



Ki-O-Rahi - The Legend

Ki o Rahi Legend

Rahi Tu Taka Hina was married to Te Arakurapakewai (or Ti Ara in some accounts). Te Arakurapakewai was kidnapped by patupaiarehe (the fairy people) and taken away to live with them. Rahi started searching for Te Arakurapakewai and decided to make a manu tangata (a kite that can carry a person) in order to get a better view of the area – this is also a link to traditional manu (kite making).

Rahi took eggs to eat for sustenance and carried these eggs in a basket called a “ki”. Some people say that the eggs themselves were the “ki”. Some of the eggs fell out and landed on a Hokioi bird (giant eagle) named Namu. The Patupaiarehe saw Rahi coming and cast a spell upon him which, some say, put 2 suns into the sky in order to try to scorch him. Thus, the manu tangata (kite) was burned and Rahi fell to the ground. Close to death, Rahi found a rock which he lay upon. The rock had a special wairua that helped sustain Rahi while he recovered. (In the game, the rock is the “tupu” and the area below the tupu is the “wairua”).

The patupaiarehe saw that Rahi was gaining his strength so they sent in a Ngarara (reptile) to defeat Rahi. Meanwhile, Namu, the Hokioi bird saw what was going on and flew in to protect Rahi (represented by ki-oma players defending the tupu). Others say the patupaiarehe made the area extremely cold and so Namu embraced Rahi to keep him warm. The Ngarara frantically ran around the tupu, forming what is now the “pawero”

zone. His speed was so fast that he turned the area into sand (nowadays, some of those pawero zones are made of sand).

Rahi’s father Eru had heard his son was in trouble so cast a spell to build a pathway for Rahi to walk out of the danger area (now seen as “te Ara”). Rahi looked to the heavens and saw the seven stars of Matariki (hence the seven pou). At once he realised that his father was trying to help him and made his way to te ara. Once Rahi was on safe ground he gained enlightenment (Mārama) from seeing his father (hence te Mārama zone).

The whakapapa ends by Rahi chasing the patupaiarehe into a volcano and the main kidnapper being blasted out due to Rahi blocking up the entrance. Te Ara is saved and the two iwi (patupaiarehe and Rahi’s people) negotiate to allow each other to coexist which also connects to the rules being agreed on before a game so that both teams

understand the expectations of the other - a process of tatu.