

# *A Summer Gift*

Geeta Dharmarajan

Art by Arvinder Chawla



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This book belongs to

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## 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](mailto: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."*

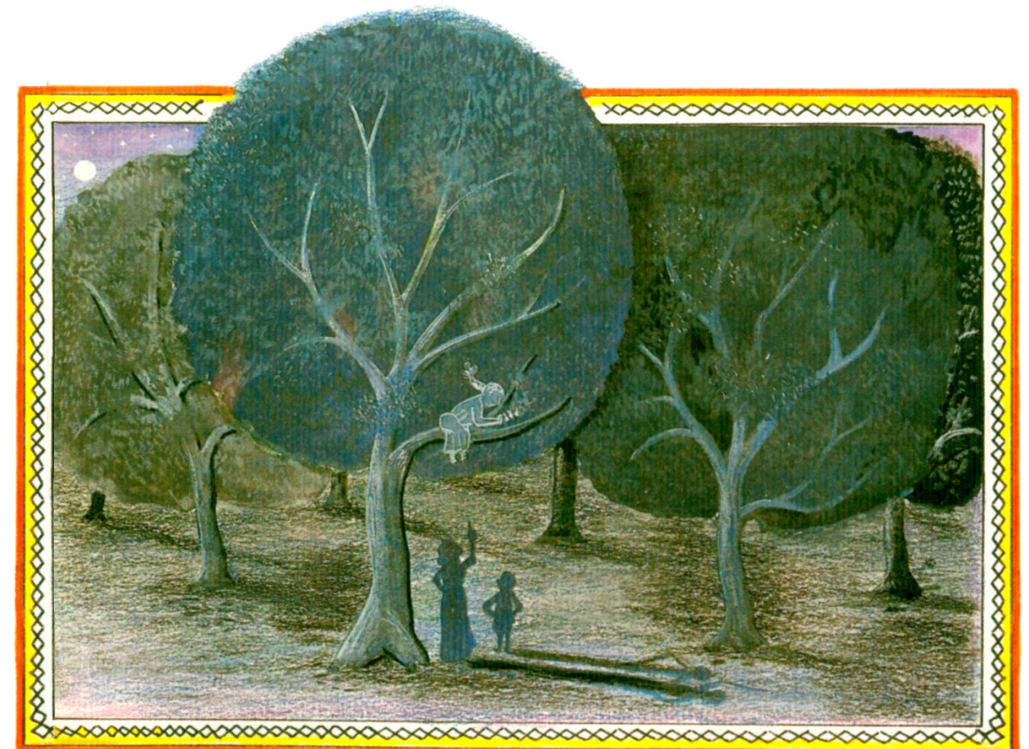
— Charles Landry, *The Art of City Making*

*"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







My grandfather is the fiercest man I know. His moustache is even bigger than my father's.

'And Thatha's always angry,' as my sister Kamu says.

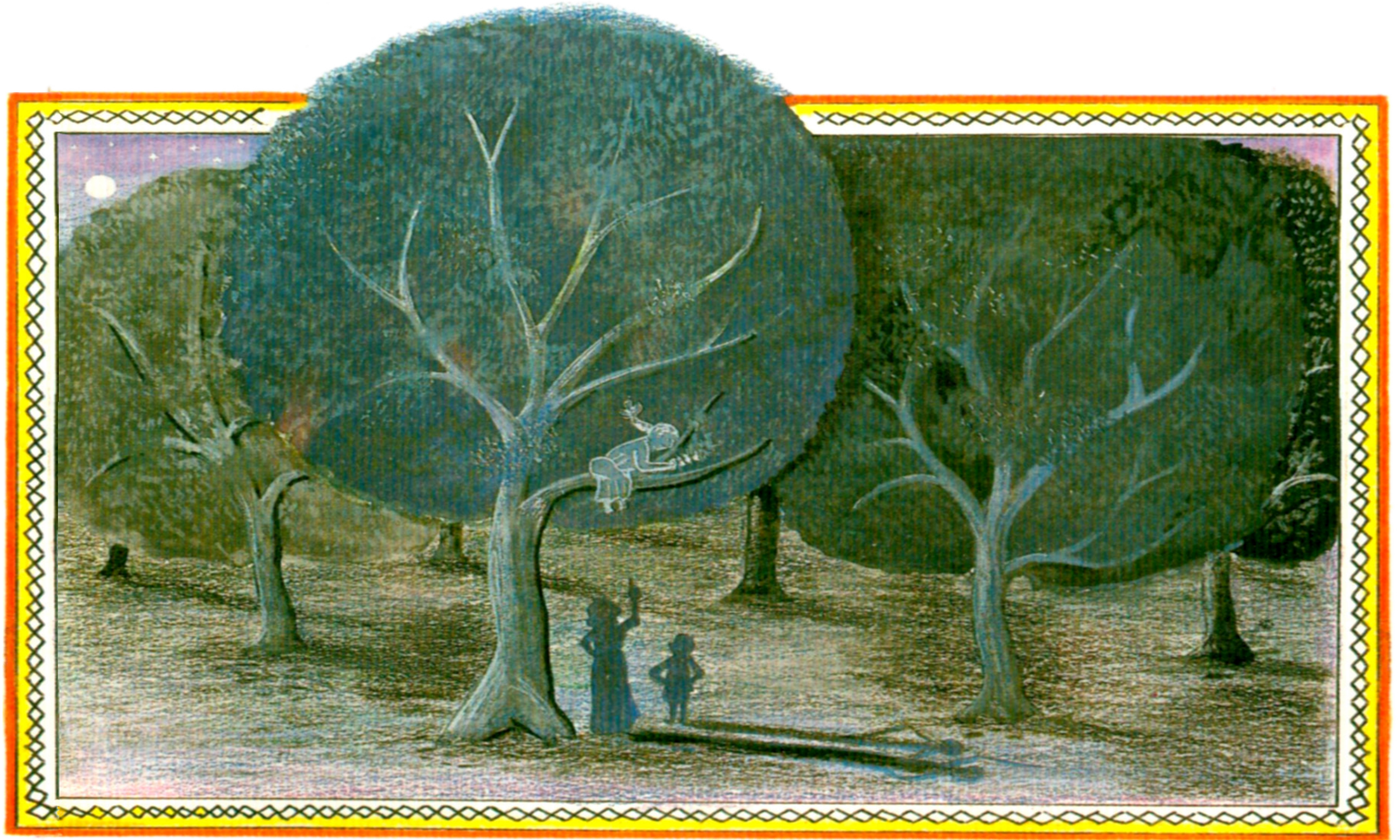
Our mango trees yield wonderful mangoes. We used to eat as many as we wanted. Then Thatha retired from his city job and came to live with us.

'If anyone touches my mangoes ...'

Thatha growled.

Thatha was angriest in summer.







‘But mangoes!’ said Kamu, sadly. ‘I can’t go through summer without mangoes!’

I couldn’t either. ‘Nor I,’ said my grandmother, my Paati.

And so Paati, Kamu and I decide to steal into the mango garden that night and take just one mango.

In the moonlight the shadows under the mango trees looked like big splotches of black Indian ink. Kamu, the expert tree-climber, was soon down beside us with the mango she had plucked.





‘This mango is the best amongst the best,’ she chanted as she examined the temptingly green mango. Paati had the knife. I had the small packet of salt and chilli powder.

‘MMMMmmmm...’ said Kamu, biting into the juicy mango. But, somehow, I just couldn’t eat. ‘Never mind, Gopu,’ said Paati. ‘Eat. Thatha won’t mind.’ And, reluctantly, I bit into the mango.





Later in the night I crept up to Thatha, lying in the yard, outside our house.

‘Thatha,’ I said softly. ‘The mangoes . . . Thatha stirred, I don’t think he was sleeping at all. ‘I know Gopu,’ he said in a voice strangely soft. ‘paati told me. I’m sorry. Sometimes when people grow old we forget things like...’ Thatha smiled. And I remember now, that was the first night I snuggled up to my Thatha to sleep. Under the soft glowing stars.



**Geeta Dharmarajan** loves writing stories for children. She was one of the editors of *Target*, a magazine for children, and *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, the magazine of the University of Pennsylvania. She was awarded the prestigious Padma Shri in 2012 for her distinguished service in the fields of literature and education.



Imagine summers without mangoes! When Gopu and Kamu's grandfather, Thatha, orders them not to pluck mangoes from their orchard, the sisters hatch a plan. And guess who joins them in their nighttime adventure? Their grandmother, Patti! In the stealth of the night the trio pluck a juicy mango and take a bite... Will Thatha explode in anger or be amused? This heartwarming story about the special bond grandchildren share with their grandparents is a must read for young readers.

