

# Whale Rider Script - Dialogue Transcript

---

In the old days, the land felt a great emptiness.

It was waiting...

waiting to be filled up...

waiting for someone to love it...

waiting for a leader.

And he came on the back  
of a whale...

a man to lead a new people.

Our ancestor, Paikea.

But now we were waiting  
for the firstborn of the new generation...

for the descendant  
of the whale rider...

- For the boy who would be chief.

Paikea.

Paikea.

There was no gladness  
when i was born.

My twin brother died  
and took our mother with him.

Rawiri.

Everyone was waiting  
for the firstborn boy to lead us...

but he died...

and i didn't.

Where is the boy?

Son.

- What's done is done. Come home.

Come home.

Start again.

You mean just pretend

it didn't happen.

- That's not what i'm saying.

- You didn't even look at her, dad!

She died.

- Son...

- no, no, no!

No. No, all you want  
is your boy.

- It's all right.

- That's all you want. Isn't it?

- You can start again.

- Hey, i've got a child.

Her name's Paikea.

- What?

- You heard me.

No. Not that name.

- It's Paikea.

- No!

Porourangi...

porourangi.

Porourangi!

Take her away.

- I told you to take her away.

No. You acknowledge  
your granddaughter.

She likes you.

He'll have another child.

He just lost a child and a wife.  
Isn't that enough?

You give that boy some time.  
You hear me?

He'll be back

when he's ready.

Stupid old paka.

You say the word,  
and i'll get a divorce, bub.

Just say the word.

- What'd he say to her?  
- Same old story.

Not good enough  
for him, is she?

He start that early



with me?

You're a man.

You can handle it.

Here. Better get used to it.

This one's gonna need someone  
to look out for her.

Yeah. All right.

My koro wished  
in his heart that i'd never been born...

but he changed his mind.

- Hey! You old paka!

Quick!

They were quick.

Must have let them off early or something.

- You've been smoking.

- Says you.

Maori women have got

to stop smoking.

We've got to protect

our childbearing properties.

You coming  
to the concert?

- Might.  
- Bet she's got her best gears  
all laid out on the bed.

- My dad's coming.  
- Nay? Better get my flash dress out then.

How long's he staying this time?  
Five minutes?

Longer than that.

That's good, 'cause i blinked  
and missed him last time.

What time's the concert, bub?

: and don't be late.

Gee, she's bossy,  
that one.

And you'd have to be smoking in a pretty funny  
place to wreck your childbearing properties.

If you ask me the name of this house,  
i will tell you.

It is whitireia.

And the carved figurehead at the top?

It is Paikea. It is Paikea.

- No good to you, you reckon?

- Shh!

- What are they feeding you?

- You look different.

- Hmm. You do too. Must be growing up.

- Am not.

- Sorry i was late.

- It doesn't matter. It was stink anyway.

Oh.

Gotta look my best for your brother.

- Hey, bro.

- Rawiri?

- Good to see you, man.

- Yeah, put on a bit of weight  
since i saw you last time.

- Yeah.

Hey, this is  
my new lady.

- Kia ora.

- Kia ora.

How many of my sons  
you need, girl?

Give us a hand with the food.  
Make yourself useful.

You too, Pai.

Come on, mate.  
Let these important guys have their talk, eh?

Take your time.

They've been  
waiting for you.

Been a while  
this time, son.

Been away.  
Didn't you get any of my postcards?

Your mother put something on the fridge.  
I don't know what it was. A bridge or something.

France, probably.

I've been spending  
a bit of time in germany too.



- Like you there, do they?

- Some of them do.

- So, you've been busy, then?

- Yeah. Yeah, it's been good.

You know, i got a gallery interested.

Had some good shows.

How about you?

We've been all right.

It's good to see you, dad.

It was my father's waka...

but after i was born he didn't  
want to carve it anymore.

He went away.

Everybody did.

- Sorry, mum.

- You've come a long way.

I think you can have a sleep in.

- Isn't he having any breakfast?

- Septic tank's blocked down at the marae.

Can't somebody else do it?

Eat your breakfast. You're too skinny.

Can't hardly see your bum in those pants.

Thanks, ma.

Thanks, ma.

Your timing's spooky, boy.

Nerd!

Putt-putt-putt!

- Ah! What was that for?

- For the concert last night.

You have more respect next time.

- That teacher of yours got herself a husband yet?

- Don't think so.

She still got those things on her teeth?

Paka, at school we gotta do a speech

on where we come from and that.

So anyway, you know how

we all came on a whale?

That's right.

But where does  
the whale come from?

- From hawaiiiki.
- Where's that?

It's where we lived before we came here,  
where the ancestors are.

- So, Paikea came from there.
- Ae.

- How long ago?
- Long time.

But how long?

See that there?

Look at it closely.

What do you see?

- Lots of little bits of rope all twisted together.

- That's right.

Weave together the threads of Paikea

so that our line remains strong.

Each one of those threads

is one of your ancestors...

all joined together and strong...

all the way back  
to that whale of yours.

Useless bloody rope.  
I'll get another one.

Paka! Paka!

It's working!

It's working.

- I don't want you to do that again.

It's dangerous.

That's a good one.

Come in.

- A seat for you over there.

- Kia ora.

- Hi.

- Hi. Kia ora.

Have you met Pai's father?

Porourangi...

this is miss parata

from the school.



- Kia ora.

- Kia ora.

- Thought she'd appreciate seeing the show.

- No problem.

This is some of my work  
from my last exhibition in germany.

Start again, from the beginning.

She wants to see all of it.

All right.

Yeah, like i was saying,  
uh... oh, sorry.

Who's that, bro?

Anna. It's a woman  
i've been seeing.

Actually, she's pregnant.

We're expecting a child.

Why didn't you tell me?

Congratulations, bro.  
You always get the good-looking ones.

Where is she?

Why don't you bring her?

Uh, she lives in germany, mum. You know.

She wanted to have the child at home.

- But you'll bring her back here.

- Yeah, of course.

Well, um, bit of a visit

when baby gets big.

Rawiri, take miss Parata back to town.

Come with me, Pai.

When were you gonna tell me?

The day you left?

I've been trying to tell you  
since i got here.

Look, dad. It's not forever.  
It's just it's anna's first child, you know?

Her work's there,  
her family.

Family?

Yeah, i can't expect her to move  
to the other side of the world.

Don't you use that girl as an excuse.

You can't wait to get away. I see it in you.

You never stay, because it hurts you  
to see what's happening to us.

Yeah, it does.

You still walk away from it.  
Leave that waka of yours out there to rot.

I'm not here shoveling shit,  
but, dad, i'm doing my share.

Did you even see my work?  
Did you... did you even look at it?

You call it work.

It's not work. It's souvenirs.

Those young men you turn your back on...  
they've got something to learn from you.

You've got something to offer.  
Don't you turn away!

Yeah, you've got  
the privileges...

but you forget you've  
also got the obligations!

Look at me, dad, for once in your life.  
Go on.

Ah, you don't even  
know who i am.

I know who you're meant to be,  
who you were born to be.

Oh, yeah, right.  
But i failed ya, eh, dad?

Yeah, because why?  
I had a daughter?

Well, i'm probably gonna have another daughter.  
And you know what?

I'm not gonna let you treat  
another child of mine like that.

Then take her with you! You don't like the job  
i'm doing, take her! Go on! Take her!

- Stop it!

- She's no use to me.

Pai?

No, leave her.

I'll get her. Pai!

You all right?

Gotta watch that koro sometimes.

Big mouth of his gets away on him, eh?



He didn't mean it...

about me.

Well...

you know, maybe

we should think about it.

Think about what?

You coming to live with me

for a while.

What do ya think?

Why doesn't he want me?

Oh, Pai, it's not you.

It's not even about you, in a way.

Koro is just... he's just looking for something  
that doesn't exist anymore.

A new leader?

They exist.

Yeah, they do,  
except i think...

it's become  
even more than that.

In his head, your koro,  
he needs a prophet.

What's that?

Well, somebody who's gonna lead our people  
outta the darkness...

and who'll make everything  
all right again.

Only problem is, you can't just decide who those  
people are just because you want them to be, eh?

Like my brother?

Yeah.

Your koro made himself believe so strongly  
that he was gonna be the one.

But what if he was?

And what if he wasn't?

You know, your koro,  
he did the same thing with me.

Is that why he's  
so hard on you?

Yep. Pretty much.

Because i can't be  
what he wants, eh?

Me neither.

You think about it, okay?

You know you'd make me really happy  
if you'd come and stay with me.

Mmm.

Just think about it.

- Ready, Pai?
- One more go.

You be good  
to that girl.

That's right.  
You look.

I'm gonna need  
all the firstborn boys.

- It's time they learnt.
- Learnt what?

When she was born,  
that's when things went wrong for us.

That's where we'll find the answer.

You all right?

Stop the car.

Pai?

What is it, Pai?

Can we go home now?

But why? What is it?

What's wrong?

- I have to go home.

- Why?

I just have to.

I know.

It's okay.

There are some discussions about the...

Paka!

I'm back.



Not now, Pai.

But i'm back.

I'm back.

Anyway...

where does

that information come from?

It comes from the books.

- You shouldn't be smoking.

- Tryin' to give up, aren't i?

- How come you didn't go with your dad?

- I did.

Hmm. For one day.

I would have gone.

When my dad gets out,  
i'm gonna go with him.

- Where?

- Wherever. Get outta this dump.

Koro's gonna be pissed off  
when he sees you smoking.

No, he won't,  
'cause he's not coming.

- Is so.
- No, he's getting the school ready.

What school?

For us fellas, to teach us  
the old ways and that.

Probably gonna be stink.

- You can come on the bus if you want.
- I'm waiting for koro.

- But he's not coming.
- I said, "i'm waiting."

- When you're ready.

- When everyone's here, i'll be ready.

They are here.

Those boys have waited half an hour.

You tell her you weren't  
going to pick her up?

She could have come  
on the bus.

You pick her up every day for years  
and she's just supposed to guess?

Good. Let's go.

Do the welcome, bub.

Go on.

What do you think you're doing?

Pai.

You're a girl.

Go to the back.

What did i say?

What did i say?

Then leave.

Go on!

For you boys, this will be  
a sacred school of learning.

You'll be taught  
in the old ways...

in all the qualities  
of a chief.

You will be tested  
for your strength...

your courage,  
your intelligence...

and your leadership.

Paikea's canoe sank...

and he called on the ancient ones for strength.

You're going to learn that chant.

All of you. Learn it exactly.

And if you break the chant,  
you will suffer the utu...

the consequences.

Like what?

Someone dying or something?

Like your dick'll drop off.

So, hold onto your dicks.

Enough. Hold onto your dick.

Now, repeat after me.

The taiaha is an instrument of war...

a tool for fighting.



If you want to master it,  
you've got to show it respect.

Hemi. Here.

Peh!

Pick it up.

Good.

Be angry.

Anger's part of your battle.  
You gotta learn to control it.

Now, take a break.

Get a drink of water.

The rest of you in pairs.

- Koro know you're doing that?

- I'm not doing anything.

How come you're hiding  
around here then?

Koro's cool, eh?

He's teaching us to be warriors, man.

Gonna be chiefs.

We're gonna smack  
all those other ones.

You shouldn't have hit  
koro like that.

He was all right.  
He was real patient, eh?

- How come he won't let you do it?  
- Girls aren't allowed.

You could sit up the back.  
Long as you were quiet. I wouldn't mind.

You're not even  
holding it right.

Your hands should be  
like this.

And your feet...

like this.

Go back to the school, hemi.

I said, "go."

I'll deal  
with you later.

I'm sorry, paka.

You gone deaf now?

Somebody just  
apologized to you.

You don't mess around  
with sacred things!

She was  
just watching!

She was using  
a taiaha.

Let the girl do it.

You might be  
the boss out there...

but i'm the boss  
in this kitchen.

I'll do it.

You forgot  
something.

Hey, it's not too bad  
up here.

He's got a lot of rules

he has to live by.

- It's not fair.

- I know...

but sometimes you've just got to let him  
think that he's the boss.

- He is the boss.

- Hmph. Not of me.

I let him think he is, though.

- What's wrong with me, nanny?

- Nothing's wrong with you. You hear me?

You got the blood of muriwai

in your veins, girl.

Think she'd be proud of you  
saying things like that?

Anyway, that old paka's not the only one  
who knows some tricks.

Eh?

Well, you wouldn't know it now,  
but before he got fat and ugly...

your uncle rawiri was a bit  
of a hotshot with the taiaha.



- True?
- Won a trophy and everything.

Oh, you should have  
seen him.

He was beautiful.

What happened?

I don't know.

He was the second son.

But he knows some things,  
your uncle rawiri.

Don't you worry  
about that.

- Is uncle here?
- Out the back.

Hi.

Damn, girl.  
What did i tell you about sneaking up on us?

I found this.

Didn't know  
you played golf.

Not golf.

Taiaha.

Yeah, well,  
this guy's playing golf.

They cut the end off  
the golf stick...

swing it around,  
and push it through there.

Hey, shut up!  
I was good.

That's why  
you're sitting here...

while your father tells a bunch  
of snotty-nosed kids how to be chief.

Poor little bastards, huh?

Could you teach me?

- Hold up. This was a long time ago.
- So?

Please?

- Does koro know about this?
- No.

- Well, let's get it on then, eh?

- Yes!

You mean this?

It's a broom,

isn't it?

- Yee-hee!

- Woo-hoo!

Morning, dad.

- Hey! There goes that little girl, Pai!

- Move, girl! Move!

Get him, Pai!

Go, Pai!

Get him, girl!

When you extend your tongue...

you're saying to your enemies...

"i'm gonna eat you.

"Your eyes will roll back.

Your head will be stuck  
on the end of my stick."

Feel the ihi...

the power.

Make them feel the wehi, the fear.

I want the hairs on the backs  
of their necks to stand up.

Take off your shirts.

When you  
slap your chests...

i want you  
to slap them hard.

Bleh! Bleh!

Scratch them.  
Make them bleed.

Timata.

Bleh!

Bleh!



Good, hemi. Good.

All these ancestors  
are watching too.

This is my dad.

Come to see  
your boy?

- Yeah.

- Good.

Hemi, you first.

Hah!

Hah!

- Girl! Where's that school?

- Over there.

Thought you were gonna stay  
for the whole thing.

Seen your bit, didn't i?

Come meet my mates.

- Hey.

- Hey.

This is my boy.

- Hey.
- Say hello.
- Hello.

Better watch out for this one.

Did all right in there, eh?

See you later.

Tonight?

Next couple of days, maybe.

We're outta here.

Get lost, you.

Was that your dad?

Get lost.

What have you done?

Answer me.

It wasn't her fault.

Go wash your face.

Answer me, Pai.

- Do you know what you've done?

- No.

You have broken the tapu  
of this school...

on this marae, the one place  
where our old ways are upheld.

The knowledge that's been passed  
down from your ancestors...

from my grandfather to me,  
to those boys...

It's broken!

I'm sorry, paka.

You're not sorry.

Right from the beginning,  
you knew this wasn't for you...

but you keep coming back.

- Do you want me to fail?
- No.

You want these boys

to fail?

What have you got  
to say to them?

I'm sorry.

- Say it again.  
- I'm sorry.

Say it  
till you mean it!

Say it!

I'm sorry.

Want me to put  
some more hot in?

- No.

No.

You can get sick  
sitting in a cold bath.

- What if he fails, nanny?

- Then he fails.

- What will happen to him?

- Nothing will happen...



except me thinking about that divorce.

It's not koro's fault, nanny.

What's not his fault?

Sounds like his fault to me.

Not that i'm a girl.

Not you, hemi.

Rawiri.

You've all done very well.

You've shown me  
that you've got courage, that you're strong...

and that you can learn.

But there can only be one...

so there's one final test...

a test of your spirit.

If you have  
the tooth of a whale...

you must have the whale's jaw to wield it.

One of you will  
bring that back to me.

Bubba's got a cold,  
and i can't swim.

It's all right, man.

Hey.

- Give it to me.  
- I almost had it.

Nanny?

Come here.

It's not for long.

You can put your clothes in there.

And, uh, there's a lamp  
if you wanna read.

Rawiri reckons you're  
pretty brainy, eh?

Anyway, it's just for  
a little while.

He was calling to the ancient ones,  
asking them to help him...

but they weren't listening.

- So i tried...

and they heard me.

Uncle, is this where  
paka lost his reiputa?

His what?

That thing he wore around his neck.  
He threw it overboard.

Crazy old paka.

- Where?
- Just over there.

I'll get it.

It's quiet down deep.

Koro needed quiet.

That's what nanny said.

He didn't want to talk anymore.

He just wanted to go  
down and down.

She's been gone  
quite a while, eh?

Nah, she's sweet.

For paka's tea.  
And i found this.

- Got this for dad's tea.
- Lovely. Pop it in the sink.

Pai got it.

She got this as well.

You gonna tell him?

No. He's not ready yet.

Go on.

It's for my school concert.

You're my guest of honor.

So i'll see you there, paka.



Put mine there.

Come on.

I want to get up in the front.

- Save this one for paka.
- He might be held up, bub.

No, he's coming.

Thank you,  
ladies and gentlemen.

Now to finish, we have  
something very special.

One of our students has won,

not only our own school speech contest...

but the east coast  
area schools', as well.

Ladies and gentlemen,  
please welcome miss Paikea Apirana.

Did you know about this?

She said she had  
a surprise... for him.

This speech is a token  
of my deep love and respect...

for Koro Apirana,  
my grandfather.

My name is Paikea Apirana...

Go on, bub.

And i come from a long line of chiefs,  
stretching all the way back to hawaiiiki...

where our ancient ones are...

the ones that first heard  
the land crying and sent a man.

His name was also Paikea...

and i am his mo...  
most recent descendant.

But i was not the leader  
my grandfather was expecting...

and by being born...  
i broke the line back to the ancient ones.

It wasn't anybody's fault.  
It just happened.

Who is to blame?

But we can learn. And if the knowledge is given  
to everyone, we can have lots of leaders.

And soon,  
everyone will be strong...

notjust the ones  
that've been chosen.

Because sometimes, even if you're the leader  
and you need to be strong...

you can get tired.

Like our ancestor, Paikea,  
when he was lost at sea...

and he couldn't find the land,  
and he probably wanted to die.

But he knew the ancient ones  
were there for him...

so he called out to them  
to lift him up and give him strength.

This is his chant.  
I dedicate it to my grandfather.

- She all right?
- She's asleep.

That old man know  
she's staying the night?

If he doesn't like it,  
he can sleep in the road.

Might be time for us to leave, eh, dear?

What is it?

You'd better come  
have a look.

Who is to blame?

I called them and they came...

but it wasn't right.

They were dying.

Hey, keep it away from the blowhole, bro.

That's it. Just around the edges.

You okay?

He died.

Koro knew what it meant.

It was Paikea's whale,  
sent to us because we were in trouble.

Dad?



- We've got to turn it around.

- How?

Get a tractor down here  
and some ropes.

We'll wait for the tide.

If... if we can move it,  
the others will follow.

- Get the men.

- They're stuffed.

Half of them have  
been up all night.

They'll do it for you.

It was a test...

but for koro this time.

Leave it.

You've done enough.

Now!

E pana e!

E pana e!

He wanted to die.

There wasn't a reason  
to live anymore.

It's no use. They're too tired.

We'll try again later.  
Let them rest.

- Come on, dear. We'll come back.

Come on.

It's gone!

Where is she?

Where's my moko?

Where is she?

Pai!

It's okay, paka.

I wasn't scared to die.

Hurry up!

Hurry!

Let's go!

Which one?

What do you mean, which one?

Yes?

Thank you, dear.

I've been praying to god  
about it.

If that little one wakes up,  
i'm gonna give up the smokes.

She'd like that.

Wise leader,

forgive me.

I am just a fledgling new to flight.

My name is Paikea Apirana,  
and I come from a long line of chiefs...

stretching all the way back  
to the whale rider.

I'm not a prophet...

but i know that our people  
will keep going forward...

all together,  
with all of our strength.

Special help by [SergeiK](#)