

The Story of Rahitūtakahina and Tīarakurapakewai

A long time ago, in a village, there lived a fierce warrior named Rahitūtakahina (Rahi), he was married to a beautiful and loving woman named Tīarakurapakewai (Tī Ara).

One day a tribe of Patupaiarehe visited the village to kidnap Tī Ara and take her back to their home, a large volcano. They wished to have her care for them.

The Patupaiarehe knew Rahi and his whānau would chase after them so, before they left on their journey, they chanted a spell which created a giant forest filled with vines. Rahi returned to the village seeing the giant forest, and knew it would take him far too long to journey through the forest, he decided to try a different option.

Rahi found his Manu Tangata, a large kite that he was able to use to carry a person. He packed himself some moa eggs into a kī (a woven bag similar to a kete), he asked Tāwhirimātea, the Atua of wind to send him into the sky and over the top of the forest.

Soon enough, Rahi had caught up to Tī Ara and the Patupaiarehe. The Patupaiarehe noticed and decided to chant another spell to stop Rahi, this spell created a second sun. With two sun's in the sky it became very hot, so much so that it burnt Rahi's Manu Tangata, sending it to the ground.

Before crashing to Papatūanuku,(earth) Rahi managed to safely guide the Manu Tangata into a giant nest. This nest was home to a Hokioi bird (Haast Eagle), a giant eagle that was native to Aotearoa, fortunately for Rahi, the mother bird was not present, however, her chicks were, and they were very hungry. Rahi took the moa eggs from his kī and gave these to the baby Hokioi to eat.

Namu, the mother bird, flew in as Rahi was feeding her babies, seeing him feed them told her that Rahi was a good guy, so she gently grabbed Rahi and flew him back to Papatūanuku. Namu then decided she would continue to fly above Rahi to keep an eye on him.

Back on Papatūanuku, the forest and grass had all been burnt away by the two suns, leaving a giant desert. Rahi continued his journey for Tī Ara through this desert with the suns heat causing Rahi to become tired and dehydrated. Rahi was very close to giving up when he seen a giant rock in the distance.

Rahi crawled himself to this rock and rested in it's shade, soon he started to feel his energy return, he had found a special rock with a mauri (lifeforce) that was able to replenish people's energy. As Rahi continued to rest, Namu flew down from above and landed on the giant rock. She cried giant tears and these fell on Rahi's face and he was able to drink these which also helped to re-hydrate him. Soon Rahi, was feeling much better.

From their home, at the volcano, the Patupaiarehe noticed Rahi resting and decided to chant a final spell to stop him from reaching them. This time they created a giant lizard and demanded it to attack Rahi.



ki o rahi

The lizard came to where Rahi rested and tried to attack him, however, that same mauri that was helping to replenish Rahi's energy was also acting like a forcefield and the lizard could not get to Rahi.

So the lizard, stuck outside the mauri decided to dig a trench all the way around the mauri to trap Rahi.

As the lizard dug the trench it pulled large boulders up and threw them at Rahi to hurt him that way however, Rahi had his energy back now and managed to evade most of the rocks. A few times Rahi was a bit slow in getting out of the way, so Namu came to the rescue by using her wings to block the rocks, this damaged Namu's wings and soon she could not fly.

Once the lizard had thrown the last boulder it uncovered a spring (where water comes from the ground) this spring began to fill the trench up and so now Rahi was trapped on an island encircled by water. Rahi could easily have swum across however, the lizard was smart and turned into a Taniwha named Utumai.

Utumai patrolled the waters around the island, remaining hidden so that Rahi wouldn't dare swim across. Rahi was trapped, soon the two suns went down, and this created a very cold night in which the stars of Matariki shone very brightly. Namu wrapped her wings around Rahi to keep him warm and soon some familiar faces appeared.

Rahi's father and some of his whānau had decided to search after Rahi, using the stars they had navigated their way towards the volcano.

Rahi's father, a tohunga, seen Rahi trapped and so chanted a spell which froze part of the water, creating an ice bridge that connected Rahi's island to the outer world. Rahi grabbed Namu, carried her out across the ice bridge and left her with his father so he could tend to her.

Rahi and his whānau took off up to the volcano and blocked all the vents where smoke was escaping, this forced the smoke into the cave where the Patupaiarehe had Tī Ara and they were forced to flee.

As they exited the cave they were met by Rahi and his whānau, before a fight broke out, Rahi stepped forward and said there would be no fighting, losing lives from anyone's tribe was all too common, and Rahi did not want this to happen any more, so he decided a game would be better to settle disputes in the future.

Together both tribes returned to where Rahi, Namu and the Taniwha had battled. The tribes held wānanga (discussions) until they agreed on a game they could both play and thus Kī o Rahi was created.

Kī o Rahi was then played to settle differences or further relationships between the two tribes. Today we can play the game in the same manner.



ki o rahi