



Hemi meets the Pai family

A story by Joseph Potangaroa and illustrated by Mikis van Geffen

Hemi meets the Pai family

A story by Joseph Potangaroa and illustrated by Mikis van Geffen

The first thing you need to do is say Patupaiarehe ten times in a row

Patupaiarehe

Patupaiarehe

Patupaiarehe

Patupaiarehe

Patupaiarehe

Patupaiarehe

Patupaiarehe

Patupaiarehe

Patupaiarehe

Patupaiarehe

But just to make it easier you can call the family in this story Pai (say it like pie) – pai means good and of course pie is yummy good.

SOMETHING ELSE

About me

Mum and dad are very important people, that I see. They have to go to conferences, lunches and lots of hui.

Mum is a psychologist whatever that means? She goes all over the country talking to teens. She tells them to make the most of their lives- that when they are older time is precious to children, husband and wives.

Dad used to be a doctor trim and toned. Now he is a consultant who eats cakes and is getting "big boned". He spends his time helping the government tell families how they should be... I can't remember the last time he was home for tea.

I go to school at 7 and finish at 3 then it's off to an afterschool programme for me. No sport, or piano lessons because it does not fit in mum or dad's diary.

Sometimes I wonder if anyone cares for I wish that someone would care about me.

BY HEMI



Chapter 1

Kora

Hemi was laying down in the warm hay in the old milking shed. He had just finished writing his poem and so was feeling very sad. Tears ran down his cheeks and dropped onto the paper as Hine-ruru perched in the corner tilting her head curiously wondering why this child was crying. Beside her sitting on the same totara beam was Korakorako or Kora for short, the Patupaiarehe.

“Why is the boy upset kora, perhaps you should help him”, said Hine-ruru.

“Yes I am going too, his parents are trying to save the whole world instead of loving the most precious thing in their world” replied Kora.

“I don’t understand why those people and their kind have become like that. They put all the wrong things first” said Hine-ruru.

“Our people have seen this happening for a long time, whanau to busy with their work, committees, alcohol, sports. Then they wonder why their children misbehave. I will talk to the boy”, said Kora.

Kora blinked his eyes and less than a second later was sitting beside Hemi. Now as you will find out Patupaiarehe have magical powers. One of these is that they can move from one place to another just by thinking about it. Another is that we can only see them if they want us to.

“Good morning Hemi”, kora quietly says so as to try and not startle the boy.

Hemi thinks that he is imagining a voice in his head. Even when he turns his neck from side to side he can’t see anyone. Then a further, “ahem” causes him to look down and there right beside him is the most amazing person Hemi has ever seen. A description is required here.



He is a young man with pale skin and piercing blue eyes that are bloodshot around the outside. But even sitting down Hemi could see the other was no taller than an infant but his shock of messy red hair made him look a little bit bigger. His clothes were made of flax and were red.

“What are you?”, asks Hemi.

In reply Kora say, “I am Māori, from here just like you but my people are called the Patupaiarehe or Pai for short. We live in the mountains but come down into the valley to help someone like you”

“Why do you think I need help?”, splutters Hemi a little sternly.

Very calmly Kora says, “I read your poem and I have seen you come here before. When you play games you talk to yourself and more and more you cry. Would you like to come to meet my family? Just hold my hand and we can go to my home. You will be back here in no time at all”

Despite talking to this strange little man who he had never met before Hemi forgot about stranger danger, which is normally not a wise thing to forget about, and felt that he would be safe. Really he did not care. What was there to lose. He loved his great nan and her little farm where he spent most weekends but despite this felt that if he disappeared no one would really care anyway.

“Okay” as Hemi closed his hand around Kora’s.

Chapter 2

A special tree

The forest was quiet and quite dark in the undergrowth because the kareao, ferns and rimu were so big and entangled. Hemi and Kora stood in front of a craggy stone cliff face with green moss and large ferns dangling down from the weight of water droplets.

Kora motioned with his hand for Hemi to follow. Kora walked straight up to the cliff so that Hemi thought he was going to smash straight into pointy sharp rocks but instead kora brushed past the ferns and disappeared. Hemi scuttled after him into what appeared to be a cave but when he reached out to steady himself against the wall he touched wood. Actually by running his fingers along the length of the wall Hemi could feel that the whole lot was wood.

It took a few minutes to come out the other side and oh what a difference. The warm sun shone on a small grassy meadow where flowers grew and beds of ripe vegetables coloured the vista. Lots of different plants and trees surrounded the meadow but in the middle was a huge tree all twisted and gnarly. It looked like it was tall enough to touch the sky and round enough that it would take twenty men standing in a circle hand in hand to reach around the trunk.

Birds of different sizes and colours were in the trees or on the ground, some flew through the air showing off as they went. Bees buzzed, flies whizzed, cicadas chirrped while lizards sunned themselves on rocks.

Kora said, “The tunnel is the inside of a very old waka that belonged to your people. We moved it here for safe keeping, we use it as the entrance to our place. We will go and meet the family soon but how about we have a chat so you know a bit more about us”

To the side of the cave entrance was a five sides pergola that was covered in sweet smelling puawananga. Inside were several hammocks hanging from carved rafters. Kora and Hemi lay down in the hammocks to talk about Patupaiarehe.

Hemi was very excited and had so many questions. Before they started Kora gave Hemi a pencil and a pad to write about or draw anything he wanted. He could even take the book home. So Hemi took notes and drew pictures, something he was very good at. Kora did not mind this after all if big people ever saw any of this or Hemi talked about his adventure they would think he was just a lonely strange boy with an overactive imagination.

cm

70

60

50

40

30

20

10

Chapter 3

A little bit about Patupaiarehe

The men and women are no taller than 50 cm tall

They have the most
crazy out of control blond
or red hair

They are
slim but
have big
muscles

Pale skin

Long pointy
fingers

When they are
working they
dress in clothes
made of flax
that is dyed
red

Hemi took lots of notes and did draw plenty of pictures during his first stay with the Pai. He thought that one day he might write a book about his adventures. But for now here are some of the important details.



My favourite shorts from Cotton On

This is me.

Their appearance makes
them look quite angry
although they are really not.
They are the most
joyous content people
I have ever met.

The eyes are
usually black,
occasionally blue
but for some reason
the outside
are bloodshot

When they are
relaxing they wear
white dresses that
look like those
Roman togas

Some wear moccasins
made out of flax

When they aren't busy
they fill their days with
games, singing and talking.

Pai have lived around what is now called New Zealand for hundred years. They arrived long before the darker skinned big people

once everything was settled they liked to go to the beach to fish and surf during summer but stayed in the valleys during winter

When they arrived here in what we now call the Wairarapa they lived by the sea but after the weather got bad moved into the valleys for food and shelter.

Most of their food came from picking wild berries and vegetables

They studied nature and the skies to be able to live in harmony with all other living beings.

They always carefully plan an activity, they think about other life and are always grateful for what they get.

They lived alongside the bigger people that are now called Māori.

They used to use fire more but became weary of it when they saw the damage it could do after seeing big people lose control of fire

Pai stay away from big people

Hemi noted further:

- * When the pākehā (big white people) came many big brown people started to change. Like the pakeha most big people moved away from nature but the Pai did not want to change.
- * The big people started to blame Pai for all sorts of unfortunate things from droughts to floods, to lost pots, even for lost wives and children. None of which was true but the Pai guessed it's easier to blame someone smaller than you.

- * After a while the Pai moved to the mountains where they could be themselves, living happily without being picked on. Their main town was on Pukemoremore but now they live in small scattered communities.
- * Unless it was safe they stopped using open fires but this was mostly so that big people could not find them.
- * In days gone by if a big man was not looking after his wife Pai would invite her to join them so that she could be treated like a queen. Sometimes a marriage would take place, the descendants of these couples are seen among the big people today. Sometimes those mixed people are called urekehu and you can tell who they are because they have blond or red hair and fair skin.
- * Patupaiārehe started to move around in mist and darkness not wanting to be seen. Big people wrongfully believe that Patupaiārehe don't like the sun. Actually they love the sun but big people were so mean at one time it was better to not risk being seen in the daytime.
- * They spoke their own language but big people could understand them if Pai wanted them to.
- * Today Pai live the same way as they always have and would probably be considered old fashioned but are not backwards. They have always loved to read, to sing, to make music and to talk. They also keep up with current events, it is just that they are very weary of big people.
- * They will clean up after big people and sometimes use items that big people throw out.
- * Pai are caring about some big people problems, except where they have made them themselves, but can't interfere or use magic to change what is supposed to be.
- * Most importantly if big people parents are not being kind or loving to their children the Pai might take away the child for a while or do things to try and make the parents realise what they are doing.



* Pai have family all around the world. Leprechauns, brownies, trolls, kokopelli, dobbies, satyrs, blodeuwedd, sadko, jogahoh and the list could go on and on. Big people have heard of these but consider them fairies or mythical creatures. The truth is that they all are, or sometimes were, real little people who big people drove into the forests and quiet places.

* In New Zealand there are turehu, pontaturi, mahochoi, heketo, korakorako, tahurangi, arawaru, punawao and more who stay away from big people in places that are free of pollution and the problems that the big people have made.

Pass times

You might hear the sound of strange music drifting on a westerly breeze. This could be the echo of wind floating off the mountains through a valley or it could be one of the Pai passing time relaxing by playing their koauau or putorino, another favourite instrument.

They love making music.

Chapter 4

Patupaiarehe time

A big person can spend a year with the Pai but when he or she goes home it is like they have only been away for a day or two. Possibly just long enough for their family to remember to show them more love.

Transport

Patupaiarehe can move very quickly and are light on their feet. If they really need to they can say special words that allows them to run across clouds.

If they want to cross a river they make a mokihi which is a kind of raft made out of raupo and harakeke.

In days gone by they were allowed to call on hokio to fly them long distances. They could also travel across ground on the backs of large moho and moa. Sadly the big people killed all of these beautiful birds.

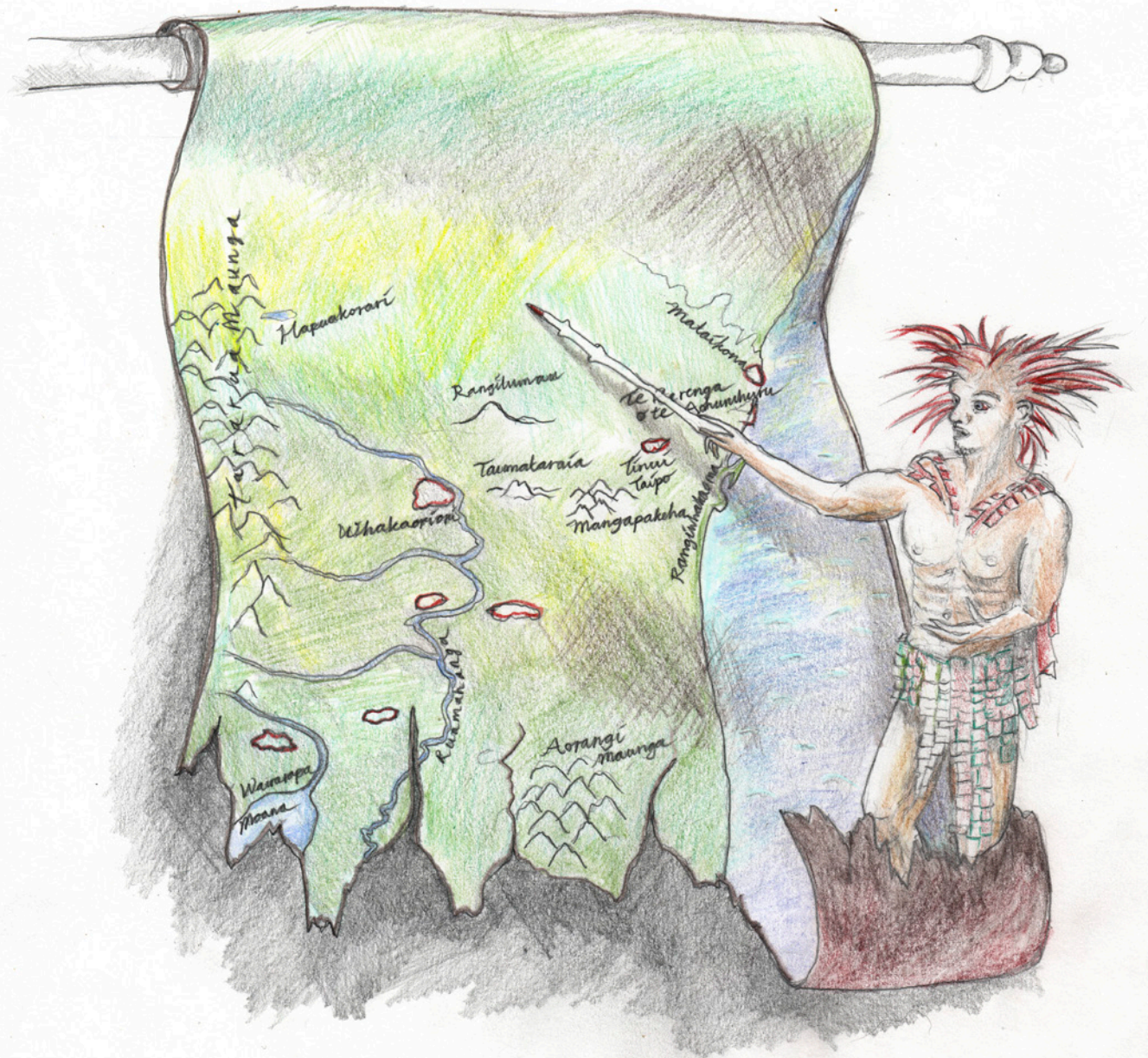
When there are special international Fairy occasions around the world the Patupaiarehe use oak trees for global travel. Of course everyone knows that oaks are magical. A person goes to a travel oak, says some secret words, does a special knock, walks into the trunk then vroom like riding a turbo speed water slide off they go to their destination.

Crafts

Patupaiarehe are expert weavers, so much so that they taught big people how to make kupenga, kete and kakahu.

Guardians

All around the land little people take care of special places because they are good at playing tricks on people. This map shows some of the places that the Patupaiarehe look after between Tararua maunga and Mataikona. Hapuakorari, Rangitumau, Taumatarāia, Mangapakeha and Tinui Taipo, Te Rerenga o te Aohuruhuru.



Pets or Mokaī

Mokaī – being so close to nature Patupaiarehe have many pets. They look after the animals and the animals return the favour. Ruru keep watch from low branches while karearea act as lookouts high up in trees. Pungawerewere peer from under logs watching to see if their webs have been broken, ready to raise the alarm if the safe zone has been breached. If there is an emergency at night pekapeka will get a message to the Patupaiarehe.

Food

Pai have a very healthy diet. Most of the time they collect berries, nuts and vegetables from the forest.

They are also very good gardeners. They grow lots of different vegetables all year round so that they never go hungry.



Chapter 5

The sun was going down behind the mountains. Way off down in the valley Hemi could see the faint flicker of light as people began to turn on the lights in their houses. Every here and there live fires twinkled on river banks or in paddocks. It was still warm even though it was now evening.

Hemi had forgotten about his worries he was having such an amazing time. A curious kokako hopped onto the end of the hammock near Hemi's feet. He thought look at that funny black mask and how beautiful this bird is as it seemed to get darker and darker until it disappeared...

A large bowl of fresh fruit had been placed on a small table beside the hammock. Beside the fruit was a jug of creamy milk and a cup made of an earthy coloured pottery. The warmth of the morning sun streamed in through the slats of the pergola.

I must have fallen asleep. What adventures are in store for me today.