

# Hinewhaitiri

(Name \_\_\_\_\_)

- 1 Hinewhaitiri liked to play with the cloud, lightning, wind, and thunder children. They always had fun, roaming everywhere and anywhere they wanted rolling across the sky throwing huge shadows onto the landscape below. Hinewhaitiri enjoyed the freedom the children of the elements shared, the dancing and chasing games they played, but most of all the stories they told of the hui marangai they had been to.
- 2 Hui marangai usually happened in autumn, in a small valley on the other side of the mountain range that separated their homes from the sea. Hinewhaitiri had heard so much about these spectacular hui but had never actually attended one herself. At certain times during the autumn months the wind changed and a cool blustery wind blew in from the sea, these were the perfect conditions for a hui marangai to be held.
- 3 The trouble for Hinewhaitiri, and indeed for everyone, was that they could never know the exact time or day that the wind would change. The sea winds were different from the land winds and unpredictable in nature, but if two double claps of thunder were heard everyone knew that that was the signal for a hui marangai to begin.
- 4 The children of the elements used these hui to practise their skills. Whether it was the biggest thunder clap, the flashiest lightning strike, the fiercest wind or the greatest downpour, they came from miles around to show off what they were capable of.
- 5 If you didn't make it to the hui, it was bad luck, no one waited for you to arrive, or really cared whether you were there or not.
- 6 One time while Hinewhaitiri was lolling around with her friends playing chasing games they all heard two distinctive claps of thunder. They froze in mid air, even though the wind children were trying their hardest to blow them in every other direction. Suddenly two more claps of thunder boomed across the sky, confirming that a hui marangai was about to begin.
- 7 Everyone jumped at the same time, twirled out of the grip of the wind children in an anticlockwise motion, changed the gentle breeze into a blustery wind and headed straight towards the mountains.

- 8 When they arrived the hui was already in full swing. Huge flashes of fork lightning pierced the sky and hit the earth with such force that trees were set on fire. Deafening claps of thunder followed causing houses and buildings to shake, fierce winds blew trees from the ground, rain flooded rivers and swamped houses sending people from the village below into a panic.
- 9 As Hinewhaitiri waited in line for her turn to show off her thunder clap prowess she looked down at the people trying desperately to save themselves. Trees were falling over, catching fire, then getting drenched by the torrential rains. Rivers were bursting their banks; roofs were being torn from houses. It seemed as though no one and nothing would be spared.
- 10 Hinewhaitiri was distracted when it came for her turn to conjure up her loudest thunder clap. She was still thinking about the poor people below when she swung her large arms together and produced the weakest clap of thunder that had ever been heard. Everyone laughed at once, so much so that the hui could not continue. No one had the energy for any more destruction, they were too busy holding their sides and laughing.
- 11 Hinewhaitiri held her head in shame. Her thunder clap whānau thought she was a joke, her lightning friends didn't want to know her, and her close cloud friends that she usually hung around with seemed to disappear into the sky.
- 12 Hinewhaitiri sat by herself on the mountain top as everyone else headed back to their respective homes. She silently cried into her huge thunder clap hands.
- 13 Looking between her fingers Hinewhaitiri noticed that the people of the valley had come out of their ruined houses and had begun to clear up the devastation.
- 14 Hinewhaitiri felt so sorry for the destruction that had been caused that she forgot about her shame. She climbed down from the mountain and headed towards the small village.
- 15 The village people ran for cover when they saw Hinewhaitiri coming for them. But Hinewhaitiri took no notice and got to work clearing away debris, straightening trees and unblocking rivers with her strong arms. When everyone saw what she was doing they were extremely grateful.
- 16 "This is what happens every year," said the rangatira of the village. "There is a sudden storm, it destroys everything, we clean it up and it happens again!"

- 17 Hinewhaitiri looked around her, and realised what they said was true, the same thing would happen again when another hui marangai was called.
- 18 "We will have to widen the rivers, plant more trees and strengthen the houses before the next wind from the sea arrives," Hinewhaitiri said.
- 19 Hinewhaitiri stayed at the village for several days to help with the extra work that needed to be done. She returned to rest on the mountain at night time where the air was cooler and much more comfortable.
- 20 One night while Hinewhaitiri was preparing for sleep she heard a voice, a deep rumbling voice that shook her from her resting place.
- 21 "I have stood here for thousands of years, since the time of Māui and his brothers," the voice boomed. Hinewhaitiri looked around but could see nothing.
- 22 "Who is that, who's there?" she asked.
- 23 "I am Old Man Mountain," the voice said. "I have watched what you are doing with the people below. You should be proud of your thoughtfulness. But I think you are wasting your time. When the next wind blows from the sea another hui will be held, the rivers will flood, the trees will blow over, the houses will be wrecked and your work will have been in vain."
- 24 "But we have widened the rivers, we've strengthened the houses, and we've planted more trees," Hinewhaitiri protested.
- 25 "These things will help, but only to prolong the inevitable."
- 26 "Then what should we do?" Hinewhaitiri asked.
- 27 "Bring the hui to me. I will test the young ones," Old Man Mountain replied.
- 28 Over the next few days the work in the village continued, the rivers were widened, more trees were planted on the hills, and the houses were strengthened. While Hinewhaitiri was putting the finishing touches to a super strong fence, one of the village people yelled out, and everyone looked to the sea. A huge blast of wind headed straight for the mountain ranges.
- 29 Hinewhaitiri raced to the top of the mountain, opened her arms and made two double claps of thunder. Far away on the horizon she could see the clouds, wind, thunder and lightning children racing towards her, all trying to arrive first.

- 30 Just as they arrived, Hinewhaitiri clapped her hands together with an extra strong boom of thunder stopping them dead in their tracks.
- 31 "Stop!" she yelled at the top of her voice. "Our hui have been held over the valley below for longer than I can remember, but now it is time for change."
- 32 "And where do you think we'll go?" A lightning bolt asked sarcastically.
- 33 Suddenly Old Man Mountain gave an almighty shake and his huge voice boomed out, "You will test yourself here, with me; I will be the one to judge you. Now show me what you can do, before the wind changes and it's too late!"
- 34 The children of the elements quickly agreed and lined up on either side of Old Man Mountain so the hui could begin. The rain fell heavily, the thunder rattled rocks, lightning strikes blasted into Old Man Mountain's sides and huge rivers ran down into the valley below.
- 35 The people of the village watched the spectacle from their homes. The rivers filled but because they had been widened, they didn't overflow. The wind blew, but because it was so far away it didn't damage a thing. And the lightning and thunder made the whole spectacle a wondrous experience to behold.
- 36 When the hui was over the people of the village applauded; it had been a fine display of nature and best of all their homes were safe. The children of the elements were also happy. This had been the most exciting hui that they could remember. Hinewhaitiri was applauded as the mastermind of it all. She would never be ridiculed again.
- 37 Old man Mountain laughed a deep belly rumbling laugh, he too had enjoyed it. "It felt like a massage on a summer's day," he said.
- 38 From that time onwards the hui marangai were held over the mountains, Hinewhaitiri was the star of the show, and the village below was safe from harm.
- 39 To this day if you look out over the mountains and hills you will often see clouds gathering around the tops waiting for the wind to change, and a hui marangai to begin.