

OIOI

Written by

Nicolette (Niki) Partsch

'A thesis submitted to Victoria University of Wellington in fulfillment of the research requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Creative Writing'.

Victoria University
Wellington 2016

INT. TANGAROA'S UNDERSEA WHARE. DAY (ANIMATION)

Large hands smooth a length of wood.

Tap. A bone chisel cuts into the wood.

Tap. A sphere of mostly pink paua shell is pressed firmly into a groove.

Tap. The carved pou is finished. The paua shell sphere is an eye. The eye is the final piece.

Tap. The Pou is fitted into the last space along a wall.

Tap. Tap. Tangaroa breathes lightly towards the lips of the new carved pou. We see eleven other pou turn their heads and eyes to watch.

Tap. Tap. Tap. The Pou takes his first breath. He blinks his eyes. Delighted, he moves his arms and legs but he cannot leave his place. He becomes frustrated, straining to move forward.

POUTOKOMANAWA

Kaua e oioi. Kua mau tatou. (Don't wriggle we're all stuck here)

The other pou laugh at him. They chant Oioi, Oioi

EXT. VILLAGE. DAY

Te Manuhauturuki (11) climbs into a boat and sets out fishing. As he leaves, his father, Ruatepupuke points the way and cautions him against travelling in another direction. As soon as his father leaves, the boy changes course and heads off in the direction that his father cautioned him against. Te Manuhauturuki throws his anchor down and it bumps into Tangaroa's house, angering him.

EXT. OPEN WATER. DAY (ANIMATION)

Tangaroa captures Te Manuhauturuki. He takes him below the waves and places him on the gable of his house.

EXT. VILLAGE. DAY

The boy's father Ruatepupuke sees what happened from the hilltop. He runs to his boat and heads out to search for his son. When he reaches the spot where his son was taken he chants a magical karakia and dives down deep.

EXT. TANGAROA'S WHARE. DAY (ANIMATION)

Deep below the sea Ruatepupuke is amazed to see a beautiful house, carved inside and out. He cautiously looks into the window. He watches, fascinated as the pou inside the house talk and joke amongst themselves. He keeps hidden until Tangaroa and his family return to sleep. While they sleep he covers the windows tightly, blocking light.

When the sun is fully risen Ruatepupuke rips the window coverings away. Light floods the house and the family panic, all try to escape the sun.

Panicked fish are everywhere. A woman with a finely woven backpack is amongst the escapees. The backpack has a strong ascending red pattern woven through it. A huge tail flicks and causes damage to the corner of the whare. The last pou becomes loose and wriggles frantically to free itself.

Ruatepupuke swims towards the surface with his son and a couple of inanimate carved pieces. Now free, Oioi grabs at a giant hapuka. Oioi and the fish become one. The nose and chin moko that was on Oioi is now on the giant hapuka. The hapuka follows Ruatepupuke to land. It attempts to come ashore but it cannot move or breathe on land.

OLD KIWA V.O

He saw land and desired to live in the world of men. But he feared the nets and the spears of man. Oioi was patient and eventually he found a way.

The moon is full. A King tide pushes high up the beach. As the sea water rises it pushes up into an underground stream. The hapuka swims up the flooded stream until it reaches its source - a spring near a village.

INT. WHARE. NIGHT

A young woman tries to drink from a calabash but it is empty. Her husband takes the calabash and goes to get water for his new wife. He goes outside and reaches out across the water to fill the calabash. The hapuka attack is quick and fierce. It takes the young man by surprise, they fight. Oioi wins and takes over the young man's body.

Meanwhile the young man - the moko now emblazoned on his chin and nose - writhes desperately in the body of the hapuka. His brother watches fearfully from the bush.

Oioi stretches out joyfully in his new body. A puff of wind crosses the surface of the spring and then catches his hair. He smiles at the sensation. He stretches his arms and legs. He jumps for joy and twirls and twists in the moonlight. He enters the house with the now full calabash. He offers the young woman water to drink and then he makes love to her.

Later they both drift off to sleep. His brother appears with a fishing net and taiaha. He captures Oioi and drags him back to the Spring where the three fight. The brothers triumph. Oioi is returned to the spring as a hapuka.

INT. WHARE. NIGHT

The light of a full moon illuminates a baby sleeping in his mother's arms. A distinctive pounamu pendant hangs from the baby's neck. An older woman sits nearby. We cannot fully see her face. She is weaving a fine kete. It has a strong ascending red pattern woven through it

EXT. WHARE. NIGHT.

Two men stand in moonlight near the spring. Their profiles are identical, the young man and his brother - the man who captured Oioi. They are armed with taiaha and nets. A large group are gathered nearby chanting karakia. A puff of wind causes the water to ripple.

One brother looks up at the full moon in the night sky.

EXT. WELL. EVENING.

A full moon is visible in the golden summer sky.

The same background landscape but in modern times. A small house with a shed and a vegetable garden at the back. Next to the shed is an old well. A group of five men and two women are gathered around the well having karakia. Their voices rise and fall in the music infused Ringatu style, which keeps rhythm and sound continuous. Hone (43) leads the karakia.

Close to the well in faded overalls and jandals is Mack (39). He is a big man, fit and strong, his voice is deep and clear. Close to him is Kiwa (11) he is skinny and small but his skin glows with good health. There is a distinctive piece of carved pounamu around Kiwa's neck. Hayley (31) is slightly built. She stands apart from the group watching. She does not participate.

EXT. BRIDGE. DAY

Young Hayley is standing on a bridge in shorts and a T-shirt. She's too afraid to jump. Other young people leap out and land in the water meters below. Someone, a guy grabs her hand.

GUY

Do it.

He jumps pulling Hayley off balance and into the water. He releases her hand as they fall. He laughs. She is terrified.

EXT. UNDERWATER. DAY

Hayley is floating underwater. A few thin bubbles trickle from her nose, then stop. She is afraid. Feet are high above her kicking towards the surface. A loud beeping noise can be heard.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM. EARLY MORNING

An alarm clock beeps loudly. Mack rolls over towards the sound carelessly. He reaches across Hayley and with his large hand he silences the alarm. Still asleep, Hayley reacts to his weight on her. She tries to push him away. Too heavy. She opens her eyes, confused and panicky she tries again. He smiles and resists. She bites and wrenches at his armpit hairs. He roars at the sudden pain and shifts his arm quickly. Breathing heavily Hayley wiggles free. Mack gets out of bed quickly clutching at his armpit. He throws a pillow at her. She laughs.

Mack begins to dress. Hayley watches him. He knows. He sits down on the bed and drags on a pair of pants.

HAYLEY

There's time.

She gently moves her hand downwards across her flat belly. Mack takes a while to respond. Hayley waits. She runs her palm lightly down his muscular back.

MACK

Don't. Have to catch the low tide
or no flounders tonight.

She persists, slowly sliding her hands up to his chest and nibbling at his ear from behind.

MACK (CONT'D)

You'll be late for work Hayley.

He stands, turns. Their eyes meet. Smiles. Mack shakes his head and moves towards the door.

HAYLEY

Hey babe?

Mack turns in mock frustration.

MACK

I have to go Hales.

She slides herself over to the side of the bed and lifts the covers back on the other side. Mack crashes down next to her on the bed.

MACK (CONT'D)

And if you get fired there's no bread and butter either.

Hayley moves close.

HAYLEY

I can get there in five. Trust me.

She gets the words out just as he moves his mouth to her lips. He kisses her long and slow. She slides her hands down along his back and pulls him even closer. The door is locked. Seabirds cry out high above.

EXT. OVERGROWN BACKYARD. MORNING

A young kitten meows. Kiwa is creeping through a tangle of blackberry, gorse and flax. He ignores the scratches but has to slow down to untangle his pounamu when it gets snagged. He follows the sound until he finds a small kitten. He grabs the kitten and places her safely inside his jacket. There is shouting somewhere nearby.

KIWA

Shush now miss. I ain't gonna hurt you.

EXT. STREET. MORNING

From the bedroom window, Hayley watches the action across the street. Cats in cages are being stacked and loaded into SPCA vehicles. A few neighbours are out on the street watching. Two young women with babies in push chairs. A few young kids with scooters or skateboards. The owner of the cats is Meredith (55) she is shabbily dressed. She is very upset. She shouts with rage. Meredith is being spoken to by two women in SPCA uniforms. They prevent her from going towards the cats in cages.

Kiwa emerge from behind a tree next to Meredith's house and crosses the street quickly. As he reaches his house he pauses to look back.

EXT. STREET. DAY

Avery (12) is tall and quite tubby. He boldly approaches one of the stacks of cages and pokes at a half feral tomcat with a small stick. The cat hisses and yowls and attacks the stick as it leaps around in the cage. Avery steps back a little laughing nervously with excitement. As he steps forward to repeat the act an SPCA officer shoos him away.

The officer looks towards Kiwa. It is obvious the boy's hiding something. Hayley, watching from the open window, calls out.

HAYLEY

Come inside now Kiwa. Hurry up.

Kiwa hurries inside. The SPCA officer looks from Kiwa to Hayley and then begins to load caged cats into the van.

INT. CHEMIST. DAY

Hayley is paying for a prescription with gold and silver coins. She counts them out carefully.

CHEMIST

Ringworm is highly contagious.
Apply the cream often. You'll need
treatment for the cat too.

HAYLEY

Tablets, yeah thanks, got some.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY

Hayley is dressed for work. She is instructing Kiwa as he applies the ringworm cream to his neck.

HAYLEY

Every morning Kiwa and at night.
Don't forget.

Kiwa leans on her as she kisses and hugs him.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

See you later ok? Don't leave Miss
Daisy on her own.

Hayley returns the milk to the fridge. There is not much in there. Some eggs, butter, a closed plastic ice cream container and a plate with a few pieces of leftover fried fish on it. Kiwa goes outside with Daisy.

Hayley returns the cereal to a small kitchen cupboard. Inside is a plastic container shaped like a tomato, a plastic salt container, peanut butter, some baking powder, flour, mixed herbs and a big glass jar with tea bags in it.

Hayley places an apple and a peanut butter sandwich into her bag. Kiwa goes outside with Daisy. Hayley quickly tidies the kitchen. She tries to fit the ringworm cream into a very full kitchen drawer. She begins to rearrange and even discard some of the contents. She is rapidly going through old ointments and medicines. Hayley tips some down the sink, returns others to the drawer, empty containers in the rubbish bin. Mack enters the kitchen.

He grabs a small homegrown apple from a bowlful and looks at what Hayley is doing. Hayley picks up the last two medicine bottles from the bench. She hesitates.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)
OK if I chuck these out babe?

She holds up the medicines.

MACK
I told you not to touch anything of his.

HAYLEY
They're expired. Will he even need them now?

Mack grabs the bottles and shoves them into the drawer.

MACK
What's wrong with your ears Hayley?

HAYLEY
Sorry, ok?

Mack is angry. He leaves. Hayley locks the drawer. She takes the empty pill bottles that were sitting on top of the rubbish bin and places them in her bag. We see the name on the label, Kiwa Miller.

EXT.BACKYARD. DAY

Mack emerges angrily from the back door and walks to the shed at the rear of the property. He bites his apple in half and then spits it out into his hand. Moth larvae. He flings the whole mess into the vegetable patch. Kiwa watches from behind the old well, to the side of the shed. Mack looks around. When he is satisfied that no one is watching he reaches up and takes the key down from a gap between the shed roof and the top of the shed wall. He enters the shed briefly.

A minute passes. Mack emerges from the shed with a fishing rod, bucket etc. He locks the shed securely behind him. He looks around again but doesn't see his son watching from behind the well.

He quickly slips the key back. As he picks up his gear he sees his son's hands flash out to grab Daisy, who has appeared next to the well. Mack hesitates. He looks back at the shed then goes slowly over to the well to where Kiwa sits, holding his kitten.

Mack puts his fishing gear down and strokes the kitten. She jumps from Kiwa's arms and brushes herself against Mack's legs. Hayley looks on from the kitchen.

MACK

Nui haere koe miss Putiputi.
(You're getting big miss Flower)

KIWA

Daisy's a putiputi ay dad?

He looks adoringly up at Mack. Who responds with a wink and a grin. Daisy gets another pat too. Then Mack cups Kiwa's chin firmly in his hand and looks searchingly into his son's eyes.

MACK

Don't go in there ay son? Koro's shed.

He searches his son's eyes as he speaks.

KIWA

I want to meet him. When will he come back?

Kiwa is suddenly despondent. Mack drops his hand and stands up straight. He towers above Kiwa and Daisy blocking the sun from them.

MACK

He's got a big fish to catch Kiwa, he'll come when it's done.

We'll go out for kahawai on the weekend ay? Me and you.

KIWA

Yeah!

MACK

How many days until the full moon?

KIWA

Five?

Mack gives Kiwa another wink and a grin. Kiwa grins and winks back then looks away from his dad and back at Daisy. Mack watches as his son scampers playfully after her. Inside the kitchen Hayley smiles.

KIWA (CONT'D)

Daisy! Putiputi! Wait!

INT.SHED.LATER

Daisy is playing with the tassel on a piece of old curtain covering something inside the shed. A small twig with a piece of brightly coloured cloth tied to it appears from a small kitten sized gap in the shed wall. Kiwa's hand wiggles the twig enticingly.

KIWA

Daisy, come on pretty girl....
Please!

Daisy has a quick play with the coloured cloth but soon she returns to give the swinging tassel her full attention. The stick is withdrawn and a minute later scrambling sounds can be heard against the outside shed wall. Kiwa's legs swing into view for a moment. There's a small thud and a grunt outside immediately below where the key is hidden. The door opens and Kiwa steps tentatively into the shed.

KIWA (CONT'D)

Daisy! We're not allowed! Come.

Kiwa moves quickly, nervously as he picks Daisy up and heads for the door. He hesitates then puts Daisy down and moves to inspect the small kitten sized gap in the wall. Kiwa looks around for something to cover the hole. As he kneels to mend it there is a crash behind him. Daisy has disturbed the cover and something has fallen to the floor. Daisy is hissing at the cover.

KIWA (CONT'D)

Daisy you egg!

Kiwa is flustered. He jumps to his feet and hurries over to check on Daisy. She is fine. He lifts her and looks with mock fierceness into her eyes.

KIWA (CONT'D)

You better be good or the SPCA will
come for you.

He gives her a little shake, then a cuddle.

KIWA (CONT'D)

Don't worry girl. I ain't gonna
tell on you.

He considers the mess on the floor. The things that have fallen are still mostly covered. There is a faint sound of a koauau (flute). Kiwa tries to lift the whole bundle but it is too awkward/heavy. Cautiously he pulls the cover back and reveals a collection of carved wooden panels. Some are little more than sketches on wood, others almost complete.

Kiwa hauls the cover out and rearranges it across two wooden horses. He begins to re-stack the carvings on top. Spending a moment or two to look at each one. He is almost finished. He picks up the last piece. It is different from the rest. The wood is darker and smoother. This piece is finished. Kiwa looks at it in wonder. The koauau sounds a little louder.

INT. PETROL STATION. DAY

Hayley puts the two medicine bottles into the rubbish bin at work. She then goes back towards the service counter. Her rubber soled shoes make no sound on the linoleum tiled flooring. She serves Harry (35) who is buying a chocolate bar. Hayley is polite but not very friendly as he attempts to make light conversation. It is awkward. He places a five dollar note on the counter as Hayley rings up the sale.

HARRY

Good to see the back of those cats
at last?

Hayley gives Harry his receipt and change.

HAYLEY

Cats? Yeah the cats.

HARRY

Nice to have them gone. All that
yowling at night. The smell too.
Bet you had a good long sleep last
night?

Hayley nods. Harry sees that Hayley isn't really listening. He makes eye contact with another customer, Bel (40) who rolls her eyes. They share a moment at Hayley's expense. Hayley doesn't see. She catches her own uneasy reflection in the computer screen.

INT. SHED. DAY

Crouching down, Kiwa runs his hand cautiously along the smooth wood then lifts it from the floor. It is thicker but much shorter than the other panels, about the size of his forearm and hand combined. He looks intently at it. The image of a twisted in-human figure is grooved deeply into the wood. It has small deep set eyes fixed with pale, mostly pink, paua shell. The nose and chin are carved with a moko right up to the thin lip line.

Kiwa runs his hands over the moko then places his hand on his own chin. As he does this he stares deeply into the paua shell eyes. The koauau is louder now. Again he runs his hands over the chin design then again he touches his own face. Daisy hisses at the carving and arches her back. It breaks Kiwa's concentration. The sound of the koauau fades.

INT. PETROL STATION. DAY

Hayley is pumping petrol into a car. Katene, an elderly customer is thanking her as she prepares to get back into her car. Hayley barely acknowledges her.

She looks skyward at the almost full moon which is visible in the ice blue of the late afternoon sky. She shivers. A truck towing a boat pulls into the station.

INT. SHED. DAY

Kiwa shivers. The light has changed. The sunlight has almost gone and it is much darker than before. Outside the window the almost full moon is clearly visible in the deepening blue of the late afternoon sky.

He hurries to tidy up. He uses a small nail to wedge the loose timber gap in the wall shut. He retrieves Daisy who is hiding under the hem of a long dark oilskin coat, hanging with a hat behind the door. Kiwa leaves the shed. The door shuts and the sound of the koauau ends abruptly.

INT. KIWA'S BEDROOM. MORNING

Kiwa is squatting precariously on top of a small chest of drawers. He is wearing only a singlet and boxer shorts. There is a faint sound of a koauau playing. Kiwa is looking alternately at the carving by his feet and into a small wall mirror. He attempts to draw the moko onto his chin with a green felt pen. Wobbly uneven lines trail hopelessly across his chin.

Startled by the sound of his fathers voice, Kiwa leaps from drawers. He shoves the carving into an open drawer, slams it shut and wipes spit onto his chin. He rubs at his chin urgently with his hand and then with his pillow causing a messy smear.

As Mack enters the room Kiwa barrels into him for a bear hug.

KIWA

Dad!

Mack embraces him with a smile.

MACK

Tide's halfway. Hurry up if you want breakfast. We're out of here in ten.

Kiwa hugs Mack tight then runs out of the bedroom. Mack takes a moment to wipe a wet green smudge from his hand onto his jeans. He frowns down at the green smudge on his son's pillow case and shakes his head in disbelief. Before he leaves the room he flips the pillow over so the smudge is not visible. His voice booms after Kiwa.

MACK (CONT'D)

Bring our lunch Kiwa.

INT.HALLWAY. MORNING

Mack walks along the hallway and goes outside via the back door. There are several photos on the wall. An old woman smoking a pipe. An old framed college rugby photo. A small boy about 18 months old sitting on the knee of a smiling man. There are other photos and a large Maori fishing calendar is also on the wall.

Beside each phase of the moon is a printed statement. Here and there are hand written comments. Mostly starting with names of fish and hand drawn phases of the moon.

The sound of a tap running can be heard in the bathroom. Mack pauses briefly to consult a note on the calendar then continues on his way.

INT. BATHROOM. MORNING

Kiwa is bent over the hand basin scrubbing his face and his chin with a soapy washcloth. The faint music of a koauau causes him to pause. He glances up at his reflection in the mirror. The face that looks back is faint and distorted but clearly not his own. It is an old man. There is eye contact. The old man smiles.

Series of short shots (sound of koauau)

Tap. A fine metal chisel cuts a thin curved groove into dark wood.

Tap. A bone chisel cuts into flesh.

Tap. A man's face, sweat drips from his brow onto carved wood.

Tap. A man's brow, sweat drips from it onto cut flesh.

Tap. A dark mix is rubbed into bloodied flesh.

Tap. Tap. Illuminated above by a huge full moon. A young man is wrestling near a spring with a thin in-human figure. It gets ever closer to the young mans face.

Tap. Tap. Tap. The young man is wrestling underwater with the hapuka. The fish prevails. His huge face presses towards the young mans.

Kiwa is startled by a sudden, loud knock on the door.

The koauau stops abruptly as Kiwa turns towards the door. A second later he looks back at the mirror. He sees only his own reflection now.

HAYLEY

Hurry up Kiwa. He won't wait all day.

She tries to open the door. It is locked. She is surprised by this. Kiwa's tone is a little desperate.

KIWA

Mum?

HAYLEY

You ok son?

Hayley tries the door again. It is still locked. Kiwa checks his chin in the mirror. It is clean. He quickly opens the bathroom door. Hayley is standing outside. She looks at Kiwa carefully.

KIWA

Yeah, uh ... I love you mum.

Hayley looks at Kiwa's freshly scrubbed face with a hint of concern.

HAYLEY

I love you too Kiwa. Do you want to tell me something?

KIWA

No?

Kiwa wraps his arms around his mum's waist and squeezes Hayley tightly. She lifts his chin, kisses his upturned forehead and then squeezes back. Then he is gone, running for the kitchen. Hayley considers a messy green smear in the washbasin. She uses water to wash it away. She then notices green smudging on the washcloth. She rinses it clean and folds it over the rail to dry. She picks up the open tube of ringworm cream from the side of the basin, replaces the cap and leaves with it.

INT. KITCHEN. MORNING

Kiwa is gobbling down cereal and milk from a bowl. Daisy is no where to be seen. Hayley enters and looks around the floor.

HAYLEY

Where's Daisy son?

She looks expectantly at Kiwa who continues to eat without looking up at her.

KIWA

Outside, playing.

Hayley looks skeptical. She says nothing but watches her son eating for a moment. He pauses only to scratch at his ear. Hayley approaches him with the tube of skin cream. He takes it and applies the cream between hurried mouthfuls of cereal.

Hayley walks over to the cat's bowl which is on the floor on a neatly folded piece of newspaper. The bowl is empty. Hayley looks over at her son then back at the empty bowl. She looks surprised but not in a good way.

HAYLEY

Maybe your little shadow will come
if you feed her Kiwa. Gee that's
not like you.

Hayley picks up a packet of dry cat food and pours some into the bowl. Daisy appears immediately and rushes over to eat. Hayley pours milk into a smaller bowl for her. Daisy purrs in appreciation. As she runs her hand over the cats fur she glances up at Kiwa. He is finishing his cereal. As he drags back his chair to stand Daisy takes fright, leaves her food and runs outside. Hayley is surprised by this.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Did you go into Koro's shed Kiwa?

Kiwa turns to look at her. She holds up the carving. He looks startled, embarrassed.

KIWA

I only wanted to look at it. Daisy went in the shed Mum. She wouldn't come. I tried to get her to come and then I had to go in and fix the hole Mum. Honest. I really want to go fishing. Please don't tell him.

HAYLEY

Where did you get the key?

KIWA

It's up high, near the tree. Under the roof. Awww don't tell him Mum.

Kiwa has an air of desperation around him now. He looks at Hayley with pleading eyes.

KIWA (CONT'D)

I ain't ever gonna forget to feed Daisy again.

Hayley opens a cupboard and reaches in without looking. She pulls out a broom and begins sweeping the floor.

HAYLEY

Tell me where that carving was.
I'll put it back while you're
fishing. Then me and you will have
a talk later.

KIWA

Mum? Daisy doesn't like me anymore.
She ran away when I called her. Is
she sick?

HAYLEY

She's just growing up son.

Hayley watches Kiwa as he fills his mouth with food.

INT. SHED. DAY

Holding the carving Hayley opens the door and enters. She pauses in a patch of sunshine on the worn wooden flooring. Daisy is hurrying along the path towards her.

Hayley lingers in the patch of light then closes the door reluctantly, keeping Daisy out. It is light enough inside to see but the floor is now in shadow. Her bare feet make no sound but the hem of her jeans makes a thin scraping sound as she moves about.

Hayley looks around the tidy shed. It is spacious inside. There is a workbench to one side with a single wooden chair. She is startled by the sound of footsteps on the roof above her until a seagull identifies itself with a familiar cry.

On the wall is a fishing net made from twine. Hayley reaches out to touch the net. It is worn, old and handmade. She runs her fingers over the twine and knots. From the corner of her eye she sees the long dark oilskin coat and hat hanging behind the door. She mistakes it for a man. She jumps in fright.

HAYLEY

Shit!

Hayley relaxes as she realizes her mistake. She goes over to the covered carvings. She reaches out and pulls the cover back. The paua shell eye on a near finished carving catches the light and glints. It startles her. She throws the cover back over it as she jumps backwards in fright. The rush of energy breaks her mood and she smiles to herself.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Shit!

Hayley takes a deep breath then removes the dark wood carving from inside her sweatshirt. She looks at it briefly then moves back to where the other carvings are stored. She carefully pulls the cover back, places the carving face down and then carefully tidies and replaces the cover.

Daisy can be heard meowing plaintively outside the shed door.

Hayley looks at a few items on the workbench, bolder now she opens a drawer.

Inside is a a torch, a short carved wooden koauau (flute) and an oiled leather pouch. She unties and opens the pouch. Inside is a set of fine carving tools. She presses slightly down on the tip of one. When she pulls her finger back there is blood and oil on it.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Shit!

A tiny drop of blood stays on the groove of the chisel.

Hayley presses the tip of her finger with her thumb to stanch the bleeding then carefully wraps the chisel set and puts it back in the drawer. As she picks up the koauau we hear the faint sound of its music. She reaches towards the back of the drawer. Her hand touches something. She reaches up and takes out an old schoolbook. Curious, Hayley pulls back the chair and sits down at the workbench. She stares at the cover. The music of the koauau is louder now, closer. Outside Daisy's meows turn to hisses.

There is a name on the front cover, Kiwa Miller. She opens it. Inside the writing is nicely formed. It is neat and even. It is written in Maori.

Hayley attempts to read the journal. She stumbles over a few words, identifies dates. Hayley copies a short extract from the last entry onto a small scrap of paper from her pocket. She stuffs it deep into her pocket and then, frustrated she returns the journal to the drawer. She shivers, rubs at her arms to warm them.

As she goes to leave she sees that the cover over the carvings is pulled back. The dark wood carving is lying face up. She looks around the empty shed before she replaces and tidies the cover. She leaves the shed. We hear Daisy greet her as she exits.

EXT. BEACH. DAY

Hayley, Mack and Kiwa are walking on the beach. Mack and Kiwa toss a rugby ball around. Occasionally Hayley takes a pass. She puts on a burst of speed and steps Mack, but he is too fast and tackles her down onto the soft sand. The ball rolls away down towards the waves. Kiwa races after it. Mack stands and offers his hand to Hayley. He pulls her up.

MACK

Not so fast today Hales, you ok?

She nods then picks up some shells.

INT. LOUNGE AVERY'S HOUSE. DAY

Avery is lying on his side on the floor in the narrow space between the wall and a three seater couch in the lounge.

The back of the couch is ripped away so Avery is able to tuck his knees up and under. His presence is not known to the adults in the room.

Hayley, Alice (42) and Bel are drinking tea from large cups. An almost empty biscuit tin sits on the coffee table. All three women look uncomfortable. Hayley looks at the photos on the wall. There is an old family photo of a much younger Alice, a man with short wavy black hair and four young children. The children have black hair like Alice and the man in the photo. Alice finishes reading the slip of paper and hands it to Bel.

BEL

Where did you get this?

Hayley doesn't answer. The silence is awkward. From an old radio, an over zealous DJ laughs at his own jokes. Finally some old Pop music is played.

Avery is listening to the conversation. As he listens he is eating the contents of a packet of dry drink mix (Raro) by dipping his finger into the pack and quietly sucking off the sugary powder. His index finger is bright orange.

Alice is clearly resentful of Hayley's presence.

HAYLEY

That's the day it happened? You were there?

ALICE

I saw him go in all right. That's something I'll never forget.

Alice has a far away look in her eyes as she remembers.

ALICE (CONT'D)

It was Easter.

(cut to)

INT.HALLWAY. NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Snoring sounds. Alice is wearing an Easter Bunny onesie, she slips down the corridor and enters an empty bedroom. She closes the door quietly behind her. Alice looks out the window towards the well. Mack and Old Kiwa are chanting karakia. Alice lies down on the bed. Her eyes close. There is shouting from outside. Alice opens her eyes and rushes to the window. Outside Mack and Old Kiwa are struggling in an embrace. Mack lunges forward and Old Kiwa topples into the well.

(cut to)

INT. LOUNGE AVERY'S HOUSE. DAY

Back in the present day, the women sit around the table contemplating the memory.

BEL

We heard the shouting. The cops came.

Bel falters. Doesn't know what to say. Hayley indicates the scrap of paper.

HAYLEY

It's the same date isn't it, the day it happened.

ALICE

Why don't you ask Mack Hayley?

HAYLEY

Why were you there Alice, are you family?

Alice smiles, shakes her head, enjoys the moment. She sips on her tea. Dunks a biscuit and sucks the shape out of it. The radio DJ blabbers on about a recent movie star indiscretion. Hayley notices another photo on the wall. Alice with the four children in their teens and a ginger headed toddler, Avery. There is an uncanny resemblance between the young Avery and the picture of young Mack at home.

Hayley mumbles her thanks for the tea to Alice and Bel and extends her hand for the paper. Bel hands it to her.

EXT. DOORSTEP. DAY

As the front door swings shut behind Hayley she hears laughter from inside the house. Instead of walking away she lingers on the doorstep. Alice and Bel's voices drift towards her from the open lounge window.

INT. AVERY'S HOUSE. DAY

BEL

She got it all right. But what about Avery. Tell him straight?

ALICE

Nah.

Alice picks up another biscuit and bites it without dunking.

BEL

He doesn't look like Kiwa.

ALICE

That little runt. Is he even Mack's? Funny how she got pregnant so fast but nothing since.

Behind the couch Avery has stopped sucking down sugar crystals and is listening intently.

EXT.STREET. DAY

Hayley glances back towards the house in disbelief then walks away towards the shopping centre. There are four shops in a row. A Grocery Store with Fruit and veg in plastic crates outside, a Fish n Chip Shop with a blackboard outside, the words 'Fish of the day Tarakihi' written in uneven block letters, a Bakery with a large fly crawling up the glass on the inside and a Charity Shop. A petrol Station is visible further down the road. A few vehicles pass Hayley as she walks along. Most occupants have a good long look at her. None wave.

Two young mums with babies in push chairs are parked in the middle of the footpath outside the Bakery. Hayley pauses to admire the babies. The women are polite but not quite friendly.

HAYLEY

She's growing fast.

MUM 1

She's five months soon.

HAYLEY

Beautiful girl. Oh and your boy has some teeth now. You're a handsome one.

MUM 2

He looks like my family.

She laughs. Hayley gives the baby girl a lingering look and then moves on.

INT. CHARITY SHOP. DAY

The Charity shop is serene. Beethoven's violin concerto emanates from somewhere. Two elderly women sit side by side behind a counter knitting. One smiles as Hayley enters.

HAYLEY

Afternoon.

Hayley picks up a pair of clean but quite worn rugby boots. She checks the size and the sprigs. She looks at the price. \$4. Hayley looks at the coins in her hand \$3.20 She puts the boots down. Hayley picks up a small wooden picture frame. Inside is a faded water colour of flowers in a vase. The frame is badly scratched. There is another framed water colour. Same flat edged frame, similar picture. The frame is good but there is a crack in the glass. Hayley buys them both. They are 50c each.

EXT. PLAYING FIELD. DAY

A group of about 20 boys aged 11 and 12 years squint into the sun as they receive instructions from their rotund middle aged coach. The boys are not overly attentive. One is singing to himself, another two are breaking dance moves. There is sporadic talking, giggling and a few frustrated shoulder shoves. They eventually spread out across the field, more or less as directed. Kiwa is the smallest boy on the field. A light scattering of parents and grandparents stand sideline. Hayley stands alone near the try line.

Kiwa fumbles a pass. They start again. Kiwa just manages to hold onto the ball and he sprints quickly along the sideline. He steps near the sideline, then over the sideline. Avery slams into him and sends him flying. Hayley moves towards them but slows when Kiwa gets up. Coach puffs along the sideline towards Avery and Kiwa.

COACH

Oi! Avery! Mate! Save it for Saturday.

The same thing happens again. Hayley moves anxiously along the sideline towards him. This time Kiwa is slower to rise. Again Hayley stops when she sees that he is ok. She is too far away to hear what is said. Coach does not see her.

COACH (CONT'D)

Damn it Avery! You're both in black and red on Saturday. Well that's if, you got boots yet Kiwa?

Kiwa shakes his head.

COACH (CONT'D)

Try it again, Holden you move onto the wing. Kiwa you take a break ay?

The boys move back towards their field positions. Coach beckons Kiwa. Hayley watches.

COACH (CONT'D)

Look mate, you're pretty quick but you need a bit more, ah, practise. Before I give you a full game.

(MORE)

COACH (CONT'D)

You need to swerve away from the tackles. Like a snake or an eel, y'know.

Coach holds one hand out in front of his body and the other stretches behind. He makes a vaguely eel-like movement. In the background the other boys laugh and there are a couple of mimics too.

COACH (CONT'D)

Look mate if Holden takes a spill, you're straight on. OK?

KIWA

Holden never misses a game Coach.

COACH

And you need some boots ay mate? Reckon next year you'll be a bit taller ay? Bit faster too.

KIWA

You want me to do the water again?

COACH

Could you come a bit early mate? Some of the boys were looking a bit green around the gills last week. The bottles might need a bit of a swish out with soapy water ay?

KIWA

Yeah ok.

COACH

Good on ya mate.

He play punches Kiwa on the arm and then wombles back onto the field. Kiwa watches for a while then turns away. As he leaves no one looks at him. He walks homeward with shoulders slumped. Hayley catches up with him as he reaches the street. They walk together without speaking. They start to play with a pebble, taking turns to kick it forward along the street. The game gets faster until they giggle as they run. Kiwa miscalculates and the pebble goes into a grate. There is a plop sound as it hits the water. Kiwa looks as if he might lift the grate, but Hayley finds another pebble and they continue on their way.

INT.MASTER BEDROOM. NIGHT

Mack is in bed dozing off. Hayley is up and wide awake. She removes twine from the two bare picture frames. They have been glued together, one on top of the other to create a single deep frame. Hayley places the unbroken glass in and polishes it. Then she picks up a photo which has been trimmed to fit the frame. A very young Kiwa sitting on the beach.

She carefully glues a dried, pressed Daisy to the photo. It resembles the sun. She places it into the frame. She seals up the back of the frame and hangs it proudly on the wall. Hayley admires her handiwork then flicks off the overhead light and gets into bed. She snuggles up to Mack. He barely moves. His eyes are half closed.

Moonlight floods the room. Hayley's eyes are wide open.

HAYLEY
Can we talk? Ay? Mack?

MACK
Huh? Tomorrow Hales, early shift.

Mack rolls over and arranges himself for sleep.

HAYLEY
Tsk.

MACK
You sure you want to wake me up?

Mack rolls back over towards Hayley and playfully lifts up her T-shirt. She resists a little as his hand slips inside her T-shirt.

MACK (CONT'D)
Never listened in school did you?
Tsk, tsk Hayley. It's better to let sleeping dogs lie Hayley. Uh oh.
Look what you've done now. He grabs her hand which is resting on the cover and pulls it down beneath the sheets.

Hayley struggles to stay serious, but she giggles.

HAYLEY
Nothing there.

Mack shifts a little. Hayley reaches down slowly, teasing.

MACK
Down a bit, bit more, keep going.

HAYLEY
Ooooh what's this? Feels like, a saveloy?

She cannot contain herself and laughs loud and long. Mack laughs an exaggerated little fake laugh and waits for Hayley to calm herself.

MACK
You hungry? Want a saveloy?

Mack lifts the covers and Hayley peers playfully downwards then back up at Mack. He smiles and winks encouragingly at her. Then Mack looks downwards too.

Hayley lifts the covers higher then squeals with fake surprise.

HAYLEY

What is it?

MACK

It's a one eyed whale Hales.

She tries to put the cover down and remove her hand but Mack pulls the covers up over their heads. Her giggles are muffled then silent.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM. LATER

MACK (CONT'D)

You can wake me up to talk anytime Hales.

Mack has an arm around her. He is relaxed, happy. Sleepy. Her head rests on his chest. He raises her hand to his lips and kisses her fingers. One by one, finally freeing her hand to rest on his thigh.

HAYLEY

It's Kiwa.

Mack's eyes are almost closed. Hayley cannot see this.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

If he had brothers or sisters he wouldn't be so alone.

Mack's eyes are closed now, and his breathing is slower. He is asleep. Hayley doesn't realize this. She proceeds cautiously.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

If you didn't do anything, why hasn't he come back?

Mack is silent. Hayley touches his chest lightly. Mack's eyes half open. He wasn't listening. Hayley doesn't realize and pushes on.

MACK

Ah, yeah ok, definitely. His eyes open wide for a second then close almost immediately.

HAYLEY

What if he can't come back, ever?

Mack's eyes blink fully open and are full of surprise. Hayley cannot see so does not recognise the change in his mood.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Mack. What really happened?

Mack's face has changed to anger.

MACK

What the hell are you doing?

Mack shifts his hand to her chin. Hayley flinches as he lifts it forcing her eyes towards his. She looks into his eyes. His anger fades slightly. He drops his hand. She holds her ground.

HAYLEY

Why is it a secret Mack?

Mack rolls over and stands as if to leave. He is really angry.

EXT. OUTSIDE HOUSE. NIGHT

Mack and Hayley's raised voices are clear. Someone is crouching in the shadows near their bedroom window, listening. A bike leans in shadow against the fence.

INT.MASTER BEDROOM. NIGHT

MACK

It's in the past Hayley. Leave it there. I don't want you fishing around for answers that I can't give you. You knew where I stood when we started this. You accepted it, you said. He'll be back, soon, one day. Kiwa's fine.

Hayley sits up angrily but lowers her voice slightly.

HAYLEY

He's not coming home Mack. Where is he?

MACK

How would I know. He's gone where he's fuckin' gone until he fuckin' comes back!

Hayley stands too, pulling her T-shirt on as she does so.

HAYLEY

Just tell me!

MACK

Not your business is it? Piss off
if you don't like it.

Mack drags on his T-shirt.

Hayley pulls on a pair of track pants. They stare at one another. Mack is clenching and unclenching his fist. Hayley is holding her ground. She drags a suitcase out from under the bed and starts throwing things into it. Mack watches awhile then he grabs the suitcase, jams it closed and throws it out of the open window.

EXT. OUTSIDE HOUSE. NIGHT

The suitcase hits something hard. Someone grunts. Neither Mack nor Hayley hear.

HAYLEY

What the hell Mack?

Footsteps. We cannot see who but someone exits the Miller property quickly. The person gets onto the bike and leaves.

MACK

You want me to throw you out too?

The gate swings silently shut.

HAYLEY

You don't have to, I'm going.

MACK

Yeah, that's it piss off to
Dargafuckinville like you always
do. This time stay there.

INT. KIWA'S ROOM. NIGHT

Kiwa is lying still in bed. His eyes are wide open. He is holding the carving tightly to his chest.

EXT. CHARITY SHOP. MORNING

Hayley leaves her suitcase at the door and begins to browse. The two elderly ladies look up smile and continue with their knitting. The ominous music of Mahler fills the little shop.

There is a large trunk near the door labelled FREE STUFF. Hayley looks through it. She picks up a large multi-coloured woollen jumper with a misshapen neck and holes in both elbows. She leaves it in the trunk and returns to browse. She spends a moment looking at new baby booties then buys a crochet hook for 30c. On the way out Hayley picks up the free woollen jumper and leaves.

EXT. BUS STOP. MORNING

Hayley looks around hopefully before she boards an intercity bus. The bus makes it's way along the roadway. Mack steps out from behind a parked van and stares after it. He looks sad.

EXT. STREET. LATE AFTERNOON

Kiwa and Mack are walking together across grass and sand. The sea glitters with late afternoon sun behind them. Gentle sounds of the sea disappear as their footsteps grow louder on the concrete footpath.

KIWA

It's a lot for only me and you Dad.

MACK

Uncle and them be here tomorrow.
We'll smoke these up for them to
take.

KIWA

Oh yeah. Big moon this time ay Dad?

Mack grins and winks at Kiwa. The bucket is heavy with fish. They are relaxed and sun weary. A group of five boys about Kiwa's age are sitting in the shade of a tree talking. Avery is a little taller than the others. He is watching Mack intently. His eyes move to Kiwa.

AVERY

What's that stink?

The other boys look towards Kiwa and Mack. A couple of them snigger.

MACK

Is that the one who gives you a
hard time son. The soft, puffy
looking carrot top?

KIWA

Yeah, Avery.

Kiwa scratches the back of his neck.

AVERY

Hey Kiwa! What's in the bucket? It
stinks.

Kiwa and Mack share a glance, then walk on without replying. Avery walks towards them. The other boys hang back, watching.

AVERY (CONT'D)

Hey! Can I see?

He catches up with them and smiles confidently at Mack. He places a hand on the bucket and looks in.

 AVERY (CONT'D)
Big fish. How did you catch them?

 MACK
Magic.

He waves his fishing rod and maintains a cool demeanor. Kiwa grins in appreciation of Mack's humour and almost laughs out loud. Avery is annoyed.

 AVERY
That's a pretty ugly fish.... What did you use for bait? Road kill?

He laughs at his own joke. The other boys have moved a little closer and they laugh too. All eyes are on Mack, the muscles in his arm bulge and flex as he lifts the bucket.

 MACK
You want to catch a big fish like this, you use a little fish for bait.

He jingles a spinner. Mack and Kiwa prepare to move on down the road as Avery reluctantly moves his hand from the bucket. Kiwa is scratching at his arm. His skin looks dry.

 AVERY
How do you catch a really big fish?

Unsmiling, Mack leans forward slightly towards Avery and the other boys. There is tension. He does not smile but there is humour in his manner. Avery looks less confident than before.

 MACK
Easy, get on the hook yourself.

Mack uses his finger in a slicing motion on Avery's arm and chest.

 MACK (CONT'D)
A little cut here and here. Draw out some blood. You'll catch a big fish all right. Might be you who eats, might be the fish. Ay?

Kiwa and a couple of the other boys laugh.

Mack grins and winks at Kiwa.

 MACK (CONT'D)
If you ever find yourself on a hook just remember to pull your legs up tight as.

 (MORE)

MACK (CONT'D)

Might be the fish is old and he knows about the line. Then he won't snap at the bait ay?

Mack pauses to look each boy in the eye. He finishes and returns his focus to Avery.

MACK (CONT'D)

Pull your legs up nice and tight.

Avery is lost for words and looks small next to Mack.

MACK (CONT'D)

You might be better off to stick with your fish n chips ay?

He pokes Avery in the stomach. His finger tip sinks into soft flesh. The boys are all quiet. Mack smiles now cold, confident. He stares Avery down then winks at Kiwa.

Kiwa and Mack move away down the street. The boys stare after them. Avery looks angry.

EVERY

Hey Kiwa! Come to rugby practise Tuesday. I want to practise my tackles.

Behind him all the boys laugh. As Kiwa and Mack walk away down the road towards their home Avery and the other boys are laughing and play tackling.

MACK

He's a big unit ay? You know, I wasn't much bigger than you when I was 12 Kiwa.

KIWA

I'm only 11 Dad.

MACK

I know son. I was there when you were born.

Mack slides his free arm around Kiwa's shoulder and jostles him a bit.

KIWA

I'm little like Mum. I'm always going to be little.

Mack gives Kiwa a light squeeze on the shoulder before releasing him.

MACK

I'll tell you a family secret. But you can't tell anyone ok?

KIWA
I won't dad.

 MACK
When I was 12 I was so short and
skinny my brothers used to call me
Short Arse.

 KIWA
No way.

 MACK
Shut up Short Arse. Go and clean my
boots Short Arse. Give me your
lunch Short Arse.

Kiwa laughs.

 KIWA
Is my Koro tall Dad?

 MACK
Yep, but I'm taller.

He winks and grins at Kiwa. Kiwa looks up at Mack's tall
muscular frame and cracks a hopeful smile.

INT. BUS. NIGHT

The bus is less than half full. Hayley is sitting alone
crocheting. As she works she unravels wool from the jumper
she picked up earlier. She stops to tie the wool where it has
broken. There are lots of tied bits.

EXT. WELL. NIGHT

It is cold. Three men Mack, Hone (43), Haruru (22), and a
woman Arohaina (43), Kiwa and another boy William (7) are
standing out by the well. They are all wearing jackets and
shoes. Hone is facing the well, saying karakia. Their hands
raise intermittently. William follows the words. Kiwa not so
much. A detective appears behind the shed, interrupting
karakia.

 HARURU
The others are at the house.

All turn to look at Mack. Hone speaks up.

 HONE
Right on time.

His comment gets a wry smile from Mack. The detective moves
away to join the others.

MACK

Keep that hangi closed until
they're gone this time.

Hone chuckles, causing the others to relax. He leans back
against the well.

HONE

You say that every year brother.

EXT. WELL. NIGHT

Two police officers in uniform and two plain clothes
detectives stand in the cold night air. Their breath rises
upwards in clouds.

DETECTIVE SIMON APPLETON

Mack Miller. Here we are another
year on. Where's Mrs Mack?

MACK

Disneyland. Ask your mate Mickey
Mouse if you don't believe me.

The two men eye each other calmly. The second detective moves
forward and takes a look towards the shed. Mack does not
move.

DETECTIVE SIMON APPLETON

Kiwa Miller Senior is still a
missing person. Don't suppose you'd
care to tell us where he is?

MACK

Fishing. He'll come back when he's
ready.

The scene is illuminated by the light of the full moon. The
distant sound of crashing waves can be heard. The detective
smiles at Kiwa who has come forward to stand behind his
father.

DETECTIVE SIMON APPLETON

This your young fullah? Must be
what, ten or eleven now? Is that
right young Kiwa?

Mack does not take his eyes off the Detective.

MACK

Go inside Kiwa. Cold out here.

Kiwa stares at the policemen for a long moment before moving
reluctantly towards the house. Once inside he lingers near
the doorway so he can still see the policemen. William joins
him.

DETECTIVE SIMON APPLETON
Mind if we have a look around?

MACK
Yes if you got a warrant? No if you don't.

DETECTIVE BEN WILKIE
Is he saying yes he does mind or yes look anyway?

Detective Wilkie is showing mock confusion. The two uniformed officers smile slightly and look directly at Mack. Mack looks annoyed but does not speak. Detective Wilkie watches Mack carefully.

DETECTIVE SIMON APPLETON
Yes thank you Detective I think we know what Mr Miller means.
Look we'll leave you to get on.
Cold night, long drive back. If you remember anything?

He hands a small business card to Mack who takes it and slips it into his pocket without looking at it. He nods at Detective Appleton. The four policemen start to move away. Mack steps forward and looks as if he might say something but Detective Wilkie stops suddenly and walks swiftly back to Mack. He stops immediately in front of him. So close that he has to tilt his neck to have eye contact. His stance is menacing. He speaks quietly but clearly.

DETECTIVE BEN WILKIE
We know you killed him Mack. Your own father. Where'd you hide the body?

He looks towards the well.

DETECTIVE BEN WILKIE (CONT'D)
Don't blame you for closing it up.
I wouldn't drink that water either.
Still it must be playing on your mind. Your family must want answers too.

He looks at the others.

DETECTIVE BEN WILKIE (CONT'D)
Give them closure Mack. Unless, you're a bloody sadist, you enjoy this?

Mack looks as if he might hit the Detective. The two men eye each other for a moment. Detective Wilkie steps back as if to go then spins around quickly and offers his card. Mack does not flinch. He makes no move to take the card.

Detective Wilkie looks pointedly at Hone, Arohaina and Haruru then walks away. Detective Wilkie places his card in the letter box and gets in the car with the others. Alice, Bel, Avery and Harry watch from the street.

INT.POLICE CAR. NIGHT

The unmarked police car moves away down the street. One of the uniformed officers speaks up.

CONSTABLE IHAIA SMITH
You said hangi sir. Said every year sir.

DETECTIVE SIMON APPLETON
Detective Wilkie is from the big city of Auckland Constable. They do things differently in Auckland isn't that right Detective Wilkie?

DETECTIVE BEN WILKIE
Sometimes you have to ruffle a few feathers to get a result.

DETECTIVE SIMON APPLETON
Oh I think you succeeded in ruffling quite a few feathers tonight Detective.

DETECTIVE BEN WILKIE
I'm shouting Fish and chips tonight gentlemen.

The two uniformed officers share a look. There is no response.

DETECTIVE BEN WILKIE (CONT'D)
Chinese Takeaways then?

Detective Wilkie looks around for support. There is none. The four policemen continue their trip in silence.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT

Kiwa is pouring tomato sauce from a can into a dispenser which is shaped and coloured like a tomato. Behind him, the huge moon illuminates the garden. The well and the shed are clearly visible. William puts cutlery out on the table. Mack and Haruru place a steaming hot wire hangi basket onto a large tray on the newspaper covered bench. Fried bread, butter and plates of food are placed onto the kitchen table. The heat from the food causes the windows to fog up, obscuring the backyard view. Hone says karakia. The family begin to load up their plates and eat.

HONE

What are your interests this year
Kiwa?

KIWA

I like science. Fishing with dad.
Rugby.

William reaches out and picks a fish scale off Kiwa's arm.

WILLIAM

Hey you're a fish!

There is a silence. Mack peels a scale from his own hand.

MACK

Me too, caught a few Kahawai
yesterday ay son?

HONE

Mmmm fresh kahawai.

MACK

All split and smoked for you
brother.

William leans over and pulls a fish scale from Kiwa's hair.

Kiwa and William start giggling, but they calm down a bit
when they notice the adults are not laughing.

INT. KIWA'S ROOM. NIGHT

Kiwa and William are top and tail in Kiwa's bed fast asleep.
Daisy is perched on the covers in the middle. The full moon
spills light across the room. Deep breathing and the sound of
waves in the distance are the only noise.

EXT. STREET. LATE NIGHT

The sky is clear and dark. There are plenty of stars but no
visible moon. By the light of a street lamp Hone, Arohaina
and the rest of the visiting family are finishing karakia.
They pack themselves and a box full of smoked kahawai into
the van. They hug and say their final good-byes then drive
away. Mack and Kiwa wave until they are out of sight. The
sound of the van engine is soon replaced by the sound of an
incoming tide, waves slide up the beach in long breaths. Kiwa
leans in close to his fathers side as they walk back towards
the house. Their feet whisper over the grass.

INT. VAN. NIGHT

AROHAINA

You missed the final part.

HONE
No I didn't. Did I?

AROHAINA
Yesterday, when the police turned
up. You always do the one to keep
the thing away.

HONE
I did it.

WILLIAM
You supposed to hold uncles hands
and that for the last one.

HONE
I did forget ay? Ah, nothing
happened. Must be ok. We'll double
up next time.

INT. WELL. NIGHT

In the pitch black something big moves around inside the
well.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT

Mack and Kiwa are drinking tea and playing cards. The clock
on the wall ticks loudly.

KIWA
Have you got a eight?

MACK
Nah.

KIWA
Dad!

MACK
Go fish.

Kiwa picks a card up from the pile.

KIWA
Dad? When's mum coming home?

MACK
Soon. Have you got a King?

KIWA
Tsk.

He gives Mack a King. Mack has only two cards left in his
hand. Kiwa has four.

Mack
Have you got a two?

KIWA
Go fish. I miss her.

Kiwa lowers his head and sobs. Mack packs up the cards and reaches across to comfort his son.

MACK
Mum loves you Kiwa. She loves us.
Give her a couple of days ay?

KIWA
I want my Koro too.

INT. HAYLEY'S OLD BEDROOM. NIGHT.

We hear another clock ticking (two clocks are ticking together slightly out of time). Hayley is sitting up in bed crocheting. The jumper has almost become a carry bag. Hayley has run out of wool. She goes through the drawers and cupboard. Finds a woollen jumper. It is brand new. Frustrated she lies down to sleep. She can't sleep. She starts to unravel her work, winding the wool into balls as she goes.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM. NIGHT

Mack is sleeping deeply. We hear still another clock ticking (three clocks are now ticking together). The dim light from the street lamp filters through the net curtains and we see Kiwa standing in the bedroom doorway looking at Mack. Kiwa is wearing pyjamas. His face is partly obscured by shadow but we clearly see the moko emblazoned on his nose and chin. The lines are deep and are a perfect copy of the ones on the carving. He turns and walks away. Mack sleeps on, oblivious.

EXT. THE WELL. NIGHT

The well is dark. Kiwa walks slowly towards it. Daisy follows quietly from a distance. Kiwa is carrying the carving. He places it on the ground and struggles to remove the heavy cover from the well. He picks up the carving and climbs carefully up to stand on the side of the well. The sound of the koauau is soft and beguiling. Kiwa stares unblinking into the water.

KIWA
I want my Koro and I'm not afraid.

He looks down into the water and we see a huge hapuka, it lifts it's head as Kiwa leans out from the top of well.

Kiwa is terrified. He turns as if to jump back down onto the grass but the carving in his hand moves suddenly, pulling him forward. Kiwa loses his balance and he tumbles headfirst in an awkward dive into the well. His leg swings out wildly as he tries to balance his fall and connects with the carving. It flies up into the air, bounces on the side of the well and lands on the grass. Below, the water froths and churns. Daisy runs. We hear the blast of a horn and then the urgent squeal of car tyres.

Tap. A fine metal chisel cuts a thin curved groove into dark wood.

Tap. A bone chisel cuts into flesh.

Tap. Tangaroa, sweat drips from his brow onto carved wood.

Tap. A man's brow, sweat drips from it onto cut flesh.

Tap. Illuminated by moonlight Kiwa is wrestling underwater with a huge fish. Their bodies twist furiously in unison. Faster and faster.

Tap. Tap. The fish and boy are one. The water is still.

Tap.Tap.Tap. The fish hangs still, head up, tail down in the water. Kiwa swims up towards the surface. Bubbles pop on the surface. Tap.

(cut to)

EXT. UNDERWATER. (HAYLEY'S DREAM) DAY

Hayley is floating underwater. A few thin bubbles trickle from her nose, then stop. Her mouth opens. No bubbles. She is afraid. We see feet above her kicking towards the surface. Bubbles explode as someone lands in the water above her. Mack swims down until he is near her. He reaches out his hand. She takes it and he pulls her to the surface. She is choking, spluttering.

MACK

It's all right. I got you girl.

(cut to)

INT. HAYLEY'S OLD BEDROOM. NIGHT

Hayley wakes abruptly from her sleep. She sits up tangled in wool gasping for air.

HAYLEY

Kiwa!

Mania (51) enters the room and sits down at the end of the bed. She doesn't say anything but helps to unwind the wool from Hayley into a ball.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

It was just a bad dream. I'm fine.

Mania begins to four plait some broken lengths of wool.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Why don't we speak Maori mum? Koro and Nan did. I remember. Why didn't they teach you?

Mania continues to plait.

MANIA

The school told them that it was better for the kids to learn the common language first. So we just spoke English at home. What's this about?

Hayley looks at her mum as she plaits. Then she shows her the piece of paper with the journal entry that she copied.

MANIA (CONT'D)

They're both whakatauki, proverbs. When the old net is cast aside, you take the new one fishing. Everyone knows that one. Dried wood will burn faster than wet wood. Don't know that one. I don't know why they're together like that.

EXT. WELL. NIGHT

Kiwa climbs deftly up the ladder and out of the well. The weak light of the street lamp gives him a slick shine. Cloaked in shadow Kiwa stands dripping wet on the edge of the well looking down. Something large hangs in the water just below the surface. It stirs. There is a flash of tail, as it writhes awkwardly at the surface. Kiwa smiles and watches. He does not see the carving which lies where it fell on the grass.

INT. HAYLEY'S OLD BEDROOM. NIGHT

Hayley is alone. She begins to pack her suitcase.

EXT. WELL. NIGHT

Kiwa effortlessly lifts and replaces the well cover and walks towards the house. As Kiwa enters the house he glances back towards the well. We see his satisfied smile more closely.

It is not Kiwa's smile. We see that it is not really Kiwa. He moves differently. His feet leave a trail of water across the floor.

EXT. BUS STOP. PRE-DAWN

A large intercity bus pulls up. Two people disembark. Hayley and a young man. The driver helps them with their luggage then the bus moves off.

The young man crosses the road and gets into an old car full of young people. Music rattles the car as it drives away. The silence is amplified when it turns the corner.

Mack steps forward with Kiwa. Hayley reaches for Kiwa and pulls him into her embrace. Clearly she is relieved to see him. Kiwa lets Hayley hug and kiss him.

HAYLEY

Wish you came son. Nanna and Poppa asked for you. Ride home was bad. I had to sit next to a mountain of a man. Too scared to sleep. He might move and crush me. And he snored and he farted.

She sniffs at her sleeve, recoils and jokingly offers it to Kiwa and then Mack. Kiwa looks confused. Mack makes a face. Hayley giggles, upbeat. Kiwa takes her backpack and hoists it onto his back. Hayley looks into Mack's eyes. He looks contrite. Hayley holds up the new crocheted bag. It strains under the weight.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Mum sent you peaches.

Mack breaks a huge grin.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Four jars.

She smiles back at Mack. He kisses her and then picks up her suitcase. He leans forward and his lips brush her cheek as he whispers in her ear.

MACK

I got something for you too.

Together the three of them walk homewards.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM. MORNING

Hayley is lying almost naked on the bed. Morning sun filters through the light window coverings across her body. Cucumber slices cover her eyes. Mack is sitting on the side of the bed looking down at her.

He has a his fishing knife in one hand and half a cucumber in the other. He slowly cuts two more slices of cucumber and places them one by one her bare breasts, covering her nipples. She shudders with shock and delight.

Mack puts the knife and cucumber down on the sill above the bed and places his finger lightly on her lips as if to quieten her. He kisses her lips lightly then he picks up an artists brush and a pot of sun warmed liquid amber honey. He gently brushes a little honey onto her lips. She tastes it and smiles. Mack smiles too. He uses the brush to paint honey swirls onto Hayley's naked skin. Hayley's breathing changes. Mack watches her a moment, then he leans outside the window and pulls a handful of petals from the climbing rose bush. He places them on her flat bare stomach. Curious, Hayley reaches up as if to uncover her eyes. Mack moves quickly to stop her.

MACK

Wait, trust me.

He holds just one rose petal below her nose. She inhales, smiles and lowers her hands down to her sides. Mack presses roses petals onto her honeyed skin. He leans in closely and breathes deeply, inhaling the sweetness. A blob of honey drips from the brush onto her thigh. She flinches. He smiles.

MACK (CONT'D)

Oops.

The warmed honey begins to slide inwards along her thigh. Mack wipes at the blob of honey with his fingers then lowers himself downwards, sliding his tongue along her trembling thigh towards the honey. Hayley arches her back and stretches out her toes.

INT. LAUNDRY. MORNING

Hayley is taking a load of washing from the washing machine. She puts the last few things from the washing basket in to wash. It's less than half a load so she goes looking for something else to clean.

INT.KIWA'S ROOM. MORNING

Hayley is humming softly to herself as she strips the sheets from Kiwa's bed. Her bare foot touches something wet and she recoils.

Hayley reaches under the bed and finds Kiwa's wet pyjamas. She calls loudly for him to come.

HAYLEY

Hey Kiwa!

KIWA

Yes mum?

Hayley is startled by Kiwa's sudden appearance in the doorway. Her hand goes momentarily to her belly.

HAYLEY
What's this son?

She holds up the wet pyjamas. Kiwa is very calm.

KIWA
Sorry mum, I was playing with William. We spilled our drinks and I used my pyjamas to clean up.

HAYLEY
Go put them in the washing machine then. And don't play with water in the bedroom Kiwa. You know better than that.

Kiwa takes the pyjamas and goes to the laundry. When he has left Hayley screws her nose up. She sniffs at her hand and a look of revulsion crosses her face. She picks up the sheets and as she does so something clatters to the floor. She picks up several large translucent fish scales. Puzzled she takes one and holds it up to the light. It is beautiful, colorful, unusual.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM. DAY.

Hayley watches Mack, in his work clothes get into a van. Kiwa comes into the room.

KIWA
I put my stuff away. Going for a swim with the boys now OK?

HAYLEY
Back by two then.

Kiwa smiles. Haley stands as if to receive a hug but Kiwa turns and leaves. She watches as he runs down the path and onto the street with a towel flung over his shoulder.

EXT. SHED. DAY

Hayley exits the shed with Koro's journal. She closes the door, looks around then climbs up and carefully replaces the key in it's hiding place.

INT. LIBRARY. DAY

Hayley is talking to a librarian. She has a firm grip on the plaited handles of her crocheted carry bag. Koro's journal is protruding from it.

HAYLEY

There's some papers and stuff that I want to be able to translate. I need a Maori dictionary?

Kath (68) is slim and attentive. She is dressed in bright colours and wears purple framed glasses. She gives Hayley's question her full attention.

KATH

Maori to English or English to Maori?

HAYLEY

I can't. I mean. It's in Maori and I want to translate it into English.

KATH

I can certainly help you find a Maori language dictionary yes or, have you thought about taking classes?

HAYLEY

I was 15 when I left school. It's a bit late for classes now.

KATH

Goodness I didn't get my librarian's qualification until I was 43. I wish I'd made a start before I started having babies but that's how things were when then. Marriage, mortgage and raising a family. You are so much younger than 43 I think my dear?

Frustrated but interested Hayley opens up a little.

HAYLEY

It costs a lot? I haven't got a computer.

KATH

Let's find you some information about local tertiary providers.

HAYLEY

I do shift work and, how much does it cost?

KATH

Let's see what's available and then we'll go from there. Carpe diem!

She places her hand gently on Hayley's arm and attempts to guide her towards a carousel stacked with leaflets. Hayley resists.

HAYLEY

Look I just want a dictionary.
Carpe diem?

KATH

It's Latin, let me show you.

INT. LIBRARY. DAY

Hayley is referencing 'diem' on Google. Kath is sitting next to her. A piece of paper with the words 'carpe diem' is on the table between them.

HAYLEY

Day, daily.

She writes it down underneath the word 'diem'.

KATH

Now carpe.

HAYLEY

It's a fish ay. Carpe diem. Daily fish? Oh, Fish of the day?

Kath smiles.

KATH

That's what a dictionary or a search engine will find you. Dozens, even thousands of different options. But it can't think. Now put both words in together.

Hayley enters 'Carpe Diem'. The result is 'seize the day'. Kath and Hayley share a light hearted moment. Kath leaves. Hayley picks up a pamphlet with 'Te Reo Maori for beginners' printed on it. Also on the desk is another small flyer. Black text on white. Community activities are listed with times and dates. We see that Thursday morning weaving is circled with pen.

INT. KITCHEN. MORNING

Hayley is tidying up. She reaches into the kitchen cupboard for the broom, but it is not there. She looks inside. The head of the broom is on the floor but the handle is not. She crouches down and picks it up.

INT. KIWA'S BEDROOM. DAY

Grasping the broom head in her hand Hayley sweeps under the bed. A pile of junk comes out with each sweep. Dirty clothes, lolly wrappers, half an apple, some scrunched up paper and a few more fish scales. Hayley is not pleased.

(Cut to)

INT. BEDROOM. (FLASHBACK) DAY

Hayley (27) is just straightening the pillow on Kiwa's freshly made bed. She turns happily as Kiwa (2) enters the room. He is holding a long stemmed daisy. He beams a proud smile as he hands it to her. It is a little battered. But she takes it with joy.

KIWA

Pretty.

HAYLEY

Pretty flower, Daisy.

KIWA

Daisy.

Hayley kisses Kiwa and he snuggles close. Together they look at the flower.

(Cut to)

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYING FIELD. DAY

Back in present day, a small daisy sits amongst the green of the grass and basks in bright sunshine. A running shoe crushes it. Then another, then another. Rugby practise is underway. Avery has a large faded bruise on the side of his face. He lines up Kiwa who is running with the ball. Hayley watches anxiously from the sideline. Avery tackles hard and drags Kiwa down but he wiggles free and as he breaks away his elbow catches Avery squarely on the nose. Avery cries out in pain as blood gushes out. Kiwa rolls quickly to place the ball.

COACH

Nice work Kiwa. Avery go clean up and get back here pronto. Run!

Coach is moving the back line into position. Avery turns to leave.

HOLDEN

Where are you going? Just wipe it you loser.

Holden motions wiping his nose with his sleeve. Avery lifts his shirt to soak up the blood which is now a trickle.

They run back to their positions in time for another practise of a set play.

Hayley is walking along the sideline watching. She is a dozen steps behind another parent. As the woman in front nears a small group of men, one calls out to her.

STAN
Oi Chukka, make us a pavlova roll
for Saturday ay?

Chukka keeps walking but calls back.

CHUKKA GIRL
What's on Saturday?

STAN
Number three moko's 1st birthday.

CHUKKA GIRL
Chur. Already?

STAN
Two o'clock

Chukka continues on her way and gives the thumbs up.

Hayley follows Chukka Girl's path behind the men. Her head down. As she passes they all turn to look at her. None speak. Stan smiles at her but she does not see.

Avery has the ball and is making some ground when there is another crunching tackle. This time it is Kiwa who drags Avery down. Avery loses the ball in the tackle and is slow to rise, holding his ribs and gasping for breath.

COACH
Nice tackle Kiwa.
(To Avery)
You need to move your legs higher
Avery he's half your size. Step up
and out of his tackle next time
mate.

Coach demonstrates. He lifts his legs in a high stepping motion to back up his words. It causes him to puff a little. Avery looks annoyed. Out of coach's sight a couple of the boys mimic the high step at Avery.

Several more shots of Kiwa out jumping, out tackling and stepping other players. One of coach rubbing at his chin in amazement. One of Hayley looking excited but confused. Other parents are looking at Hayley but none talk to her.

EXT. PLAYING FIELD. LATER

Four boys are standing around talking. Avery is looking sore. His nose is swollen.

JAYDEN

His dad is Mad Mack Miller. My old man told me. He's crazy, all those Millers are crazy. There's a well out the back of their house and his dad threw his old man in it. He went to jail for it even.

AVERY

He's not in jail now.

JAYDEN

That's the dumb thing. They let him out again.

AVERY

That's bullshit he would still be in jail now.

JAYDEN

Yeah, but, not even. The cops had to let him out. No body see? The cops can't get you for murder if there's no dead body.

HOLDEN

The cops are dumb.

JAYDEN

Why?

HOLDEN

Or scared. Why didn't they look in the well?

JAYDEN

Yeah, of course they did. Diver cops did look inside the well. No body. Nothing.

HOLDEN

Maybe he's down real deep. Maybe they couldn't find him.

Avery looks stressed.

AVERY

How deep?

JAYDEN

Real deep. My Dad says it joins up to an underground river. Then the river goes into the sea down by the old Jetty.

HOLDEN

I don't get it. Is the well sea water then?

JAYDEN
No you dumb fuck ...

The boys are all startled as Kiwa runs to catch up with them.

KIWA
Playing with you losers on
Saturday.
(To Avery)
More tackle practise next week? Ay?

Kiwa mimics the high step move. A couple of boys giggle.

KIWA (CONT'D)
Nose all right?

The boys all look at Avery who doesn't speak. He swings a big punch at Kiwa's face. Kiwa ducks easily then bounces up and jabs Avery hard in the nose. Avery cries out. Avery swings and misses again. Kiwa kicks him hard in the stomach. Avery is winded. Kiwa laughs. A long blast of a car horn sounds. The boys all look towards the sound.

KIWA (CONT'D)
Awww look, Avery's mummy's here.
Good News Avery we're on the same
team Saturday.

He slaps Avery playfully but very hard on the cheek then walks away calmly. Avery is so shocked that he does not retaliate. The other boys follow Kiwa. Avery watches them go.

AVERY
Jayden, want a lift?

JAYDEN
Nah.

Avery walks alone towards his mum's car. Hayley waits at road for Kiwa and is surprised to see him leave with the boys in the opposite direction. She follows but does not try to catch up. Kiwa does not turn around.

EXT. OUTSIDE HOUSE. ANOTHER DAY

Hayley is weeding the front garden. She is surprised to see Kiwa walking along the street with a group of boys. He is swinging the missing broom handle about. Kiwa is full of swag, clearly the centre of attention.

Hayley does not smile as Kiwa swaggers towards her. She fixes his eyes with her own.

HAYLEY
The broom handle son?

Hayley can see that he is surprised and tries to catch his eye but he is proudly focussed on Kiwa. She takes the broom handle and screws it back onto the broom head.

EXT. BACK GARDEN.DAY

Hayley is on her knees weeding the vegetable patch. The job is made easy by the soft rain soaked soil. She finds a half rotted piece of apple smothered in ants. The ants run up her gloves and arms. She tries to brush them off but there are too many as she tries to scape them off her arms Alice appears and shouts down at her.

ALICE

Your son is a bloody thug!
Assaulted my boy he did. Bloody
thug. Give me one reason why I
shouldn't call the cops.

Hayley drops her gloves and rises slowly to her feet.

HAYLEY

Calm down Alice! I was there too.
It was just a slap.

Alice is infuriated by Hayley's response. She steps forward and pushes Hayley.

ALICE

His father's a murderer. You better
watch out. Your boy'll be in the
clink next.

Hayley's stance changes from passive to aggressive. She steps in quickly taking Alice by surprise and grabs at her. Before she can touch her the soggy ground causes Alice to slip and fall heavily. There is minimal damage to body. Lots to pride.

HAYLEY

Go home Alice.

Bel appears and helps Alice to her feet. She has a beautiful finely woven kete with her. Hayley notices it. Shocked and sodden Alice is easily led away.

INT. KIWA'S ROOM. EARLY EVENING

Kiwa is doing press ups as Hayley and Mack enter the room together. There are three new pictures on the wall. The first is an aeroplane in flight. The second is a man alone on a mountain top and the third is a newspaper photograph of Auckland's Sky Tower.

KIWA

27, 28, 29, 30

MACK

Take a break son.

She looks at Bel for a reaction but Bel has deposited a too large wedge of cake into her mouth and is unable to speak.

ALICE (CONT'D)

It was all over in a couple of minutes. It took longer for him to get his pants off.

The women laugh loudly together.

BEL

Lovely icing Al.

She smiles at Alice who looks satisfied.

ALICE

After all this time Hayley, the runt wants to know what Mad Mack Miller did to his old man.

Bel lifts a wedge of cake towards her mouth and is about to bite down when she sees Hayley step forward.

BEL

Oh. Hullo Hayley.

All the women look at Hayley.

KATENE

Kia ora Hayley. Coming to join us today?

Hayley looks at Alice uncomfortably. She walks hesitantly forward.

HAYLEY

I did a little bit of weaving at school.

(To Alice)

Hello Alice. Sorry about our, misunderstanding the other day.

Alice stares coldly at Hayley.

ALICE

There's no misunderstanding Hayley. Your boy's a thug. Just like his father.

Hayley looks around the room.

KATENE

Come sit down Hayley. I'll show you how to prepare ...

HAYLEY

Next week, maybe. I have to go.

Hayley turns and leaves. Alice kooks smug. Katene rises and follows Hayley outside.

Bel seems conflicted, she eyes the cake but chooses to speak.

BEL

She's a bit slow off the mark that one. It's been 12 years.

What if he floated up later, you know, after the cops were finished? Mack could have pulled him out, buried him somewhere.

Bel trails her finger through the soft icing and licks it away.

JULES

Maybe Handsome Harry was right. That young cop diver who went down to look. What if he was too scared to go right the way down. What if he just said he did? What if old Kiwa's still down there. I saw it on TV, how if the water's cold enough the bodies don't come up. Ever.

ALICE

Hairy Harry more like.

CHUKKA GIRL

Eh? Harry's bald Al.

They all laugh.

ALICE

That was the other reason I didn't let him back in for seconds. He's bald up top, but not down there. He's a carrot. Uhgg! Gave me the colliwobbles something terrible.

Alice shudders at the thought. She grabs her cup and takes a hearty swing of the cooling tea. Before she can swallow Bel responds.

BEL

That's why you don't like gingernuts?

The other women explode with laughter. Alice chokes and splutters on the tea that was in her mouth. When the laughing stops Bel continues.

BEL (CONT'D)

Avery's a carrot top. Are you sure you didn't let Harry back in for seconds Al?

ALICE

Only takes the one hook to catch a fish Bel. He's a Smith for sure.

Alice sneaks a doubtful sideways look at Bel. Alice also looks a bit doubtful. Jules, Chukka Girl and Maria are content to soak up the mystery.

Katene returns alone and resumes weaving.

INT. LIBRARY. ANOTHER DAY

Hayley opens old Kiwa's journal and begins to search a thin Maori English dictionary for words. She writes what she finds into a new exercise book. She is frustrated, she slams the journal shut.

EXT. LIBRARY. DAY

Hayley and Katene are sitting outside the library. Hayley is searching for something inside her bag. She doesn't find it.

KATENE

I make my own preserves. This one's crab apple jelly.

She hands a piece of fried bread spread thickly with butter and pink jelly. Hayley is reluctant but Katene humbly insists.

KATENE (CONT'D)

Food and problems. Always better when you have someone to share with.

Hayley gratefully accepts and takes a small bite. It is delicious.

INT. LOUNGE. NIGHT

Kiwa has the broom handle again. Hayley is reluctantly holding a toy plastic Star Wars Light Sabre. It has seen better days. Kiwa is showing Hayley his taiaha moves.

KIWA

Pao upoko!

He strikes in slow motion towards her head. Hayley blocks.

KIWA (CONT'D)

Pao tinana!

Kiwa strikes a little faster at her belly. Hayley blocks. She uses her other hand to grasp the tip of the light sabre. He advances on her swinging and jabbing. His eyes are fierce, frightening. Hayley goes from mild annoyance to anger.

HAYLEY

That's enough son. Too close.

Instead of backing off kiwa moves faster. The Taiaha whistles through the air missing her head, neck and core by centimeters. She backs away, afraid of being hit. Her hand lingers near her belly.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Kiwa, stop.

She tries to sound authoritative but her voice is weak. She stares into his eyes. He brings the taiaha around for a fatal neck blow. It stops an instant before contact.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

What's wrong with you?

KIWA

Sorry mum, messing about. You know I could never hurt you. We're blood.

He smiles, lowers the taiaha, and prances lightly away. As he reaches the door Hayley calls out to him.

HAYLEY

Didn't stop you taking my lunch this morning.

Kiwa laughs and pauses long enough to pukana cheekily and reply.

KIWA

I'm a growing boy.

INT. CHARITY SHOP. DAY

Hayley is looking through the FREE STUFF trunk. She does not find what she is looking for and moves to look at jumpers. They are all between \$4 and \$12. She leaves empty handed.

INT. LOUNGE. MORNING

Hayley is sitting at the kitchen table. A dozen mismatched flax strips are scatter on the table top nearby. Hayley is weaving a small square place mat. Its not going well. The flax has not been prepared properly.

EXT. POLYTECH. DAY

Hayley is standing outside looking up at the entrance way. She looks nervous. It is quiet out on the street. Suddenly the double doors open and a group of five well dressed young women exit noisily. Hayley stares. One of them smiles at Hayley but she does not see because she is looking at another girl who gives her an unfriendly stare. Hayley watches as the girls pass by, then hesitates at the steps.

Hayley looks around. She is alone. She takes a couple of deep breathes then tackles the stairs and enters.

INT. POLYTECH. DAY

Hayley walks towards a small window counter. She steps lightly, quietly. There are two women inside the office beyond the counter. One is talking on the phone. A gossipy personal conversation is underway. The other is photocopying. Neither look at Hayley although it is clear that they have both seen her. She waits patiently for a minute then tries calling out.

HAYLEY

Excuse me?

JUANITA

She'll be with you in a minute.

Juanita indicates the woman on the phone. Hayley smiles gratefully and continues to wait. Several minutes pass. The second hand on the wall clock drags around and Hayley speaks up again.

HAYLEY

I just want to get some information
on Te Reo Maori night classes?

Juanita picks up her photocopying and leaves without looking at Hayley. The other woman sighs deeply.

EVANGALINE

(Into phone) Just wait a minute
will you, another Maori who can't
speak Maori, who wants to be a
Maori. (To Hayley) Tohu or degree?

Hayley is embarrassed, she tries to consult her leaflet for an answer to the question.

EVANGALINE (CONT'D)

No rush dearie, I've got all day.
(Into the phone) Must be benefits
bonanza week.

Hayley hears this and it angers her but she tries to stay focused on her goal.

HAYLEY

Look I don't know what one. It says to come in and talk to someone if you have questions.

She waves the leaflet at Evangeline who puts the phone down purposefully and slowly drags her large frame up and out of her chair.

EVANGALINE

That means with an appointment. Do you have an appointment? It wouldn't matter if you did they're hardly ever here. Still I'll see what's available.

Evangeline reaches for a large black diary then picks up the phone again, turns away from Hayley and whispers loudly into it.

EVANGALINE (CONT'D)

Make sure the oven is hot before you put that sponge pudding in.

When Evangeline gets to the window Hayley is gone.

EXT. POLYTECH. DAY

Hayley rips up the leaflet and throws it into a bin. She strides away. There are furious tears in her eyes. Katene watches from inside her car which is parked across the street.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTRE. DAY

Hayley is sitting on the floor preparing flax for weaving. Small neat bundles of same sized flax sit next to her. Jules sits nearby sorting flax strips. Katene walks in, sees Hayley and smiles.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM. DAY

Hayley is sitting on the floor weaving a simple food basket. Her body leans forward in concentration. Mack is lying on the bed strumming on a guitar. Mostly he is watching Hayley as she works.

HAYLEY

I'll stay if you want me to.

MACK

Nah, we'll be all right. Bring us some of your mum's preserves? Those black peaches Mmmmm.

HAYLEY

We could all go up at Queens
birthday? Preserves every day?

Hayley pauses in her work to look directly at Mack. Mack avoids her intensity and begins to sing softly as he plays. Hayley joins in briefly but she stops, frustrated.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Ring your brother. Cancel it for
one time. Come with us?

Mack doesn't answer, instead he stops singing and changes chords rapidly upping the tempo and changing the tune. Hayley finishes her basket in silence.

MACK

Stay then.

Hayley stands and leaves with the finished food basket. Mack continues strumming.

INT. KIWA'S ROOM. DAY

Hayley places neatly folded clean clothes into a small chest of drawers. She gathers some papers and school books together, pausing to read a school trip notice. She turns as Kiwa enters. He looks annoyed.

HAYLEY

What's the matter son?

Hayley puts the papers neatly aside and sits down on his bed, leaving room for him to join her. Kiwa stays where he is.

KIWA

I ain't happy when you mess around
with my shit, and sit on my bed.

Hayley is surprised and upset. Her voice is louder when she responds.

HAYLEY

You shouldn't talk to me like that
Kiwa. Swearing too.

KIWA

Sorry ok. Look, leave my shit,
stuff on my bed. I'll put it away
when I come in.

HAYLEY

We tried that before ay Kiwa? It
only works if you put the clothes
away. We don't want a house with
washing all over the place ay?

MR KINGI

Pat Kingi. I'm Kiwa's Maths teacher. I also take Kapa Haka.

HAYLEY

And taiaha?

MR KINGI

Hey Kiwa, might be I left my keys in the changing room. Can you run down and have a look for me while I talk to your mum?

Kiwa looks at his mum who smiles. He leaves.

MR KINGI (CONT'D)

I played rugby with Mack, back a few years. Your boy's got some real talent. I work with a group from the college. Usually we're not able to cater to the younger ones but Kiwa's a natural. If you and Mack agree I'd like him to come along to training two nights a week.

Hayley looks worried.

HAYLEY

Do they hit each other with those sticks? Taiaha?

MR KINGI

No, it's just training. Great for balance, strength.

HAYLEY

I'll talk to Mack. How much does it cost?

MR KINGI

Nothing for training. There's a trip out to the island coming up. Maybe \$50.

HAYLEY

If he can't go. On the trip. Does that mean he's off the team?

Before Mr Kingi can answer Kiwa is back empty handed.

KIWA

No keys Mr Kingi.

Mr Kingi makes a show of looking through his pockets. He finds the keys. Fakes surprise.

MR KINGI

Thanks anyway Kiwa. Hell of a good rugby player your old man. Good at everything. Music, Art, Pretty good at Maths, Kapa Haka leader - wicked vocals. Champion Mau Rakau. You got big shoes to fill young Kiwa. Big shoes. Stay fit. Use your practise taiaha every day.

Kiwa and Hayley both smile when he mentions the taiaha. They turn together to walk home.

HAYLEY

You can use the broom handle at home but you have to put it back after ok?

As they walk their feet clatter on the linoleum flooring. At first their steps are out of time.

KIWA

There's a trip. Out to the island

HAYLEY

We'll see Kiwa.

KIWA

I'm definitely going. If I have to walk I'm going.

As they approach the exit door their pace is exactly matched. Hayley and Kiwa smile as they push the double doors open in unison. Their smiles quickly fade when they are greeted by wind and rain. As they run out across the wet concrete their footsteps are lost to the rhythm of the rain. Kiwa runs ahead of Hayley. She cannot keep up with him. He shouts into the wind.

KIWA (CONT'D)

I'm going to the island. I'm going to climb the mountain. I'm going to fly in a plane.

INT. LIBRARY. ANOTHER DAY

The clock on the wall says 4.30. Hayley is checking out a large book. It is a thick Maori dictionary. She places the book in her bag then heads towards the exit. Kath stops her just before she goes out the door. Kath is energetic and friendly. Hayley is reluctant and negative. We do not hear what they say. They speak awhile then Hayley shakes her head adamantly and leaves. Kath looks after her a moment then returns to her work.

EXT. KIWA'S HOUSE. NIGHT

Kiwa and Jarrod are getting into a van. Mr Kingi is talking to Mack and they shake hands just before he gets into the van. Hayley and Mack help with gears and Hayley hands Kiwa some money and a bag of food. Kiwa is polite but cool. He leans in for a kiss. He waves to them but does not look back. The others in the van wave goodbye. Mr Kingi's watch shows 8 p.m.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM.

Hayley and Mack are sleeping. The bedside clock reads 7.30 a.m. There is a knock at the door, then another, insistent.

Hayley rises and goes to see who it is. She opens the door to Avery who has an over stuffed sports bag with him and a bucket full of gears.

HAYLEY

Avery, where are you off to?

AVERY

With Kiwa to the island.

Mack has joined them at the doorway. Hayley looks embarrassed. Mack looks a bit angry.

HAYLEY

Have you had breakfast Avery?

AVERY

Nah, but it's ok. Got some sandwiches and my aunty Bel made us a banana cake.

He holds up a large Tupperware container.

MACK

You better come in Avery.

AVERY

Oh no it's ok Kiwa said pick up's at eight o'clock. Mr Kingi's bringing his van. Then we load up and go over on a boat.

HAYLEY

I think there's been a mix up. They left last night at 8 o'clock

Avery is silenced, he tries a smile but it doesn't work.

MACK

They left last night.

Avery is stunned, guilt stricken, agitated. Mack and Hayley both watch him. Both look uncomfortable. Avery stumbles over his words.

AVERY

He asked me to come. Eight o'clock.

HAYLEY

He should have told you Avery.
Jarrod went with him.

Avery looks as if he might cry then picks up his bag and half runs, half falls down the steps. He walks quickly away down the road. In the opposite direction to his home. His bucket stays on the step.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Avery! (To Mack) Do something.

They look at one another in disbelief.

MACK

That was cruel. Thought they were mates?

HAYLEY

Daisy's mate too. He loved her one minute, then not. Kiwa's almost like another person.

MACK

Boys.

HAYLEY

No, that's not it. He's different.

Mack laughs it off but he doesn't look completely convinced.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE. AFTERNOON

Avery has returned to collect his bucket. As he bends to pick it up. Mack speaks to him from nearby. He has been waiting for Avery to come back.

MACK

Kiwa was wrong to treat you that way.

Avery doesn't speak. His eyes are puffy from crying. He doesn't turn around to face Mack. Just picks up his bucket and starts to leave.

MACK (CONT'D)

Fried herring with butter and lots of onions.

He makes a satisfied eating sound.

MACK (CONT'D)

I'll be down at the old jetty in about an hour. Bring your bucket, see if we you can fill it up with herrings ay? Or might be you got something better to do?

Avery hesitates but just for a moment, then walks purposefully away towards home. Hayley appears at the door.

HAYLEY

I never liked that boy, but I feel sorry for him now.

MACK

Save your tears girl. He'll be all right. He's coming fishing with me later.

Hayley looks a bit doubtful as she looks after Avery's quickly disappearing form.

HAYLEY

When?

MACK

Tide will be about right in an hour or so, why?

HAYLEY

Come.

A mischievous look crosses her face. Mack looks a bit confused, then follows.

Hayley gives Mack a meaningful look then turns and walks slowly back into the house. Mack watches her go then follows.

INT. HALLWAY. DAY

Hayley holds up a pair of pink baby booties. Mack stares.

MACK

For real?

They embrace.

EXT. OLD JETTY. DAY

Mack and Avery are sitting side by side with a large piece of banana cake between them. Avery jumps to his feet and pulls in a small fish. He carefully removes it from the hook and drops it into his bucket where there are several others. He looks relaxed, almost happy.

As he re-baits his hook his finger slips and he pokes the hook deep into his finger. As he shouts out in pain he becomes entangled between his line and his bucket. The bucket tips and most of the fish fall into the water.

EVERY

Oh shit no, oh, shit!

He looks really upset. His hands tremble and shake as he tries frantically to remove the bloody hook from his collar where it is now lodged. As he stamps about Mack moves the banana cake away to a safer place.

MACK

Tangaroa will be stoked with that lot. Or the seagulls.

EVERY

What do you mean? Tangaroa.

Avery looks nervously over the side of the jetty. A few drops of his blood drip into the water. He tries to grab them as they fall. Mack laughs.

MACK

You kids watch too many vampire movies. All bull shit.

He is smiling broadly enjoying Avery's anxiety.

EVERY

How do you know? Anyway I don't believe in that Tangaroa stuff.

Mack grabs his leg as if to push him in. Avery lets out a little cry of fright. Mack laughs.

Embarrassed Avery sucks the trickle of blood seeping out of his hand he gets a bit of bait as well as blood. He spits it out with disgust and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand. Mack hands him a water bottle. Avery take a swig and then spits it all out into the sea.

Avery and Mack sit in silence awhile, lines down. Mack shifts the banana cake back into the space between them. He wipes the blade of his fishing knife on his jeans then cuts a piece of cake. He licks icing from his fingers.

MACK

Lovely icing. Your mum make this cake?

Avery is slow to answer.

EVERY

Aunty Bel. But mum did the icing.

(MORE)

EVERY (CONT'D)

She puts the chocolate in a bowl, you have to break it all up first. Then she puts the bowl over a pot of hot water. You can't let the bowl touch the water and you can't get water in it or it won't work. Then you melt it and then you put a whole bottle of cream in it. Stir it and it's the icing.

Mack shows his appreciation by cutting another piece and taking an enormous bite.

EVERY (CONT'D)

Tangaroa is the god of the sea. We had a book at school. But I wish I did know about it.

Mack and Avery look directly at each other for the first time. Time passes slowly. There is a connection between them. The mood lifts. We see that the sun is still high and the water glistens with light as far as the eye can see. Seabirds call as they drift across the sky.

MACK

You sure you got the time?

Avery does not answer. They sit looking out across the sea, their posture the same, their expressions the same. Mack points out to a spot in the water.

MACK (CONT'D)

Here they come.

Avery and Mack both get a strike each. Avery pulls his line up quickly, removes the fish, re-baits and sends it back down. Mack jerks his line at each strike but is slower to pull his line in. When he does his three hooks each have a fish on them. Avery is impressed. Mack notices and loves it. He winks at Avery and grins.

EXT. LIBRARY. DAY

Hayley has the journal with her. She approaches Katene who is sitting outside under the tree.

HAYLEY

I need some help.

Katene reaches for the journal.

EXT. OLD JETTY. DAY

MACK

And so Tangaroa took Ruatepupuke's son Te Manuhauturuki down to his house under the sea.

AVERY

He drowned?

MACK

Do you want to tell the story?

Avery shuts up. Mack waits a moment before continuing.

MACK (CONT'D)

Ruatepupuke found the house and saw his son up on the gable.

Avery looks like he has a question, but is silent. Mack makes the shape of a roof with his hands. He places his finger tips on his chin and pokes out his tongue. Avery gets it.

MACK (CONT'D)

Tangaroa and his family were out. So Ruatepupuke hid and waited for them to return and sleep.

AVERY

He was mad because his son was dead?

Mack pauses and takes a swig from the water bottle.

AVERY (CONT'D)

Sorry.

MACK

Ruatepupuke was amazed to see the beautiful house, carved inside and out. He saw the carved panels inside the house could talk. He keeps hidden until Tangaroa and his family return to sleep. While they sleep he covers the windows tightly, blocking light.

INT. LIBRARY. DAY

Hayley waits as Katene is reads a page of the journal silently.

KATENE

He wants to find a solution to a problem. He doesn't really say what the problem is. It's a personal diary.

Hayley looks embarrassed as Katene reads more.

KATENE (CONT'D)

He plans to fight with this mischief maker and to trap him and fix him for good. Most of the entries are about karakia and readings he's looked at. There's a missionary whose name is in here twice.

EXT. OLD JETTY. DAY

MACK

Ruatepupuke escaped back to land with his son, who was alive, and some of the carved panels.

AVERY

Which?

Avery places his hand over his own mouth. Mack almost laughs.

MACK

Not the talking ones. Those are the mischief ones.

Avery looks like he is going to speak but doesn't. Mack enjoys the moment.

MACK (CONT'D)

My father told me these stories.

Avery looks like he will burst if he doesn't speak. Mack points out to a spot on the water.

MACK (CONT'D)

Here they come again.

EXT. MARAE. DAY

Kiwa and another boy are singled out from the group for an exhibition bout. Kiwa looks tiny next to his opponent who is older, bigger, strong and fit. Kiwa's speed and skill is breathtaking. Mr Kingi looks proud but amazed. Jarrod is watching and jumping around with excitement. Mr Kingi reminds Jarrod to be respectful.

INT. LIBRARY. DAY

Katene hands the journal back to Hayley who looks confused and disappointed.

KATENE

Keep looking. Be strong.

EXT. OLD JETTY. DAY

AVERY

Those talking pou are just a story.
They're not Real?

MACK

Maybe, maybe not.

Mack looks down into the water then pulls his legs up to sit in a cross legged position. Avery quickly does the same. They both laugh together.

EXT. THE WELL. (HAYLEY'S DREAM) NIGHT

There is an almost full moon. Mack exits the shed with his bucket and fishing gears. His breath condenses in the chill night air. He walks past the well without a glance and follows the pathway along the side of the house towards the road.

A minute passes. We see Daisy sitting on the edge of the well. Hayley appears in her pyjamas and a heavy jacket. Her hands are pushed deep into her pockets. She looks towards the direction Mack took and watches a while. Daisy greets her with a friendly meow and Hayley strokes her fur.

HAYLEY

I missed you Daisy girl. Where you
been?

Satisfied that Mack is not coming back, Hayley struggles to remove the heavy cover from the well. Daisy stays nearby as Hayley wrestles the cover onto it's side.

Shivering and with her breath heavy Hayley leans over to look into the water. The moon is directly overhead and light floods the well. Beyond the reach of the moonlight there is nothing but deep dark water. Hayley strains to see with Daisy at her shoulder. Together they concentrate on the water below. She finds a toehold on the side of the well and pulls herself up to a seated position. Her legs dangling into the moonlit well. The rungs of the ladder inside the well disappear down into the water.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

What's your secret well? What do
you know?

Hayley sighs and wraps her arms around herself for warmth. She then pushes her hands deep into her pockets.

Suddenly Daisy jumps onto her lap. She loses her balance as Hayley struggle to retains hers. Daisy digs her claws into Hayley's thin pyjama pants. Hayley grabs hold of her.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Shit!

Blood spots well up and stain Hayley's pyjamas. Hayley is about to laugh when Daisy who is facing down hisses and struggles to free herself from Hayley's grip. As Daisy leaps onto the grass Hayley sees a large dark figure spiralling up from the deep.

Hayley loses her balance as she looks at the ripple distorted face of her son. She falls towards the water, mouth open in a silent scream.

(cut to)

INT. MASTER BEDROOM. NIGHT

Hayley wakes with a start. Mack is snoring softly beside her. She runs her hands through her dry hair. Pulls back the sheet and checks herself. Dry safe. Her hands go to her belly.

INT.MASTER BEDROOM. NEXT MORNING

Mack wakes to the sound of the toilet flushing. He calls out to Hayley.

MACK

Hales. Hales!

When Hayley enters the room, Mack is lying on the bed wearing just a singlet and his underwear. Hayley has clearly been up for a while. She opens the curtains and places a few folded clothes into the dresser. Mack squints at the light.

MACK (CONT'D)

Too much light, close the curtain
Hales.

Mack pats the bed next to him.

MACK (CONT'D)

House to ourselves. Lets make some
noise.

HAYLEY

Can we talk please?

MACK

After, come here. Make me warm.

HAYLEY

Here.

Hayley passes him a sweatshirt. Mack ignores the gesture. He picks up his guitar. He strums a few chords then fiddles with the tuning.

Mack watches Hayley while he gently plays and sings. He is expectant. Hayley stays out of reach.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

I know what I promised but I need you to tell me about that well. I need you to tell me about your father.

She stops what she is doing and looks straight at him. Mack stops playing and begins to fiddle with the tuning of his guitar. He looks frustrated.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Please Mack.

She is still, desperate.

MACK

My father Hayley. Mine. Not yours.

Mack slams the palm of his hand flat against the wood of his guitar. It makes a harsh sound and causes her to jump.

HAYLEY

Just tell me!

Mack interrupts with another angry crash of his palm. His voice is raised but his face shows sadness too.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

I need to know.

MACK

I didn't hurt my old man. You don't need to know anything else! I can't tell you what I don't know.

HAYLEY

Something's wrong with Kiwa. There's something about that well. Tell me what you do know Mack.

Mack shoves his guitar to one side and leaps to his feet. He so angry that he is shaking.

MACK

No you don't need to know. You want to know. Did I do it? Why don't you tell me. You know so much these days, all your fuckin' library books and secret meetings.

Mack swings his arm and sends Hayley's books flying from the table beside her bed. She is shocked by his response. Her arms cross protectively over her stomach.

HAYLEY

I don't believe it. I never have.
But Mack I know something happened.
Just tell me what it was. Just tell
me what happened. Why does everyone
hate us?

Mack grabs his guitar and is about to swing it at Hayley but he instead drops it roughly to the floor. There is a definite sound of splitting wood. Mack picks up Koro's journal from the floor. Hayley looks as if she might run for the door but instead watches as Mack throws a wild look at her.

MACK

You won't understand.

HAYLEY

I'm trying.

Hayley goes to him and they embrace tightly. Mack scoops Hayley from the floor and swings her onto the bed. He is on her in a flash. Kisses her. Hayley responds tearing at his singlet. It is quick and feral. Immediately satisfying for both of them. The tension is gone. Mack rolls back onto the pillow they both lie there breathing heavily.

Mack rolls over onto one arm and looks deep into Hayley's eyes.

MACK

You won't understand.

HAYLEY

Mack!

MACK

I don't understand.

There is a long moment between them.

HAYLEY

What happened to your father?

MACK

It wasn't him. It's true I did push
him in but it wasn't him. See I
told you. If I don't understand how
can you.

HAYLEY

I think he was trying to get rid of
it.

INT. MEREDITH'S HOUSE. DAY

Daisy is sitting on a shabby old couch in the sun. Meredith is sitting on the other end of the couch stroking a tabby. She is deep in thought or lost in space (take your pick). From her vantage point on the arm of the couch Daisy can see a van pulling up in front of the Miller house. Kiwa gets out of the van with a backpack and a carry all. Daisy's tail begins to twitch.

INT. LIBRARY. DAY

Kath is showing Hayley how to adjust the focus on the microfiche reader. We see that Hayley is reading an old journal entry written by an early Missionary to the area. We see the text as she reads it.

I had extensive conversations with the local chief of the district. My intention was to secure the good land near the freshwater spring in order that I might establish a small chapel and a school. He was quite agreeable until a meddlesome tohunga forbade any building near the spring. Despite my protestations to the contrary he insisted that it was unsafe. He informed me that despite my coming from a family of builders I was not sufficiently knowledgeable in these matters. He finished with a somewhat muddled account involving ongoing mischief and a talking post. I assume that he referred to ancient native spirits which supposedly inhabited the bush near the spring.

HAYLEY

The spring is our well.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY

Hayley arrives home from work to find Mack and Avery sitting at the table eating fried herring.

HAYLEY

Hello Avery. Where's Kiwa?

AVERY

Hello Mrs Miller.

MACK
Training. These are sweet as Hales.
Sit with us.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY

The fish is gone. Mack, Hayley and Avery are contentedly sitting at the table drinking tea.

Alice and Bel appear at the door.

HAYLEY
Alice, Bel, come in.

Hayley stands up and flicks on the switch to boil the jug. Alice glares at Hayley then speaks directly to Avery.

ALICE
You get home Avery. I've got
business with these two.

HAYLEY
Take it easy Alice. What's wrong?

ALICE
Avery move it!

Avery does not move. Alice moves forward and in a flash has his ear twisted firmly between her thumb and forefinger. Avery cries out as she hauls him towards the door. Mack's voice halts her.

MACK
Enough!

Avery manages to pull his ear away from Alice and backs away from Alice. He is angry.

AVERY
You go home mum. I got a right to
be here. I asked you about my Dad
and you lied to me Mum. He's not in
Australia is he?

ALICE
What did they say to you?

AVERY
They didn't have to. I already
know. You said it.

ALICE
Bloody liars!

Mack moves towards Alice.

MACK
Time to take your bullshit home
Alice. Go on.

He gestures firmly towards the door.

ALICE
Mack's not your bloody father!

AVERY
Liar!

He looks from Alice to Mack. Hayley looks at Mack. Mack just looks confused.

ALICE
Avery, Kiwa is your father.

Avery is even more confused. Bel speaks up.

BEL
Well I never. Old Kiwa. I always
thought it was Mack you were going
over to see?

Mack looks horrified.

ALICE
Well now you know.

Alice looks hopefully at Avery. Avery is processing the information slowly. His face shows great pain.

AVERY
He's dead. My father's dead?

All eyes on Avery. He runs from the house.
(Fade)

INT. LOUNGE. DAY

Hayley is working with fishing line. She is knotting it to make a net. She adds shells and other embellishments as she works.

INT. LOUNGE. LATER

Mack and Hayley are sitting in silence.

HAYLEY
There's something I found.

Mack is unresponsive. He looks tired but far from sleep.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

I read some books, some journals
and I understand part of it.

Mack turns slowly in Hayley's direction.

MACK

Go home for while Hales. The baby.

HAYLEY

I was deaf to what they all said,
about you. The only sound I heard
was the beating of my own heart.
The only other person who knows
that sound is Kiwa. I'm not going
anywhere.

Mack is quiet, impassive. He doesn't speak. Hayley waits.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

He likes to play tricks. That's
what your father tried to do. He
played a trick but it didn't work.
I read it in his journal Mack. He
made that carving, he wanted to
trap it in the carving. But it
didn't work. I think maybe that's
where your father's been ever
since.

MACK

That carving that Kiwa had?

EXT. WELL.(FLASHBACK) NIGHT.

MACK V.O

He went down the ladder with that
carving. I saw something big inside
the well. A Hapuka, mouth like a
whale. They both went down into the
water then my father come out
again. But he wasn't right, his
smile wasn't right.

Old Kiwa smiling and dripping wet emerges from the well. The full moon illuminates the scene. He looks at Mack who is at first relieved and moves to embrace his father. But when old Kiwa smiles Mack knows the truth. The embrace becomes a wrestle. Old Kiwa is stronger and forces Mack down to the ground. Mack finds the carving in his hand and smashes it into the side of old Kiwa's head. He cries out. There is shouting as others come. Hands reach out but are too late to prevent Mack from heaving the semi conscious Old Kiwa into the well. The blood smeared carving falls down onto the grass. Mack has time to jump in after his father but he hesitates too long. Hands grab and pull him away.

A police siren sounds in the distance.
(cut to)

INT. LOUNGE

Hayley looks at Mack, sympathetic.

MACK

I should have gone in. That was my chance I think. To beat him in the water. Two of us. We might have had a chance.

Through the window we see the almost full moon. Clouds cover it in part giving it an eerie appearance.

HAYLEY

What does it want?

MACK

Everything a man wants.

INT.MASTER BEDROOM. LATER

Mack picks up his patched up guitar and begins to play bits and pieces. He fiddles with the tuning. The sound isn't what it was.

Hayley gets her wakahuia down from the top of the bookcase. She handles it gently. Holding the lid in place as if something inside might spill out.

Hayley sits down next to Mack. He stops strumming and picks at the strings of his guitar.

HAYLEY

I found the first one just after I found that carving in his room. Dunno why I kept it, but there were more. Threw a lot away. Some went up the vacuum but there's plenty.

Hayley opens the wakahuia and reveals it to be full of flat fish scales of various sizes. They are beautiful. Mack exhales loudly. Hayley watches his face intently.

Mack picks up a large scale and examines it as it lies flat on the palm of his hand.

MACK

Hapuka. Why are they all so flat?

HAYLEY

They came off him. The first few curled up, lost their colour so I pressed them in this.

She hold up a small wooden flower press.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)
Then I used nail varnish to hold
the colour see? It's clear so the
colour is real.

She runs her hand through the scales. They make a light
clattering sound.

INT. LOUNGE. NIGHT

Mack is on the phone. He is dressed ready for work.

MACK
Yeah, got to be two of us brother.
Can you come?

Hayley walks in and shows Mack her empty purse.

MACK (CONT'D)
Kiwa?

Hayley and Mack's eyes lock. The phone rings. Hayley answers
it.

HAYLEY
Hullo. No Alice, we haven't seen
him yet.

EXT. CORNER SHOP. DUSK

Kiwa and Avery wait by a tree out of sight of passers by.
They duck down as Hayley and Mack walk past on their way to
work. A man emerges from the shop and looks around. Avery
shows himself and the man approaches.

AVERY
Let me see?

The man pulls out a small box of 12 cans of bourbon and coke.
He reaches and opens the box. The man grabs three cans in
each hand and slides them into his deep pockets.

AVERY (CONT'D)
Hey!

MAN
You're too young to drink. Better
for uncle to take some.

He starts to walk away.

AVERY
You're not my uncle. Hey, where's
our change?

The man laughs and continues on his way. Kiwa pops out from his hiding place, throws something then ducks behind the tree again. A small rock hits the man hard in the back of the head. It draws blood. The man turns angrily. Avery grabs the shopping bag and runs as the man gives chase. Kiwa laughs from behind the tree. The man gives up and Kiwa emerges to join Avery.

Avery is breathless. Kiwa is upbeat, excited. They turn towards Kiwa's house.

KIWA

You're smarter than I thought you were Cindyrelly.

Avery clearly doesn't like the name and closes up.

KIWA (CONT'D)

You done this before?

They walk on a bit before Kiwa realizes that Avery has gone quiet.

KIWA (CONT'D)

Don't be such a sook man. Your own fault getting sad and blabbing about your family. Drink some concrete or something.

Kiwa punches Avery hard on the upper arm.

INT.KIWA'S ROOM. LATER

Avery and Kiwa are sitting cross legged. There are two empty bourbon and cola cans on the floor.

Kiwa changes the music CD. There is a new All Blacks poster on the wall next to a wall planner. On it the phases of the moon are shown in cheerful caricatures. Some days are blank and others have activities of events written in pen. Each day up until Friday is crossed off with an X. Friday has 'No Training' written on it. Saturday is a full moon. The words 'King Tide' are written in pen.

KIWA

You better not get weird on me Avery. If I get with your cousin Destiny.

AVERY

I told you she likes you.

Kiwa slaps Avery on the back causing him to splutter. Some drink comes out through Avery's nose. Both boys erupt into noisy laughter. They crank the music up.

(Series of short shots)

Kiwa messing about with a pair of Nunchuks.

Avery leaning back so as not to be hit by Nunchuks.

Avery messing about with a pair of Nunchuks.

Kiwa laughing hysterically.

Avery clutching at his eye.

Kiwa dancing and pulling drunken fighting stances.

Avery dancing and swaying and ducking to avoid being hit.

Kiwa asleep on the bed snoring.

Avery tidying up.

INT. KIWA'S ROOM. LATER

Through the window the almost full moon slips in and out of sight behind the gathering clouds. Hayley comes into the room wearing her work clothes. She draws the curtains together. She slips her hand under the pillow near Kiwa's shoulder. As she is about to leave she hears a loud snore. She lifts the bed cover and peers cautiously under the bed. Avery is squeezed in there fast asleep.

INT.MEREDITH'S HOUSE.

Meredith enters the cluttered lounge with a cup of tea. She sits down on a cat damaged armchair. We see a cat door leading to outside push inwards and Daisy enters the room. She runs toward Meredith and jumps up onto her lap. Meredith smiles with delight.

MEREDITH

My pretty girl.

She strokes Daisy lovingly.

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

Big fat moon tomorrow my pretty.

Daisy settles down on Meredith's lap and begins to purr.

INT. KIWA'S ROOM. MORNING

Kiwa is puzzling over the fish scales in his bed. He finds one stuck to his neck. He gets up and goes over to the calendar. With a pen he crosses out Friday. The note on today's date reads King tide.

INT. KITCHEN. MORNING

Avery is downstairs polishing off a large plate of fried eggs, fried potatoes and peas. He doesn't slow down until the plate is wiped clean with the last piece of toast. Hayley places another cup of milo in front of him. He looks at her gratefully.

HAYLEY

Ready to go home now Avery? Talk to your mum.

Avery nods but looks uncommitted.

The phone rings. Hayley picks up.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

Hullo? How late? Hang on I'll get him. Yeah ok then, yeah I'll tell him.

She hangs up the phone.

EXT. BACKYARD. NIGHT

Mack enters the shed. He takes the old woven fishing net from the wall and places it on the floor. He takes a wooden mallet and some tent pegs and places them on the net. He puts on his father's hat. He takes the oilskin from behind the door and puts it on. He slips the dark wooden carving into the pocket. He sits on his father's chair and waits. Rain falls on the roof.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT

Kiwa is playing catch and release with a blowfly. He releases the fly and drinks some water straight from the tap. He then fills his hands with water and lowers his face into it. He is surprised by a scale on his face. He scrapes at it with his finger nail. It clatters down into the sink. The reflection in the mirror is neither Kiwa's nor the old man. It is another. A twisted in-human form. Avery looks on in horror from the hallway. Avery runs.

INT. LOUNGE. NIGHT

Hayley is using her crochet hook to attach her shell and scale adorned net to a woven flax border. She calls out after Avery rushes past.

HAYLEY

Avery, Avery!

She follows him to the door and watches Avery sprint homewards through puddles and rain. As she turns back Kiwa appears directly behind her.

KIWA

It's all right Mum. He saw a fly in the bathroom, thought it was a spider. I mashed it.

Kiwa holds out his hand to show a pulpy mess. Hayley recoils.

EXT. THE WELL. NIGHT

The rain has stopped. Kiwa approaches the well at a fast pace. He tears the cover off effortlessly. With one hand on the stone wall he hops onto the side and looks down.

KIWA

Here fishy, fishy.

The moon slides out from behind the thinning clouds and moonlight floods the scene. We see Harry, Avery and someone else advancing cautiously behind the bushes.

Mack bursts from the shed and pushes Kiwa hard. Kiwa barely moves. Mack backs away in shock. That smile plays across Kiwa's lips.

Kiwa lifts his legs and spins around so that he is now facing Mack. His back is to the open well.

KIWA (CONT'D)

Come on Dad show me some of your moves. You champion rugby player, you champion Maths student, you champion of the Taiaha. Did I miss anything?

Mack glances up. High winds are pushing clouds towards the moon. His hand slips into his pocket. Mack smiles. The scene is thrown into near darkness as a large dense cloud covers the moon. Mack pitches the carving hard. Flashing red and blue police lights illuminate the scene. The carving connects with Kiwa's face. Blood gushes from Kiwa's nose. He has blood on his hand and arm as he lifts the carving from where it fell on the side of the well. Blood smears across the carving and it seems to wiggle from his grasp to slide into the well.

MACK

Yeah, you missed Baseball.

Mack lifts the net as is about to throw it when it is suddenly ripped from his grasp. The moon is again visible. A Detective and a uniformed officer wrestle Mack to the ground. The net is underneath him.

MACK (CONT'D)

Kiwa, son!

Hayley rushes forward to help Mack but is forced back by a uniformed policeman. She runs back to the house. There is a chaotic scene. Avery is trying to pull the net out from underneath Mack. Alice is trying to pull Avery away. Mack is yelling and screaming. Harry is scuffling with a uniformed officer. Hayley appears with her woven net artwork she races towards the well but she slips backwards to land on her back on the wet grass. Avery grabs her hand and hauls her up. He grabs the net.

HAYLEY

Have to get Kiwa.

Avery grabs Hayley's net and heads for the well. Alice stands between Avery and the well. She grabs Avery in an awkward bear hug and holds on.

AVERY

Let me go Mum!

MACK

Avery do it!

A police officer tries to separate Alice and Avery. Hayley's net falls to the ground. Hayley grabs it and tries to drag the net up and over the side of the well. It gets snagged in the stonework.

ALICE

Let me go! Let me go!

Avery drops to the ground leaving Alice to struggle with the police officer. As soon as the attention is off him Avery rushes to help Hayley untangle the net.

More police lights flash nearby. Hayley grips the net firmly then glances at her belly. Then she is airborne going down into the well. There is no splash. The net has snagged again and is hanging. Alice is also holding onto it from above. A policeman is holding onto Alice. Hayley is swinging from the net just above the water.

AVERY

Sorry Mum.

Avery jumps feet first onto the net dragging it from Alice's hands. He and Hayley disappear into the water below. Alice screams.

ALICE
Avery, Avery, Avery!

MACK
Let me fuckin' go you eggs!

Mack is well secured with handcuffs and three uniformed officers who are lying on top of him but he continues to struggle.

DETECTIVE BEN WILKIE
Hold onto that mad bastard until
the wagon gets here.

DETECTIVE SIMON APPLETON
Get us some lights. Rope.

He is pulling off his coat and shoes at the side of the well. Alice joins him and looks down.

ALICE
Avery, my baby Avery!

She stops her howling as a figure breaks the dark water below and gasps for breath. Alice tries to snatch the torch from a uniformed police woman but instead causes it to fall. It hits the figure which is now climbing upwards. There is a deep male grunt. The torch hits the water with a splash and illuminates the water as it descends. Alice backs warily away from the well as a large figure emerges.

OLD KIWA
Tihei mauri ora!
(I will speak)

Torches light the scene. There is shouting. Other voices. Chaos.

DETECTIVE BEN WILKIE
Who the hell are you?

Series of short shots (sound of koauau)

Tap. A fine metal chisel cuts a thin curved groove into dark wood.

Tap. A bone chisel cuts into flesh.

Tap. A man's face, sweat drips from his brow onto carved wood.

Tap. A man's brow, sweat drips from it onto cut flesh.

Tap. A dark mix is rubbed into bloodied flesh.

Tap. Avery and Kiwa are wrestling with a thin in-human figure. Hayley encircles them with a net.

Tap. Their bodies twist furiously in unison. Faster and faster.

Tap. Tap. The net hangs still in the water. Hayley is floating underwater. A few thin bubbles trickle from her nose, then stop.

Tap. Tap. Tap. Hayley's hand drifts down to her belly. Her legs kick. She swims up towards the light of the moon.

EXT. WELL. NIGHT

OLD KIWA

Kiwa Miller. Give us a hand friend?

Hayley emerges from the well with a length of twine between her teeth. Old Kiwa grabs it and begins to pull. Many hands join in and the net is hauled in. Squashed inside is Avery, Kiwa and a huge Hapuka. The boys cough and splutter. Police drag Mack and Old Kiwa off to the wagon.

INT.KITCHEN.DAY.

Mack, Hayley and Old Kiwa are seated at the kitchen table. There are cups of tea, bread, butter and hard boiled eggs on the table. They all look very tired and very happy.

OLD KIWA

It was quiet and dark. I could move but like in a dream. Not real. And then I saw his face. Beautiful. I knew he was my moko straight away. You gave him my name Mack.

The old man dips his head and reaches into his pocket for something he cannot find. He uses his shirt to wipe his eyes.

MACK

After they let me out of jail I lived real quiet on my own. Didn't do anything much. Took the benefit. Paid the bills. Tried to understand. Hone tried to take me to live with him. I didn't want to leave you. So I stayed. Waited for you. Ate a lot of fish.

Mack smiles when he says this. They all smile.

MACK (CONT'D)

Then I met Hayley.

OLD KIWA
How did you two get together?

HAYLEY
Jumped off a bridge, and he was
there.

They all laugh.

MACK
Hey, that Detective from Auckland
nearly shit himself when you told
him your name.

They laugh. Mack has the look of a very happy man.

They are interrupted by a knock at the door. It is Avery. He is carrying a freshly made banana cake with chocolate icing. Mack stares at the cake. Old Kiwa stares at Avery. He stands up slowly and opens his arms wide. Avery's grip on the cake wobbles. Mack quickly saves it. Dragging his finger through the icing as he does so.

AVERY
Are you my?

Avery cannot complete the question as he is overcome with emotion. They embrace. Bel and Alice appear at the doorway. Hayley motions them to come inside. There is a brief tussle punctuated by raucous laughter as they try to wedge their tubby selves through the narrow doorway at the same time.

Old Kiwa winks at Alice. She blushes. Hayley whispers to Kiwa. He beams at her and touches her slightly swollen belly.

INT.POLICE STATION. DAY

Detective Ben Wilkie is unpacking a small box of personal possessions onto an empty desk near a large window. An IT guy arrives with a desktop computer and proceeds to set it up for him. The Sky Tower and a new moon are both visible in the summer sky.

IT GUY
Interesting piece.

A familiar carving sits on the desk.

DETECTIVE BEN WILKIE
My only souvenir from a stint in
rural policing.

IT GUY
Yeah? Cool. Just enter a password
and you're good to go.

He leaves. The Detective types in 'Auckland'.

The End.

.