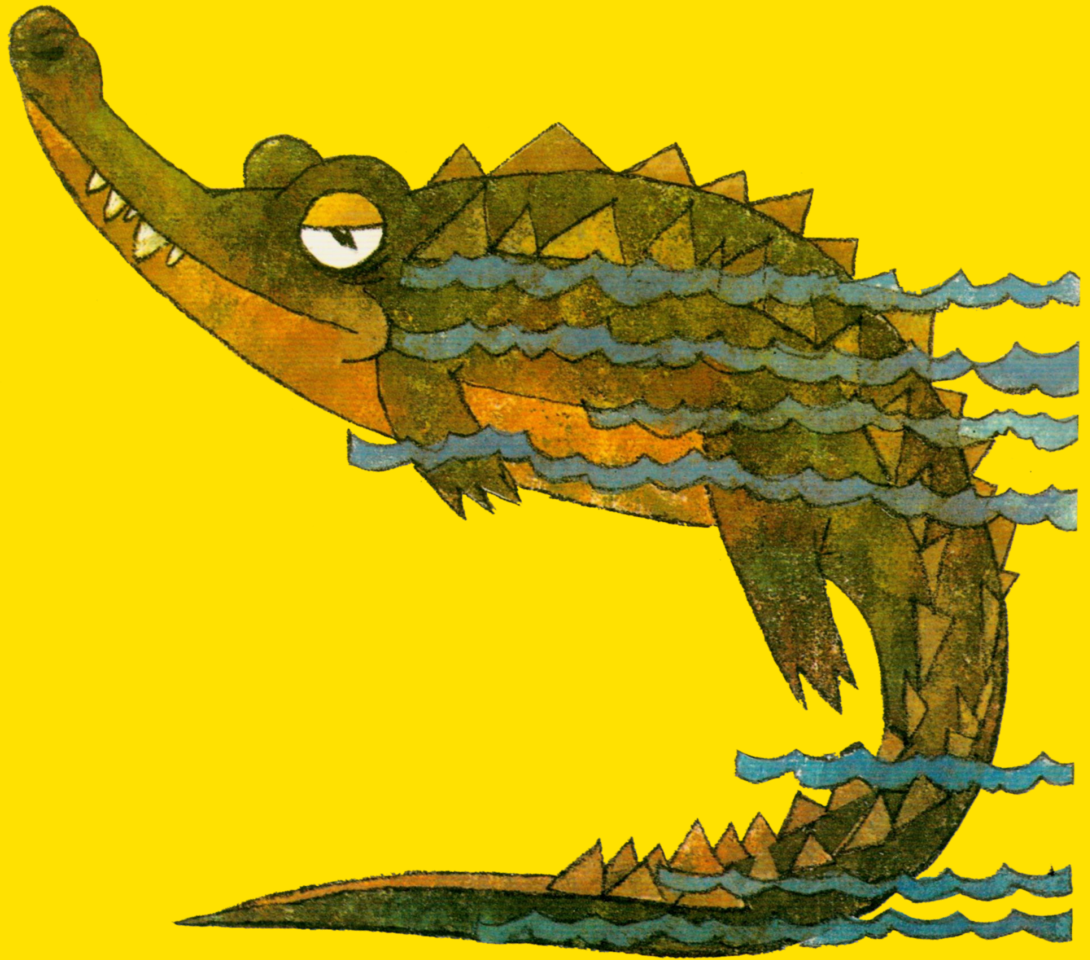


Shankar

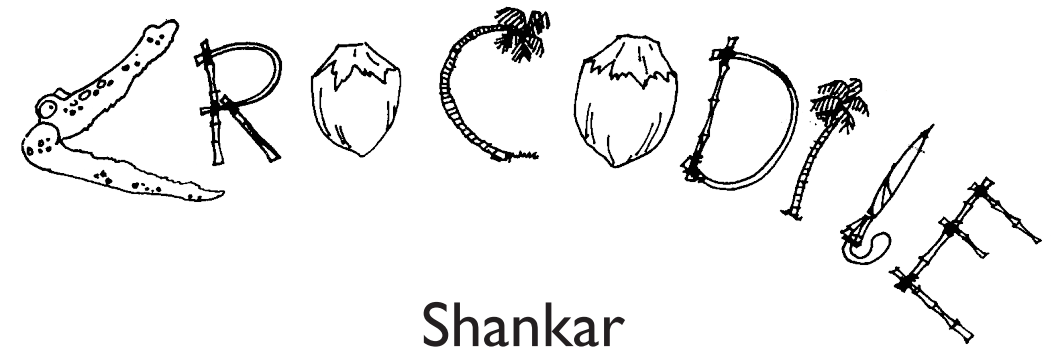
Art by Atanu Roy



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This book belongs to

.....



Shankar

Art by Atanu Roy

About Katha

Katha, a nonprofit organization founded in 1988, works in the literacy to literature continuum. We work with slum communities and municipal corporation schools to ensure that every child learns to read for fun and at grade level. We also work with women and teachers so that all children achieve their potential.

Our books, workshops and learning centres strive to forge cross-cultural connections through story and Story Pedagogy®. As one of India's finest publishers, our initiative has been recognized as "a unique and special moment in Indian publishing history" by *The Economic Times*.

Katha's books have received global recognition, including the nomination by an international jury for the prestigious Astrid Lindgren Award, the world's biggest prize for children's literature.

We love to work with new and established writers, translators and illustrators.

Do you like writing, illustrating, translating for children? Write to us at editors@katha.org to become a cherished member of the Katha family!

"[Katha] ... an educational jewel in India's crown."

— Naoyuki Shinohara, Deputy Managing Director, International Monetary Fund

"Katha stands as an exemplar for all the creative projects around the world that grapple with ordinary and dramatic misery in cities."

— Charles Landry, *The Art of City Making*

"Katha has a real soft corner for kids. Which is why it ... create[s] such gorgeous picture books for children."

— Time Out

"Katha's work is driven by the idea that children can bring change to their communities that is sustainable and real, just as the children do in [their books]."

— Papertigers



Everyone calls me Raja. I live with my grandfather and my grandmother in a small village in Kerala. Once I saw a huge crocodile in a tank near my house.

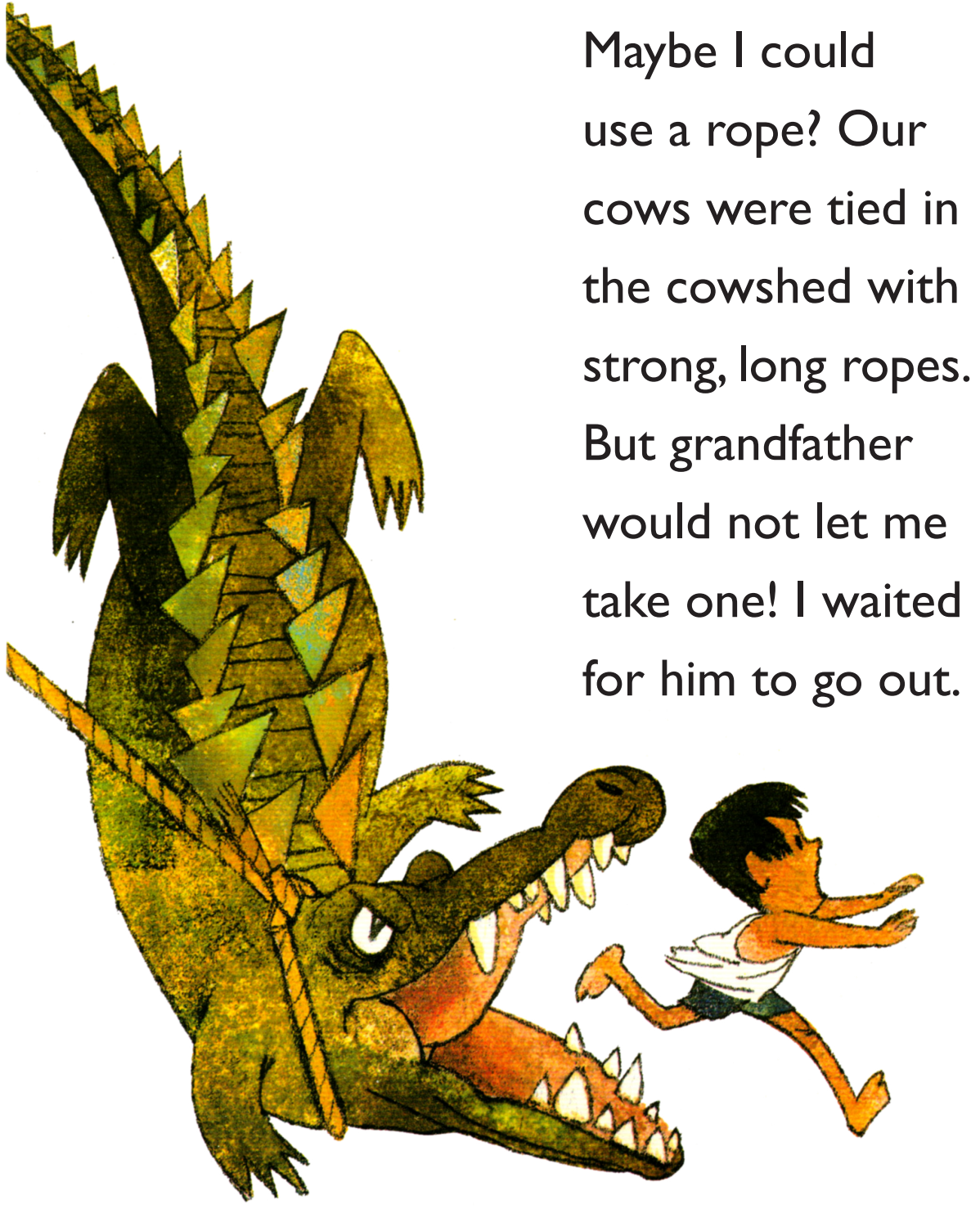


I did not mind the crocodile staying there. But, I did not want it to eat our fish.

I stood behind a tree and threw a brick at it. But, the

crocodile just slipped into the water and disappeared.

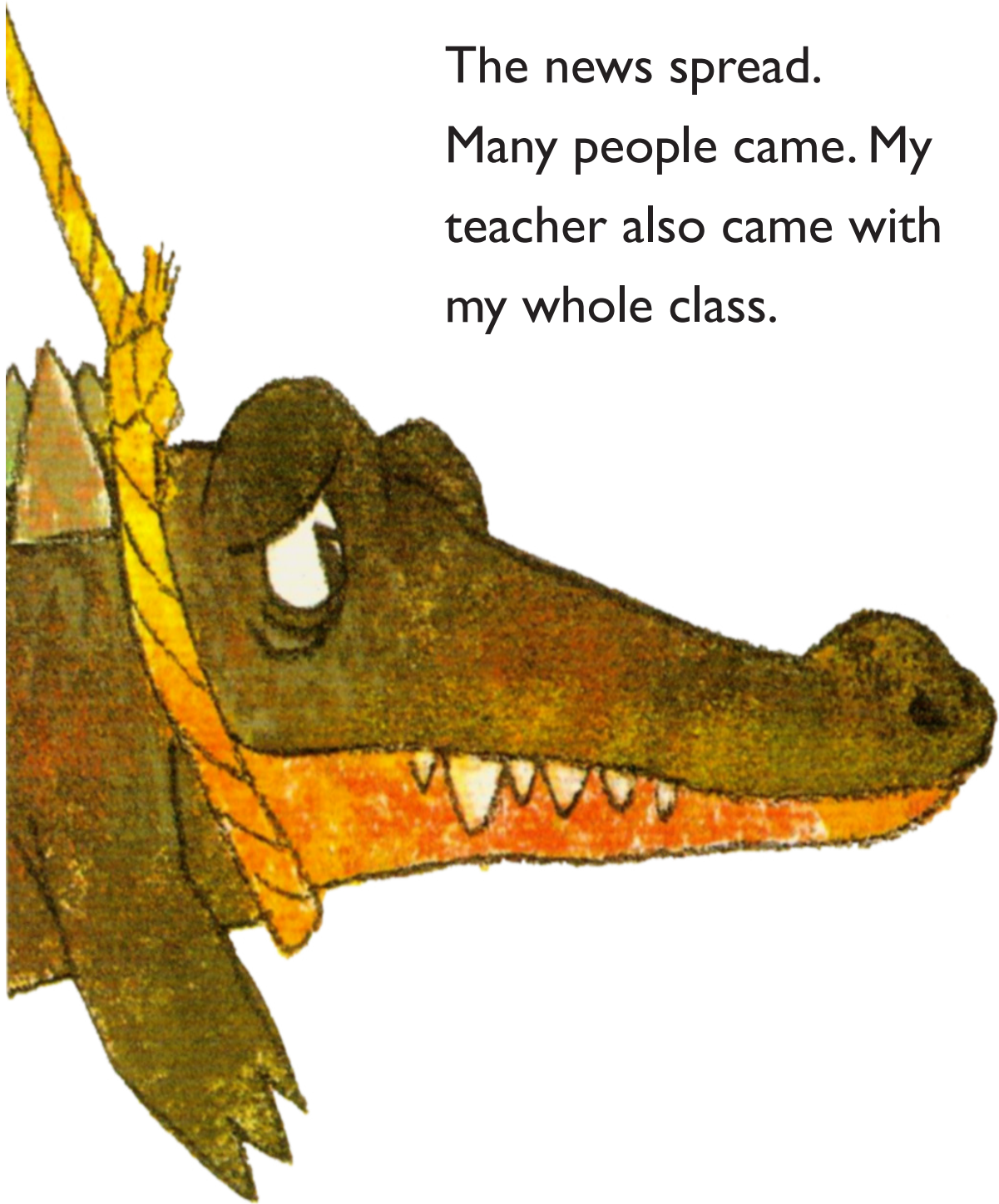




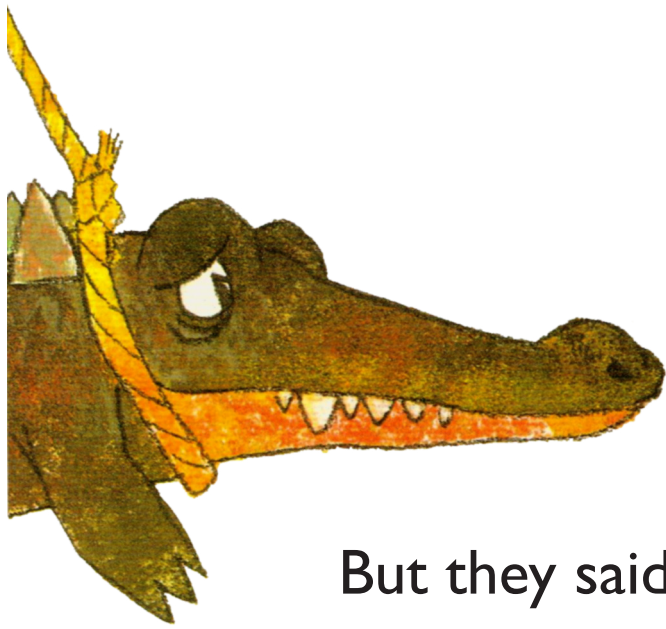
Maybe I could use a rope? Our cows were tied in the cowshed with strong, long ropes. But grandfather would not let me take one! I waited for him to go out.

Then, I quietly took a rope to the tank. I made a noose at one end of the rope and tied the other end to a big tree. Early next morning, I ran to the tank. There it was, the huge crocodile...caught! When it saw me, it suddenly rushed at me with its mouth open, letting off a sharp sound.

The news spread.
Many people came. My
teacher also came with
my whole class.

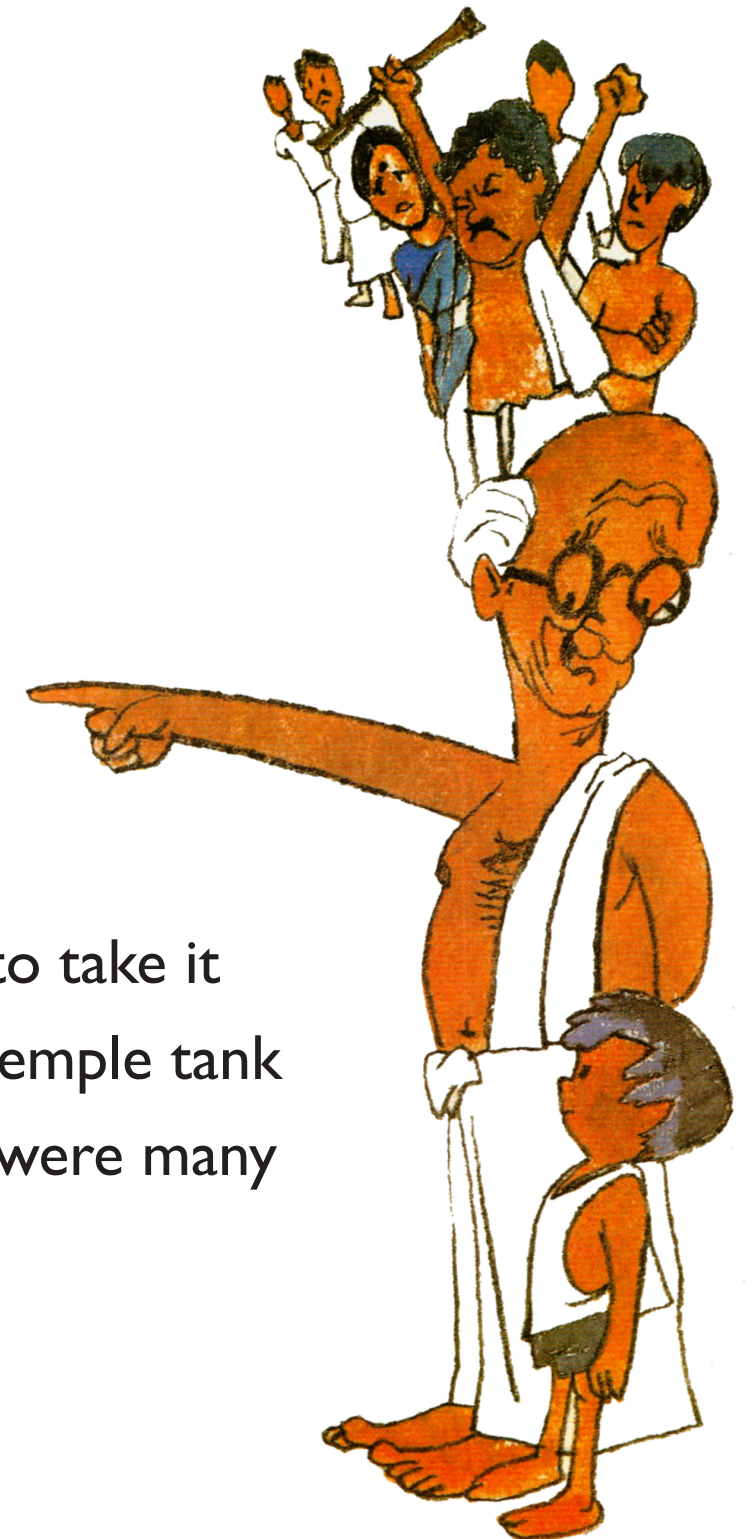


I felt like a hero! Some
people in the crowd
wanted to hurt the
crocodile. I told them that
it was my crocodile and I
wanted to set it free.

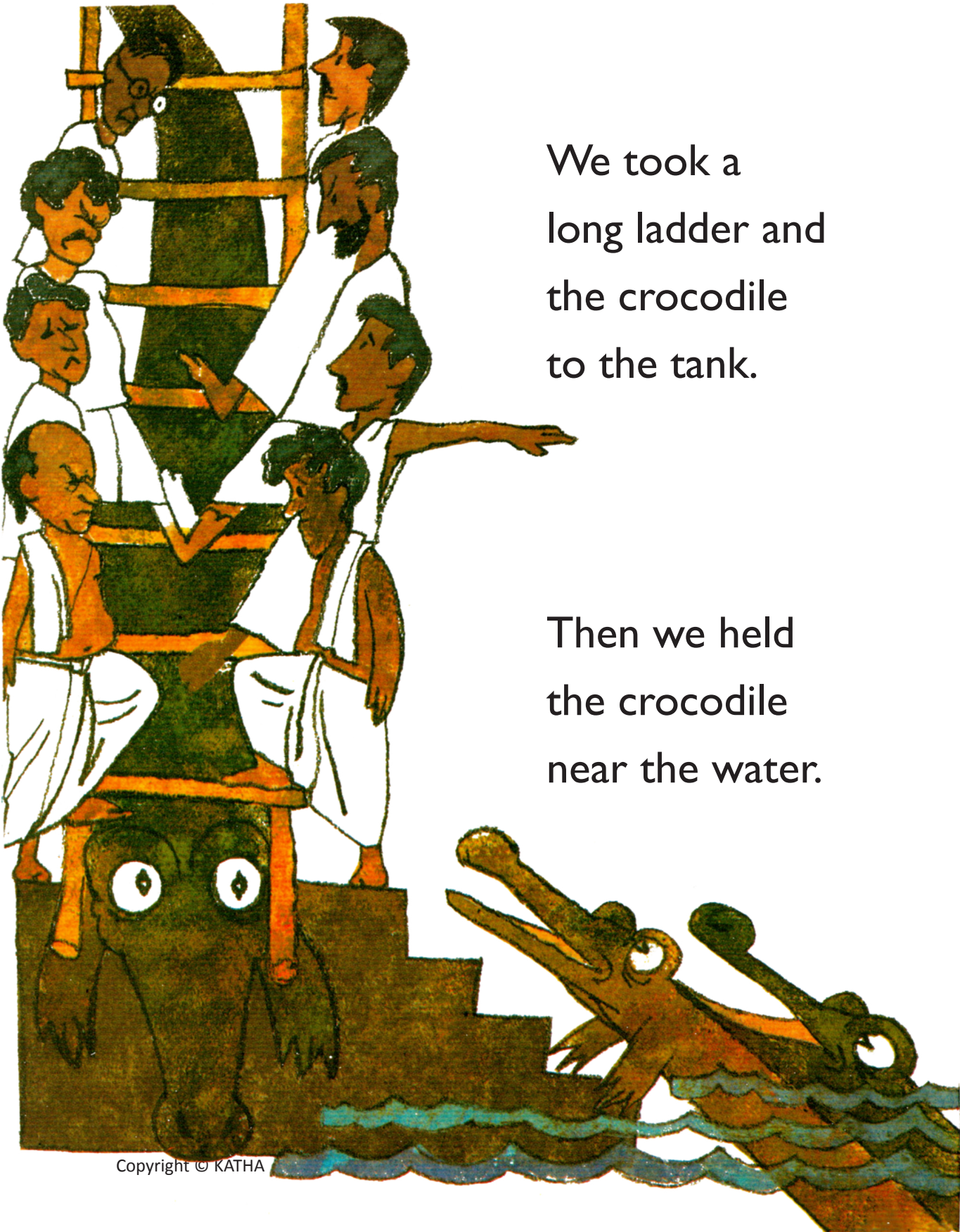


But they said it must be killed. I was alone and helpless.

Then, grandfather came! He was the only person who could save my crocodile. Grandfather said in a loud voice that nobody should harm the crocodile. He turned to me and said, 'Raja, set it free, at once.'



We decided to take it to the large temple tank where there were many crocodiles.

An illustration showing a group of men in white robes gathered around a large wooden ladder. The ladder is positioned over a crocodile that is being held near the edge of a tank. The crocodile has large, wide eyes and its mouth is open. The men are looking at the crocodile and the ladder with various expressions of concern and focus. The scene is set outdoors with a simple background.

We took a
long ladder and
the crocodile
to the tank.

Then we held
the crocodile
near the water.

We put the ladder on top
of it Eight people pressed
down the ladder at both ends
so that it could not move.
Then I cut the rope that held
the crocodile. The ladder
was lifted and the crocodile
jumped into the tank!
A few days later my crocodile
was back in the same tank
where I had seen him first....
basking in the sun!



A foremost writer and illustrator of children's books and the father of political cartooning in India, K. Shankar Pillai, better known as **Shankar**, was born in Kayamkulam, Kerala. He founded *Shankar's Weekly* in 1948, which went on to become a fine example of sparkling wit and humour. The magazine closed down in 1975 and from then on, Shankar turned to making children laugh and enjoy. Today he is most remembered for setting up Children's Book Trust and Shankar's International Dolls Museum. He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1976.

With over a hundred children's books under his belt, **Atanu Roy** has devoted much of his creative prowess to children's literature. It's no surprise then that Roy, who once worked as a political cartoonist for *India Today*, has won awards like the Children's Choice Award for Book Illustrations and the IBBY Certificate of Honour for Illustrations.

Raja is in a fix. There is a crocodile in the tank near his house and it might eat all the fish! When Raja tries to shoo away the crocodile, he finds himself in a bigger mess. Now he wants to save the animal from the villagers. Will grandfather's brainwave set the crocodile free? Find out for yourself by joining Raja on this adventurous journey!

