

‘Ko te Ihumanea o te kura mō te tau 2021, ko Hone Tāwhaki. Pakipaki mai rā,’ tā te tumuaki ki tōna kura me ngā mātua i haere mai ki te pō tuku taonga. Ka whakawhiwhia ki a Hone he karahipi e utu katoa ana āna tau whare wānanga, e whitu me āna nama pukapuka, he moni pūkoro anō i tāna whai i te akoranga tākuta rongoā.

Ka takitū mai ngā ākonga me ngā mātua ka pakipaki roa ai me te hūrō atu anō ki a Hone i a ia ka haere ki te tiki i tāna taonga. Ka hakahaka ngā tama Māori ka tū whakaiti mai a Hone ki te atamira me te whakamā anō ōna i tana korenga i mōhio ki te haka e haka tahi ai anō a ia ki te tira haka nei. Inā rā kātahi anō ka kite i te Whakaihuwaka Hākinakina me tāna mahi haka tahi atu ki te tira heoi anō a Hone, auare ake.

Ka awhiawhi te matua me te kōkā o Hone i a ia ka mea ai te pāpā ki a Hone. ‘Nāku koe, e tama.’ ‘E pā, he aha koe i kore ai i whāngai mai ki a au tōku Māoritanga?’ me te roimata e ringi mai ana i tōna pāpāringa. Ka pā te whakamā nui ki te matua kāore āna whakahoki ka ngū ai.

Ka haere ake te whānau ki te whare kai rangatira i te taone pū ka kai tahi, ka inu tahi ka rere ngā kōrero otiia, ki waenga kau i ngā mātua. Ka tonoa te hāwini kai kia tonoa ā rātau kai. ‘He aha māu?’ Tā te pāpā ki a Hone e noho ngū nei. ‘Hai aha māku, kāore au e rongō ana i te hiakai!’ ‘Hei hari kai atu pea māu?’ ‘Kāo, kāore au i te hiahia.’ Te whakahoki a Hone.

Ka hoki te whānau ki te kāinga i roto i te waka karekau hoki he reo e rere ana. Tae atu ana ki te kāinga kotahi atu a Hone ki tōna moemanga.

*Kotahi tau ki mua*

Ka hipa kairangitia e Hone āna pepa me ana whakamātautau katoa i te Whare Wānanga o Ōtakōu, ā, kei te kapu o tōna ringa te ao e whanga mai ana ki a ia.

Ka hoki ake ia ki te kāinga mō te raumati ki te mahi he mea whai mahi e ia ki ngā wharau hipi o te rohe o te Manawatū. Te rā tuatahi i te mahi ka tūpono mahi tahi a ia me tētahi o ngā tama o te kura inātaurā ka koa te ngākau i tana mōhio ki tētahi o ngā mata o ngā kaimahi, ahakoa kore tonu a ia i te tino mōhio ki a ia. Ka mihi rāua ki a rāua, ā, ko te tama nei he Māori anō nāna i haka tautoko atu ki a Hone nōna ka whiwhi i tana tohu ihumanea i te tau kotahi ki muri.

Ka haere te rā ka whakahoahoa rāua ki a rāua, ā, ka whai mōhio a Hone e mahi ana te tama nei kia utua tāna haere ki te Whare Wānanga o Raukawa e whai ana ia i te tohu kaiako reo Māori.

Mutu ana te rā mahi ka inuina pia te kēnge mahi ka haere tonu ngā kōrero i waenga i ngā tama tokorua. Ka akiaki te tama nei, a Whai kia akoako anō a Hone i tōna reo me ngā tikanga. Te mutunga iho kua hoki koa atu a Hone ki te kāinga kua whai hoa hōu a ia me tētahi whakaaro anō kei roto i a ia e tipu ana.

Rere haere ngā wiki e waru i a Hone e mahi tahi ana me Whai, ā, kua tino piri rāua ki a rāua. Ka tae ki te rā whakamutunga o Hone ki te mahi ka ngau tōna ngākau ki te pōuri pēnā i tērā i rongo ai ia i tana whakawhiwhinga ki te taonga ihumanea. Ka kore a Hone i mōhio me pēhea rā a ia tēnei mamae e whakamauru, ka kore hoki i pai ki a ia.

Mutu kau te rā mahi ka mōhio te kēnge ko te rā whakamutunga o Hone tēnei ki te mahi ka haute, ka kai tahi, ka inu ai ngā kaikuti, ngā kaitahitahi me te kaipēre. Ka takiwaiata rātau i ngā waiata o mua i ngā pāti wharau – he wai reo Māori, he wai Tui Tekā, Herbs, aha atu aha atu. Ka tino rongō a Hone i te wairua Māori whānau nei ki tōna ngākau nōhea anō a ia i rongō i mua atu.

Ka kuhu te kēnge ki te wēne ka huri a Whai ki a Hone ka mea. *‘E hoa nā tō koi, ahakoa pēhea e taea ana e koe te hoki ki te whai i tō tohu tākuta rongōā otia, e whanga mai ana tō reo ki a koe, tēnā whāia kia tata, whakamaua kia tina!’*

Ka hoki a Hone ki te kāinga me te whakaaro rētō tonu ki te kōrero akiaki mai a tōna hoa. Heoi anō, ka hoki moata a ia ki te moe inā hoki te aonga ake o te rā e hautū atu ōna mātua i a ia ki Pōneke kia rere atu ki Otepoti.

Ka kai pāreti te whānau i mua i te wehenga. Ka kōrero ake a Hone. ‘E pā, mōhio ana koe kei hea rā te Whare Wānanga o Raukawa?’ ‘Āe, kei Ōtaki tonu e tata atu ana ki tātahi, he aha ai?’ te whakahoki a te pāpā. Itēmea, me whakataka iho au ki reira kei te hiahia whai ahau i tōku reo me tōku Māoritanga!’

