



Tokahaere An Awe Inspiring Landmark

RAUKAWA

RAUKAWA COUNTY COUNCIL

By Paraone Gloyne
Illustrated by Hākopa Pore



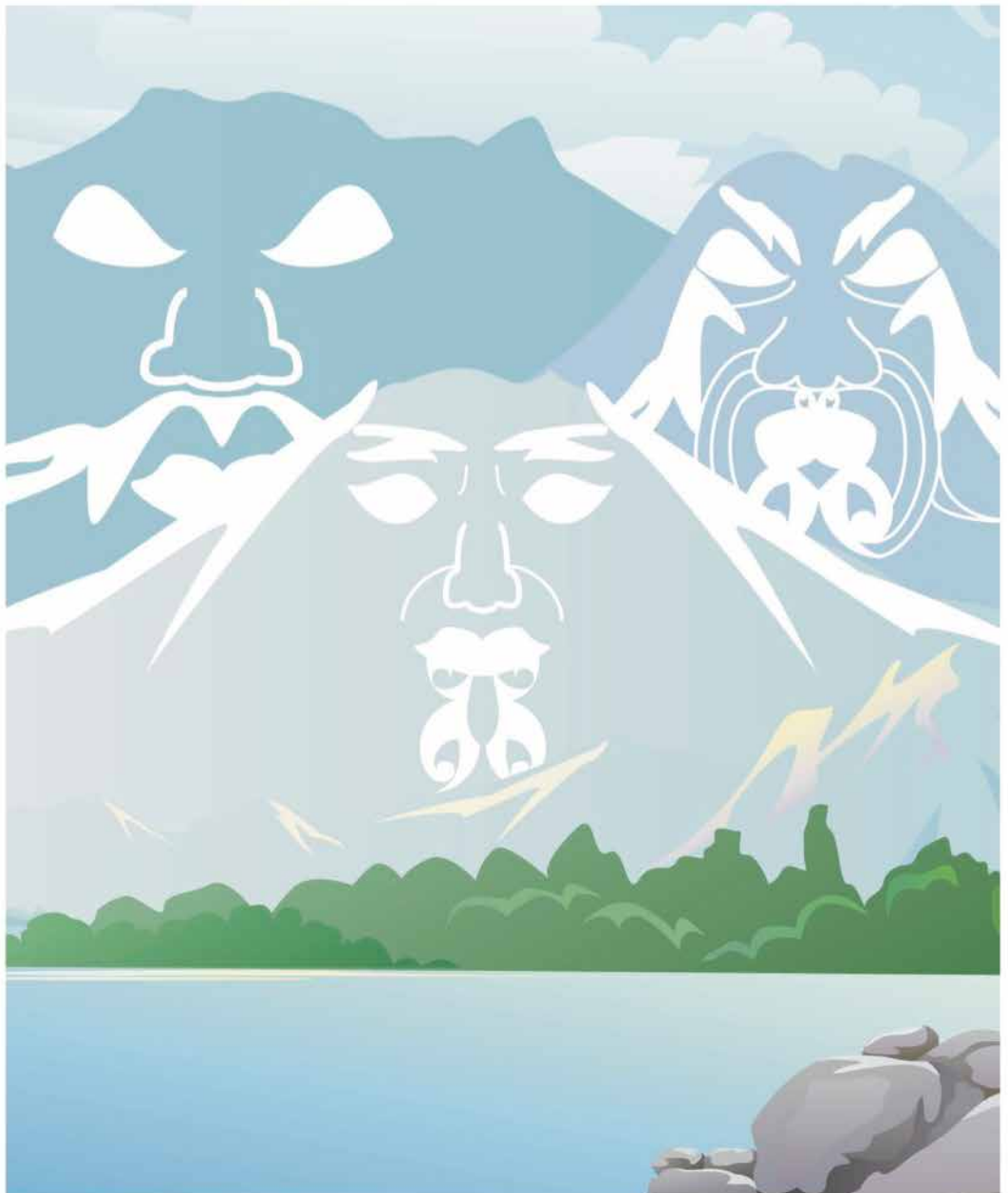
This story returns to the time of mystical beings, to the world of the fairy folk, to the days where gods roamed the earth.



Birds spoke to man and man spoke to the birds. The people of that time knew the stories of the animals, the messages and signs of nature.



Let our thoughts return now to the times of old, to ancient times. Turn your attention to the peak of Te Wharepūhanga-a-Kahu, to the mountain top of Raukawa, where lightning flashes, the place of the feared and the frightening. At its base is the resting place of the many who lived in that world. These accounts come from them.



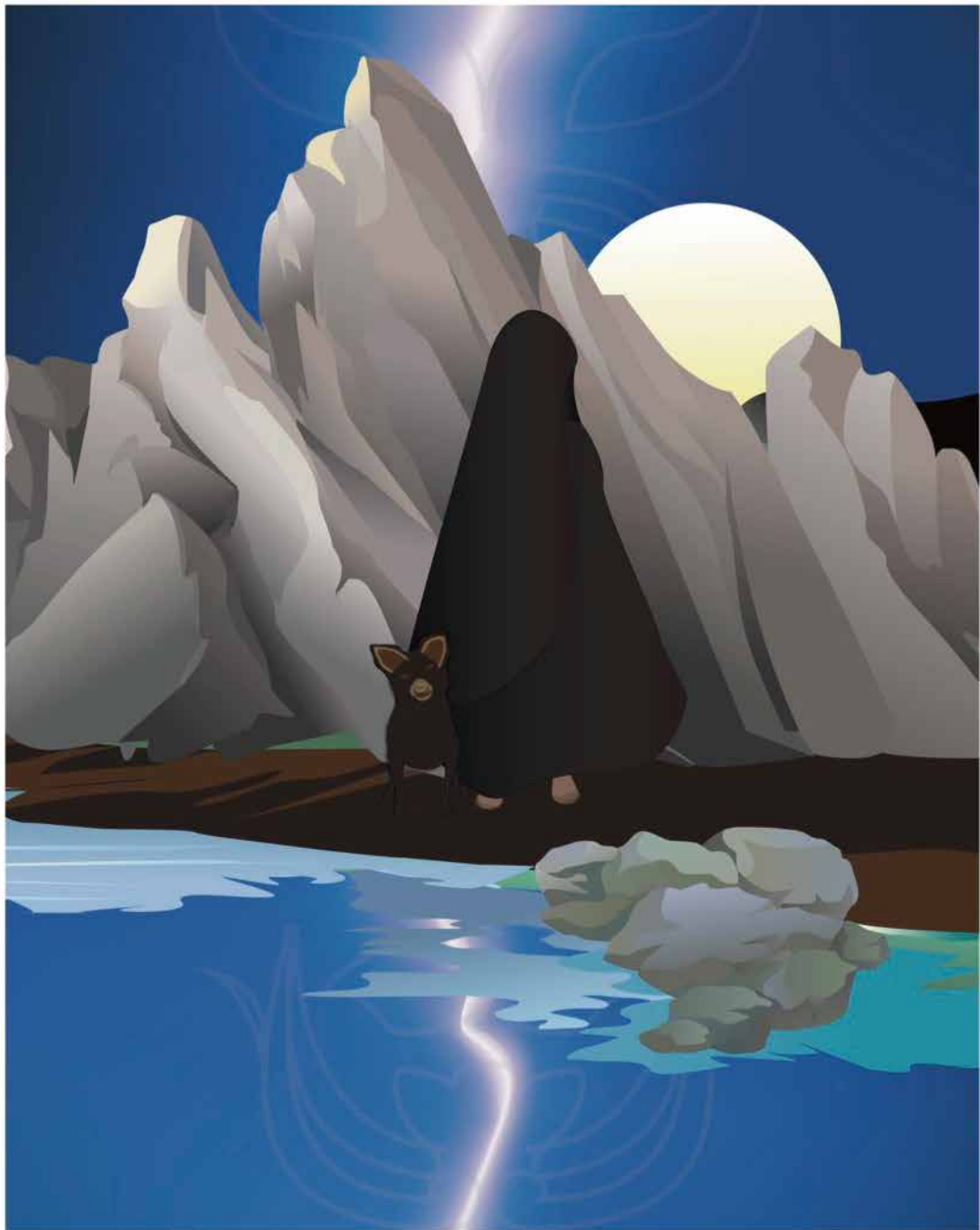
I turn my attention to the stomach of Māui's Fish, to the cluster of mountains, to Tongariro, Ngāuruhoe and Ruapehu. It was at this time that Taranaki grew jealous of Tongariro, as Taranaki wanted Pīhanga as a wife for himself.



War had developed between the mountains, hence the reason why Taranaki departed to the distant place where he stands today. Maungakakamea, Maungapōhatu and Pūtauaki travelled east, while Tauhara went to the north of Taupō. Tongariro was victorious and married Pīhanga.



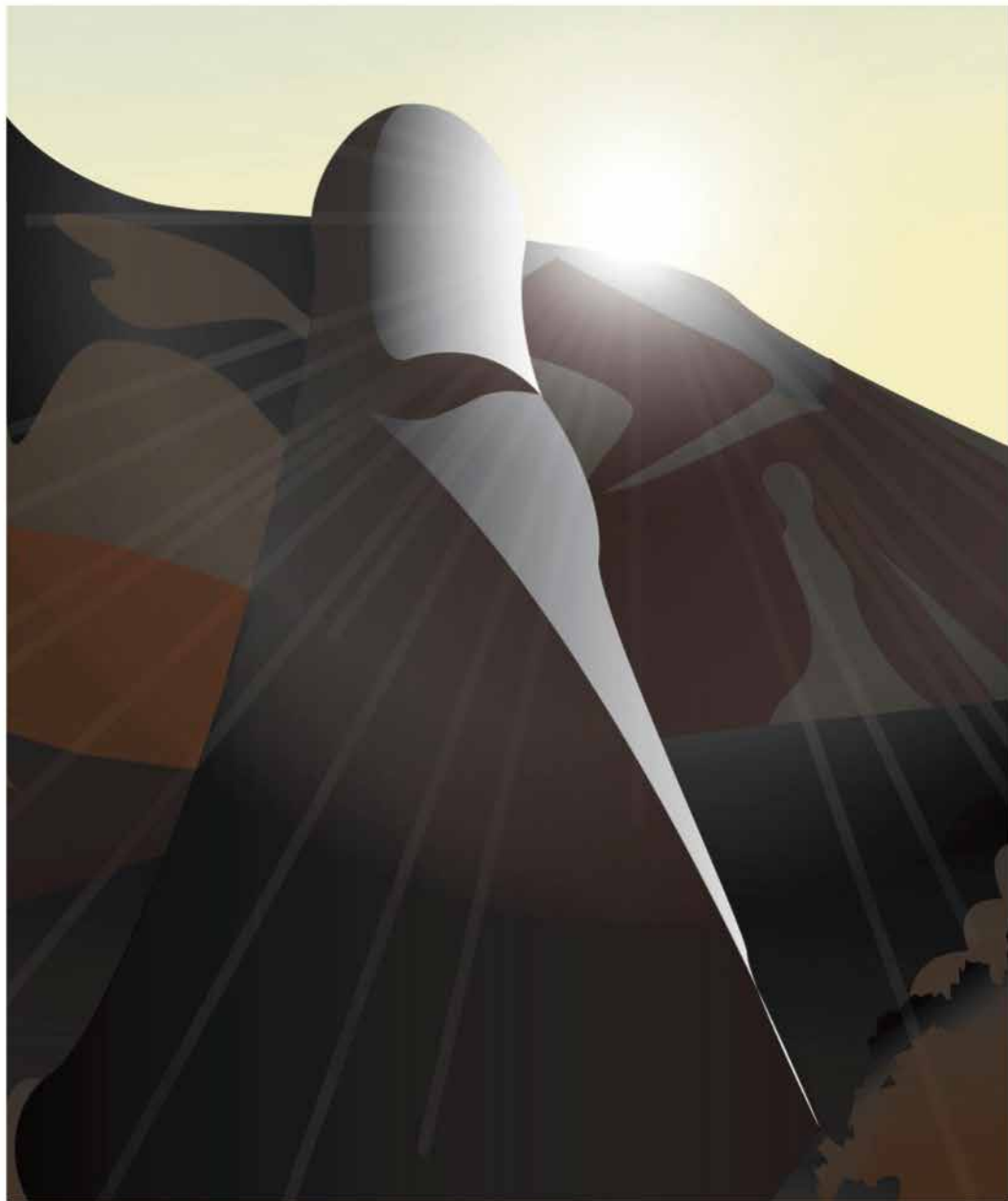
Tokahaere was also present at the time of the quarrel. He didn't like what was happening and decided to head west, to Kāwhia. But, he had to travel through the night, instead of the daylight hours lest he be caught by the sun and turned to stone.



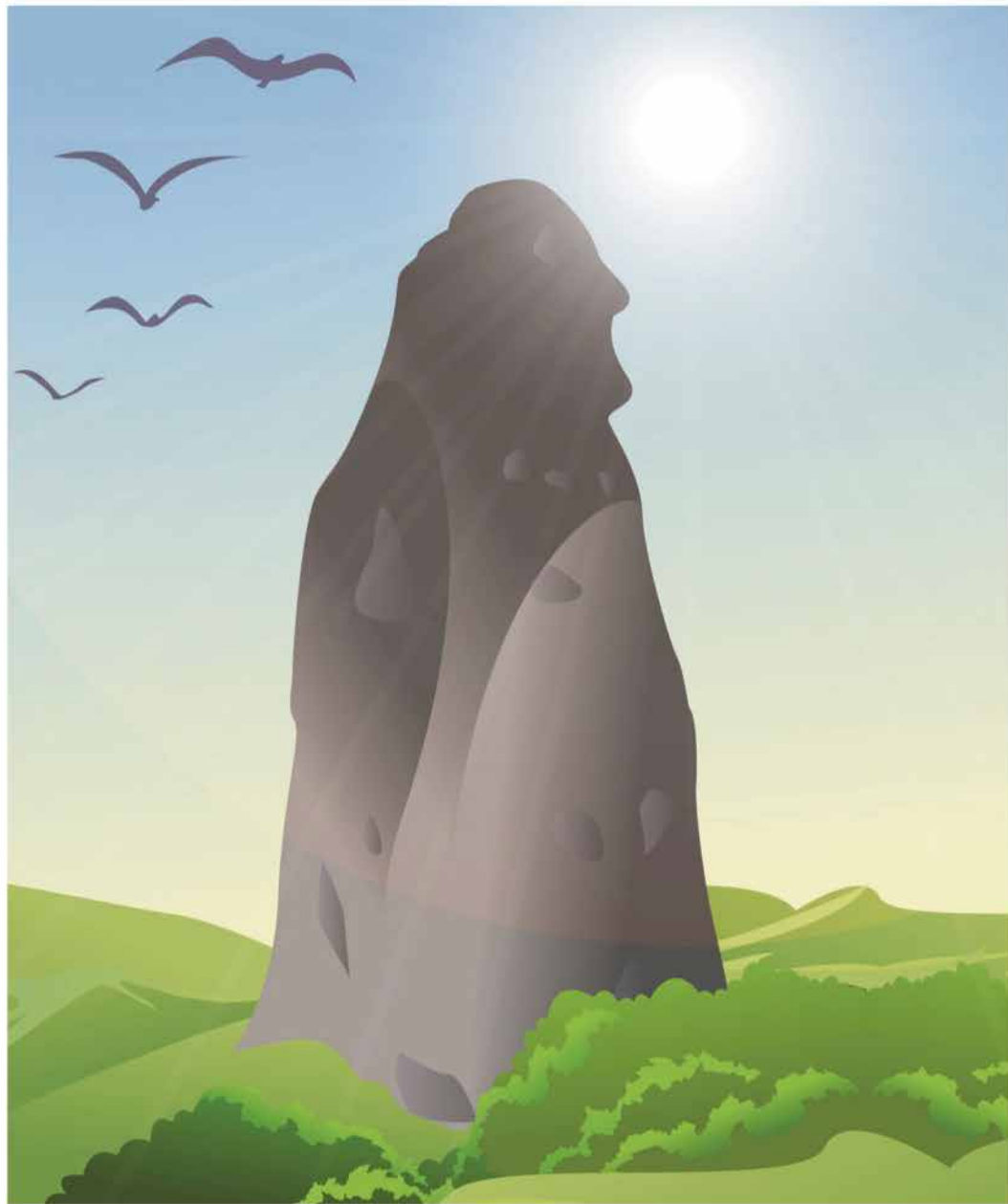
On that note, he left with his dog travelling by the north-west side of Te Kōpua Kānapanapa, Lake Taupō-nui-a-Tia.



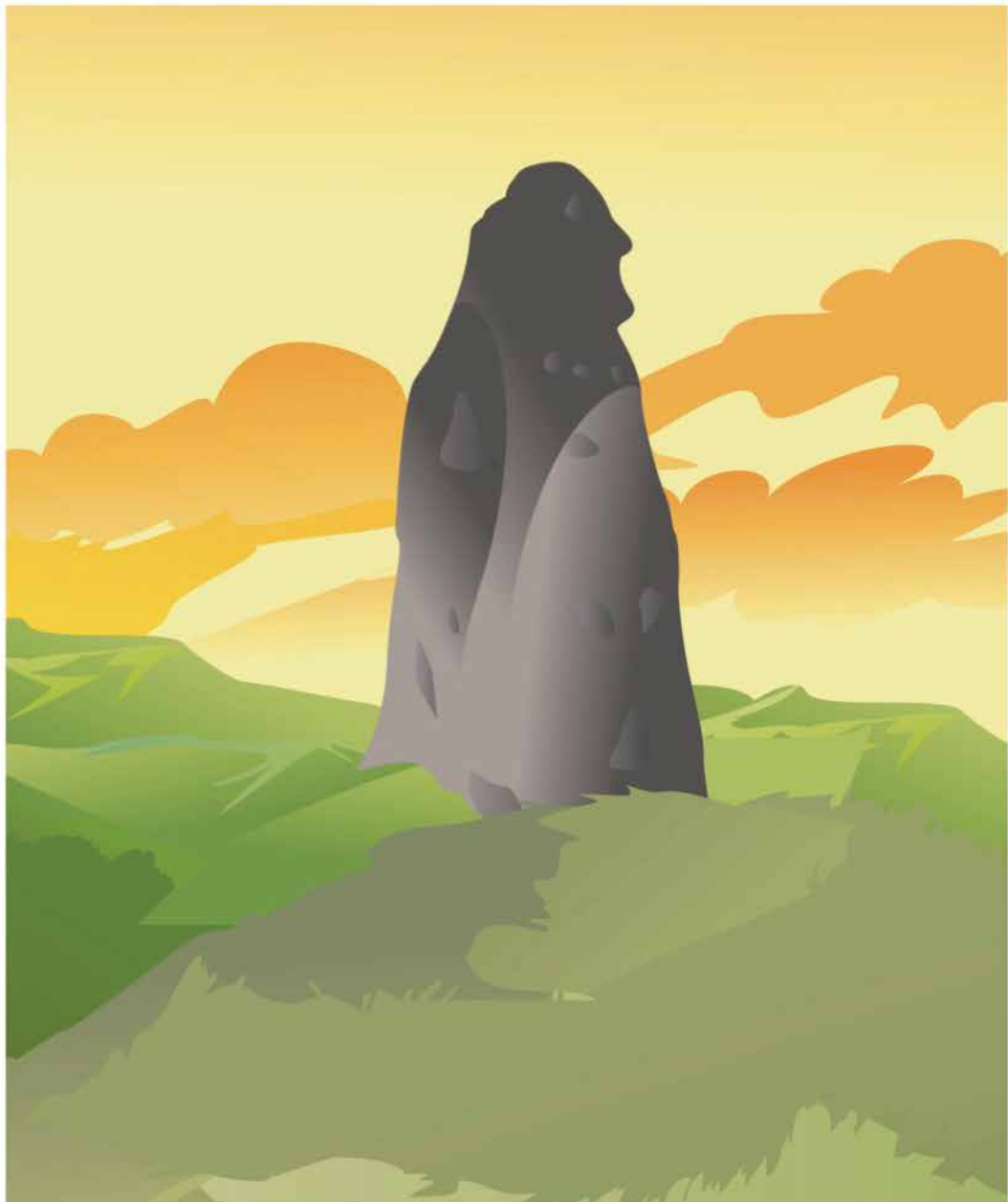
Each night the pair would travel, sleeping at dawn and hiding in caves or dark places so they wouldn't be caught by the sun.



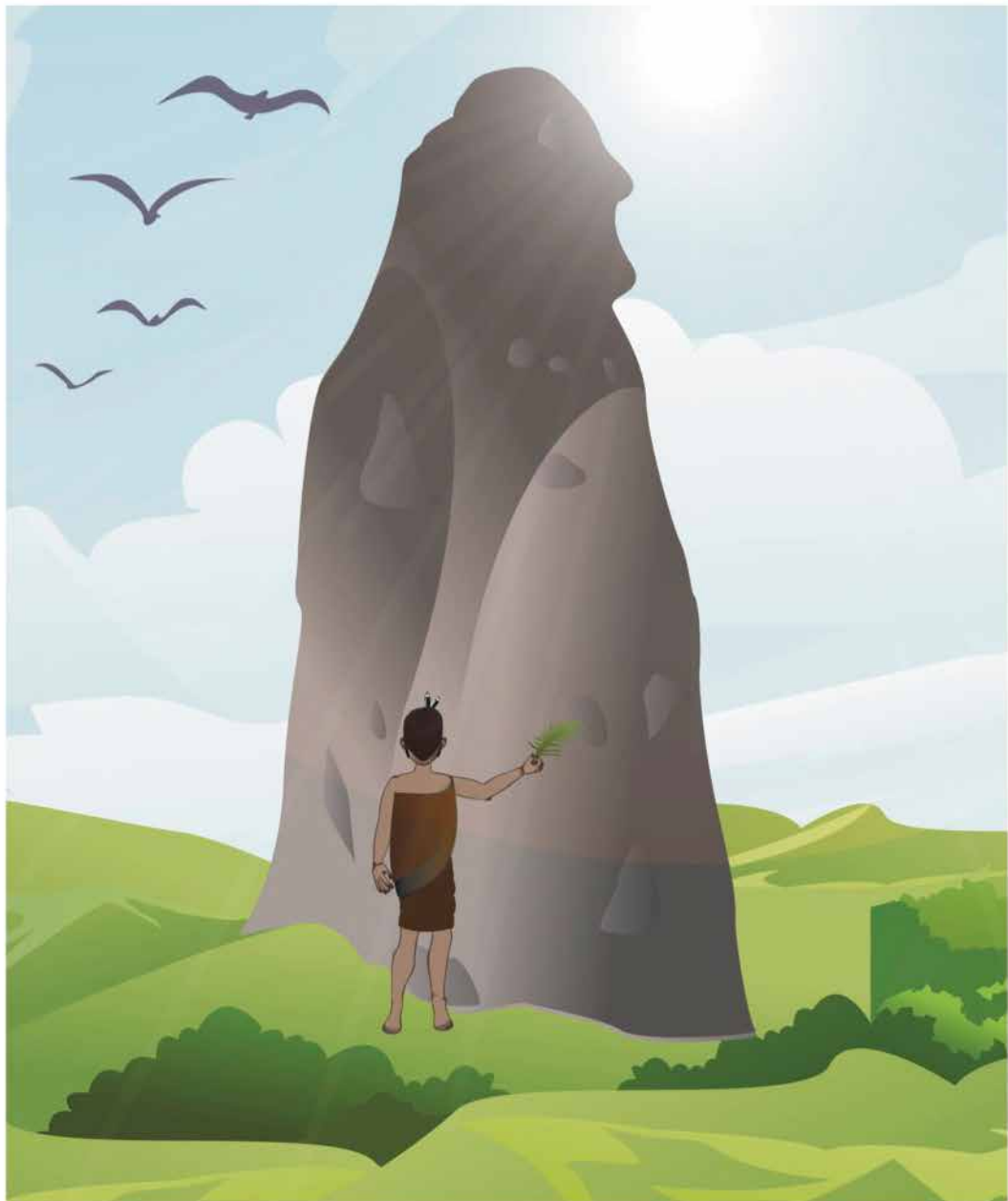
However it was not to be, the sun appeared and his rays stretched out to Tokahaere and his dog! Alas, the pair were turned to stone in a valley close to Wharepūhunga. His dog was transformed into a tuatara lizard.



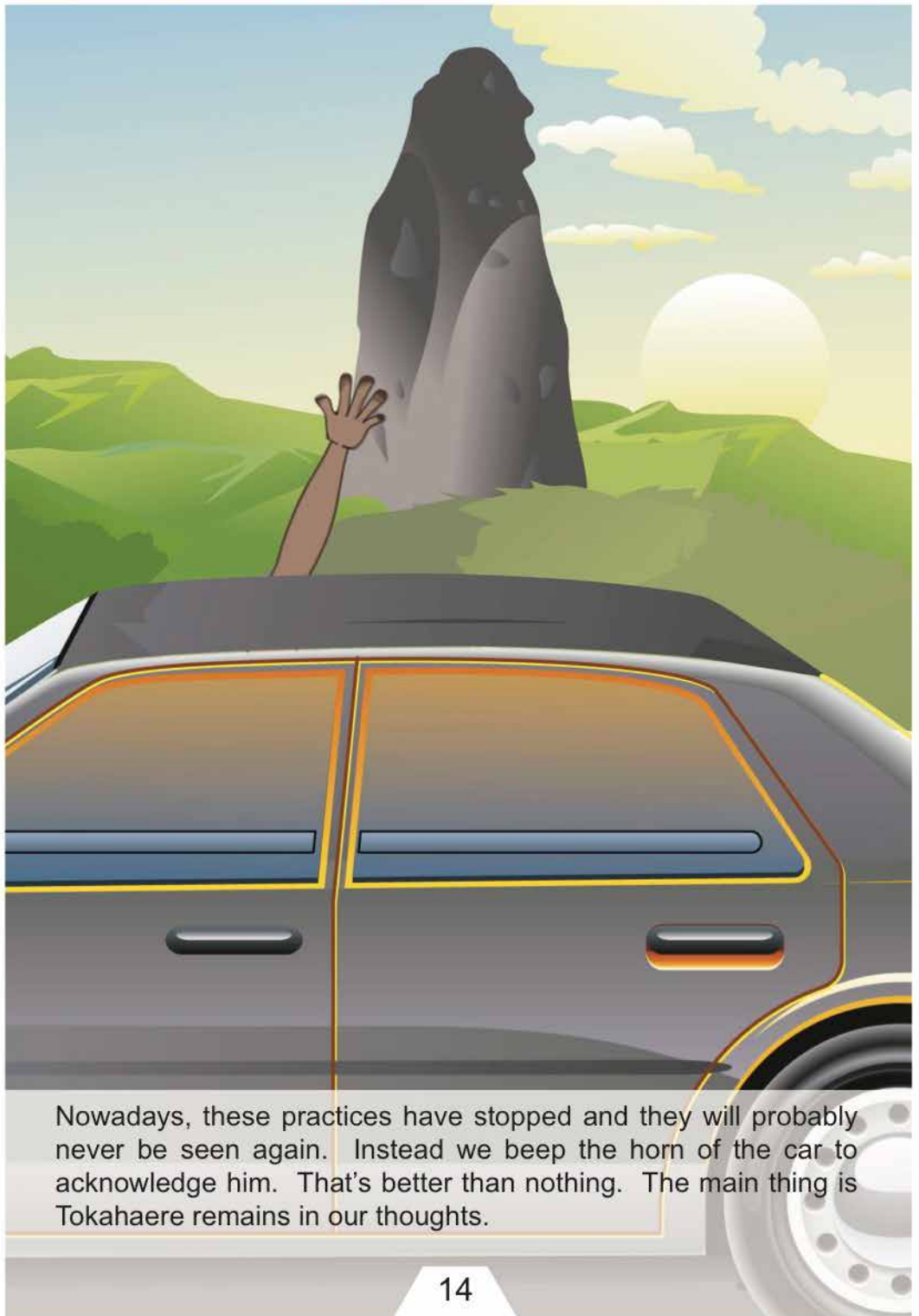
Both were permanently fixed there from that time to the present day. This rock remains a symbol of awe, as a story rock for the descendants of the Raukawa tribe. At certain times one can see his face and his dog.



There is also a story that refers to the clairvoyant powers of this mystical being. He would be closely examined by the high priests in order to forecast the weather for the day ahead, predicting rain, fair weather or wind.



It is also a place to be acknowledged by visitors to the area, hence it is spoken of as a point of entry. If a guest or outsider arrives, a fern or leaf must be left at his base as a gift to him. This was the practise in times of old.



Nowadays, these practices have stopped and they will probably never be seen again. Instead we beep the horn of the car to acknowledge him. That's better than nothing. The main thing is Tokahaere remains in our thoughts.

By Paraone Gloyne

Illustrated by Hākopa Pore

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