

# STOP, Thief!

by  
Simon  
Cooke

## CHARACTERS



**MOHUA**

**MAX**

(MARAMA'S  
ASSISTANT)

**KEA**

**MARAMA**

(A PHOTOGRAPHER)

**KĀREAREA**

**KŌKAKO**

**WHIO**

**HOIHO**

**SCENE:** A forest by the sea. **MARAMA** and **MAX** are walking through the forest. It is very early in the morning, and the air is filled with birdsong.

**MARAMA.** I love the forest at dawn. It's so beautiful. I want to photograph everything.

**MAX** (yawning). It's too early. Can I please go back to bed?

**MARAMA.** No, Max, we have a job to do. We're here to get pictures of birds for the new banknotes that are going to be printed. And we'll need to find a really special bird for the hundred-dollar note!

**MOHUA, WHIO, KŌKAKO, KĀREAREA, and KEA** are nearby, listening to the humans.

**MOHUA.** Did you hear that? Those humans want to take our pictures and put them on banknotes. We'll be famous!

**WHIO.** Awesome! Mum will be so proud of me.

**KEA** (talking to himself). That camera is so shiny. I wonder if I can get a closer look ...

**KEA** shuffles around behind the humans to get closer to the camera.

**KĀREAREA.** Since I'm the most important bird, my picture is sure to be on the hundred-dollar note. Everybody wants to see Kārearea, king of the skies!

**KŌKAKO.** In your dreams, Kārearea. They'll want to see my beautiful blue wattle. Watch!

**KŌKAKO** *flies around the humans, doing rock star poses.*

**MARAMA** *snaps photos excitedly.*

**MOHUA.** Out of the way, Kōkako. My bright yellow head will make them forget about your blue wattle.

**MOHUA** *flies around the humans, doing supermodel poses.*

**KŌKAKO** (*pushing in front*). Stop hogging the camera, Mohua!

**MOHUA** (*pushing back*).

Get off my beak, Kōkako!

**MAX** (*confused*). What are those birds doing?

**MARAMA.** I think they're fighting over territory.

**HOIHO** *waddles up.*

**HOIHO.** What's going on?

**KĀREAREA.** Kia ora, Hoiho. Good news. Those humans are going to take my photo and put it on the one-hundred-dollar note.

**HOIHO.** Do you think they'll take a photo of me?

**WHIO.** No chance, Hoiho. You're not a proper bird. I mean, you can't even fly!

**KŌKAKO** (*laughing*). Imagine a flying penguin!

*The birds all laugh at HOIHO.*

**WHIO** (*to KŌKAKO, KĀREAREA, and MOHUA*). Anyway, I don't know why you three think you have a chance. They'll want a photo of me – a bird that's brave and sporty. I love swimming in fast mountain streams and rivers. I'm a thrill-seeking duck!

**WHIO** *flies in front of the camera and pretends to be kayaking down rapids.*

**MAX.** What is that duck doing? Break-dancing?

**MARAMA.** It's a whio – and no, I think it might have something stuck in its beak.

**KĀREAREA** (*calling to WHIO*). I'm braver than you, Whio. (**KĀREAREA** *turns to where the other birds are standing.*) Isn't that right, Kea? Hey, where's Kea gone?



**WHIO.** He's over there.

**MOHUA.** What's he up to? I think we'd better stop him before he does something silly!

*KEA is sneaking up behind MARAMA, who is still taking photos. Suddenly, KEA grabs the camera and flies away with it.*

**MARAMA.** Stop, thief!

**MAX.** What's happening?

**MARAMA.** That kea has stolen my camera!

*The birds look at each other, their beaks open in shock.*

**KĀREAREA.** Oh no! If there's no camera, there'll be no photo of me on the hundred-dollar note! Come on, everybody. Catch that kea!

**WHIO.** Sorry, Hoiho. You'll have to stay here because you can't fly.

**MOHUA, WHIO, KŌKAKO, and KĀREAREA chase KEA.**

**KEA.** This heavy camera is slowing me down. They're catching up. But if I can't have this camera, nobody can!

*KEA flies over the sea and drops the camera.*

**MOHUA.** Oh no, Kea's dropped the camera into the sea!

**WHIO** (*crying*). The camera's gone?

Now we'll never be famous.

Mum will be so disappointed!



**HOIHO.** Don't worry. Leave it to me.

**HOIHO** waddles towards the sea and dives in.

**WHIO** (to **KĀREAREA**). Wow! Look at Hoiho dive! She dives into the sea as well as you dive down from tall trees!

**KĀREAREA** (*disgruntled*). Hmmph!

**MOHUA.** Look at Hoiho glide through the water!

**KŌKAKO.** She glides through the water as well as I glide through the forest!



**HOIHO** arrives back with the camera, placing it carefully on the ground near **MARAMA** and **MAX**, who look astonished. **HOIHO** waddles back to the other birds.

**KŌKAKO.** Well done, Hoiho!

**MOHUA.** Yes, we're sorry we made fun of you. If anyone deserves to be on the hundred-dollar note, it's you.

**KĀREAREA** scowls but doesn't say anything. **MARAMA** picks up her camera.

**MARAMA.** That was amazing. I didn't expect to see this camera again. It's a good thing it's waterproof.

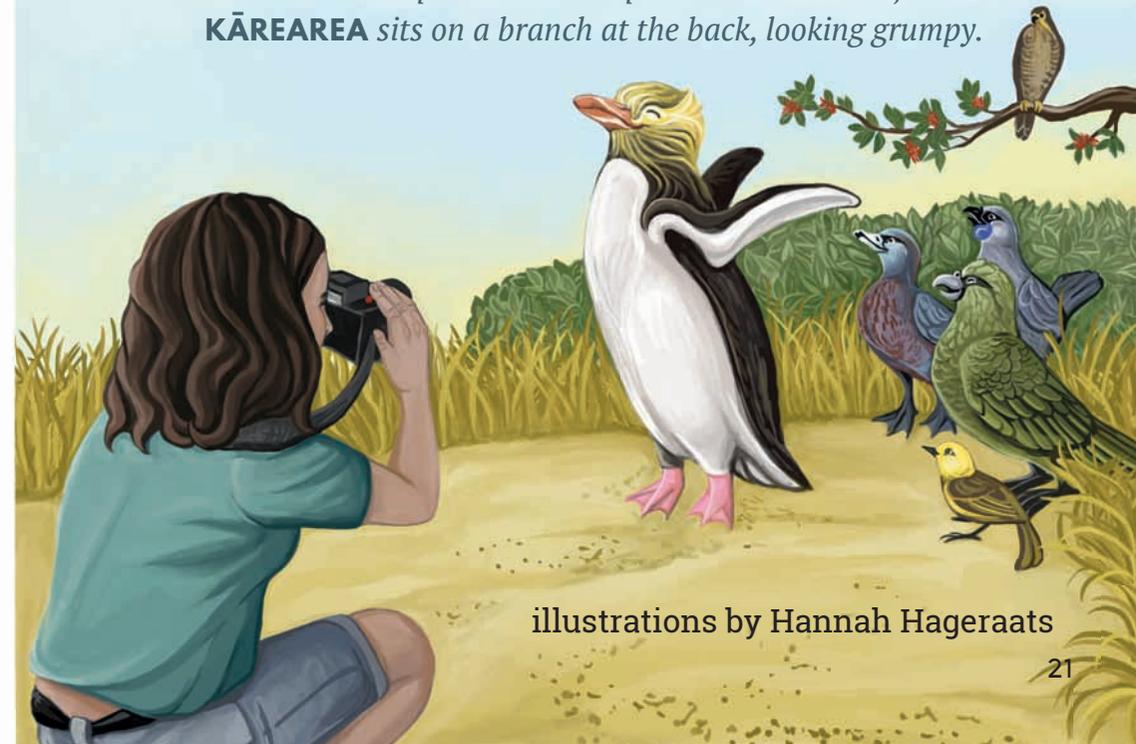
**MAX.** It's a pity it wasn't kea-proof too.

**MARAMA.** Yes, that kea caused so much trouble there's no way he's going to be on a banknote. But that helpful hoiho should be. I'm going to make sure she ends up on the best note of all.

**MAX.** You mean the hundred-dollar note?

**MARAMA.** No, hardly anyone uses those. The five-dollar note is the best. There are lots of them around. People use them and look at them every day. I'm going to make that little bird famous!

**MARAMA** starts taking pictures of the birds again. All the other birds except **KĀREAREA** push **HOIHO** to the front. **KĀREAREA** sits on a branch at the back, looking grumpy.



illustrations by Hannah Hageraats

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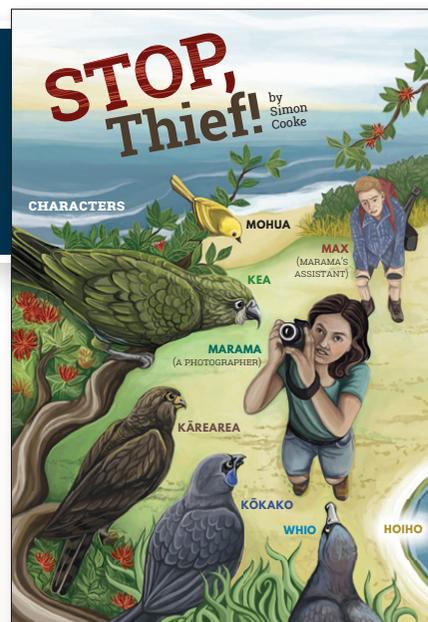
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