



THE TRUTH ABOUT STORIES:  
A NATIVE NARRATIVE BY THOMAS KING

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“ The truth about stories is that that’s all we are.” Koinei ngā kupu e tika ana hei whakamana i te āhua o te pukapuka nei nā Thomas King i tuhi. Ko te pakiwaitara tētehi āhuatanga e pupuri nei e te iwi taketake, he huarahi e mārama ai tātou ki te huringa o te ao. He taonga hoki ēnei kua take mai nō mua rā anō, kia kore e warewaretia wā tātou hītori, kia pupuri tonu hoki ki ngā kōrero o mua, ngā kōrero e puawai ai te tuakiri o te tangata. Mō King, ka hanga te pakiwaitara i te tangata, nā koianei te pūtakenga mai o tāna aronga i roto i te pukapuka nei. Ko tāna he whakatakoto mai i ngā pakiwaitara kua rangona e ia i roto i ōna tau, me ki ko ngā hītori nō tōna iwi. Ko tētehi o ngā āhuatanga matua ka tū mai i roto i te tuhituhinga nei ko tāna kōrero mō ngā āhuatanga kua pā ki a ia i roto i tōna oranga. He huarahi pai tēnei hei whakamahana atu i te kaituhi ki te kaipānui, mā reira e āhei ana te kaipānui ki te whakawhanaunga atu ki te ngako o ngā kōrero o roto i te pukapuka.

I whānau mai a King i te tau 1943 ki roto o Amerika hei tangata whenua. Ahu mai ana tōna pāpā i te iwi Cherokee, he Iniana Amerika, ā, he toto Kirihi tō tōna māmā. I whakawhiwhia e King tāna Tākutatanga i roto i te reo Ingarīhi e whakaako ana i ngā āhuatanga tangata whenua me te tuinga hanganga hoki. I te mea ko te ngako o ngā kōrero o roto i te pukapuka e titiro ana ki te pakiwaitara e ārahi nei i raro iho i te whakaaro iwi taketake, e tika ana mā King tēnei pukapuka e tuhi. I tupu ake a King i roto i ngā wā i whakahāweatia ngā tangata iwi taketake, i titiro whakararohia rātou e te Pākehā. I roto i tōna whakatupuranga i āhei ia ki te kite i ngā taumahatanga me ngā pēhitanga i pā ki ngā Iniana o Amerika. Ahakoa ēnei uauatanga i tū kaha tonu ia mō tōna iwi me te tautoko i ngā tikanga. Ka kōrero ia mō te wā i haere atu ia ki te Whare Wānanga kōrero ai mō ngā kaupapa e hāngai atu ana ki ngā iwi taketake o Amerika. I runga i te mea kāore i maua e King ngā kākahu tawhito o te iwi Iniana, kāore te tangata i kite i a ia hei Iniana Amerika. I roto i tēnei kōrero āna ka whakawhānuihia e ia te kaupapa nei mā te kōrero mō te tirohanga o te tangata ki te tangata whenua, me ngā pōhēhē o ngā tāngata kē atu mō te iwi taketake.

Ki ahau nei i tuhia te pukapuka nei mō te tangata e ngana ana ki te rongō i ngā whakaaro o te tangata e matatau ana ki te tuhi i ngā pakiwaitara me ngā mōhiotanga o te pakiwaitara i raro iho i te kaupapa iwi taketake. I te mea he tirohanga ahurei tā King ki te whakatakoto me te whakaputa pakiwaitara ka taea e ia te huri i tētehi kōrero wawaenga ki tētehi hei whakahikohiko i te hinengaro, hei whakawhakaaro rānei i te tangata. Ko tāna hoki he titiro ki ngā āhuatanga rerekē ka uru atu ki te whakapuaki i te pakiwaitara me ki ko ngā momo huarahi whakaaro hei whakatakoto i te pakiwaitara. I te mutunga iho he pukapuka tēnei mō te tangata e hiahia ana ki te pānui i tētehi pukapuka e ngāwari ana ki te whai atu. Ahakoa tērā, e nui ana ngā aronga hou ka akona i te wā orite mō ngā Iniana Amerika, mō ngā hītori me ngā pakiwaitara o mua, ngā whakaaro hoki mō ngā huarahi hei tuhi kōrero. Mehemea rānei he tangata koe e papai ana ki te pānui i ngā pakiwaitara rerekē koianei tētehi pukapuka e tika ana māu. He tirohanga hou ki te tuhi me te hanga o te pakiwaitara.

Kua whakawehea e King te pukapuka nei ki ngā wāhanga matua e ono, ko ia wāhanga e āhua whai ana i te pūnaha ōrite, ka tuhituhi ia mō ētehi pakiwaitara o mua e whakaatu ana i ngā kōrero mō tōna oranga hoki. I roto hoki i tōna pukapuka ka whakatakotia e ia he kōrero whakataki hei whakapā mai ki te kaipānui, he momo whakamārama tā King i ngā kōrero kua whakatakotia e ia. He tino mātauranga tā te kaituhi nei i te mea e kukume ana tēnei i te kaipānui ki roto i ngā kōrero, i runga i te whakaaro ko King e kōrero ana ki a koe i a koe e pānui ana.

E tuhituhi ana a King i roto i tāna pukapuka *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative* mō te pakiwaitara. I roto i te pukapuka nei ka whakapuakina e ia ngā tini pakiwaitara rerekē.

I waenganui i ngā pakiwaitara āna ka whakatakotia e ia ōna ake whakaaro mō ngā āhuatanga o te pakiwaitara e pēnei ana, “So you have to be careful with the stories you tell. And you have to watch out for the stories you are told.” He kupu ārahi ēnei i te tangata mō te pakiwaitara. I te mea ka whakamahia e King ngā kōrero mō tōna ake oranga, he huarahi pai tēnei kia hono pai atu te tangata ki a ia me ōna whakaaro. Ka tīmata te kaituhi i te wāhanga o ia pukapuka ki ngā kupu orite, e hāngai ana ki tētehi pakiwaitara mō te ao e māunu ana i runga i te tuarā o te honu, me ki he tāruatanga. Heoi anō, ia wā ka tuhia mai te pakiwaitara nei ka paku tīni ia i te kōrero. I te tīmatanga mai o taku pānui i tēnei pukapuka kāore au i tino mārama he aha a King i pēnei ai, engari inaianei e āta mārama ana ahau ki te pūtaka o tāna e ngana ana ki te whakamārama mai. Ahakoa ka paku whakarerekēhia te pakiwaitara i te mutunga iho ko te kaupapa e karapotī nei i taua pakiwaitara e whai ana i ngā hua matua i whakaritea māna:

I’ve heard this story many times, and each time someone tells the story, it changes. Sometimes the change is simply in the voice of the story teller. Sometimes the change is in the details. Sometimes in the order of events...But in all the telling of all the tellers, the world never leaves the turtle’s back. And the turtle never swims away.

Ko tētehi o ngā āhuatanga matua i kapo ahau i a au e pānui ana i te pukapuka nei ko ō King whakaaro mō tēnei mea te pakiwaitara me ana hua. Ko tētehi o ngā whakaaro i tino mau ki tōku hinengaro ko tēnei, “we live by stories, we also live in them.” He kupu ēnei e tino mārama ai ki te iwi taketake i te mea mai rāno ko te pakiwaitara he huarahi e ora ai te iwi, e ora ai ngā maharatanga, kia kore e wareware ngā uri whakaheke ki ngā hītori a ō tātou tūpuna. He oranga tēnei mō te iwi.

I tino rata tēnei pukapuka ki ahau, i māmā hoki te whai i te pukapuka nei nā runga i te ngāwari o te reo o roto. Ahakoa he kaupapa hohonu tā King e kōrero ana, i tino pārekareka ki a au te pānui i runga i te rere pai o ngā kōrero, me te noho hīkaka o ngā kōrero o roto. Kāore ahau i āhei ki te whakatakoto i te pukapuka nei nā runga i taku tino ū ki ngā kōrero me te hononga o ngā whakaaro ki te iwi Māori. He mea hira ki a au ngā kōrero mō ngā iwi taketake me ā rātou hītori, i te mea e āhei ana ahau ki te whakahono atu ki ngā kōrero e whakaputaina ana. He tino orite ngā āhuatanga i pā ki ngā Iniana Amerika ki tā te Māori i te taenga mai a te Pākeha. Nā runga i tērā, e āhei ana ahau ki te tino rongō i ngā kōrero i whakatakotoria e King, ka taea e au te mārama atu ki tāna tirohanga ki ngā kōrero me ngā pakiwaitara i tuhia e ia.

He tirohanga motuhake tēnei nā King ki te āhuatanga o te pakiwaitara, mā tāna whakatakotoranga i āhei ia ki te whakaatu mai i ngā taonga e puritia nei e te pakiwaitara mā te whakapuaki mai i ētehi o ngā kōrero tawhito, ngā hītori me āna ake kōrero. Mā te whai i tētehi huarahi e taea ai e te kaipānui te hono atu ki tāna i whakatakoto ai.