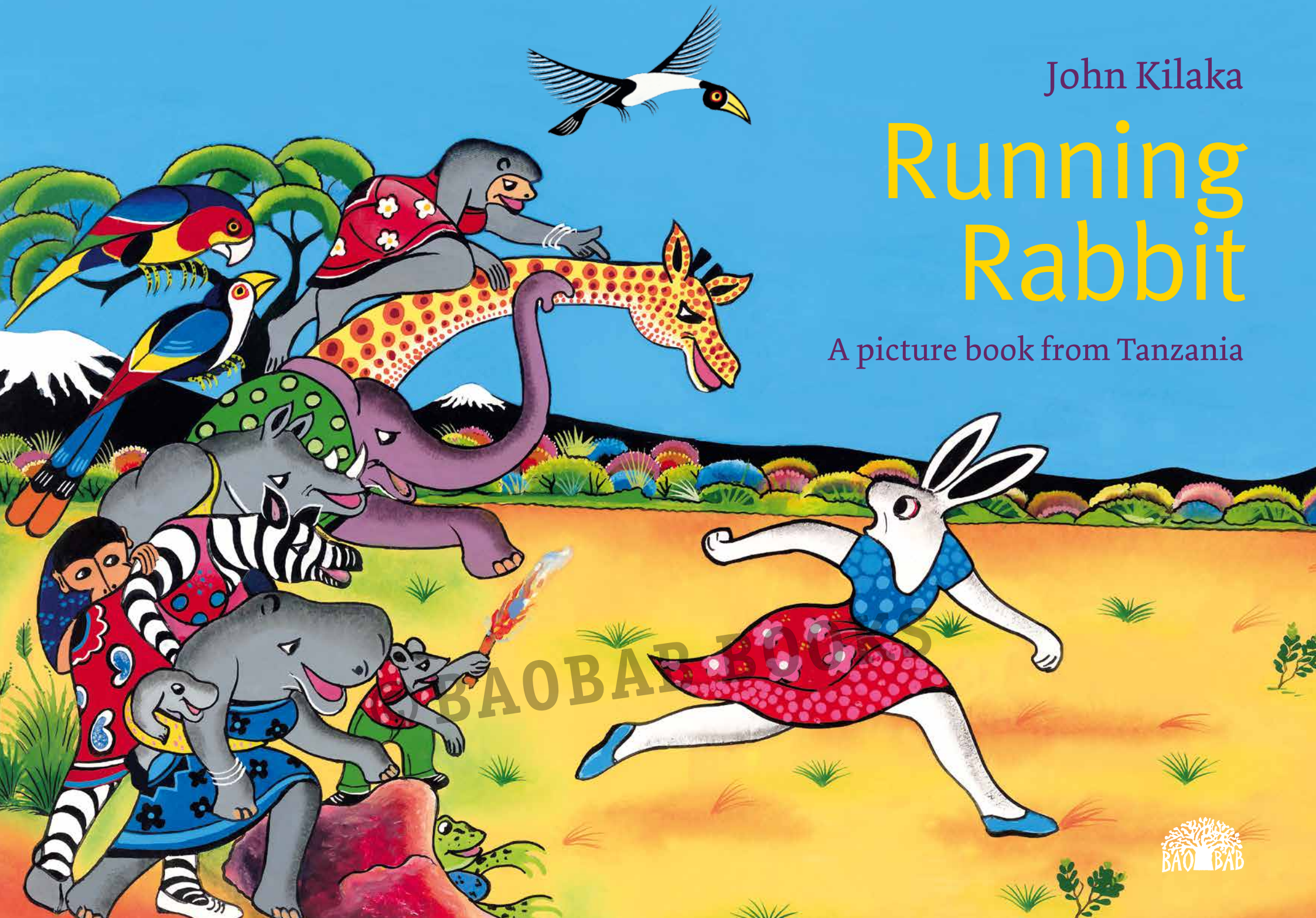


John Kilaka

Running Rabbit

A picture book from Tanzania





© BAOBA

B BOOKS



Baobab heißt der Affenbrotbaum, in dessen Schatten sich die Menschen Geschichten erzählen. Baobab heißt auch die Buchreihe, in der Bilderbücher, Kindergeschichten und Jugendromane aus Afrika, Asien, Lateinamerika, Ozeanien und dem Nahen Osten in deutscher Übersetzung erscheinen. Herausgegeben wird sie von Baobab Books, der Fachstelle zur Förderung kultureller Vielfalt in der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur. Informationen zu unserem Gesamtprogramm und unseren Projekten finden Sie unter: www.baobabbooks.ch

Baobab Books dankt terre des hommes schweiz und zahlreichen weiteren Geldgebern und insbesondere dem Bundesamt für Kultur, von welchem der Verlag einen Strukturbeitrag für die Jahre 2016–2018 erhält.

© BAOBAB

John Kilaka

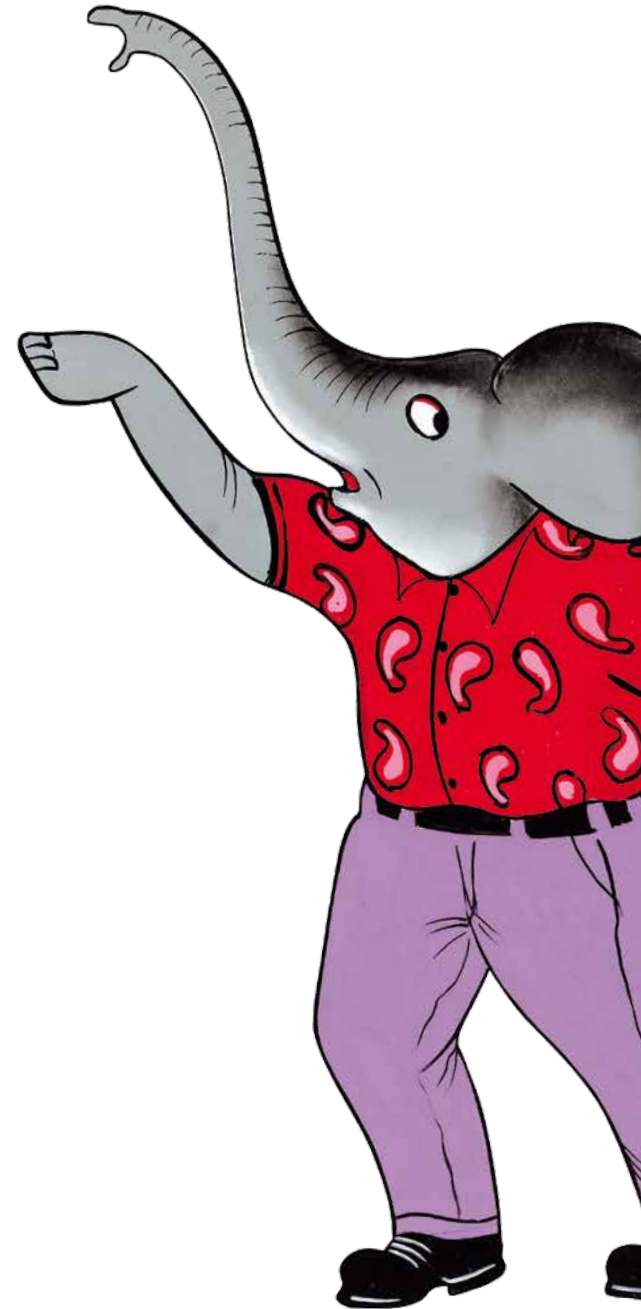
Schneller Hase

A picture book from Tanzania

Translated to English
by Barbara Brennwald

BAOBAB BOOKS

BAOBAB BOOKS



Long ago, the animals lived peacefully together in the forest. Except for Lion who preferred to spend his days among the bushes, and for Crocodile who loved to hide in the river.

One day the land dried out. The animals got thirsty but did not dare to go and look for water, because they were afraid of Lion.

“I have an idea,” said Buffalo. “It’s too dangerous for us to look for water on our own. Let’s go together.”

“That’s a great idea,” the others agreed, and they set off right away.

After searching for a long time, they found a river. “How lucky we are!”

But just as they were about to have a drink, Crocodile surfaced:

“What do you think you are doing? This is my river. I will let you drink from its water, but only if I get one of you to eat in return. I am hungry.”





The animals had no choice but to go home. They had a meeting and tried to find a solution to their problem. Elephant got up and spoke first: “Crocodile will not allow us to drink water from the river, unless we do as he says. So, who’s prepared to get eaten by Crocodile?”

No one answered. None of the animals was willing to give their life for the others.

So Buffalo suggested: “Let’s give Crocodile a small animal. We have to be allowed to drink from the river then.”

“Yes, that sounds like a good idea,” the big animals agreed.

“How is this a good idea?” the smaller animals protested. “It’s a mean one.”

“Ok, which animal should we catch?” asked Elephant as if he hadn’t heard.

The small animals looked around, terrified, and then huddled closer together.

Rabbit protested: “Didn’t we say we were all going to live together peacefully? We all want to live!”

“There is no time for this. We are thirsty, and there’s plenty of water to drink in Crocodile’s river,” Buffalo insisted. “One of us has to be eaten by Crocodile so the others can drink some water.”



© BAObA



The small animals could not talk the big ones out of their plan. “That’s settled then,” said Elephant. “Buffalo, tell us which animal it shall be.”
“Take that one.” Buffalo pointed to the group of small animals.
“Who? Me?” Monkey cried.
“No, I mean Rabbit,” said Buffalo. “Catch her and feed her to Crocodile. Quick!”
“Ha,” thought Rabbit. “I am definitely not letting them catch me and be Crocodile’s dinner. That would be silly.” So she took off.
The big animals were right on her tail. But she deftly dashed into the bushes and hid between some long grass stalks.
After a while, she slipped away and hid in a cave.





The animals looked everywhere. Rabbit was not to escape! Buffalo urged them to keep going, when suddenly ... the animals heard him howl: “Help! Help! We are all lost!”

Buffalo had accidentally woken Lion who had been taking a nap in the high grass. Now, he was chasing after Buffalo, roaring his best lion’s roar. The animals scattered – helter-skelter – in all directions.

When Buffalo spotted a cave, he quickly hid in it. Now he was safe.



© BAOBA



Rabbit tried to see who had come into her dark hideout. It was ... “Oh, no! Buffalo!” Rabbit could not stop herself from shrieking. “I don’t want be eaten!” “Shshsh! Stop hollering.” Buffalo tried to calm Rabbit down. “I am not here to catch you. Lion is after me, he wants to eat me. That’s why I’m hiding.” Rabbit was baffled: “But Buffalo, you are a big guy! You were trying to convince the others to hand me over to Crocodile to be his dinner. Now, look at you, you don’t want to die either. Who would have thought? I could make just a little noise, so Lion finds out you are in here.”

“Please, dear Rabbit. Please, do not! If Lion finds us here, he will eat us both. Let’s be friends and stick together!” Buffalo begged Rabbit.

“Oh, so now you want to be friends again,” Rabbit snapped.

“We will lose both our lives if we’re not,” Buffalo asked ruefully.

“Think of something, then! You’re the one who got us both into this situation!” Rabbit was furious.







Meanwhile, the animals grouped together again. “Is everyone here?” asked Elephant.

“Buffalo is missing,” said Rhino. “Maybe Lion caught him.”

“Oh, no! What do we do now?” asked Elephant.

“Hey, big Elephant!” The animals were outraged. “There is Lion roaming the bushes, Buffalo is missing and maybe already eaten up – and you are asking us what we should do? The only thing we can think of right now is to go home and come up with a new plan.”

One after the other they turned to leave. They were thirsty, looking for Rabbit, worrying about Buffalo, and scared of Lion.



At the same time, Lion had been trailing Buffalo and found a cave. He sat down in front of it and waited. Buffalo would have to come out at some point ... The other animals were holding another meeting in the forest. Elephant asked: “Should we first look for Rabbit and take him to the river, or should we try to save Buffalo first? We don’t even know whether he is still hiding or whether Lion has already eaten him up.”

“How can we find either of them, as long as Lion is still roaming around, looking for prey? We have to deal with him first, and then find Rabbit and Buffalo,” Giraffe volunteered.

Everyone agreed, and so they were on their way once again.





Armed with sticks, the animals searched the bushes.
“Giraffe,” Elephant shouted. “You are tall, can you take a good look around to see whether Lion is in the area.”
“Sure thing,” Giraffe answered. “Let me see.” And then...”Oh ...! Oh, no ...! Th-th-there, there!”
“What do you see? Is it Buffalo?” the animals wanted to know.
“No, it’s Lion. He’s sitting in front of a cave.”
Lion had already heard the animals. He sat up and gave an ear-splitting roar that made everybody’s hair stand on end. Some of the animals were ready to cut and run, but Elephant trumpeted: “Stop! Stop, everyone! Nobody’s running away! We will face him, let’s go!”
He brandished his stick. And so, all together, they made an enormous noise and started to circle in on Lion. No wonder it was his turn to get frightened ...



© BAObA



Now it was Lion who was weighing up his chances to escape. But there were none. So, on the spur of the moment, he jumped into the cave.

Buffalo and Rabbit almost jumped out of their skins. “We’re trapped!” Buffalo whispered. He was sure that the Lion had finally come to eat him and tried to hide behind a rock. Rabbit crouched in the far corner of the cave. Both were hoping that the Lion might simply not see them.

Then, they heard excited voices outside the cave entrance, and they realised: Lion must have been fleeing from the others.



© BAObA



Lion has disappeared into the cave. Now what?" the animals were asking.
"We wait until he comes out again," Elephant decided.
And so they camped in front of the cave entrance. They waited the whole night, but Lion did not come back out.
The next morning, Mouse spoke up: "I have an idea! Instead of wasting our time waiting, let's light a fire. The smoke will chase Lion right out of the cave."
"Brilliant idea!" All animals helped to gather wood for a huge fire.



BAOBA



В ВУ

They collected a huge heap of wood in no time at all. They lit the fire, and threw in some green leaves to create as much fume as possible. The cave started to fill with thick smoke. Rabbit quickly realised their situation and whispered: “Hey, Buffalo. I don’t want to suffocate in this cave. I’m out of here. Are you coming?”

“Yes, I am. We have to try, at least. We can’t keep on hiding from Lion,” Buffalo agreed.

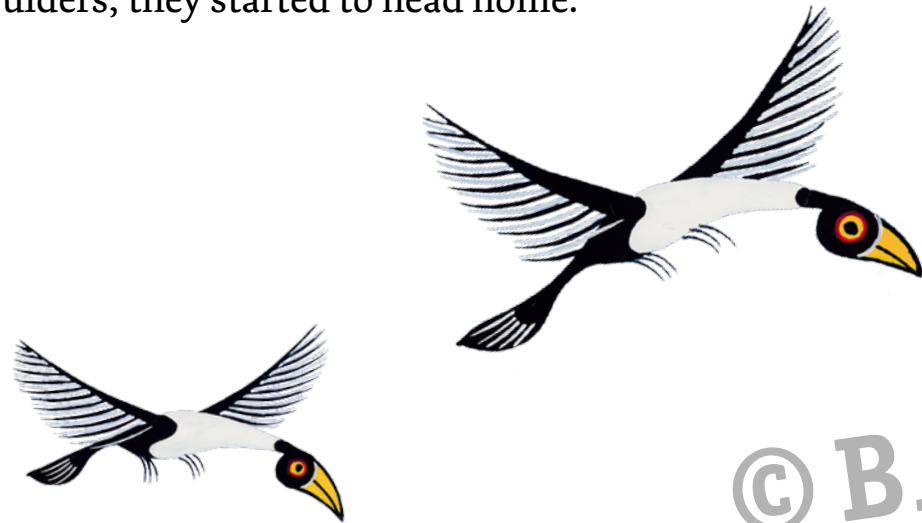
“You are big and strong. You go first and shove the fire away from the entrance,” Rabbit told Buffalo. He summoned all his courage and dashed past Lion, brushed the burning heap of wood away, and cleared the way out of the cave for them.



© BAObA



The animals were working hard, throwing more wood into the fire, just when Buffalo leapt out of the cave, with Rabbit following right behind. They couldn't believe their eyes and demanded to know how it came to be that the two had been sitting in a cave together with hungry Lion. There was quite a chaos, and everyone was asking questions at the same time, when suddenly Lion came running out of the cave. With shock, the animal leapt aside. None of them thought about actually catching Lion. They were just relieved to see Buffalo unharmed and to have found Rabbit. Patting each other's shoulders, they started to head home.



© BAObA



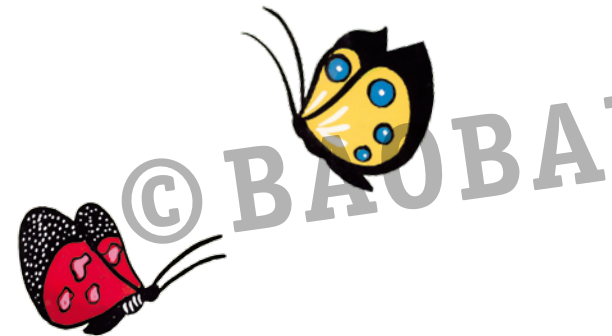
But, hold on: Rabbit wanted a word: “All this happened because you all were prepared to give Crocodile a small animal to eat! What will you do, when Crocodile has eaten all small animals and is still hungry?”

Nobody answered, so Rabbit continued: “I know where to find water for all of us. Let’s build a well!”

The animals agreed: “That’s a great plan!”

Everyone helped, and before long, water started to splutter. The animals cheered and celebrated.

They thanked Rabbit for her idea of digging for water. And they thanked Mouse for his idea of starting a fire and creating smoke. “It was a crazy idea, but it got Buffalo and Rabbit out of that cave. We are no longer thirsty, and we are all back together again.”





JOHN KILAKA

John Kilaka's road to becoming an author of picture books is unusual: He was born in small village in the southwest of Tanzania in 1966.

Even as a little boy, he drew sand pictures with sticks. In school he used – to the delight of his fellow students – the scarce chalk resources for his drawings on the blackboard.

Being an artist as a career, however, was unheard of in his community. His family had pictured him as a hunter and fisherman. And that's what he became, at first. But his passion for creating art stayed with him, and so he moved to Dar es Salaam at the age of 21 with not much more than a drawing pencil in his baggage. In the *Village Museum*, he studied the art of Tingatinga.

In 2001, Baobab Books published his first picture book: *Fresh Fish* was an instant success and was translated into numerous languages, just as his next stories, the equally successful *True Friends* and *The Amazing Tree*.

Today, John Kilaka is one of the most important representatives of Tingatinga art and one of the most famous contemporary picture book authors of Africa. He also collects Tanzanian folktales, in order to prevent them from being lost, and in his workshops, he inspires children to write and illustrate their own stories.

B BOOKS

Schneller Hase

© 2018 Baobab Books, Basel, Switzerland
All rights reserved

Text and Illustration: John Kilaka
Book design: Schön & Berger, Zurich
ISBN 978-3-905804-86-7

© BAOBA

B BOOKS



The animals are thirsty, there is no water. Crocodile, who lives in the river, is hungry: “If you want a drink of water, you have to give me one of you to eat.”

The big animals quickly agree that they will give Crocodile a small animal. They will catch Rabbit and hand her over. Rabbit does not agree. She flees and takes refuge in a cave.

While searching for Rabbit, the animals unfortunately rouse a hungry lion. Buffalo makes a narrow escape and hides ... in Rabbit’s cave. Before long, Lion joins them.



© BAOBAB BOOKS