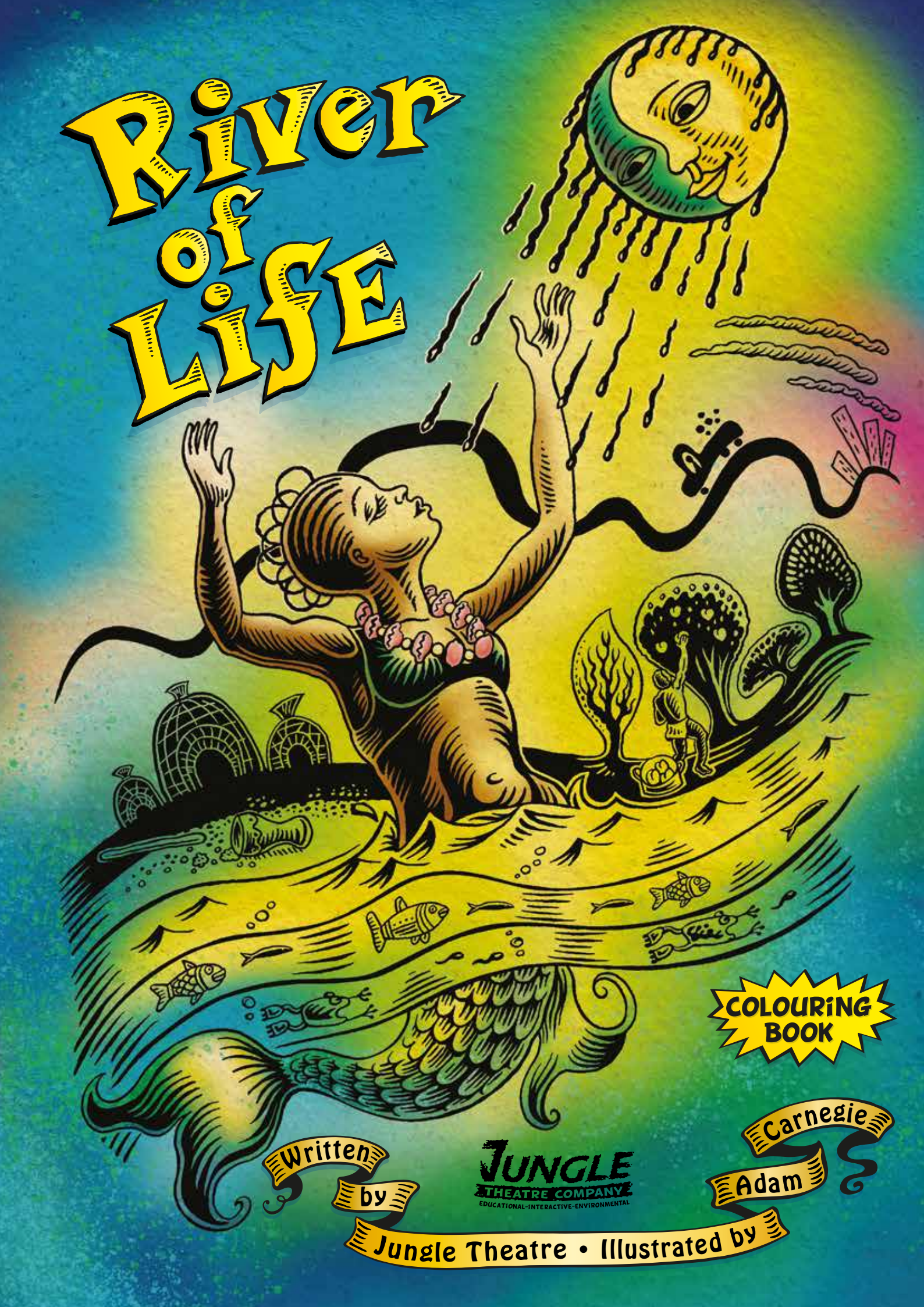
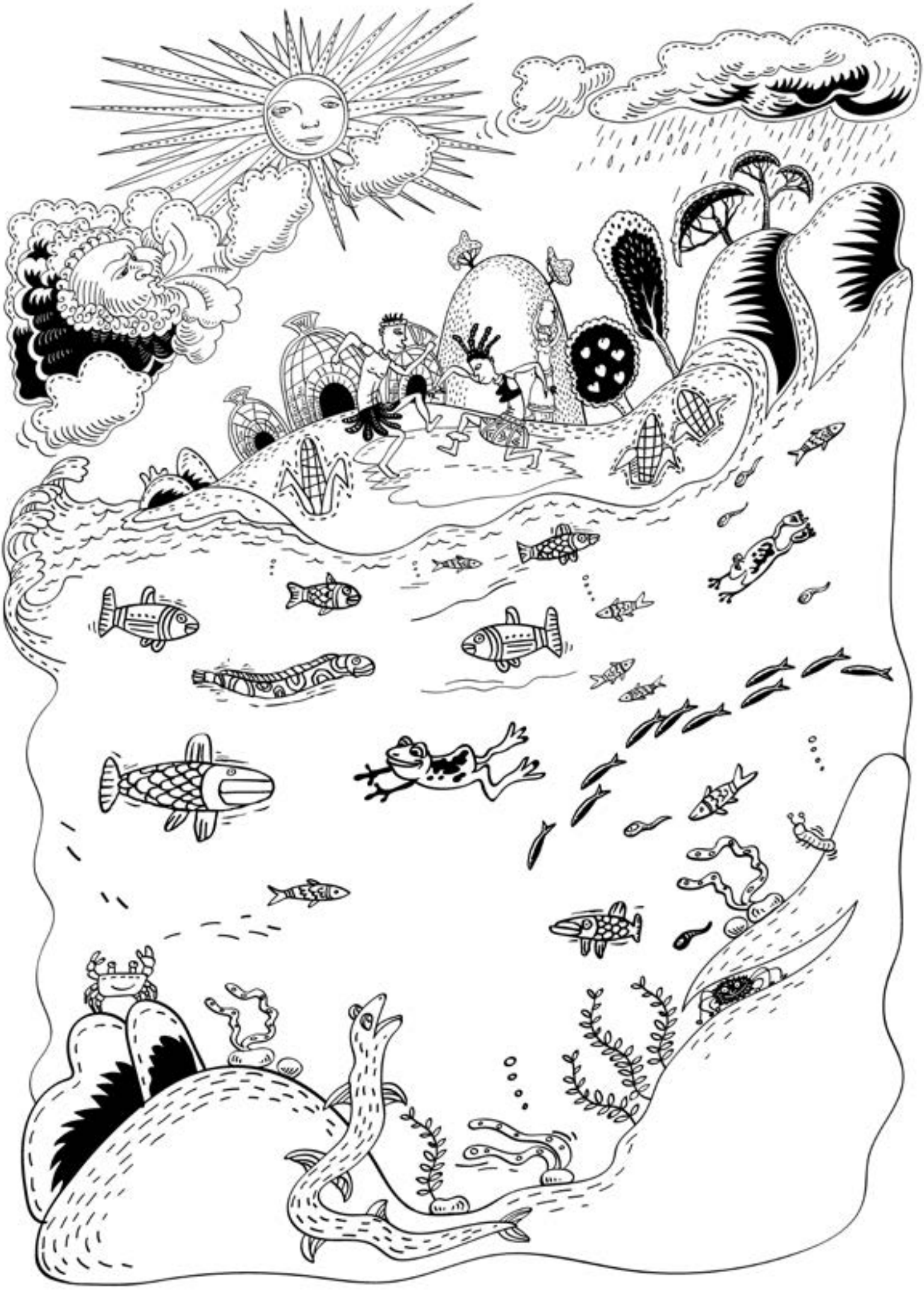

River of Life
COLOURING BOOK
Written by
Jungle Theatre
JUNGLE
THEATRE COMPANY
EDUCATIONAL-INTERACTIVE-ENVIRONMENTAL
• Illustrated by
Adam Carnegie



Welcome, we are going to tell you a story called Umlambo Wobomi, which means the River of Life.

The story starts with the ocean. The sun shone hot making water rise from the ocean. Clouds formed and the wind blew them all the way to the mountains. Rain started to fall, and tiny streams began to flow down the mountains. The streams joined each other getting bigger and bigger and bigger making the river, the River of life, Umlambo Wobomi!

Inside this river lived many creatures' plants, insects,
frogs...
"Gwaaark!"
...snakes...
"SSSSS!"
...fish...
"Ubabalaa!"

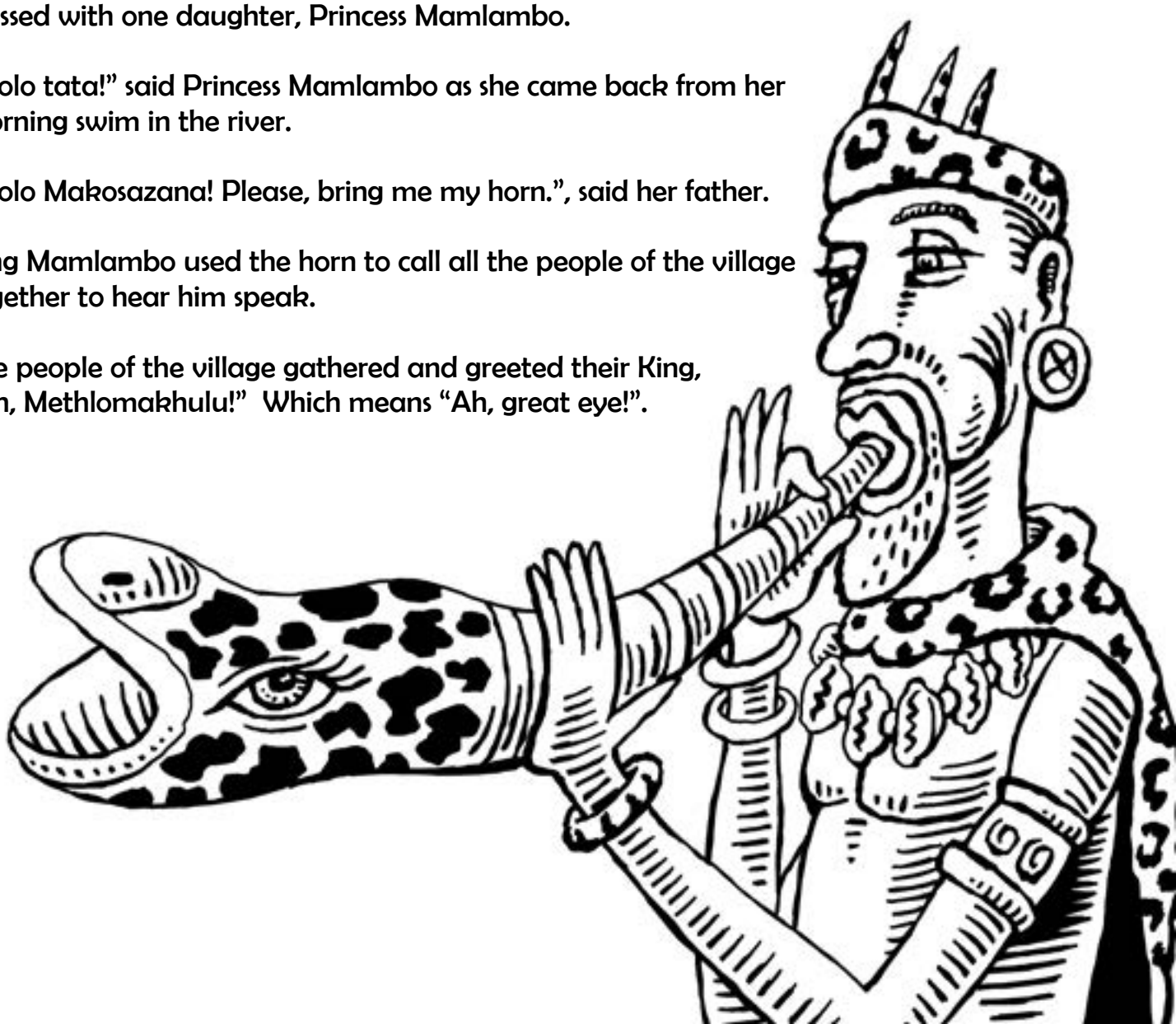
Not so long ago, next to the river, there was a peaceful village where the Omlambo tribe lived. This village was ruled by the great King Mamlambo who was blessed with one daughter, Princess Mamlambo.

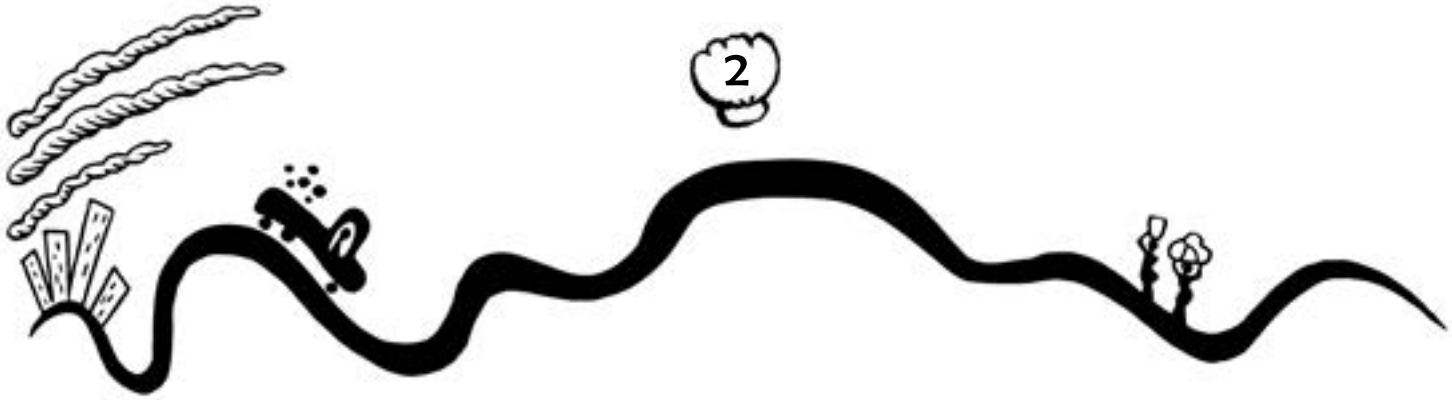
"Molo tata!" said Princess Mamlambo as she came back from her morning swim in the river.

"Molo Makosazana! Please, bring me my horn.", said her father.

King Mamlambo used the horn to call all the people of the village together to hear him speak.

The people of the village gathered and greeted their King,
"Ah, Methlomakhulu!" Which means "Ah, great eye!".





King Mamlambo spoke, "People of Omlambo, our river provides us with water for drinking, cooking, and washing. Our river provides us with fish to eat and water for our fruits, vegetables, and animals. Our river was looked after by our grandparents and their grandparents before them and we shall do the same. Umlambo Wobomi is the River of Life! Let the celebration begin!"

The people of the village beat drums, danced, and sang to celebrate their river. "Umlambo Wobomi is the River of Life!"

Suddenly, from far away over the mountains they saw a strange shiny silver "bakkie". The celebration stopped. The people of the village watched the "bakkie" as it got closer and closer.
The "bakkie" arrived in the village. The "bakkie" door opened and out stepped a man wearing a shiny black suit and a false smile. He lifted a box from the back of the "bakkie" and spoke to the crowd of people that had gathered around him.

"Matenten special has arrived from the big city! I've got ten top quality products in ten top prices! Wozani, wozani!"

Matenten pulled a bag of sweets out of the box and started to sing.

"Sweety treaty makes you happy. Sweety treaty makes you glad. Guys don't be sad sweety treaty will make you glad. Don't cry sweety treaty will make you fly."

The people of the village had never seen sweets before. They were amazed.

"Only R10!" called out Matenten

"We have no money." replied the people.

"What can you offer me?" asked Matenten

"I'll give you a bag of potatoes." said one of the villagers.

"I'll give a bag of potatoes and a bag of bananas." said another.

"I'll give you a bag of potatoes a bag of bananas and a chicken." said another.

Soogas

"Good, you will get the Sweety Treaty!" exclaimed Matenten

Matenten handed over a bag of sweets and pulled one product after the other from his box. Each product was wrapped in plastic and came in a plastic bag. Matenten managed to convince the people of the village to exchange all their animals and vegetables for many useless products. Matenten then left the village laughing with a "bakkie" load of fresh food. The people forgot about taking care of the river. All the plastic was thrown into the river. The river water became polluted.

The people tried to wash hands in the river, but their hands just become sticky. They tried to wash their faces in the river, but their faces just become itchy. They tried to drink the water from the river, but it tasted bad and gave them pain in their tummies. They tried to spear the fish, but the fish were hard to find.

Meanwhile under the water the river creatures were getting sick. A snake called out to his leader for help.

"Tarafaaa! Siswaa, tarafaaa!"

A frog was stuck with litter around his neck.

"Tarafaaaaa!"

Finally, the King of the river creatures, Tarafaa, spoke,

"Beyaneebobo scloomglumsclumgloom!"

The creatures repeated their leader's words,

"Beyaneebobo scloomglumsclumgloom!"

The King Fish decided to teach the people a lesson. So, the creatures drank up all the water in the river.

The next morning two people from the village discovered the empty river. They ran over to report to their King what they had seen.

"Ah, Methlomakhulu! There is no water in our river! We are thirsty. Our plants and animals are dying. Please tell us what to do?"

The King was deep in thought for a moment and then spoke.

"My people, we need to do things the way our great, great grandparents used to do, we must go and seek advice from our Sangoma."

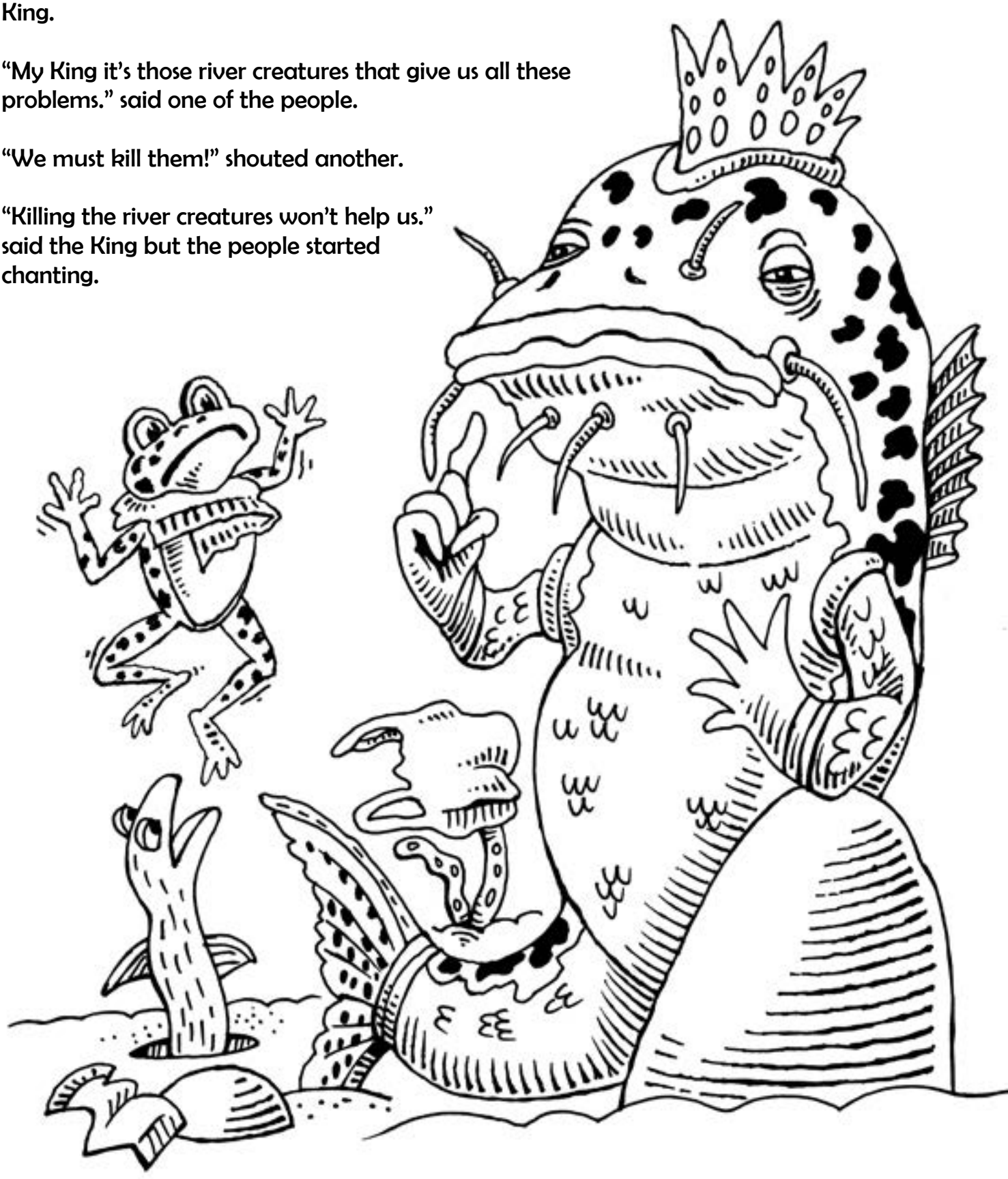
"My King, you know our Sangoma left the village when Matenten arrived." said the people.

"Yes, that is true. Now we need our Sangoma to come back and help us." said their King.

"My King it's those river creatures that give us all these problems." said one of the people.

"We must kill them!" shouted another.

"Killing the river creatures won't help us." said the King but the people started chanting.



"KILL THE RIVER CREATURES!!!!"

The angry crowd kept on chanting and moved down towards the dry riverbed. Just then Princess Mamlambo stood in their path and called out.

"No! Stop! We should not kill the river creatures! We need the frogs to eat the flies and mosquitoes. We need the snakes to eat the rats. We need the fish for our food."

"What are we going to do?" cried the people.

"I will go and find the Sangoma." said Princess Mamlambo.

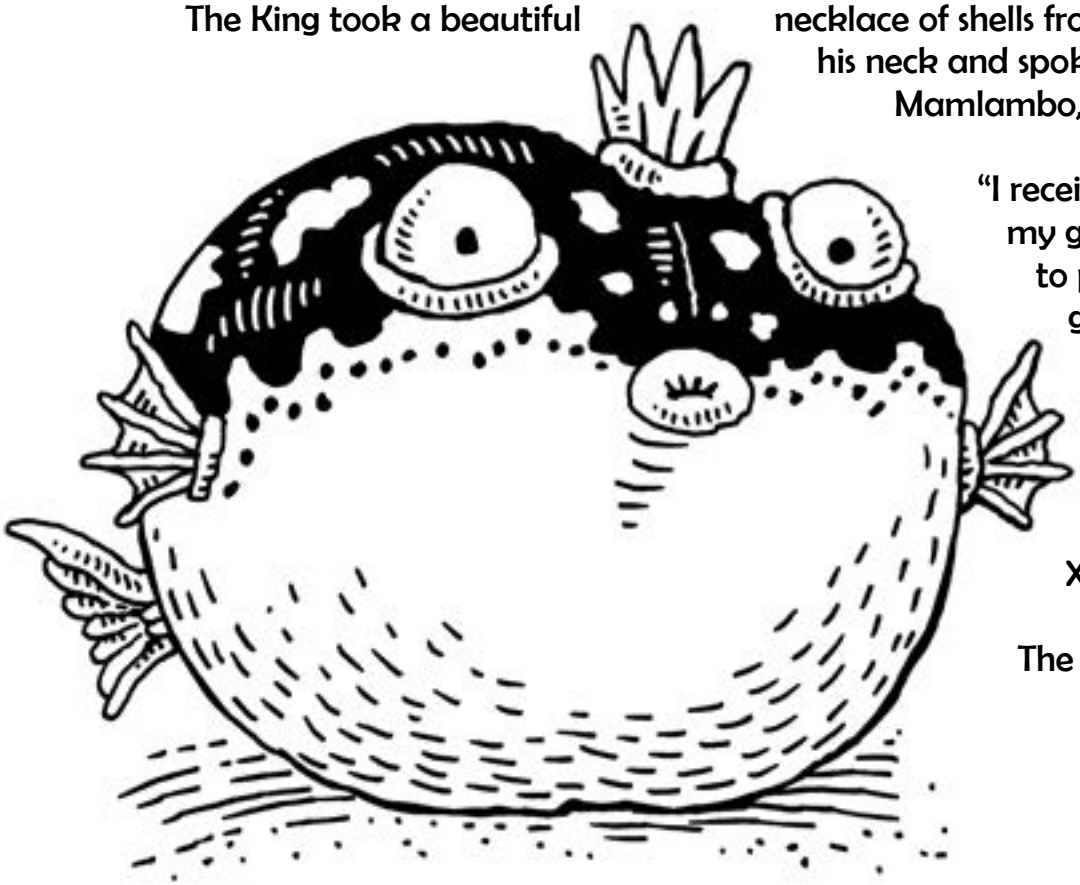
"Not you my daughter." replied the King.

"Tata, now is the time. I'm old enough to help my village." said Princess Mamlambo.

The King took a moment to think before he spoke.

"I always knew that the time would come for you to prove yourself to Omlambo."

The King took a beautiful necklace of shells from around his neck and spoke to Princess Mamlambo,



"I received this necklace from my great, great grand father to protect me, today I'm giving it to you to protect you on your journey. If your mother was still with us, she would be very proud of you. Go well Mamlambo Xhakaza."

The villagers watched in

silence as Princess Mamlambo hung the necklace around her neck and prepared herself for the journey in search of their Sangoma. As Princess Mamlambo left the village the people wished her well with this song about how their Sangoma can live under water.

“Emanzini manzini isangoma silala emanzini kwazulu.”

Princess Mamlambo knew that she would need to walk far into the mountains to find the cave where their Sangoma would be living. As she walked along the dry riverbed the sun beat down on her and a powerful wind blew sand up into her face and eyes. She grabbed hold of the necklace. It helped her to keep going. In the thick forest at the foothills of the mountains Princess Mamlambo heard scary sounds of wild animals, but she held the necklace and was brave enough to keep walking. Climbing the mountain, she nearly slipped and fell but focused on her fathers’ words and the necklace. Finally, she reached the top of the mountain and entered the Sangoma’s cave.

“Princess Mamlambo, sit down!” said Sangoma.

“Makhosi.” replied Princess Mamlambo as she respectfully clapped her hands and found a place to sit in the cave.

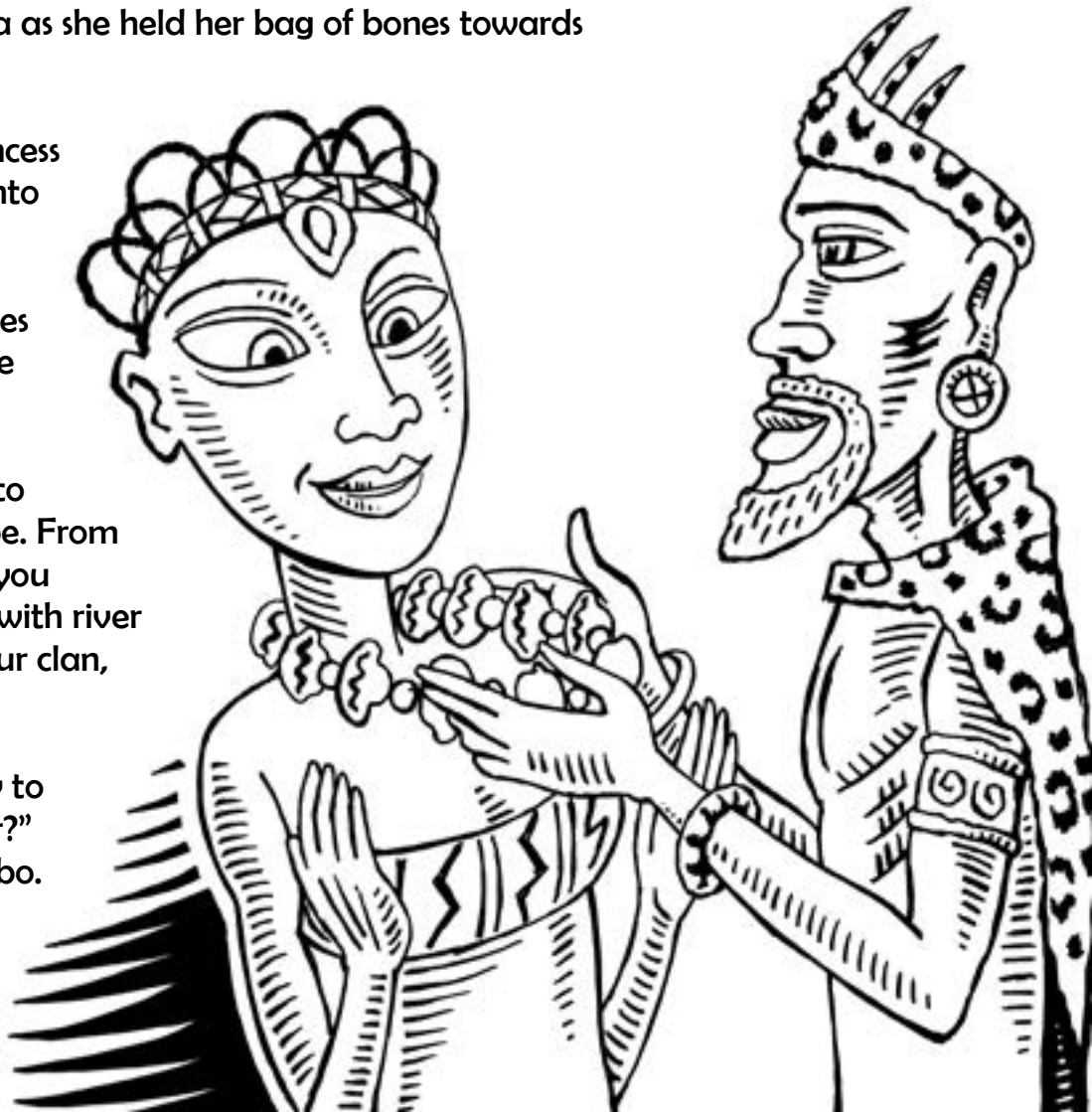
“Vumani.” said Sangoma as she held her bag of bones towards Princess Mamlambo.

“Siyavuma.” replied Princess Mamlambo and blew onto the bones.

Sangoma threw the bones onto the floor of the cave and spoke.

“You have been chosen to help your Omlambo tribe. From your great grandfather you received the gift to talk with river creatures. Because of your clan, Ngumlambo!”

“Makhosi, what will I say to the creatures of the river?” asked Princess Mamlambo.



"The answers are in your heart!" replied Sangoma.

"Makhosi." said Princess Mamlambo as she clapped her hands in gratitude.

They danced together and sang the song that the people of the village had sung before.

"Emanzini manzini isangoma silala emanzini kwazulu."

Once they had danced for a while the Sangoma turned to Princess Mamlambo and called out,

"Hamba!"

Princess Mamlambo, journeyed back to the village filled with hope. She was ready to speak with the river creatures. She arrived at the dry riverbed and came across river creatures who were puffed up from drinking all the water. The King fish spoke,

"Haniaa baskita bulom."

"Haniaa baskita bulom?" repeated Princess Mamlambo confused.

"Haniaa baskita bulom." repeated the King fish and showed her the action of picking up litter.

"Ah, Haniaa baskita bulom." Princess Mamlambo realized what the King fish was saying.

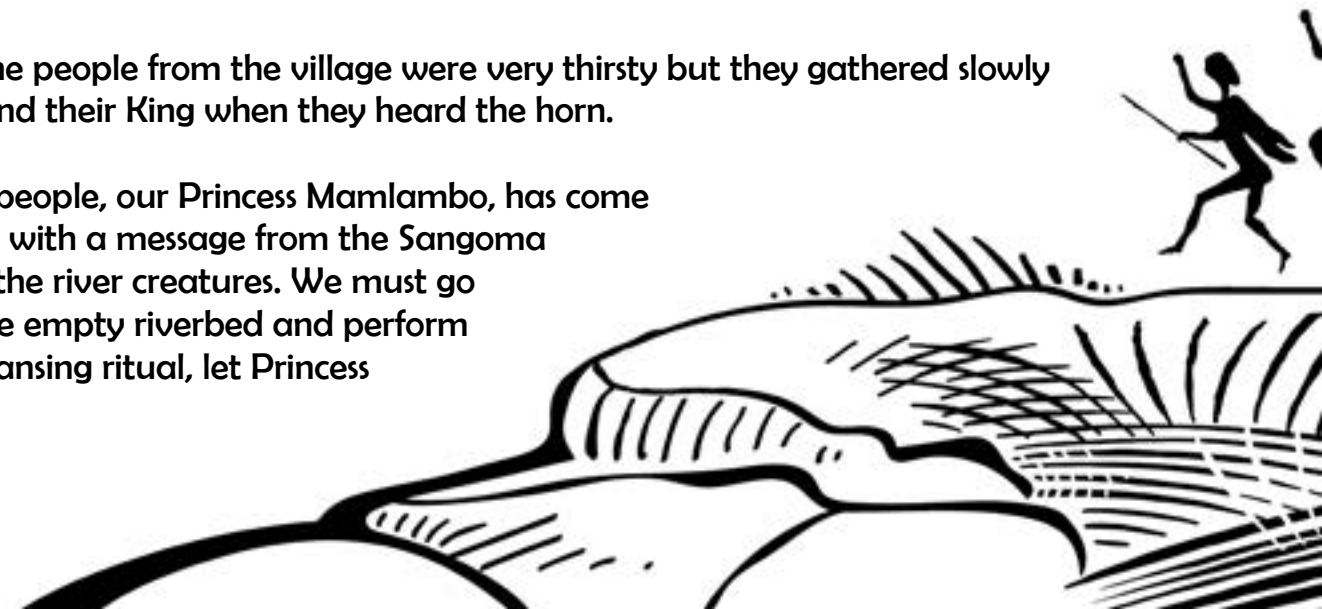
"Aksa, splowblow splowblow." said the King fish.

"Ah, splow blow splowblow!" exclaimed Princess Mamlambo.

Princess Mamlambo ran over to her father the King to pass on the message. They embraced and the Princess brought her father the horn.

All the people from the village were very thirsty but they gathered slowly around their King when they heard the horn.

"My people, our Princess Mamlambo, has come back with a message from the Sangoma and the river creatures. We must go to the empty riverbed and perform a cleansing ritual, let Princess



Mamlambo lead the ritual."

The Princess started a song and the people joined in as they followed her down to the riverbed.

Kulula amanzi bantubam, free the water my people."

Once they had reached the riverbed Princess Mamlambo spoke to her people.

"I have a message from the water creatures. We can get our river back but first we must take care of the river and all its creatures. We must stop polluting the river. We must pick up all the litter in and around the river."

All the people of the village followed their Princess as they picked up all the litter in and around the river. Once they were done the Princess showed the King fish their work.

"Baltiya ubulongi!" the King fish called out.

Princess Mamlambo translated the King fish's words,

"The King fish says we have all done well."

"Balingi splowblow splowblow?" the Princess asked the King fish.

"Baliki splow blow splow blow!" he replied

It was then that the river creatures released the water that they had sucked up from the river. It poured from their mouths and filled up the river. Clouds gathered far away on the mountains and rain began to fall. The river grew and grew and grew until it was full like before. All the villagers drank deeply from the river, some jumped in and swam with the river creatures. Just then the Sangoma arrived back in the village and spoke to her King.

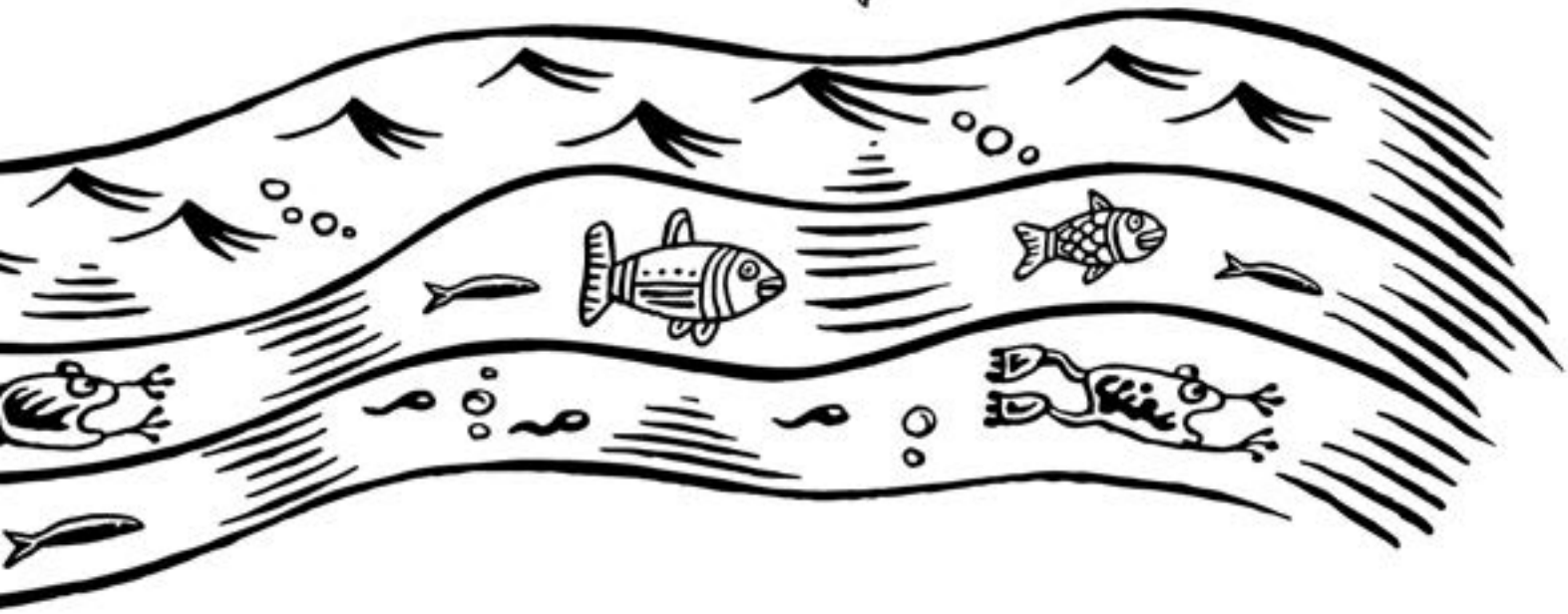
"My King."

"Sangoma?" the King replied.

"Princess Mamlambo has been very brave."

"You have guided her well. It is time you returned to your people."

"I will be glad to come home."



"Mamlambo, bring me my horn," asked the King who blew the horn to gather his people.

"My people let us welcome our Sangoma back into the village. She has helped us to bring back our beautiful river, Umlambo Wobomi! Thank you for giving us life again. Let's dance, sing and celebrate, Umlambo Wobomi."

The people played drums, danced and everybody sang together,

"Umlambo Wobomi, is the river of life, the river of life,"

From that day onwards Princess Mamlambo, became a mermaid. Every night she would swim under water and speak with the river creatures. Every day she would share stories about the river with her people. The river, the creatures and the people all lived together happily ever after.

THE END

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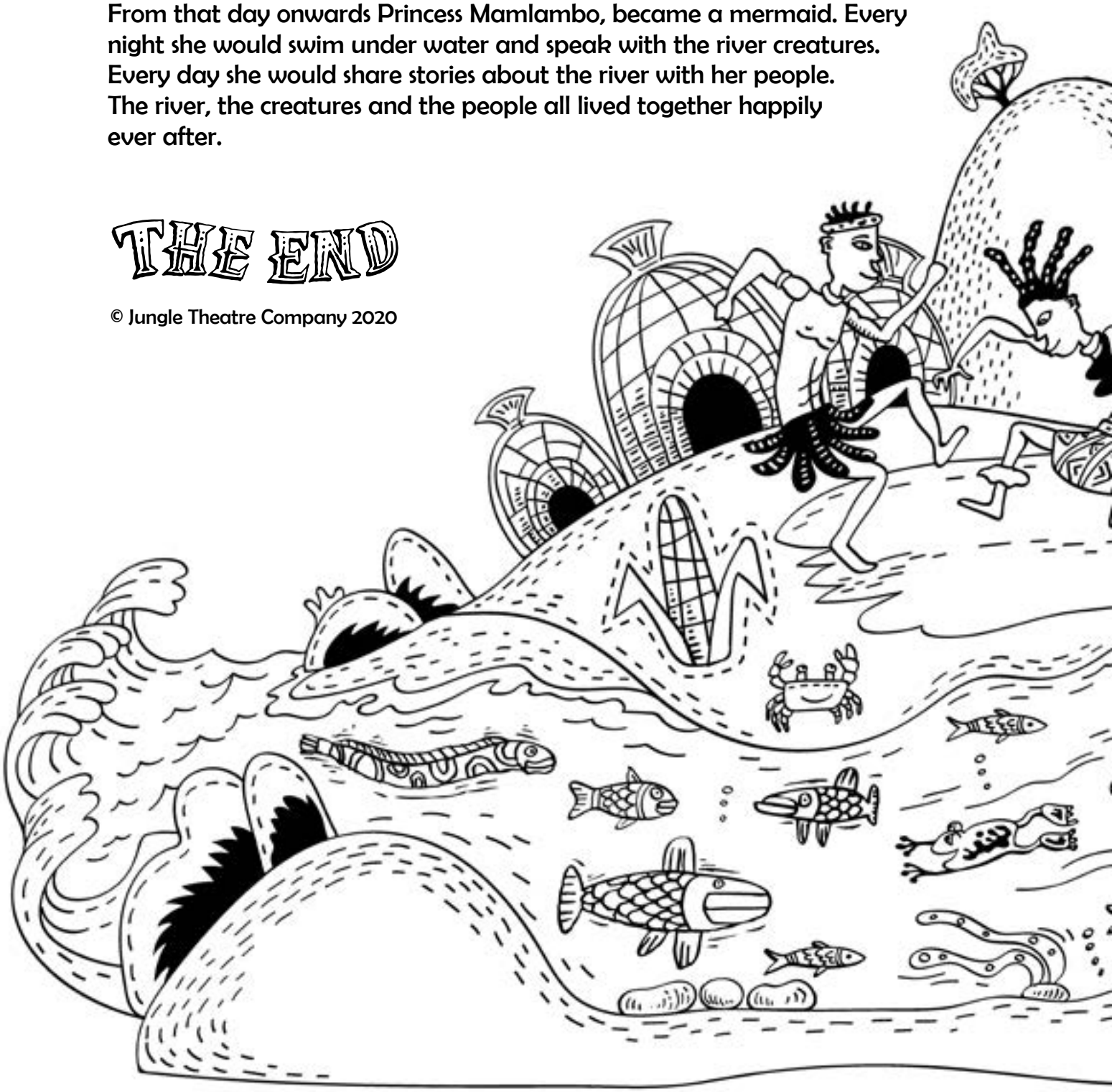

River of Life
ORIGINAL AND AFRICAN
CONNECTING WITH NATURE
INSPIRING CHILDREN
WORKSHOPS AND LAUGHTER
DANCE... MASKS... MUSIC... DRUMS...
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