



Ranginui and Papatūānuku

Ranginui, the sky father, dwelt with Papatūānuku, the earth mother, and was joined to her, and land was made. They held each other in a tight embrace and had a very very deep love for one another.

They had numerous children, all male, who lived in darkness in the embrace of their parents. But one day, they noticed a light coming from under the armpit of their mother Papatūānuku. But as soon as they saw it, it was gone, as Rangi and Papa once again embraced each other.

At length the offspring of Ranginui and Papatūānuku, worn out with continual darkness, met together to decide what should be done about their parents, that man might arise. "Shall we kill our parents, shall we slay them, our father and our mother, or shall we separate them?" they asked. And long did they consider in the darkness.

At last Tumatauenga, the fiercest of the offspring and the guardian of war, spoke out. "*It is well. Let us kill them,*" stated Tumatauenga.

But Tāne-mahuta, guardian of the forest, answered, "*No, not so. It is better to seperate them, and to let the sky stand far above us and the earth lie below here. Let the sky be a stranger to us, but let earth remain close to us as our nursing mother.*"

Some of the other sons, and Tumatauenga among them, saw wisdom in this and agreed with Tāne-mahuta. Others did not agree, and one, now and forever has always disagreed with his brothers, and this is Tāwhiri-mātea, the guardian of winds and storms. For Tāwhiri-mātea, fearing that his kingdom would be overthrown, did not wish his parents to be torn apart. So while some agreed, Tāwhiri-mātea would not and was silent, he held his breath. And long did they consider further. At the end of a time no man can measure they decided that Ranginui and Papatūānuku must be forced apart, and they began by turns to attempt this deed.