

# BOOKRAPT™

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## ***The Song of Kauri* written by Melinda Szymanik**

**illustrated by Dominique Ford**

**Publisher: Scholastic New Zealand**

**RRP \$27.00**

A beautiful book. For the illustrations alone this book is worth the extra cost of its hard cover. Dominique Ford has used a range of techniques to illustrate the text dramatically and with real feeling. Many readers would be happy to have these paintings framed on their walls.

Author Melinda Szymanik starts her *Song of Kauri* with the familiar “Once upon a time ...”

From seed to sapling to tall tree the kauri grows. He appeals to the Earth, the Sun, and the Moon to be his friend:

*By night the Moon tugged at Kauri's heart on her way across the sky, but she was changeable and distant. “There is only me,” she said, “to lure the tides and raise the crops. And the Sun chases at my heels. I must keep going.”*

As time passes other plants, birds, insects and other animals came. Then Man, people of the land, followed by New People, urgent, with machines ...

This is a book to provoke discussion. The cycle of progress and destruction, of life and death, are clearly shown in the words and illustrations, providing plenty of food for thought and debate.

On the Dedication and Copyright page there is a clear plea:

*Help save our kauri tree.*

*Kauri dieback is a deadly fungus-like disease that is killing thousands of kauri in New Zealand.*

*It is caused by tiny spores in soil that infect kauri roots.*

*You can help prevent kauri dieback by scrubbing your shoes before and after forest walks, and staying on the walking tracks.*

**Reviewed by Chris Wright**

