

# Waikeno

## Helpful kaitiaki



A story by Joseph Potangaroa

and illustrated by Mikis van Geffen



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The morning was good for fishing, the sea was calm and there were no bad signs. Koro told his two grandsons to get ready because they would leave soon. They dragged their small boat down the pebbly beach, through the shallow water, then when it was deep enough jumped on board.

Koro put the oars in place and began to row away from land. The boys watched their family get smaller then they couldn't see their camp and soon all they could see was the hill top that told them where home was.





It seemed as though this was going to be a great day but then very quickly the weather turned bad. At first the sea slapped against the side of the boat causing it to move to and fro. As the wind grew stronger the waves got bigger and bigger.

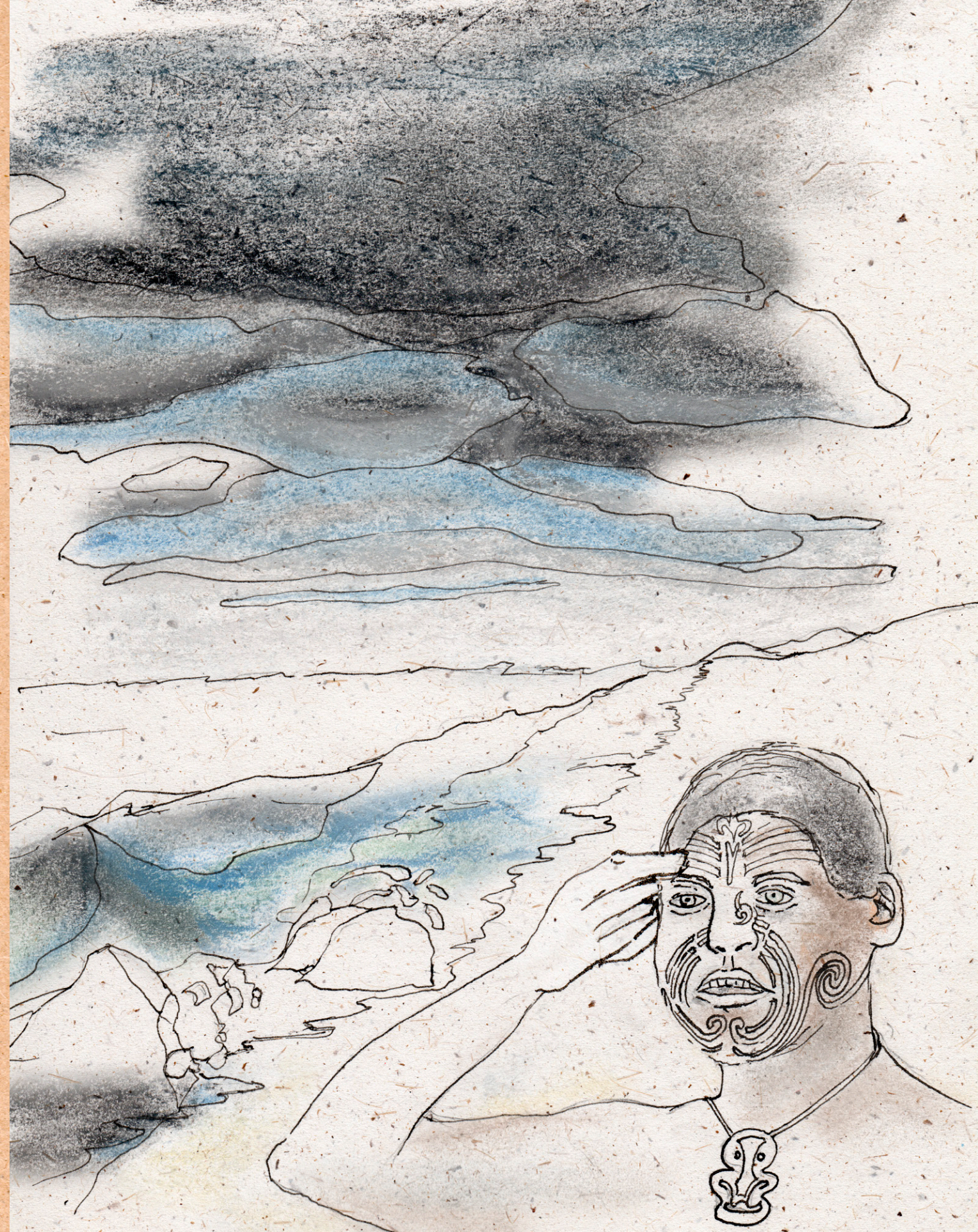
Spray stung their faces and cold water washed into the boat as it bobbed up and down in the rough water. The boys became worried that they would be drowned by the angry sea.





On the shore the family had seen dark clouds quickly appear on the horizon and so knew that a storm was coming. They began to worry about koro and the boys.

Worry turned to fear when the boat didn't come back through the blanket of rain and walls of waves that pounded the beach.





Back out at sea, even though they were stuck in a raging storm, koro stayed calm. He told the boys to keep their heads down. Lying flat on the bottom of the boat they could not see anything but did hear their grandfather's voice. They peeked upwards to see the old man standing up and somehow keeping his balance as he said a karakia.





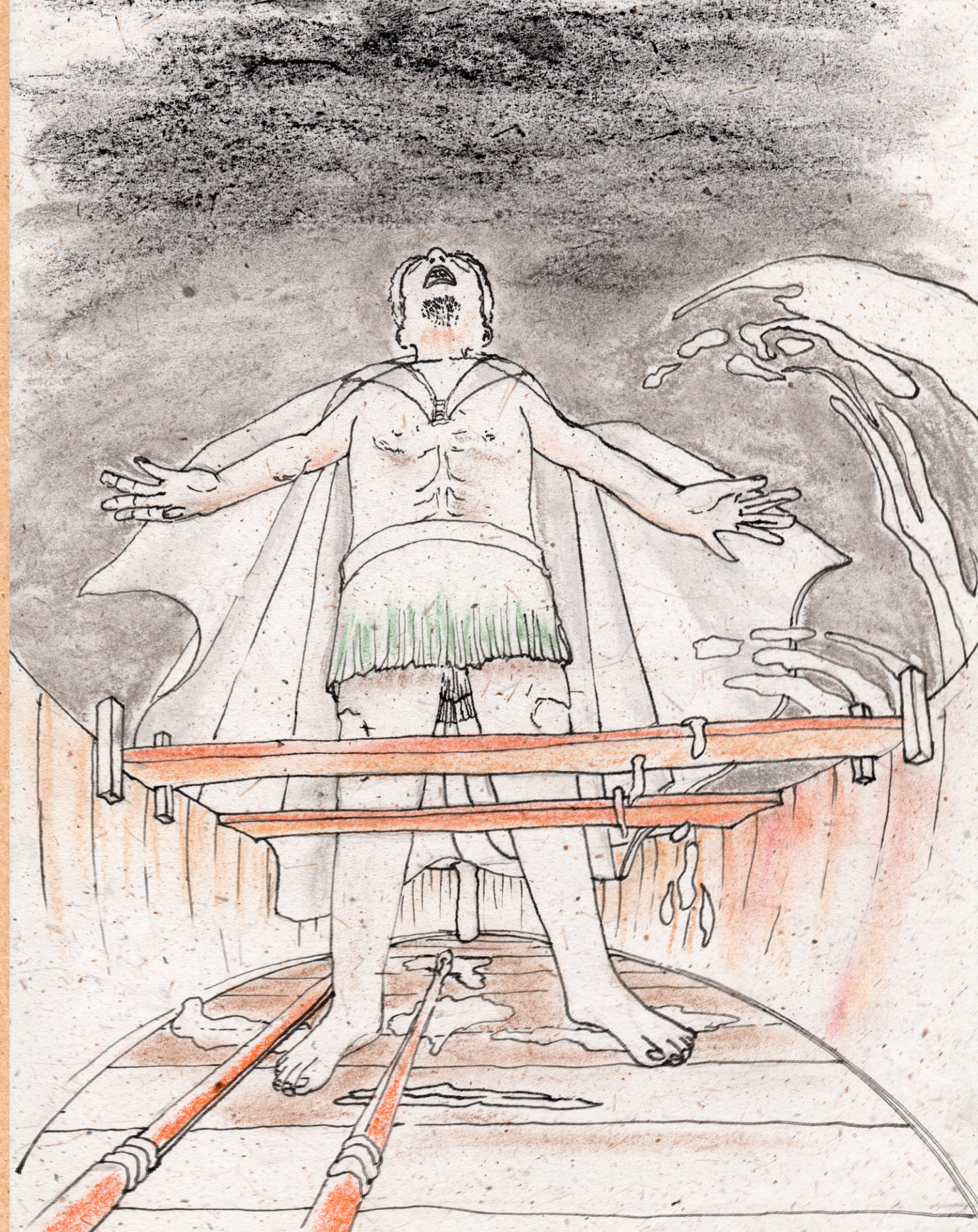
Nanny Nan the oldest of the kuia had not seen a tempest this bad since she was a girl. She tried to not show how worried she was but inside thought that her son and great grandsons must be lost. She started to cry while calling out to her loved ones and asking for Tangaroa to return them to her.





Out on the sea the boys  
could hear the karakia, their  
grandfathers voice rising above  
all the other noise, becoming  
stronger and stronger.

Then something hit both sides  
of the boat lifting it out of the  
water. No longer were they  
rocked violently from side to  
side but instead seemed to move  
swiftly and surely through the  
water.



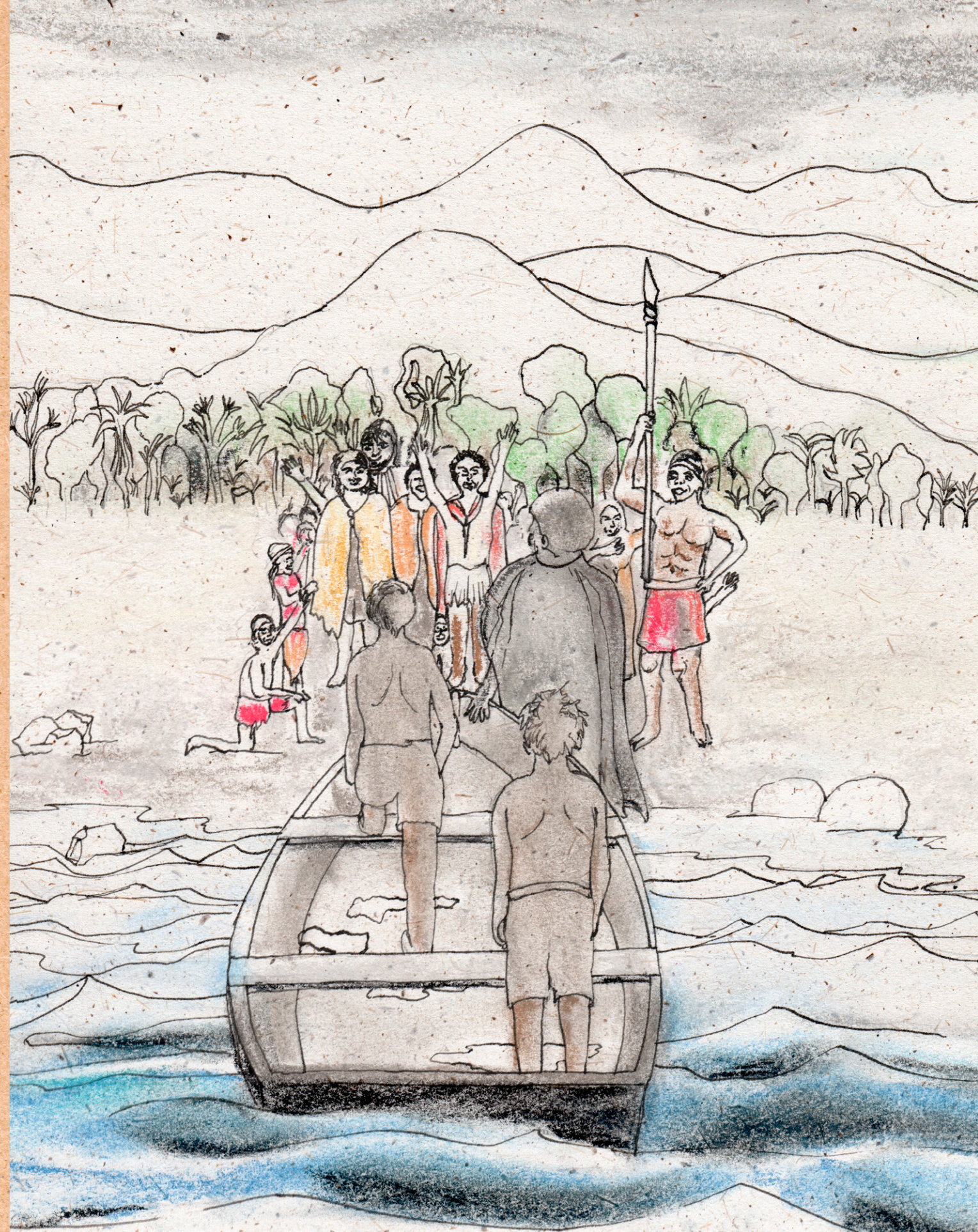


Koro did not stop but now he was talking kindly to something. Next, although very far away, the boys thought that they could hear a lady. They listened hard and it really was a lady but she was very sad. Then she screamed and soon a lot more women joined her but now they were all calling out to something. The boys kept their heads down listening to the voices of their grandfather and the women.





Just as the storm had come from nowhere the boat suddenly hit solid ground. Koro told the boys to keep their heads down for a bit longer. As they stared down into water rather than the bottom of the boat koro said thanks to something. He then said the boys could get up. Rising to their feet the boys looked around, they were home, all the family standing on the beach were very relieved to see them.





Then the boys thought to  
look back out to the sea. They  
turned and there disappearing  
beyond the breakers were two  
magnificent white dolphins, the  
kaitiaki of their family.

Adapted from a story/family history, as told  
by Te Nahu Haeata Jnr to Joseph Potangaroa  
whilst on a day adventure to Waikekeno, the  
location of the story.

