

# BOOKRAPT™

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## ***Magic and Makutu* by David Hair**

**Publisher: HarperCollins**

**RRP \$24.99**

This is the final book in the six-book series of young adult novels that time-slip between the past world of Aotearoa and contemporary New Zealand. It's a ripping good yarn full of power and passion.

The backstory of the previous five books is outlined in the early pages so this book can still be understood and enjoyed by readers new to the series. Although it takes some concentration to understand the part each character plays, it's worth the effort to become absorbed in the unfolding drama. When the story launches into the heart of the action it's a fantastic ride.

Regardless of whether they live in the past, the present - or both - the characters experience all the hopes, dreams, uncertainties and growing pains of young people anywhere. Their friendships and shared challenges are portrayed with empathy and understanding.

Matiu Douglas is a reluctant apprentice tohunga who must undergo a terrifying mission to save the people he loves, and New Zealand, from an evil adversary. He must meet the Goddess of Death, Hine-nui-te-po, and father her child before the malevolent Byron Kikitoa reaches her. Trouble is, Matiu is attracted to someone else and is terrified of the goddess.

Although Matiu has some loyal friends and wise counsellors on his side, the success of the ultimate quest is his responsibility. If he fails, the world will be overcome by unimaginable disaster. The clock is ticking.

The interaction and dialogue between the characters is well-written and the relationships are fully believable. It's a battle between good and evil, the tug of loyalties, a test of true friendship, tough choices, and the human need for love.

This New Zealand series gives a glimpse of the past that shaped this country and interweaves it with skilful storytelling and mysterious events that will have readers questioning what is real in today's world and what is magical. Outstanding!

**Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett**

**Author's website:**

<http://www.davidhairauthor.com/>

