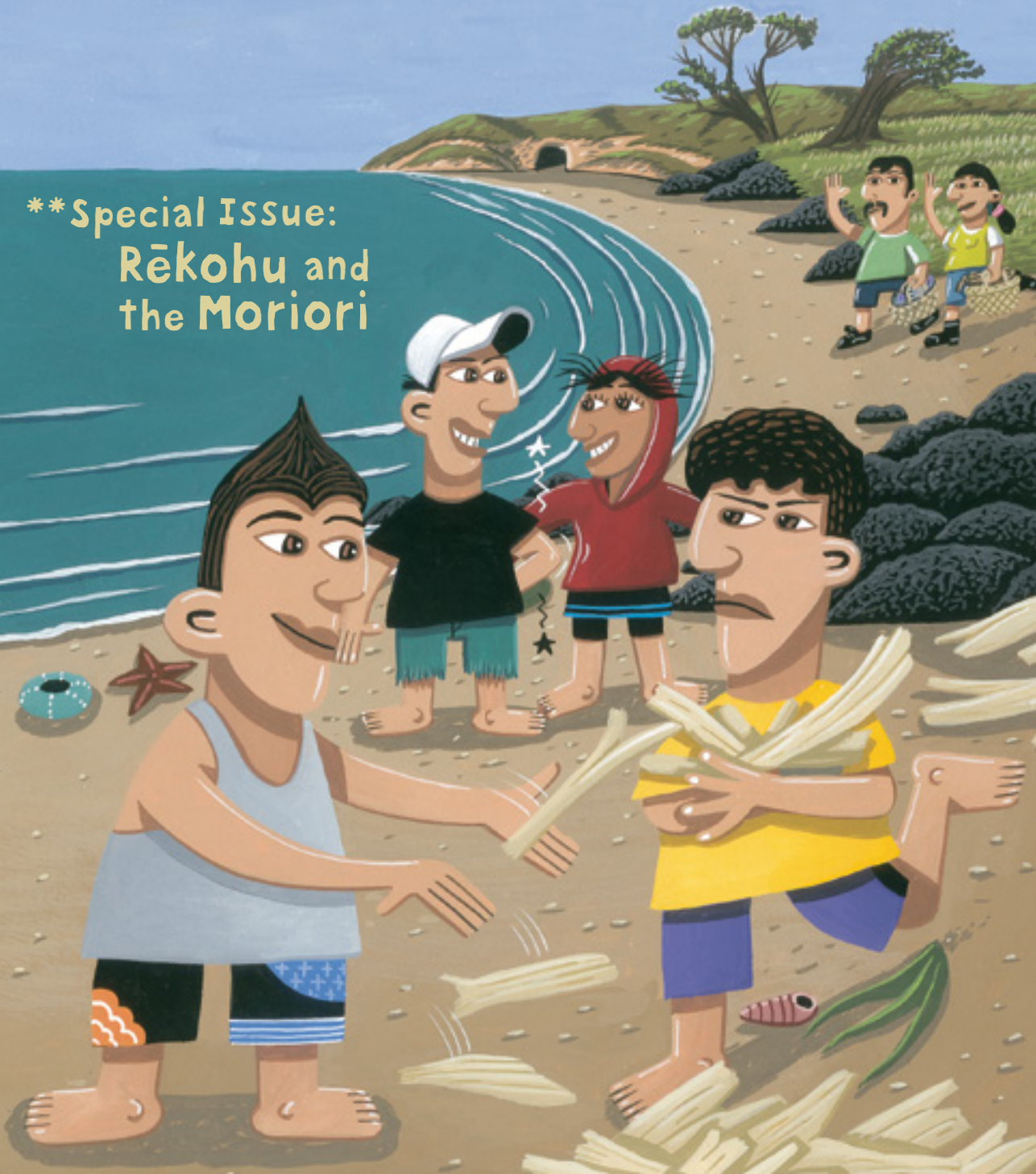


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** Special Issue:
Rēkohu and
the Moriori



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This resource has been developed to support
The New Zealand Curriculum

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Introduction:

Rēkohu and the Moriori



Rēkohu
(Chatham Islands)



Rēkohu is the Moriori name for the island group known as the Chatham Islands. It is also the Moriori name for the main island in the group. Rēkohu is part of New Zealand.

The name Rēkohu means “misty skies” or “the sun as seen through the mist”.

The people of the land, or tchakat henu* of Rēkohu are the Moriori.

This issue of the *School Journal* is dedicated to them.





Rēkohu
(Chatham Island)

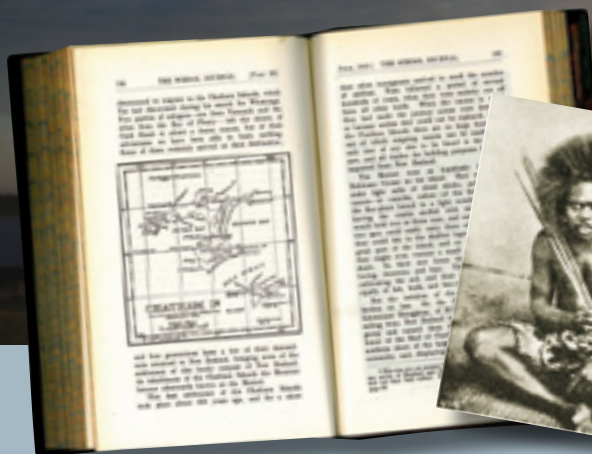
Pitt Strait

Rangiaurii
(Pitt Island)



Who are these children? See page 20.

Who Are the Moriori?



Can you believe everything you read in the School Journal?

In 1916, the Journal published a series of articles called “The Coming of the Maoris”. These articles claimed that when the first Māori voyagers arrived in New Zealand, another group of people of Melanesian origin were already living here. According to the Journal articles, the descendants of these people later went to the Chatham Islands and became known as the Moriori. The 1916 Part 1 Journal described them as “lazy, stupid people, with flat noses and very dark skins”.

In 1916, many people believed this story, and they also believed that all the Moriori had died out.

In fact, we now know that NONE of this is true.



So - who are the Moriori?

Like the Māori of mainland New Zealand, the Moriori are Polynesian. Moriori people trace their ancestry to the first waka that travelled from Hawaiki. In the 2006 New Zealand census, 945 people indicated that they were of Moriori descent.

Over many centuries, Moriori have developed their own culture and language, which still continues today.



You can find out more about Rēkohu and the Moriori from Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, at www.teara.govt.nz



Meet Māui and Hinemata Solomon.

Māui Solomon is the grandson of the Moriori leader Tame Horomona Rehe (Tommy Solomon), who died on Rēkohu in 1933.

Māui remembers what it was like growing up in Temuka in the 1960s. “We were taught at school that the Moriori no longer existed,” he says. “I was always proud of my Moriori heritage (as well as my Māori and Pākehā heritage). But I didn’t know anything about who the Moriori really are or what happened to them in the past.”

Māui is determined that his own children will grow up knowing more about their Moriori heritage.





Hinemata Solomon is Māui's daughter. In 2005, when she was eight years old, Hinemata flew to Rēkohu with her father and brother for the opening of the new Moriori marae, Kopinga.

This is what she wrote:

Our marae is special – it's the only Moriori marae in the whole world. Hundreds of people attended the opening. The Prime Minister was there to open the marae.

There are some amazing views from the marae – especially the crooked trees in the sunset.

After the opening, we had a feast. I especially remember the puddings. There was a cheesecake with a chocolate fern on top and strawberries dipped in chocolate sauce. Yum!

While we were on Rēkohu, I went to see the statue of my karapuna, Tame Horomona Rehe. We saw his gravestone, too.

*Dad told me that when **his** father was a boy, he and his friends used to have running races along the beach on the way to school. In those days, there were no bridges. My koro used to ride his horse everywhere, but his horse didn't like riding through the lake because of the slimy eels touching its legs.*

Dad took us fishing to a place he called "the fishing rock". We knew why he called it that because we'd only been fishing there for about twenty minutes when we caught eight huge blue cod.

That was an awesome holiday!

Kopinga, a Place of Peace

based on an interview with Mana Cracknell

Imagine you are an albatross, soaring high among the clouds above the island of Rēkohu. Far below, a large, white-painted building sprawls on the hillside. Its shape looks somehow familiar ...

Kopinga Marae belongs to the Moriori people of Rēkohu. It was designed to look like a hopo (albatross) with its wings outstretched on the grass.





The hopo has great importance for Moriori. Its white feathers are a symbol of peace. In the old days, Moriori wore these feathers in their hair or beards as a sign of their belief in a peaceful way of life.

Some of the descendants of the early Moriori still live on Rēkohu. They come to the marae to learn more about their Moriori heritage.





On the walls of the whareniui, carvings and paintings depict the legends and history of Rēkohu and its sacred bird, the hopo.

In the centre of the marae is a wooden pou, carved with the names of the 1561 Moriori men, women, and children who were alive in 1835.

Around the pou lie precious taonga – clubs, adzes, and white hopo feathers.

These are a reminder of the ancient Law of Nunuku – the vow of peace.





Nunuku's Law

Hundreds of years ago, after fierce fighting among the tribes of Rēkohu, a chief called Nunuku called for an end to war and killing. All the chiefs of Rēkohu agreed to this.

If two people began a fight, they were allowed to strike each other with a tupuari (a wooden staff), but if either drew blood, the fighting had to stop immediately.

In 1835, when Rēkohu was invaded by tribes from New Zealand, the chiefs of Rēkohu met to decide what they should do.

After long discussion, the chiefs decided that they could not disobey Nunuku's ancient law of peace. They decided not to fight against the invasion but to share their island with the visitors.

Within a year, over two hundred Moriori men, women, and children had been killed. Many others became slaves or died in captivity.

Their names are carved on the pou at Kopinga Marae to honour their memory and their legacy of peace.



The Kopi Tree

The marae is named after the kopi (karaka) tree. Some of the patterns carved in the pou come from ancient carvings made by Moriori in the bark of kopi trees on Rēkohu.



Glossary

of Moriori Words

Moriori	Māori	English
hokopapa	whakapapa	family history
hopo	toroa	albatross
karapuna	tipuna	ancestor(s)
kopi	karaka	karaka
maurahiri	manuhiri	visitors
tchakat henu	tangata whenua	people of the land
tehi	tahi	one
teru	rua	two
toru	toru	three
tewha	wha	four
terima	rima	five
teono	ono	six

Rēkohu Timeline



Beginnings

According to the traditional stories of the Moriori, people were already living on Rēkohu when Kahu, the first voyager from Hawaiki, arrived in his canoe, *Tāne*. These were the descendants of Rongomaiwhenua (Peace on the Land) and Rongomaitere (Peace on the Sea).

900-1500

Archaeologists have evidence suggesting that Rēkohu was settled by groups of Polynesian voyagers from the mainland of New Zealand. But Moriori traditions tell us that many of their karapuna came directly to Rēkohu from Polynesia.

1791

The HMS *Chatham*, captained by Lieutenant William Robert Broughton, was the first European ship to arrive at Rēkohu.

Plaque at Kāingaroa
commemorating the arrival
of HMS Chatham in 1791

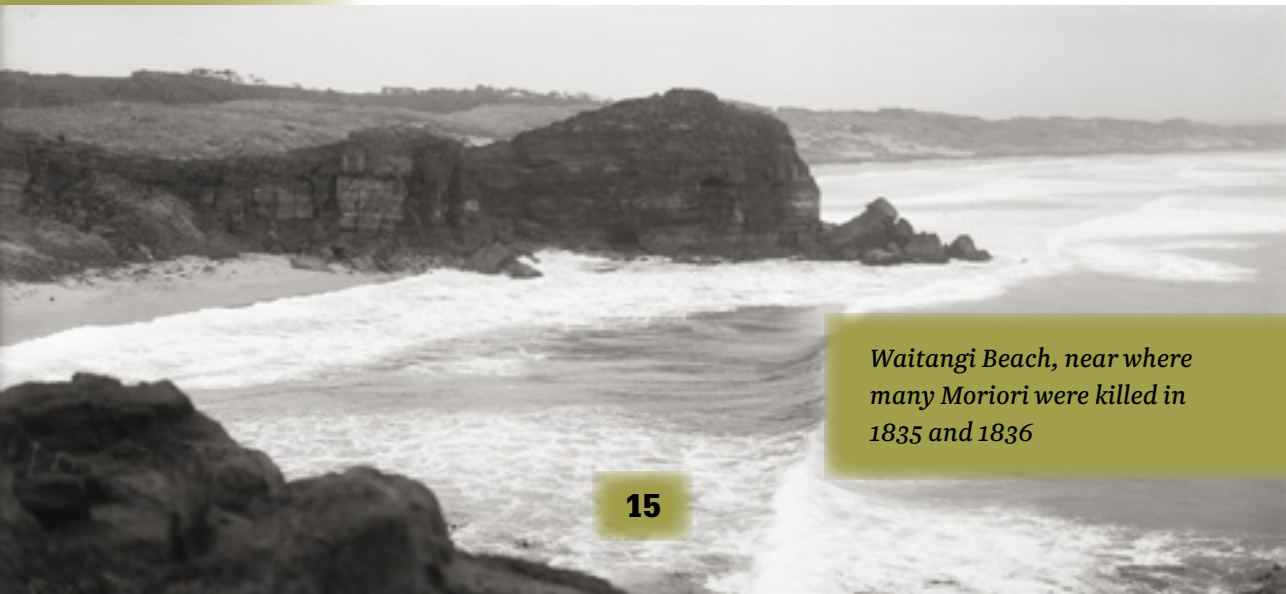




1835



Rēkohu was invaded by Ngāti Mutunga and Ngāti Tama from Wellington, New Zealand. The Rēkohu chiefs obeyed the Law of Nunuku, deciding not to fight the invaders because of their belief in peace. Instead, they welcomed and looked after the new arrivals, who were sick when they first arrived. More than two hundred Moriori men, women, and children were killed by the invaders, and many others became slaves.



Waitangi Beach, near where many Moriori were killed in 1835 and 1836

1838-39

Influenza epidemics killed many Moriori and Māori on Rēkohu.



*Johannes Gotfried Engst
– a missionary who arrived
in Rēkohu in 1843*

1842



Rēkohu became part of New Zealand. The first European Christian missionary arrived.

1863

The last Moriori slaves were freed.

1870

The Native Land Court awarded 58 516 hectares (97.3 percent of the land on Rēkohu) to Ngāti Mutunga. 1640 hectares (2.7 percent) were set aside for Moriori.

1933



Tame Horomona Rehe (known as Tommy Solomon) died. He was the last person of full Moriori descent.



*Tame Horomona Rehe
in 1900*



*Toutouwai
(Chatham Islands
black robin)*

1976

A programme began to save the endangered toutouwai (Chatham Islands black robin) on Little Mangere Island. In 1976, only seven birds remained. By 2010, the number of birds had risen to around 200.

1986

A statue of Tame Horomona Rehe was unveiled by the Prime Minister, David Lange, on 29 December at Manukau Point as a memorial to the Moriori as tchakat henu of Rēkohu.



*The statue of
Tame Horomona Rehe
at Manukau Point*





1988

Moriōri filed a claim with the Waitangi Tribunal seeking the return of land, fishing rights, and recognition of their identity and culture.

2001

The Waitangi Tribunal upheld the claims of Moriōri as tchakat henu of Rēkohu. The Hokotehi Moriōri Trust was formed to represent all Moriōri people.

2004

Moriōri won back a share of their fishing rights from the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission.





HOKOTEHI
MORIORI UNITY AND DEVELOPMENT



2005

On 21 January, Kopinga Marae was opened by Helen Clark, Prime Minister of New Zealand.

2008

Hokotehi and the Crown established a \$6 million trust fund to help rebuild Moriori culture and identity.



*Hinemata Solomon
at the ceremony to
hand over the trust
fund in 2008*

Special Places

by children from Kāingaroa School, Rēkohu

Kāingaroa is a tiny fishing village on the north-east coast of Rēkohu. Most of the children at Kāingaroa School have karapuna who are Moriori. Here, some of them write about their favourite places on the island.

PJ *Jesse* *Brooke* *Reed*
Monique *Jacob* *Serena* *Nicole*





Nicole

The Moriori carvings are in the kopi grove. When you come in at the start, the clouds cover the signposts with shadows, and it feels scary. The carvings are dug into the bark of the trees. They were made when none of us were born. When it is really windy, the leaves come floating down, but it's warm and calm and peaceful in the trees.

Jacob

My special place is the Moriori carvings. When I'm there I feel calm, and when a light breeze blows, it sounds like the trees and the carvings are talking to me. I like walking through that piece of native bush especially when it's raining because the pitter patter of rain on the dead leaves that litter the forest floor sounds peaceful.



Monique

When we go to Matarākau, the first thing I see is the old trees. They are bent because the wind has been blowing them for a long time. When it's windy, my little brother Chandler always gets blown over because he's little and not that steady. The wind blows my hair around. It sounds like a big whistle.



Reed

At Okawa there are big, soft sandhills, and I slide down them. When I am there, I can hear the waves crashing together. Then I can see the oystercatchers standing in the waves. It is beautiful. It is my special place.

Serena

When we go to the Back Beach, we find crystals. We slide down the sandhills, and sometimes we go for swims. I like playing in the water when we go out on the boat with my dad. Sometimes we catch sharks, but they don't come up close when we're swimming.





Jesse

My house is right next to the sea at Kāingaroa. When I wake up, I can see the ocean. When it's stormy, the sea is rough. The fishing boats look like they'll nearly tip over. On sunny days, the water is calm and beautiful because it's clear. Sometimes you can see the fish off the wharf and off the rocks.

The Chatham Islands is a great place to live.



Fast Food

by Hera Black Taute

CHARACTERS

TE UA

HINEROA

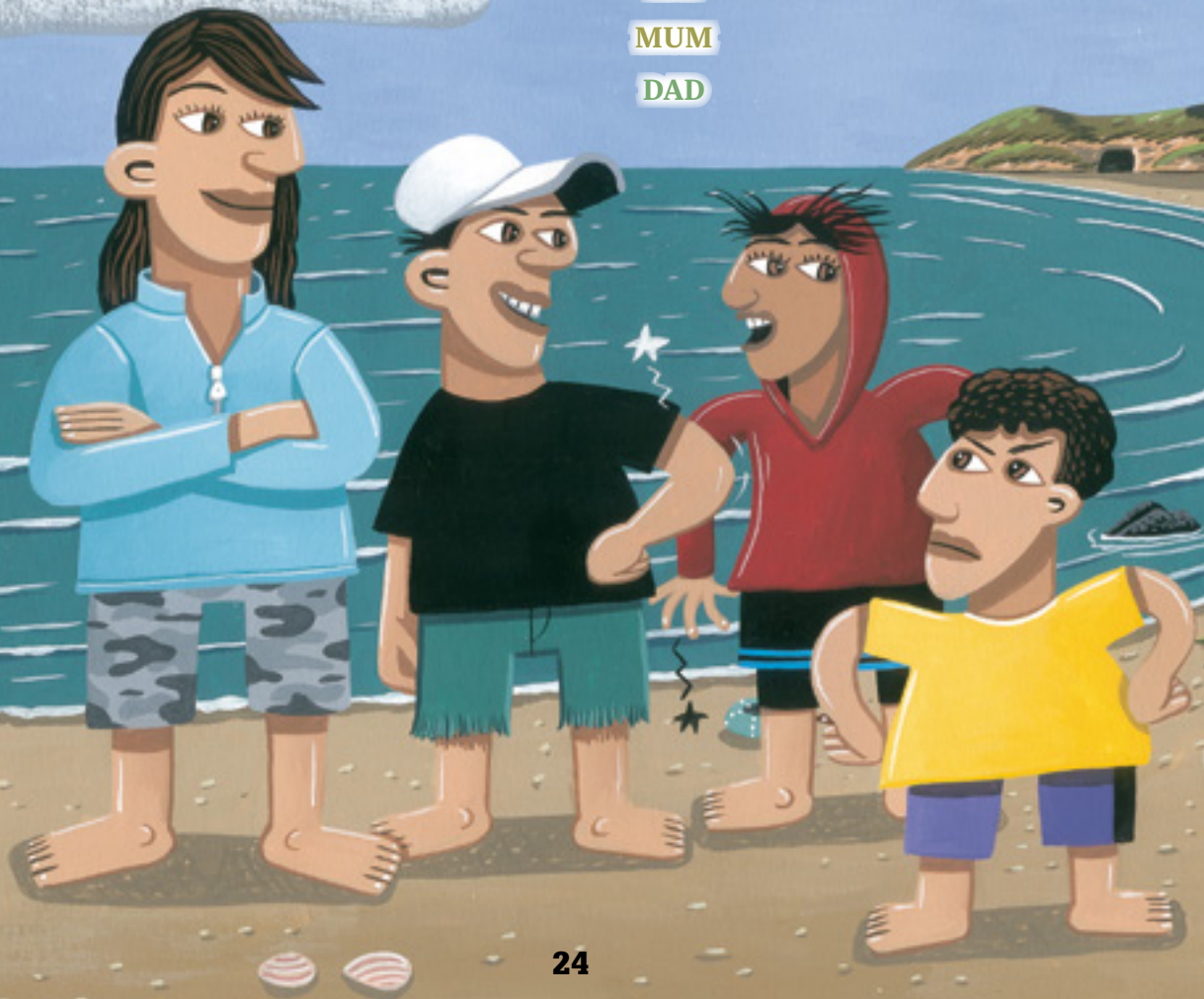
NIWHAI

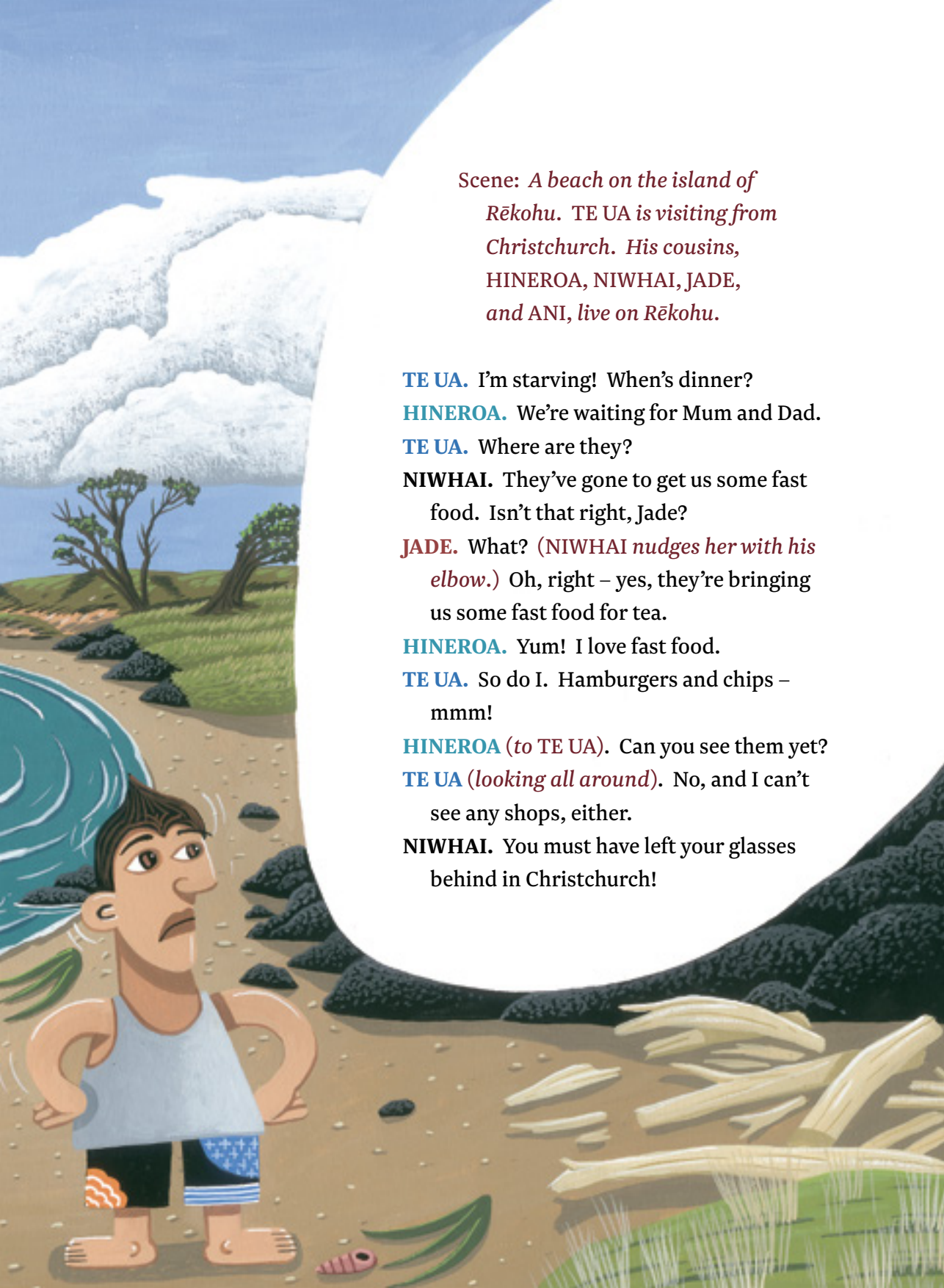
JADE

ANI

MUM

DAD





Scene: *A beach on the island of Rēkohu. TE UA is visiting from Christchurch. His cousins, HINEROA, NIWHAI, JADE, and ANI, live on Rēkohu.*

TE UA. I'm starving! When's dinner?

HINEROA. We're waiting for Mum and Dad.

TE UA. Where are they?

NIWHAI. They've gone to get us some fast food. Isn't that right, Jade?

JADE. What? (*NIWHAI nudges her with his elbow.*) Oh, right – yes, they're bringing us some fast food for tea.

HINEROA. Yum! I love fast food.

TE UA. So do I. Hamburgers and chips – mmm!

HINEROA (*to TE UA*). Can you see them yet?

TE UA (*looking all around*). No, and I can't see any shops, either.

NIWHAI. You must have left your glasses behind in Christchurch!

JADE. I suppose you left them for your cat to wear!

ANI (*glaring at NIWHAI and JADE*). Come on, Te Ua. Come and help me find some firewood.

TE UA. What for? It's summer – we don't need firewood.

JADE. When Mum and Dad come back, we'll light a bonfire on the beach.

TE UA. I hope they come back soon – I'm so hungry I could eat three hamburgers!

The children pick up driftwood from the beach and pile it in the centre of the stage.

TE UA. Is that enough?

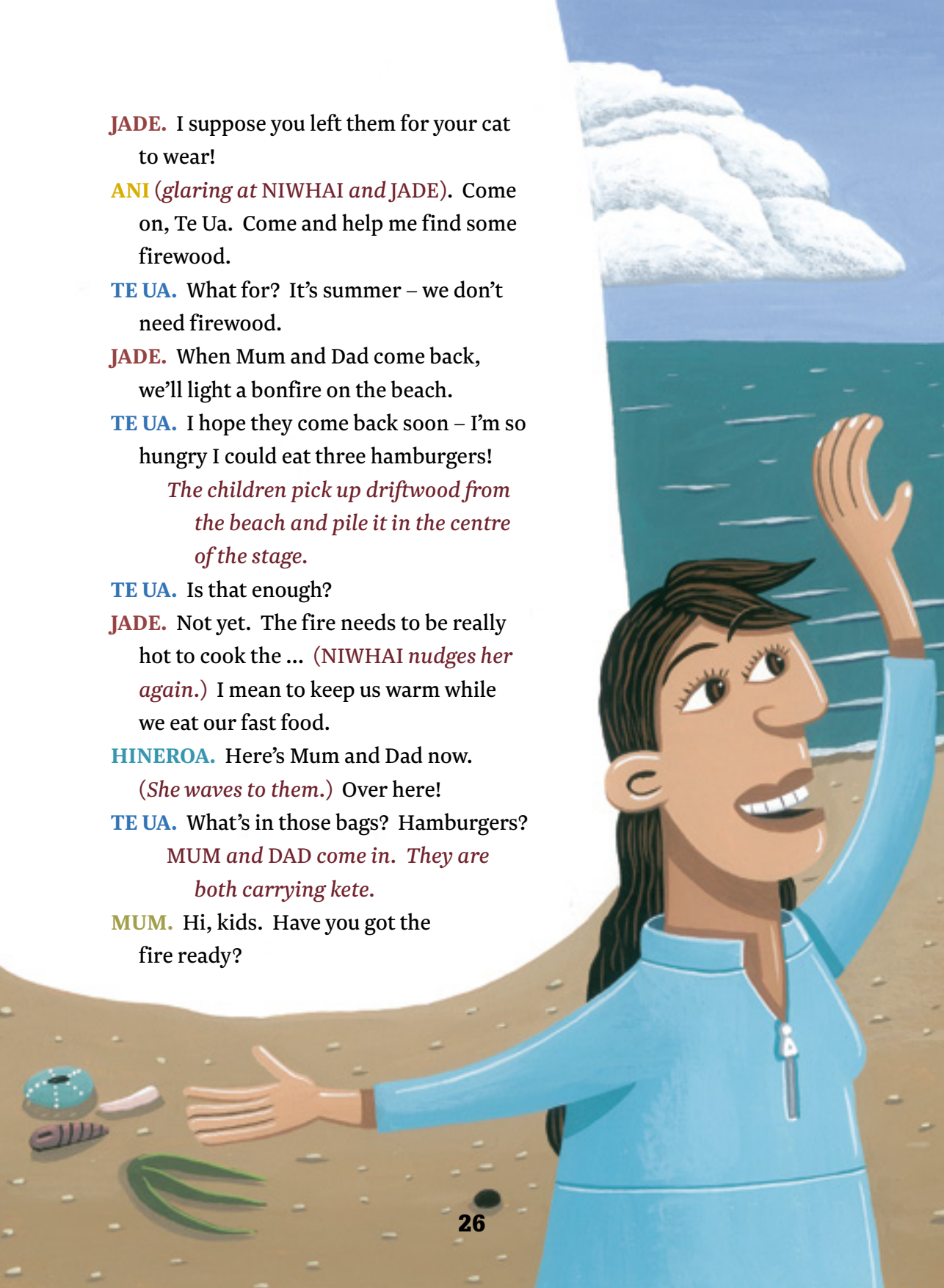
JADE. Not yet. The fire needs to be really hot to cook the ... (*NIWHAI nudges her again.*) I mean to keep us warm while we eat our fast food.

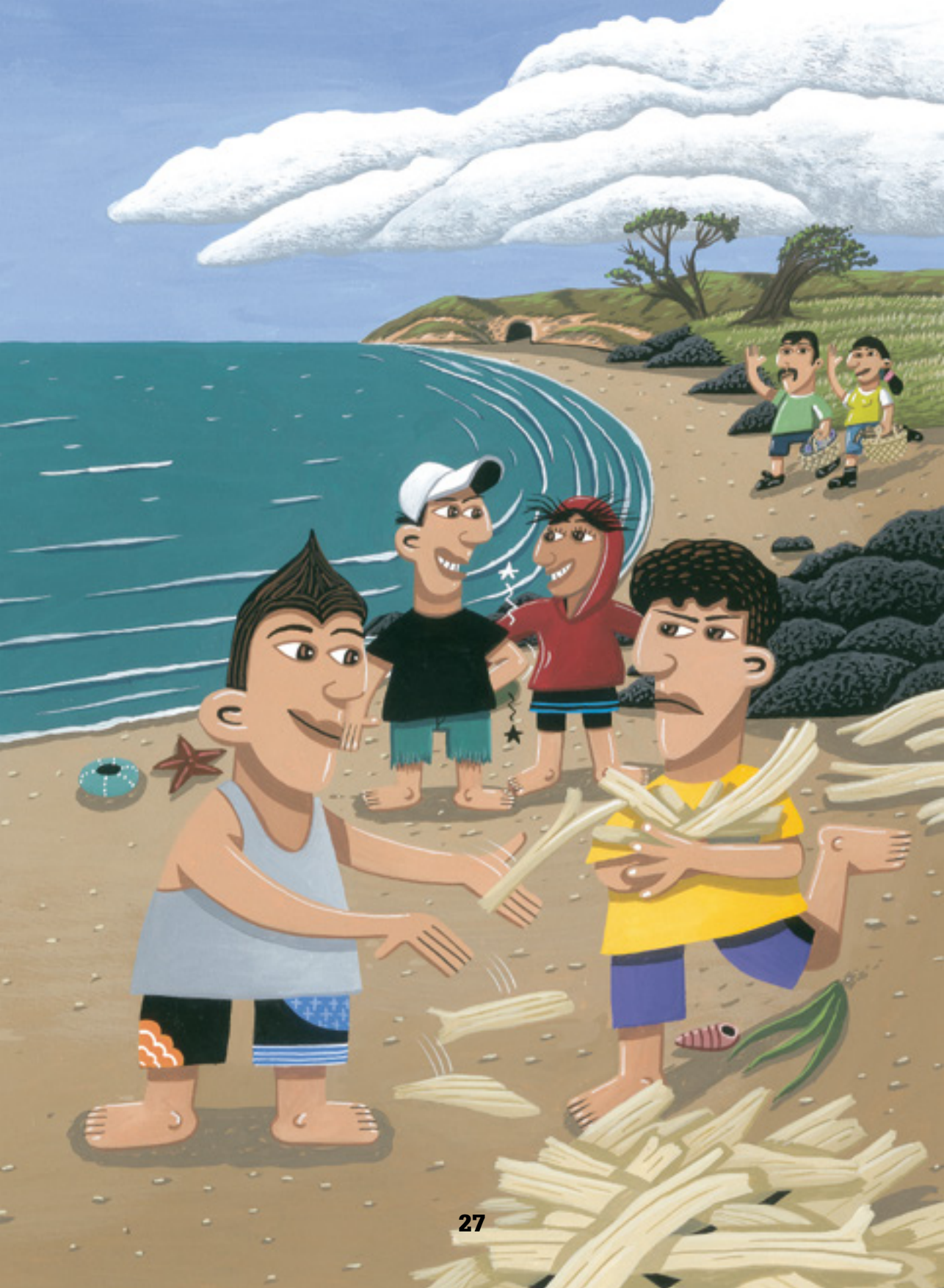
HINEROA. Here's Mum and Dad now. (*She waves to them.*) Over here!

TE UA. What's in those bags? Hamburgers?

MUM and DAD come in. They are both carrying kete.

MUM. Hi, kids. Have you got the fire ready?





DAD (*handing a kete to NIWHAI*). Here you are, Niwhai.

I'll light the fire while you get the pāua ready.

TE UA. Pāua?

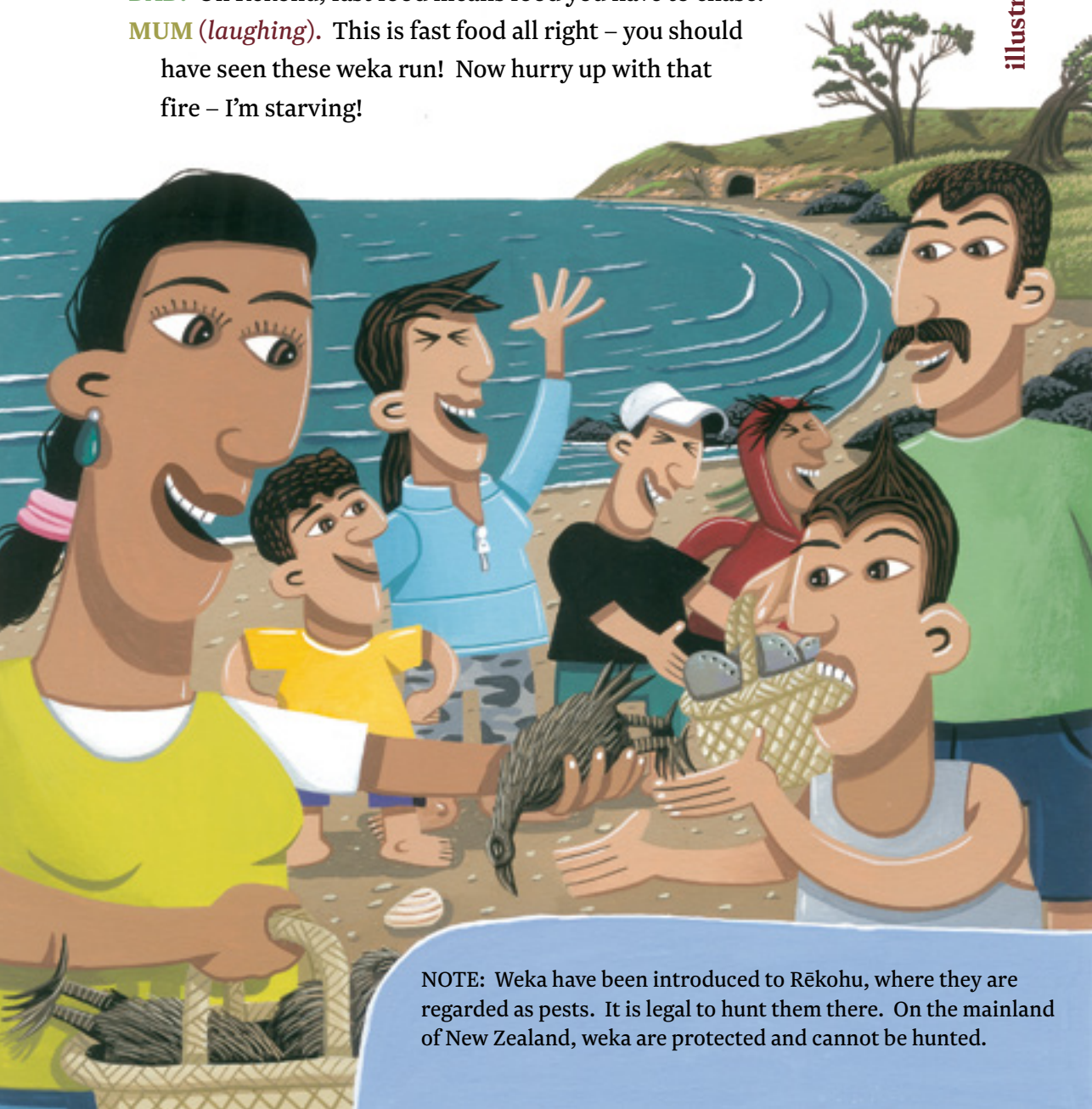
MUM (*handing a kete to TE UA*). Here you are, Te Ua.

You can help me pluck these weka.

TE UA. What? I thought we were having fast food!

DAD. On Rēkohu, fast food means food you have to chase.

MUM (*laughing*). This is fast food all right – you should have seen these weka run! Now hurry up with that fire – I'm starving!



NOTE: Weka have been introduced to Rēkohu, where they are regarded as pests. It is legal to hunt them there. On the mainland of New Zealand, weka are protected and cannot be hunted.

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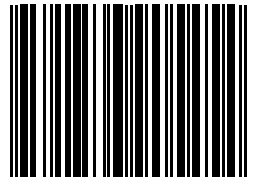
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