

# Maori Creation Myth

In the beginning there was no sky, no sea, no earth and no Gods. There was only darkness, only Te Kore, the Nothingness. The very beginning was made from nothing. From this nothingness, the primal parents of the Māori came, Papatuanuku, the Earth mother, and Ranginui, the Sky father. Papatuanuku and Ranginui came together, embracing in the darkness, and had 70 male children. These offspring became the gods of the Māori. However, the children of Papatuanuku and Ranginui were locked in their parents embrace, in eternal darkness, and yearned to see some light. They eventually decided that their parents should be separated, and had a meeting to decide what should be done.

They considered for a long time - should Rangi and Papa be killed? Or shall they be forced to separate?

Finally, Tumatauenga, the god of War, said "Let us kill our parents".

However, Tane-Mahuta, the god of man and forests, and all which inhabits the forests, thought that Rangi and Papa should be separated. He thought that Ranginui should go up above, to the sky, and that Papatuanuku should go below, to dwell on earth. All the children, including Tu, the God of War, agreed with Tane.

Tawhiri Matea, the god of winds and storms was the only child who did not wish for his parents to be separated. He feared that his kingdom would be overthrown. One by one the children tried to separate their parents.

Rongomatane, the god and father of cultivated foods, tried without success. Haumia Tiketike, god of uncultivated food also tried.

Then it was the turn of Tangaroa, the god of the sea, and Tumatauenga, the god of war, but neither Tangaroa nor Tumatauenga could separate their parents.

Lastly Tane-Mahuta rose. Strong as the kauri tree, he placed his shoulders against his mother Papatuanuku and his feet against his father Ranginui, and he pushed hard, for a very long time, straining and heaving all the while. Rangi and Papa cried in pain, asking their sons " why do you wish to destroy our love?"

After a long time Tane finally managed to separate Rangi and Papa, and for the first time the children saw the light of day (ao Marama) come streaming in. Once this happened, Tawhiri Matea, the god of winds and storms, and who had been against the separation of his parents, left for the sky to join his father.

The turbulent winds and storms on earth are caused by Tawhiri Matea, in revenge for this brother's acts.

Now that the separation of Papatuanuku and Ranginui was complete, and there was a sky and an earth. However, there was just one missing element, and Tane decided to create a female. From an area named Kura-waka Tane took some clay, and modeled it into a woman. He then breathed life into it, and created Hine-ahu-one - the earth formed maiden.

Tane and Hine had a beautiful daughter called Hinetitama. When Hinetitama grew, she had daughters to Tane. One day Hinetitama asked Tane who her father was, and on discovering that Tane was the father of her children, she fled with shame into the night, to a place called Rarohenga, the underworld. From then on she became known as Hine-nui-te-po, the goddess of the night.