spotted in the lagoon in Nukunonu, one of the atolls that make up Tokelau. At first, nobody was sure what it was. It turned out to be a young whale shark.

Whale sharks are the biggest fish in the sea. They can grow up to 18 metres long. They only eat plankton (microscopic plants and animals that drift in the ocean currents), so they are not dangerous to humans – in fact, whale sharks are endangered, so they need *our* protection!

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