



A Maori Story



Adapted by Gaynor Ramsey

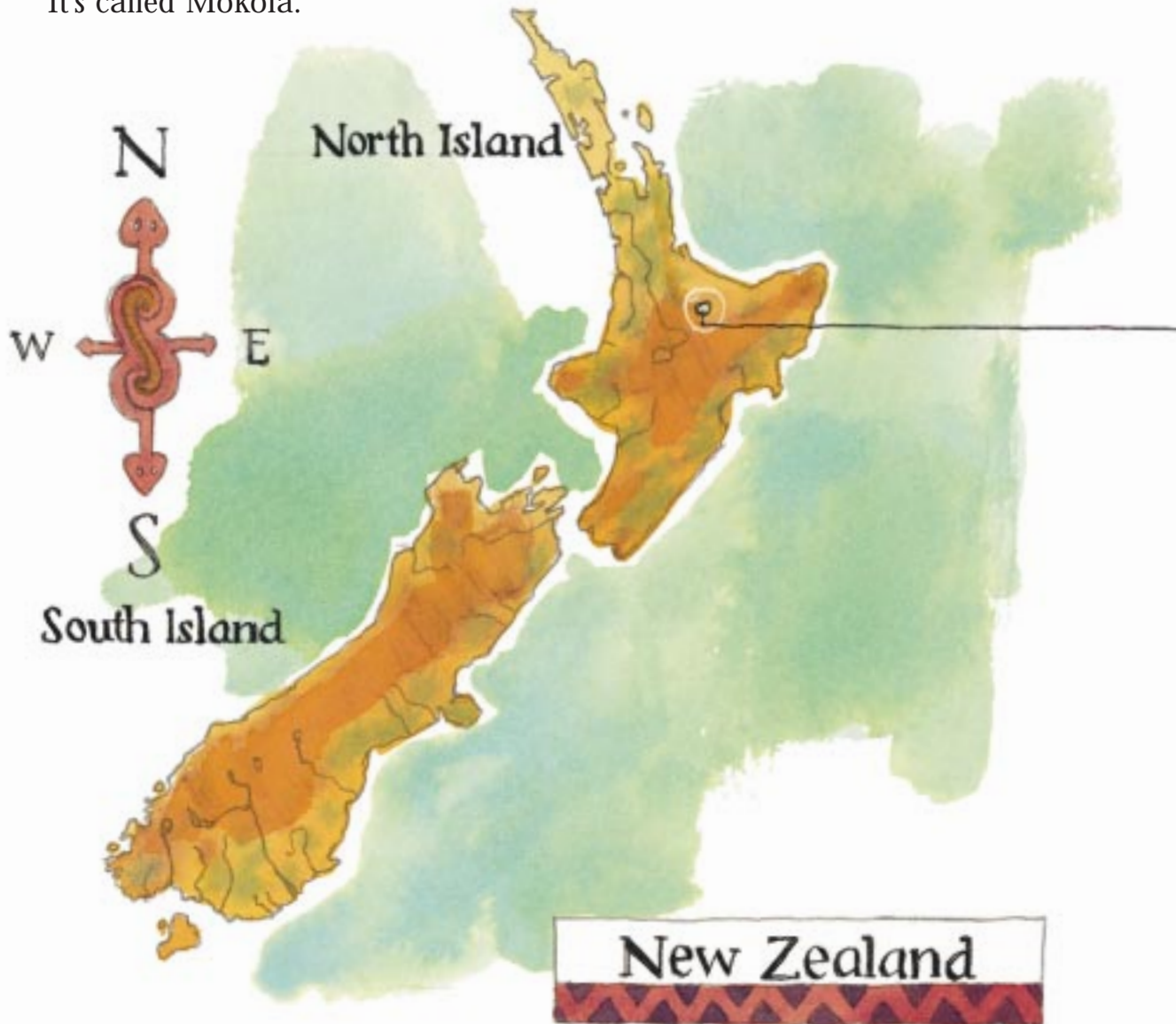


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This story comes from a country called Aotearoa.
In English its name is New Zealand.

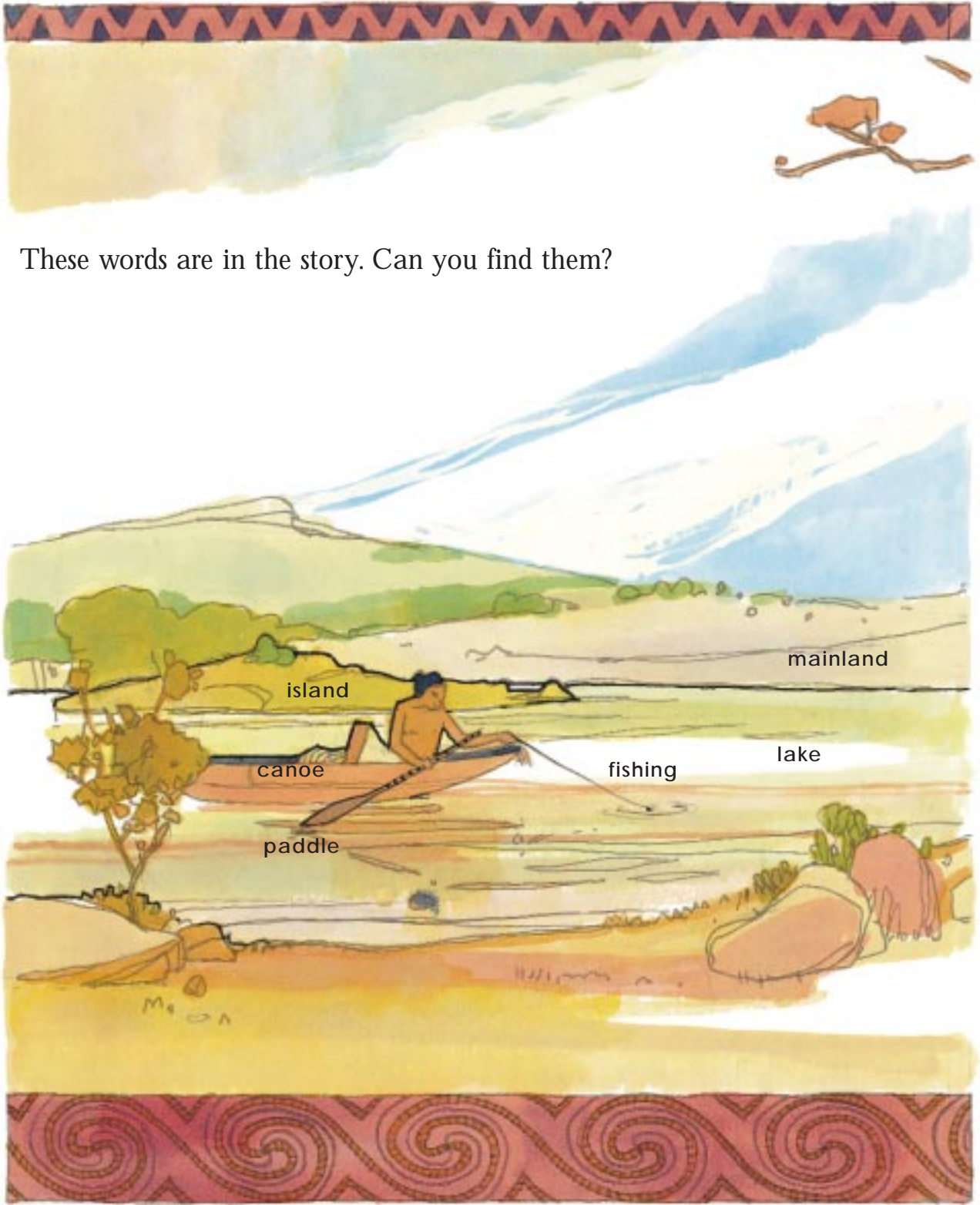
There's a lake in the middle of the North Island.
It's called Lake Rotorua.

There's an island in the middle of the lake.
It's called Mokoia.



This story is about a young woman called Hinemoa and a young man called Tutanekai (Tuta for short).





These words are in the story. Can you find them?

island

mainland

canoe

fishing

lake

paddle

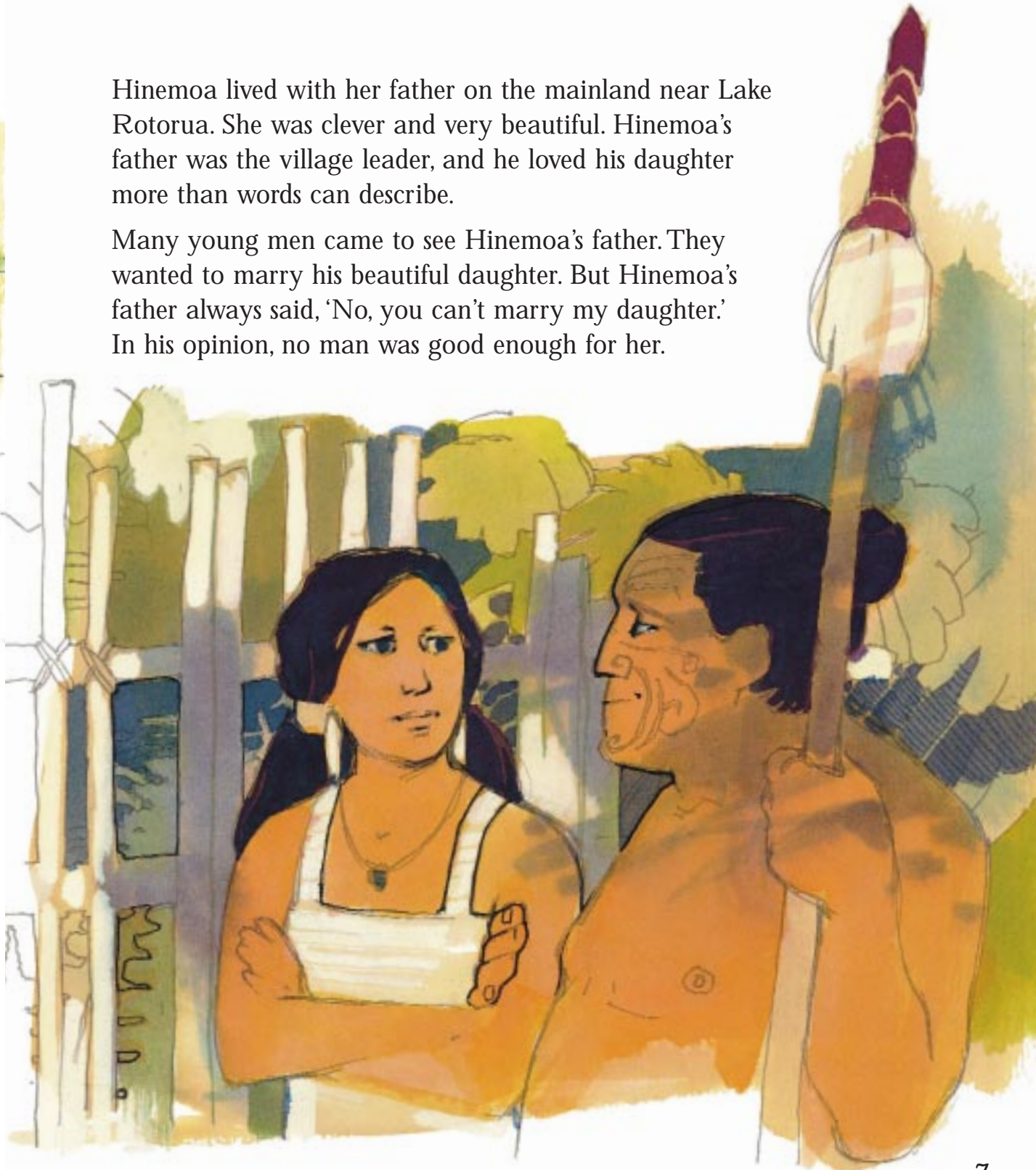




Tuta was a tall, strong and handsome young man. He lived on the island of Mokoia. He was a very good hunter and fisherman. He hunted and fished with his friends on Mokoia. He was also a wonderful musician - the best on the island. He played the flute. Tuta sometimes played his flute for other people in the evenings. People on the mainland could hear his flute music across the water.

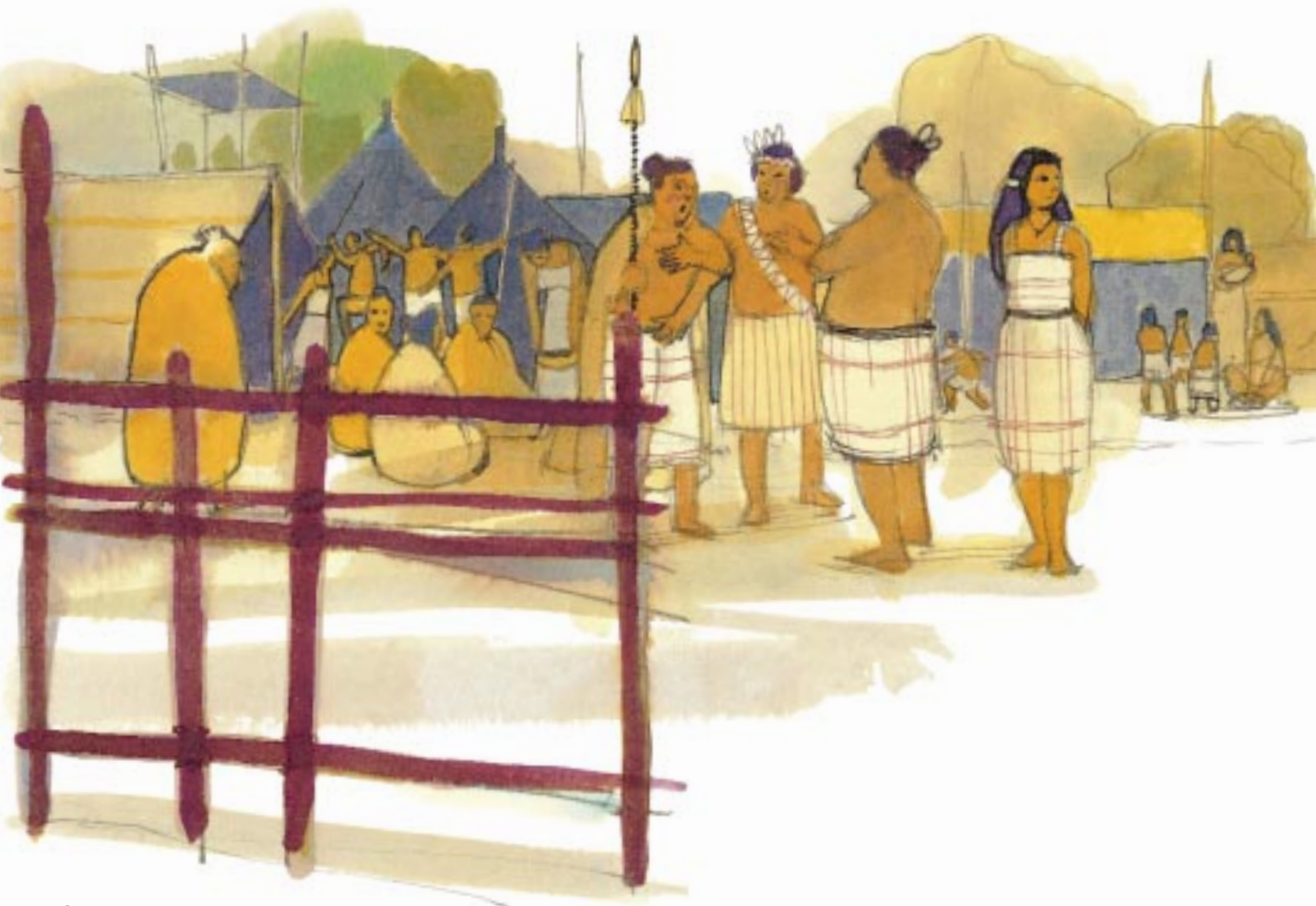
Hinemoa lived with her father on the mainland near Lake Rotorua. She was clever and very beautiful. Hinemoa's father was the village leader, and he loved his daughter more than words can describe.

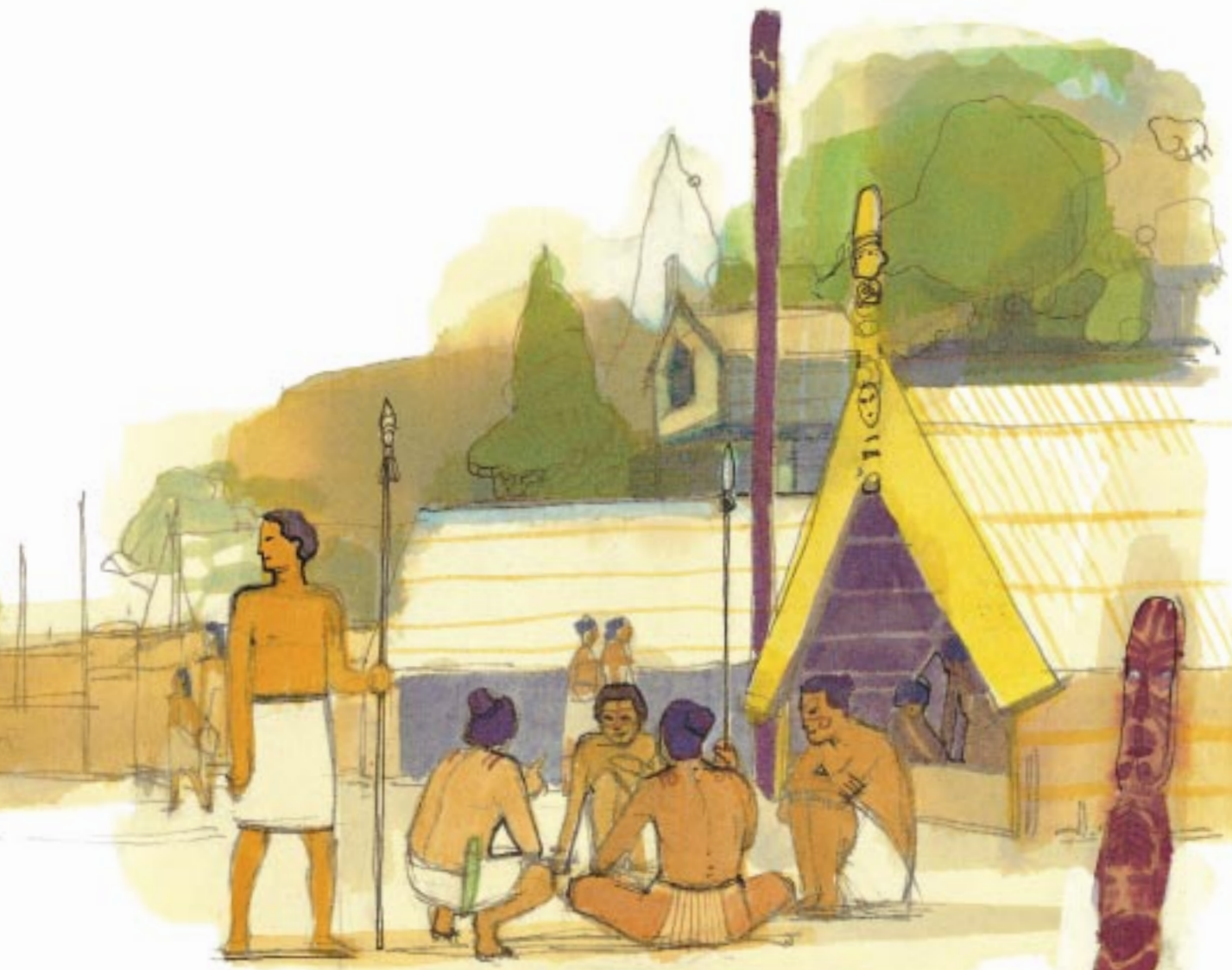
Many young men came to see Hinemoa's father. They wanted to marry his beautiful daughter. But Hinemoa's father always said, 'No, you can't marry my daughter.' In his opinion, no man was good enough for her.



From time to time, all the people who lived near Lake Rotorua or on the island of Mokoia met together on the mainland, near the lake. They talked, sang songs and danced together. On these warm, romantic evenings, young men often came and asked Hinemoa's father, 'Can I marry your daughter? I've got a lot of land.' Or 'Can I marry your daughter? I've got a very big and wonderful house.'

But no man was good enough for her. Hinemoa's father always said, 'No, you can't marry my daughter.'

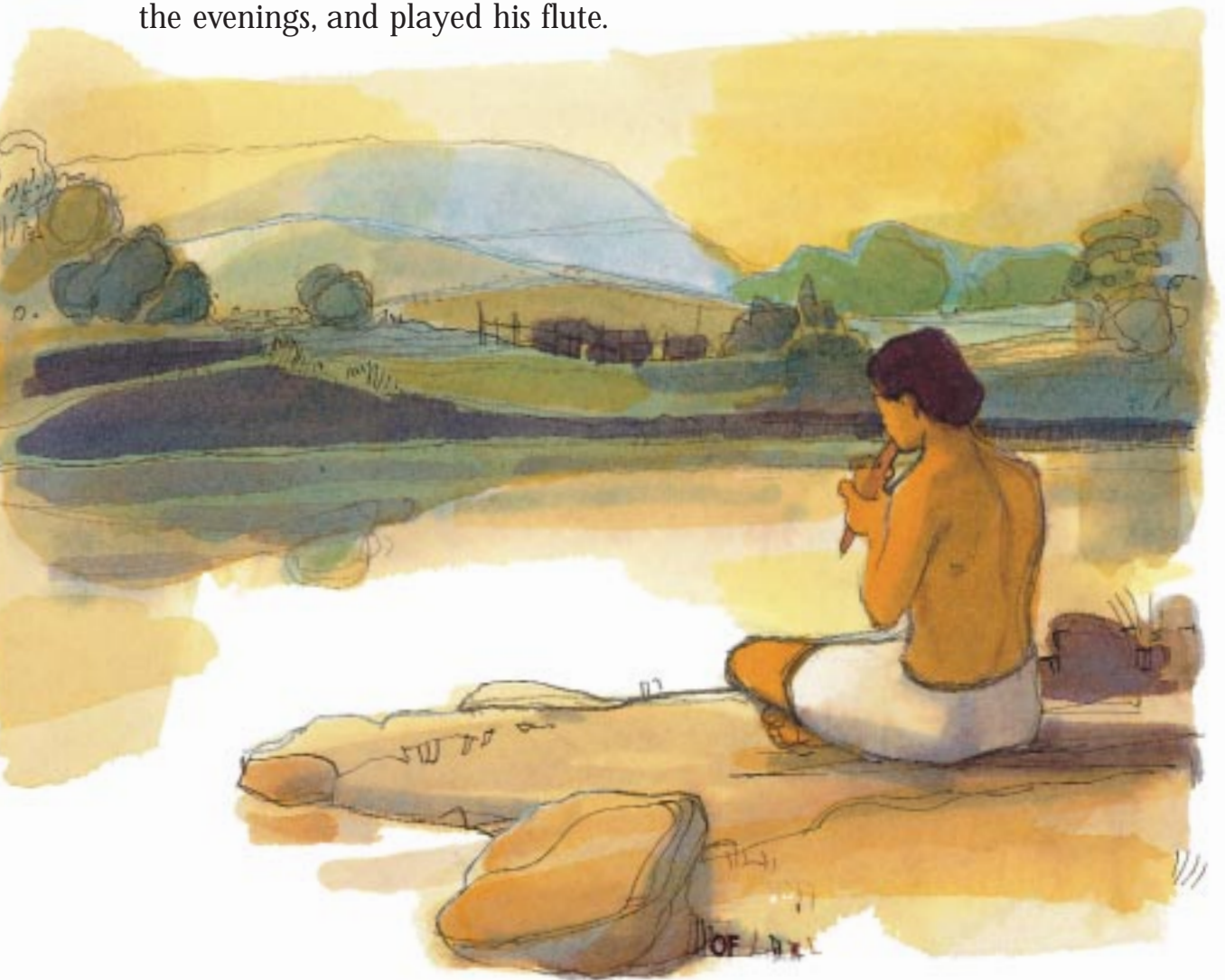




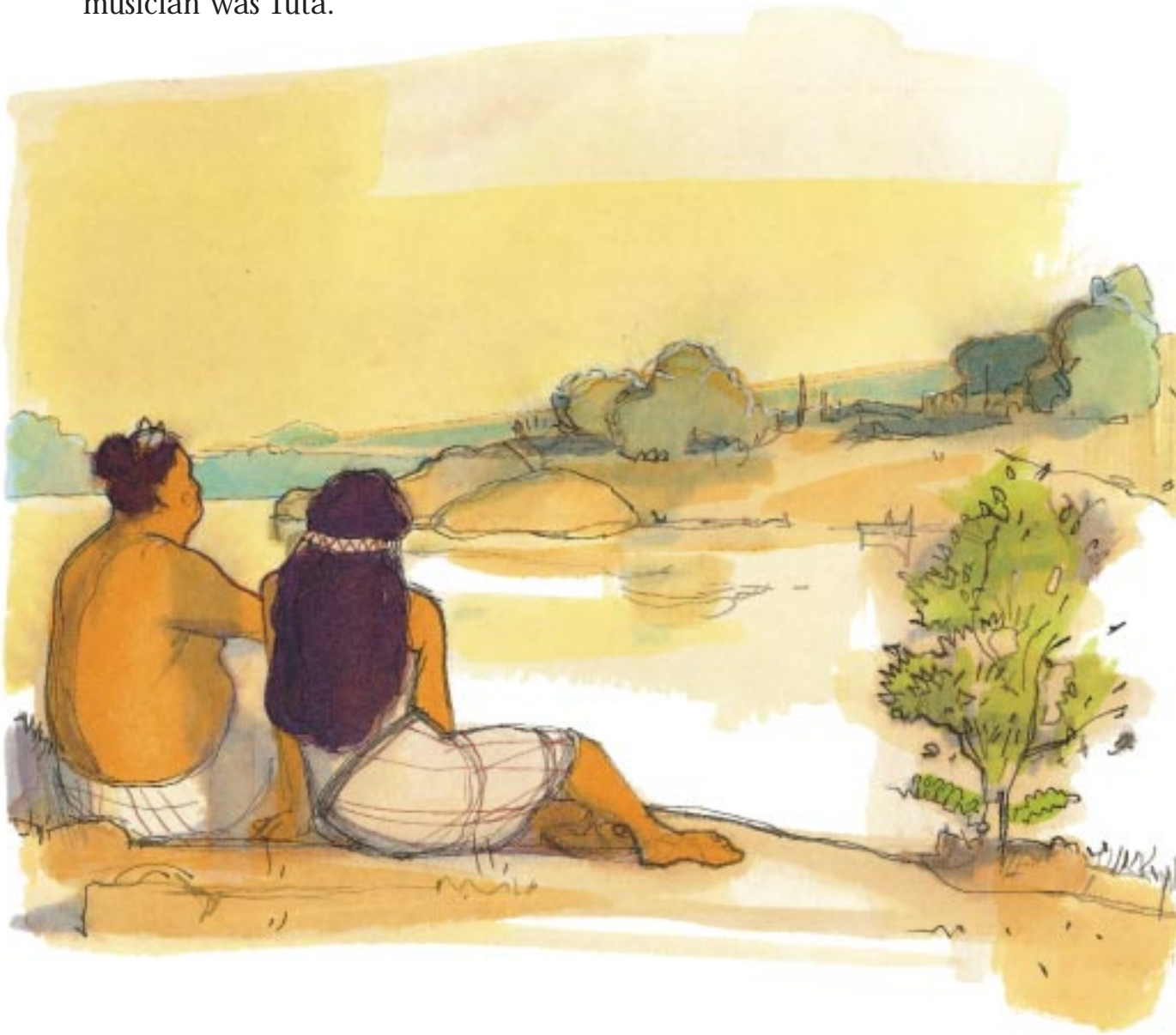
It was on one of these evenings that Hinemoa and Tuta first met. They saw each other, but they didn't speak. Tuta didn't try to speak to Hinemoa, but he was happy. She was the most beautiful girl in the world - and he saw a smile in her eyes.

When Tuta was back at home on the island, he didn't think of hunting, fishing or his friends. He thought only of Hinemoa.

After that night, Tuta wanted to be alone more and more. He didn't want to talk to the other young men or listen to their dreams about beautiful girls. He often walked to a special place on the island. From there it was possible to see across the water to the mainland. He sat there alone in the evenings, and played his flute.



Hinemoa and her father listened to the music from across the water. It was beautiful, and at the same time, sad. Hinemoa's father thought, 'Only a man who can play music like this is good enough for Hinemoa.' But he didn't say this to Hinemoa, and they didn't know that the musician was Tuta.





Sometimes Tuta went across the water to the mainland. But Hinemoa's father was always near his daughter. So Tuta and Hinemoa didn't speak to each other. But he looked at her, and she looked at him, and their eyes said a thousand words. They fell more and more in love.

Then one evening, Hinemoa's father talked to his brother for a long time. Tuta and Hinemoa had a few moments together.

Tuta said, 'Hinemoa, I love you and I want to marry you. I must ask your father now.'

But Hinemoa cried, 'No, Tuta! I love you, too - but in my father's opinion no man is good enough for me. Don't ask him, because then I can never see you again.'

Tuta didn't know what to do. He said, 'Hinemoa, come with me to Mokoia.'



A week later Tuta and Hinemoa made plans. Tuta said, 'Come to my island when your people are asleep. Find a canoe and come across the water to me.'

Hinemoa wasn't sure. 'How can I find the island?' she asked.

'Listen to my flute and come across the water, then you can find Mokoia - and me,' Tuta answered.

Hinemoa looked at Tuta. 'Is it you? Is it you who plays the flute?' Now she was sure.

The next night Hinemoa went to the lake and looked for a canoe - but they were all on higher land. They were big and heavy. She tried to pull a canoe from the higher land to the water - but it was too heavy for her. She went home sadly and listened to Tuta's music from across the water.



The next night Hinemoa went down to the water again. But again the canoes were on higher ground. She tried to pull a canoe into the water, but again the canoe was too heavy. She went home and listened to Tuta's music. Hinemoa started crying. She was very unhappy.





Hinemoa went down to the water for the third time the next night. This time she didn't try to pull a canoe into the water. She found some branches from the trees and she tied the branches together. Then she made a paddle. When she was ready, she sat on the branches and began her journey across the water to Mokoia. She followed the sound of Tuta's music.

Hinemoa was afraid. There was no moon that night, and it was very dark on the lake. The water was very cold.

The island wasn't very far from the mainland. But the journey seemed like hours to Hinemoa. She put her hand in the lake time and time again - but she felt only water. Then, at last! Hinemoa put her hand in the lake, and she felt land under the water. She was there! She was on the island of Mokoia, on Tuta's island. Hinemoa was very happy.

It was dark and Hinemoa was cold. Where was Tuta? Hinemoa walked and walked but she didn't know where she was.

Suddenly the ground became warm under her feet, and then warmer. Soon Hinemoa found a warm water pool and she sat in the pool. Her body slowly became warmer - but where was Tuta?

Hinemoa was afraid. She thought of her father. She was alone in the dark. She listened. Nothing. She waited. Nothing.





And then through the trees she saw Tuta. He came to her and gently lifted her out of the warm water. He carried her to his house. There they talked and talked all night about their love and their future life together.

Tuta was really happy. Hinemoa was the most beautiful girl in the world and she loved him.





But back on the mainland, very early in the morning, Hinemoa's father discovered that his daughter wasn't at home. He was very angry. He shouted and called all the people from their beds.

'Where's Hinemoa?' he shouted again and again. Nobody answered. He was almost crazy with anger.

In the end, one of the young men in the village spoke. 'She's on Mokoia, with Tuta,' he said.

'Tuta? Tuta? Who is Tuta? I'll kill him!' shouted Hinemoa's father.



When it was light, Hinemoa's father and his brother went across the water in a canoe. Some young men on the island took them to Tuta's house. They knew that Tuta and Hinemoa were there. They were all angry too, because they all wanted to marry Hinemoa, but she was in love with Tuta.

When Hinemoa's father was outside Tuta's house he stopped and listened. He heard the flute music again. It was more beautiful than ever before.

And then he realised that Hinemoa was with the only man who was good enough for her.



Very soon, Hinemoa and Tuta were married, and today the warm pool on the island of Mokoia is called Hinemoa's Pool. People say that sometimes you can hear the sounds of a flute in the air - if you listen very, very carefully.

Aotearoa is the Maori name for New Zealand in English. Look at the pictures on pages 6, 10, 15, 17, 18 and 20 and find a word in each of those pictures. Then you will discover what Aotearoa means.

The Maori people gave the country the name Aotearoa because this is what they saw when they arrived there from across the sea.

