

# Ahumai Te Paerata

# **AHUMAI TE PAERATA**

The tōtara trees
Of my marae
Stand tall
Like always

l too

Stand tall

Waiting for my brother

Hitiri

To return

The scars

On my body

From the battle of Ōrākau

Have not yet healed

Ōrākau

The beginning moment

Of the anger I still harbour

My iwi and I Are determined

We will be avenged

#### **HERBERT MEADE**

I am weary As is my guide The vast bush Fights back

No more travelling Can be done

Now that night

Has fallen

The scars

From the vast bush behind us

Will heal

Within a day

The last thing I remember

Before succumbing to sleep

Is wondering

Who might be in charge

Of this village

HERBERT HERBERT

To hands
On my body
There is a crowd
Waiting for me
In the building

I awaken They begin to shout
To voices As I am dragged

Shouting In front of the rangatira

Hoariri! His cruel eyes
They yell Look down on me
When I wake With vengeance

They begin dragging me He

To their building

Now I know

Who's in charge

**AHUMAI** 

The coming home

Of Hitiri Not only brought us food

But our craved revenge

A Pākehā man Who dared

To sleep on our land

A Pākehā man

Wearing

An officer's jacket

A Pākehā man

Who looks

Like those at Ōrākau

My iwi begin to shout We will have revenge He too

Shouts something In their language

The crowd cheers And I don't need A translation

l know That this

Is my death sentence

**AHUMAI** 

The Pākehā man

Dared to rest on our land

But there is real dread in his eyes

The Pākehā man

Is wearing an officer's jacket

But his shoulders are slumped within it

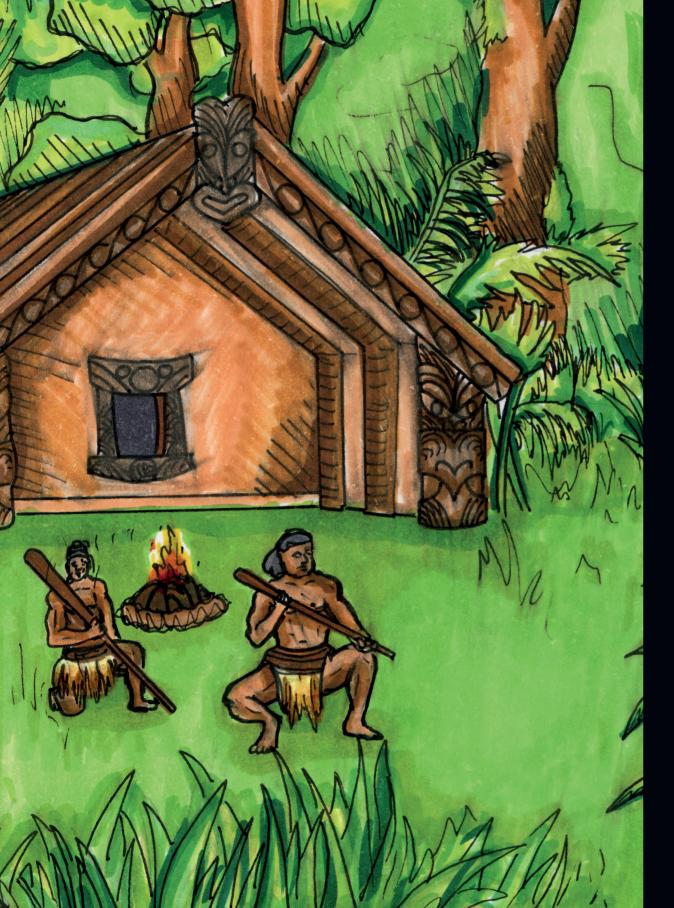
The Pākehā man

Looks like those at Ōrākau But he is not one of them

And though I want revenge I cannot send an innocent man

To his death





## **HERBERT**

I sit down

And close my eyes

There is nothing

I can do

As I wait

For my end

The cheering stops

I can hear

Footsteps

Coming towards me

They stop

And I squeeze my eyes shut

Even tighter

After a few seconds

I am not dead

So I risk a glance

There is a woman

Standing

Not in front of me

But beside me

She faces the crowd

And slowly

She sits

The crowd looks at me

Solemnly

And I know

They will let me go

## **AHUMAI**

As I start

To walk over

The cheering stops

I look at his face

As I halt

Beside him

He doesn't open his eyes

l turn

Towards the crowd

And slowly

I sit down

I glance at him

He has opened his eyes

And they are full

Of gratitude

Gratitude

The reward

I get for fighting

For peace

Slowly

I let my anger

drain away

The crowd looks at us

Solemnly

And I know

They will let him go

Words by Sophie Vare, age 12 Pictures by Max Carter, age 15