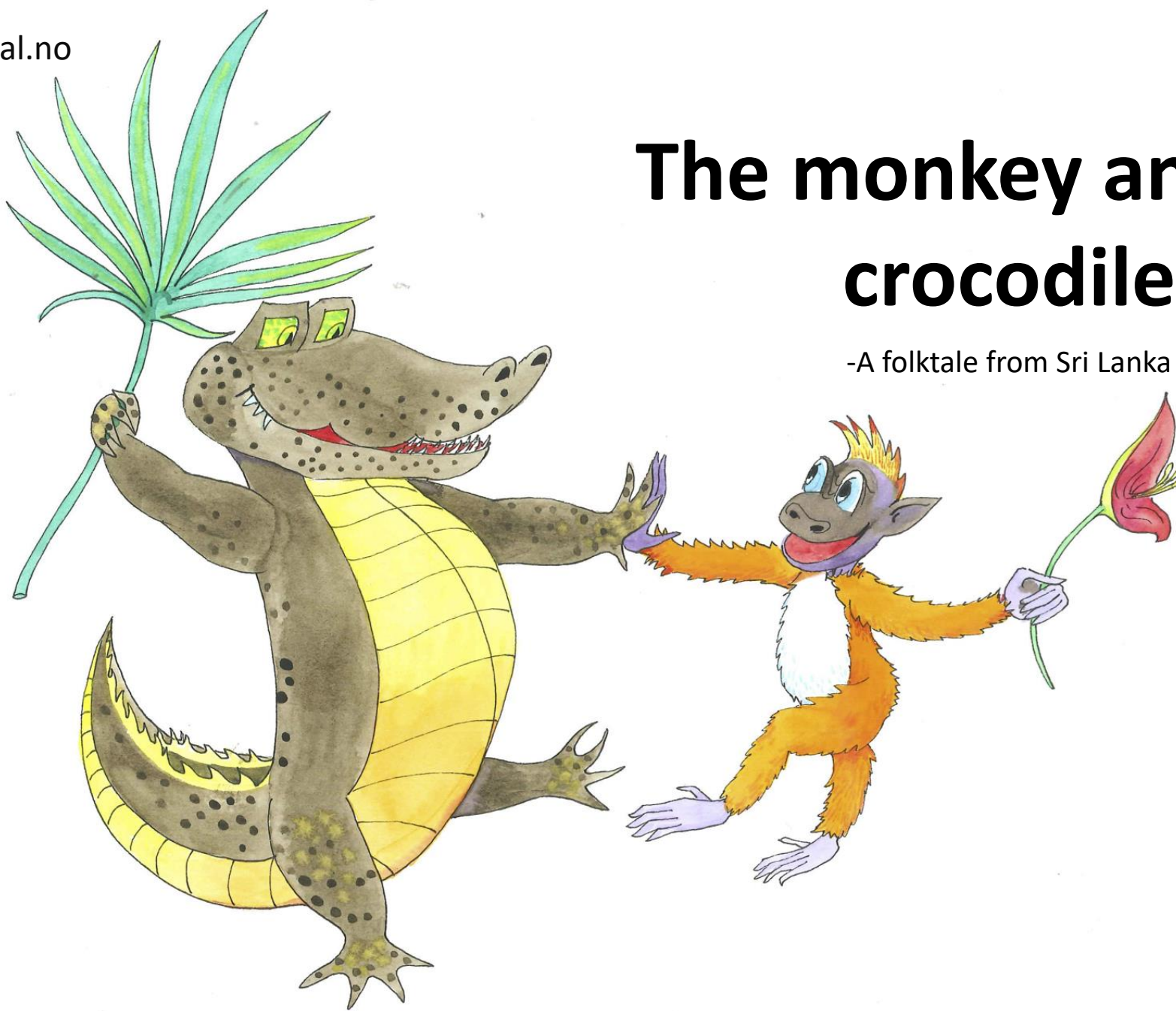


The monkey and the crocodile

-A folktale from Sri Lanka





Once upon a time, there was a deep jungle in Sri Lanka.

In the jungle there were lots of trees, and between the trees flowed a wide river. Here, a young monkey lived with his mother. He was a cute, little brown monkey with two huge ears and a big heart.



Every day, the young monkey climbed up the trees. He swung from tree to tree, all the way until he came to the river. There, he would slide down the tree and sit at the riverbank, all alone. The young monkey had no friends. And the other animals did not want to play with him. They were much older than him and ran faster too, so the young monkey could not catch up with them.



In the evening, he would go back to his mum and lay in her lap. 'I have no friends to play with,' he used to say. 'Don't be sad, dear child.

When you will grow up, you will have lots of friends,' his mum would reply. 'But I want friends now!' said the young ape.

'I am your friend,' said the mum. 'Zzzz' ... and the young monkey fell asleep.



One day when the young monkey was by the riverside, he suddenly saw two huge round eyes sticking out of the water. The eyes swam closer and closer to him.



All of a sudden, a huge head stuck out which splashed the monkey with heaps of water, soaking him wet. Up from the water appeared a humongous animal with a long green snout, sharp teeth and a long tale.

‘Who are you?’ asked the monkey, shaking water off himself. ‘Eh ... I ... I am a crocodile,’ said the animal. ‘And I am a monkey. Shall we be friends? Best friends?’ asked the monkey.

‘Friends, what is that?’ asked the crocodile. ‘Being friends means that we play together and we look after each other,’ explained the monkey. ‘Okay then, we can be friends, eh... best friends,’ replied the crocodile.





So, they started playing
together:

Ahaa oohoo, here is my friend

Ahaa oohoo, where did he
come from

Ahaa oohoo, from the river
down there

Ahaa oohoo, he made my day!



In the evening
they said bye
to each other
and promised
to meet the
next day.



The monkey ran back home and told his mum:
'I've made a friend'.

'Wow, that's nice', his mum replied happily.

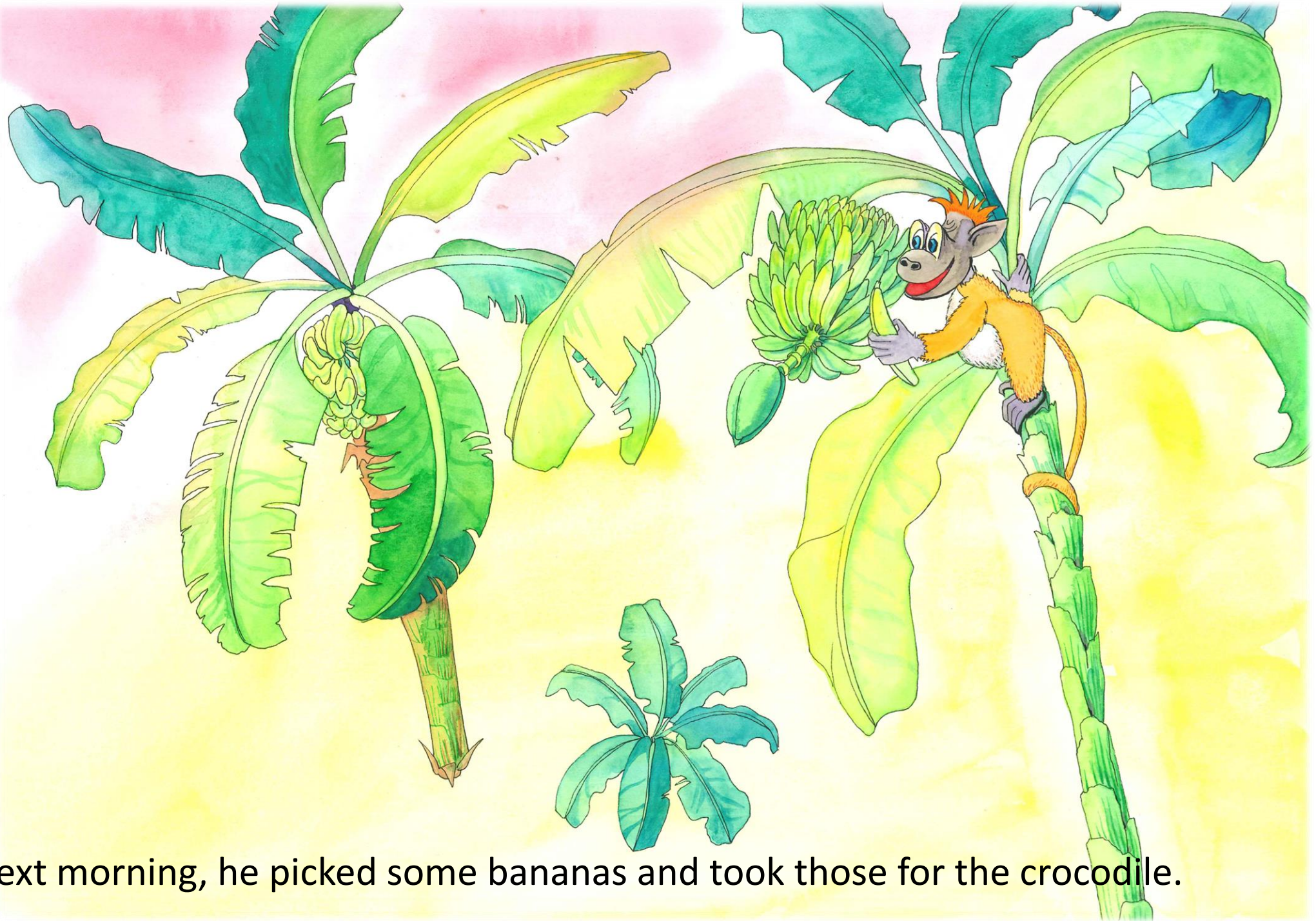
'His name is ... umm....it's kk ...kk...' 'Kitty?'
asked the mum. 'No,' said the monkey. 'Koala?'
the mum was curious. 'No,' said the monkey.
'Cow?' the mum kept trying. 'No, his name is
kkkk, crocodile!', the monkey said.

'CROCODILE!' mama monkey screamed.

'Crocodiles are dangerous! They eat other
animals. They eat monkeys! You are not
allowed to play with that crocodile.'



The young monkey was very sad. He had just made a friend. When he went to bed that night, he could not sleep. Suddenly, he had an idea:



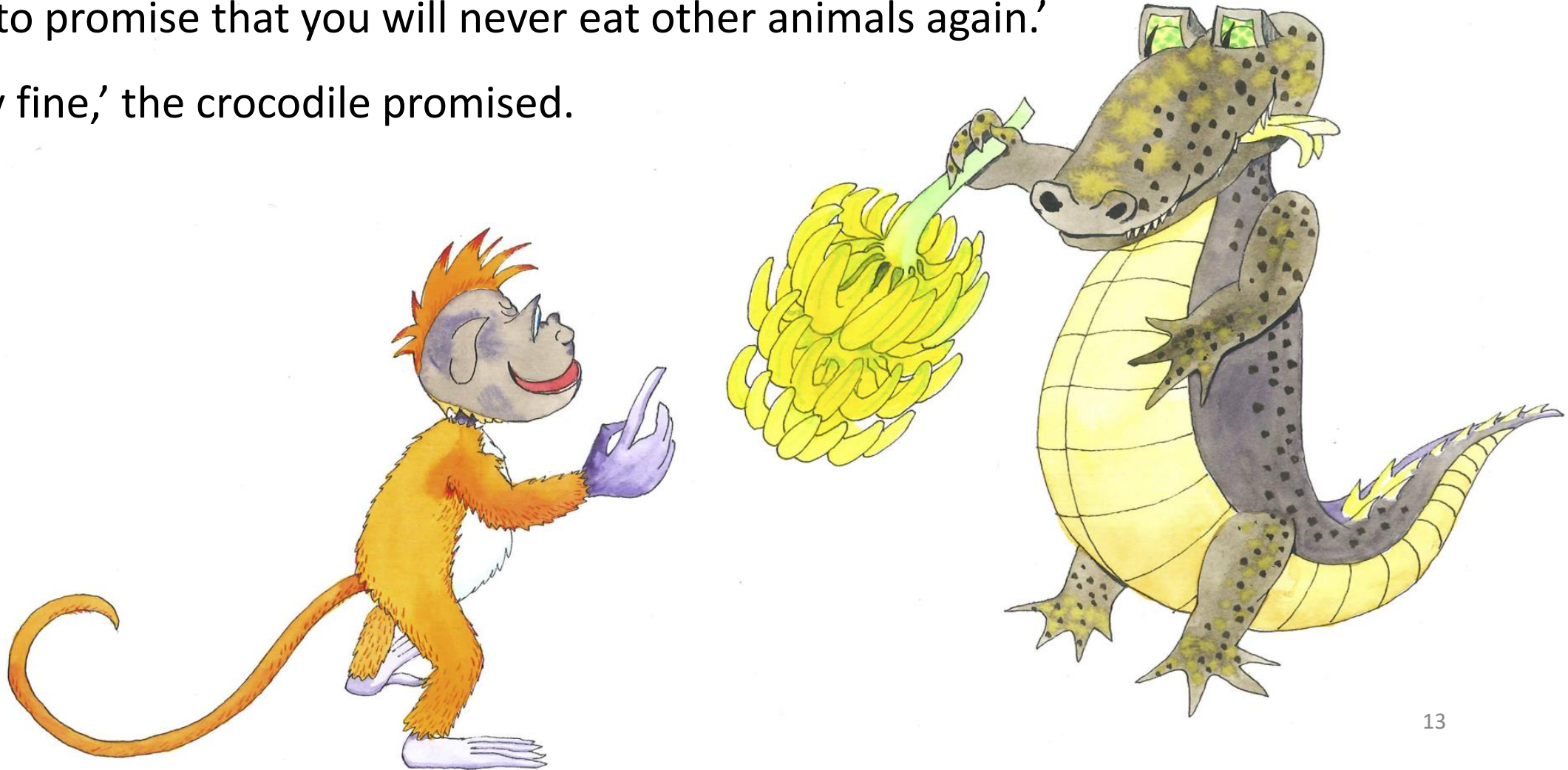
The next morning, he picked some bananas and took those for the crocodile.

The monkey gave bananas to the crocodile and said: 'Look, here's some fruit for you. It tastes delicious.' The crocodile had a bite of banana and said 'Yeah ... it is delicious.'

The monkey said, 'I will bring you fruit every day.

But you have to promise that you will never eat other animals again.'

'Umm okay fine,' the crocodile promised.





Every single day, the monkey brought a fruit basket for the crocodile, with all types of fruits, really yummy fruits: bananas, pineapples, kiwis, mandarins, mangoes. Then they played and had lots of fun. When it was time to go home in the evening, the monkey went back to his mum while the crocodile swam back to his wife, carrying the fruit basket on his back to share the fruit with her.



One day, the crocodile's wife said: 'The fruit tastes nice but there's something that is missing. A monkey's heart! It would be great to eat a little monkey's heart with this fruit,' said the wife and asked her husband to invite the monkey to their home so that they could eat his heart. 'Umm... But he is my friend,' said the husband. 'Friend? What is a friend? Never heard of something like that,' said the crocodile's wife. 'Have you forgotten that we crocodiles eat animals?' She told her husband to hurry up because she was very hungry.



The crocodile swam down to the monkey and invited him over to dinner. The monkey was overjoyed, but then he remembered something:

‘I cannot swim,’ said the monkey. ‘How am I going to make it to your home?’



‘Well ... I can carry you on my back,’ the crocodile offered. The monkey liked the idea. So, he hopped on the crocodile’s back and they made their way to the crocodile’s home.



When they got close to the crocodile's home, his wife was standing by the riverbank, wearing an apron and holding a large fork in her hand, ready to gobble up the monkey.

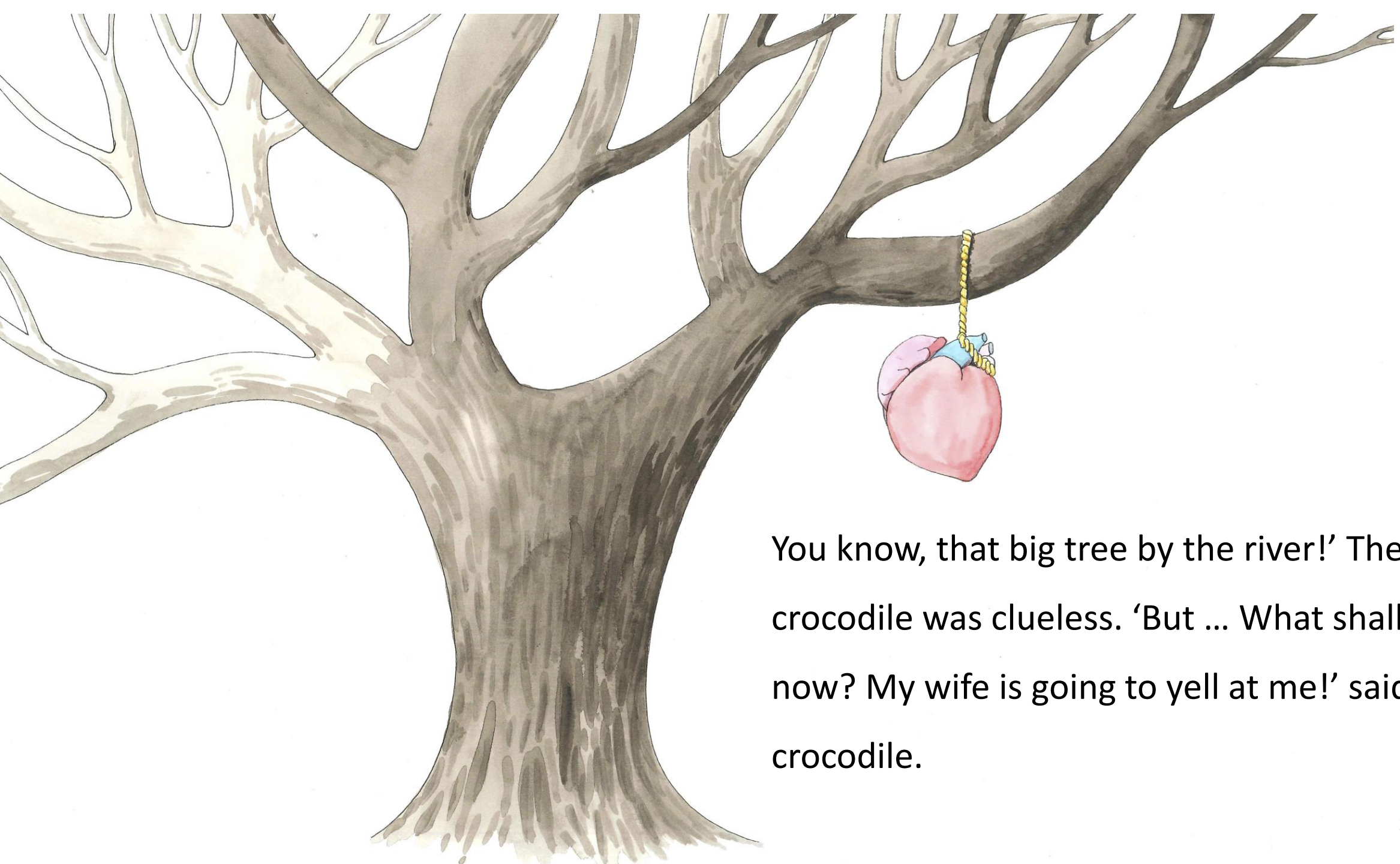
‘Well ... You know, my wife really wanted to eat a monkey's heart. This is why I brought you home with me so that she could eat you,’ the crocodile explained.



‘But I have left my
heart behind,’
said the monkey.

‘What ... What do you
mean?’

‘I am sorry ...’ said the
monkey. ‘My heart had
gotten wet, so I took it
out and left it on a
tree to dry.



You know, that big tree by the river!’ The crocodile was clueless. ‘But ... What shall we do now? My wife is going to yell at me!’ said the crocodile.



‘We will just swim back and fetch my heart,’ the monkey said.

‘Good idea!’ the crocodile said and started swimming back with the monkey on his back.



When they were back by the large tree, the crocodile told the monkey to hurry up and fetch the heart. The monkey jumped off his back and quickly climbed up the tree. Now he was out of the crocodile's reach. 'You are not my friend anymore,' the monkey said and ran back home.



The young monkey ran straight into the arms of his mother and promised that from now on he will listen to his mother and never be friends with crocodiles.

And that is how the story ends.



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