

Speech and Drama
13 years
Test Recital

SPEECH AND DRAMA COMPETITION 2023 Test Piece

'Friend' by Hone Tuwhare

Do you remember
that wild stretch of land
with the lone tree guarding the
point
from the sharp-tongued sea?

The fort we built out of branches
wrenched from the tree
is dead wood now.
The air that was thick with the whirr
of
toetoe spear succumbs at last to the
grey gull's wheel.

Oyster-studded roots
of the mangrove yield no finer feast
of silver-bellied eels, and sea-snails
cooked in a rusty can.

Allow me to mend the broken ends
of shared days:
but I wanted to say
that the tree we climbed
that gave food and drink
to youthful dreams, is no more.
Pursed to the lips her fine-edged
leaves made whistle - now stamp
No silken tracery on the cracked

clay floor.

Friend,
in this drear
dreamless time I clasp
your hand if only to reassure
that all our jewelled fantasies were
real and wore splendid rags.

Perhaps the tree
will strike fresh roots again:
give soothing shade to a hurt and
troubled world.