

# Mukand and Riaz

Nina Sabnani





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written and illustrated by

**Nina Sabnani**





Mukand has a cricket cap. His best friend, Riaz, loves that cap and wants it. But Mukand will not let Riaz wear it. Mukand feels that when he wears his cap he can do anything.

One day, when Riaz is chasing him, Mukand falls off his bicycle. He breaks his arm.







Riaz takes Mukand to a bonesetter who lives in Keemari, close to the Karachi harbour. The bonesetter is known as Keemari ka Bhaiyya and is everybody's friend.

He doesn't take any fees from the boys. But they slip some money into the donation box.





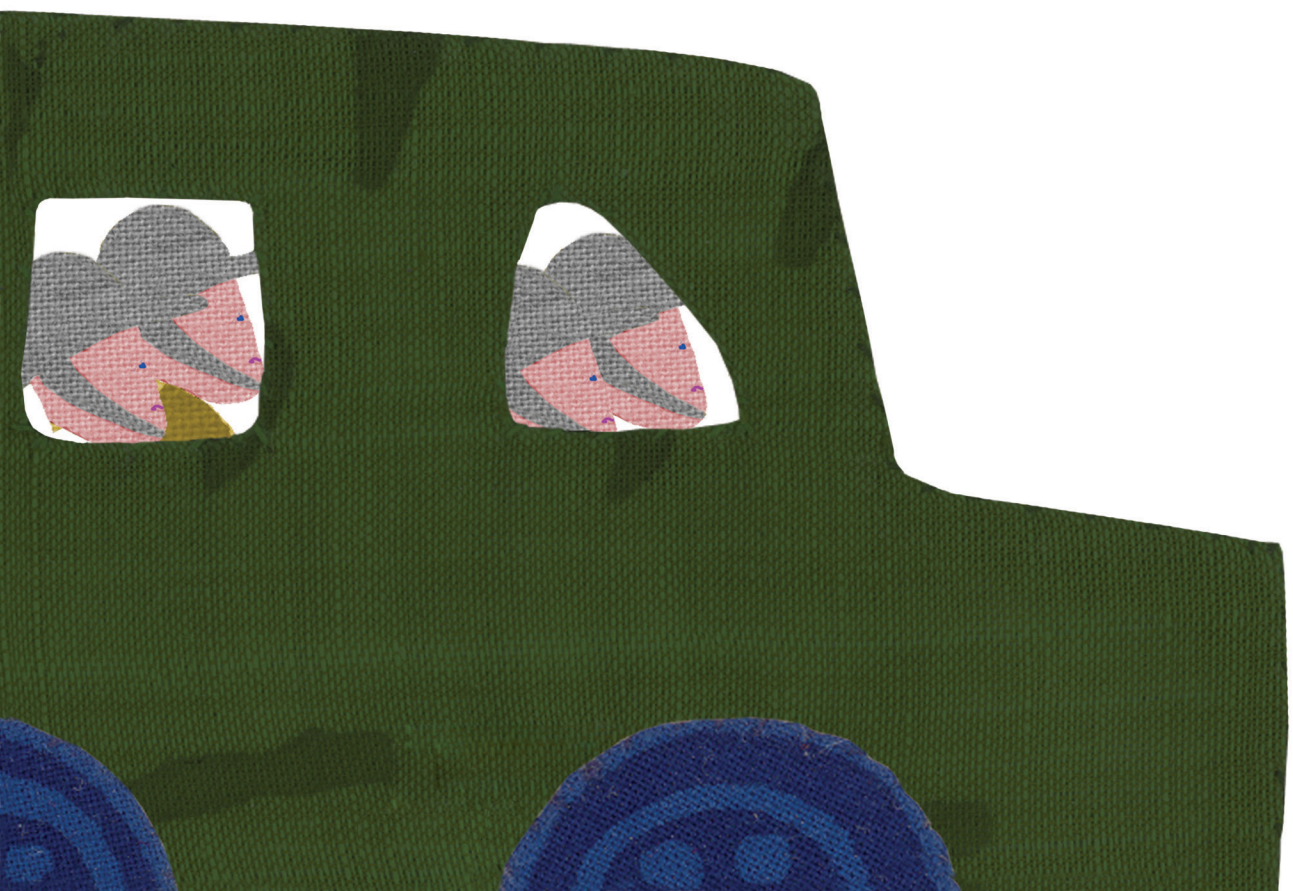


When Mukand gets better he plays cricket with his friends on Kembel Street. He calls Riaz to play with them but Riaz wants to read. Suddenly....





....a military van comes and stops on the street. An English soldier jumps out and tells the boys to go home.





Mukand and Riaz go to the market instead, to their favourite bakery. They love to eat buns with biscuits inside them. They buy some buns and go to the library.







It is Sunday and Mukand is looking after people's shoes outside the gurudwara. He also serves ice-water to everybody. He gets the water from his dear friend, Ladaram Faludawala.







Ladaram is happy that Mukand has helped him. He gives Mukand some kulfi to eat and a bucket of water to take home.







At home, Mukand loves to stand in front of the mirror, wearing his cap and dreaming about the future.







Then one day, the teacher does not come to the school. Mukand and his friends have fun.

Riaz comes a little later and tells Mukand he must hurry home. He says the country has been divided in two — India and Pakistan. Mukand's family has to leave and Mukand must go home to pack.







Mukand does not understand what is happening. On the way home he sees strange things — people chasing each other and shouting. He sees blood on the streets.







Riaz brings kurtas and Jinnah caps. He tells Mukand to change his clothes and cap. Mukand refuses. Mukand's father tells him that their lives are in danger. If they wear kurtas and Jinnah caps they will look like everyone else. They can leave Karachi without being noticed.







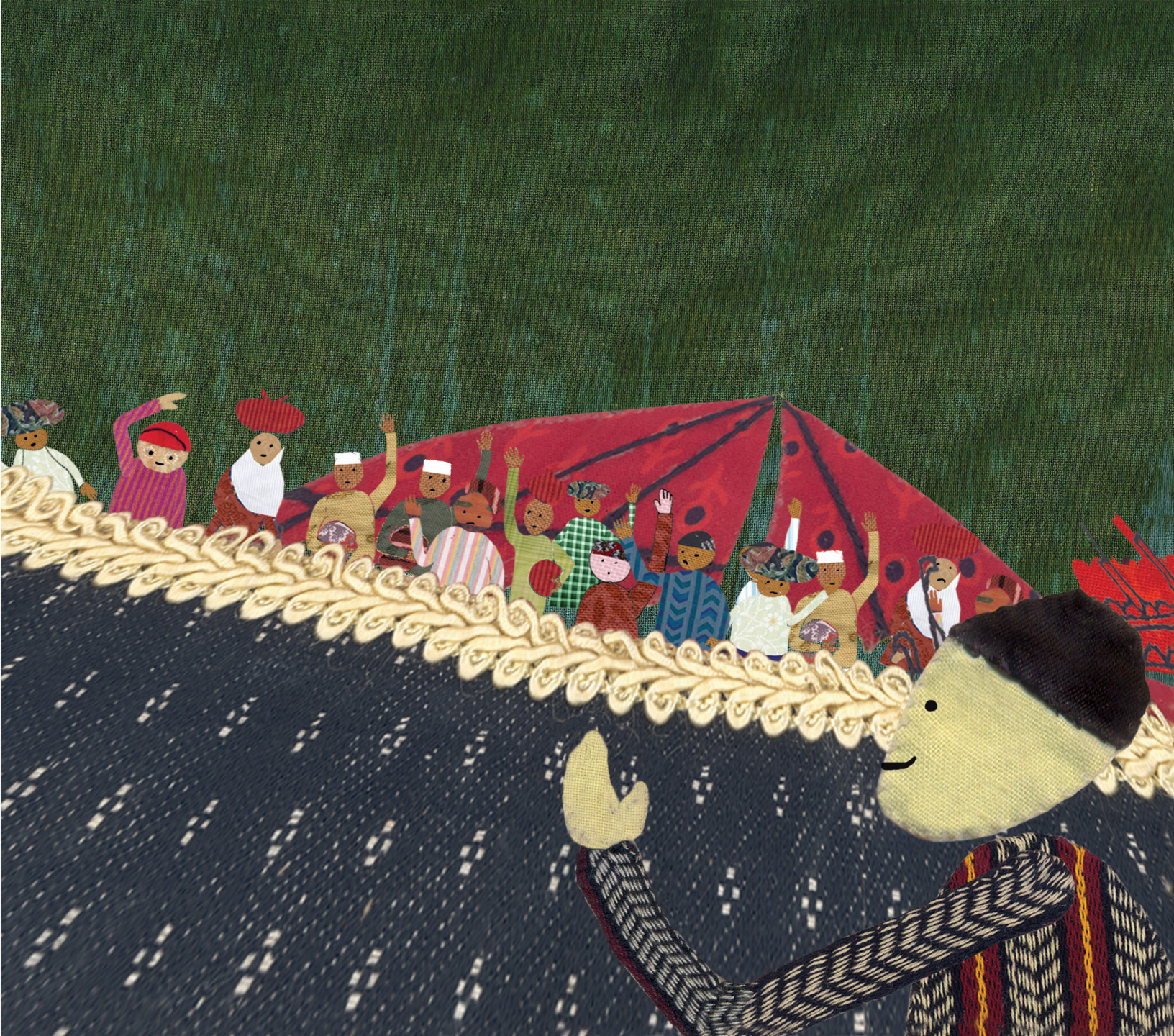
Riaz helps them. He knows driving even though he is not old enough to drive. But this is an emergency. Riaz takes Mukand and his family to the harbour where a ship, the S. S. Shirala, is waiting to take them to Bombay in India. There are many people in the harbour and they have to get on quickly.

Mukand's family thanks Riaz. But Mukand does not want to leave Riaz. With whom will he play?



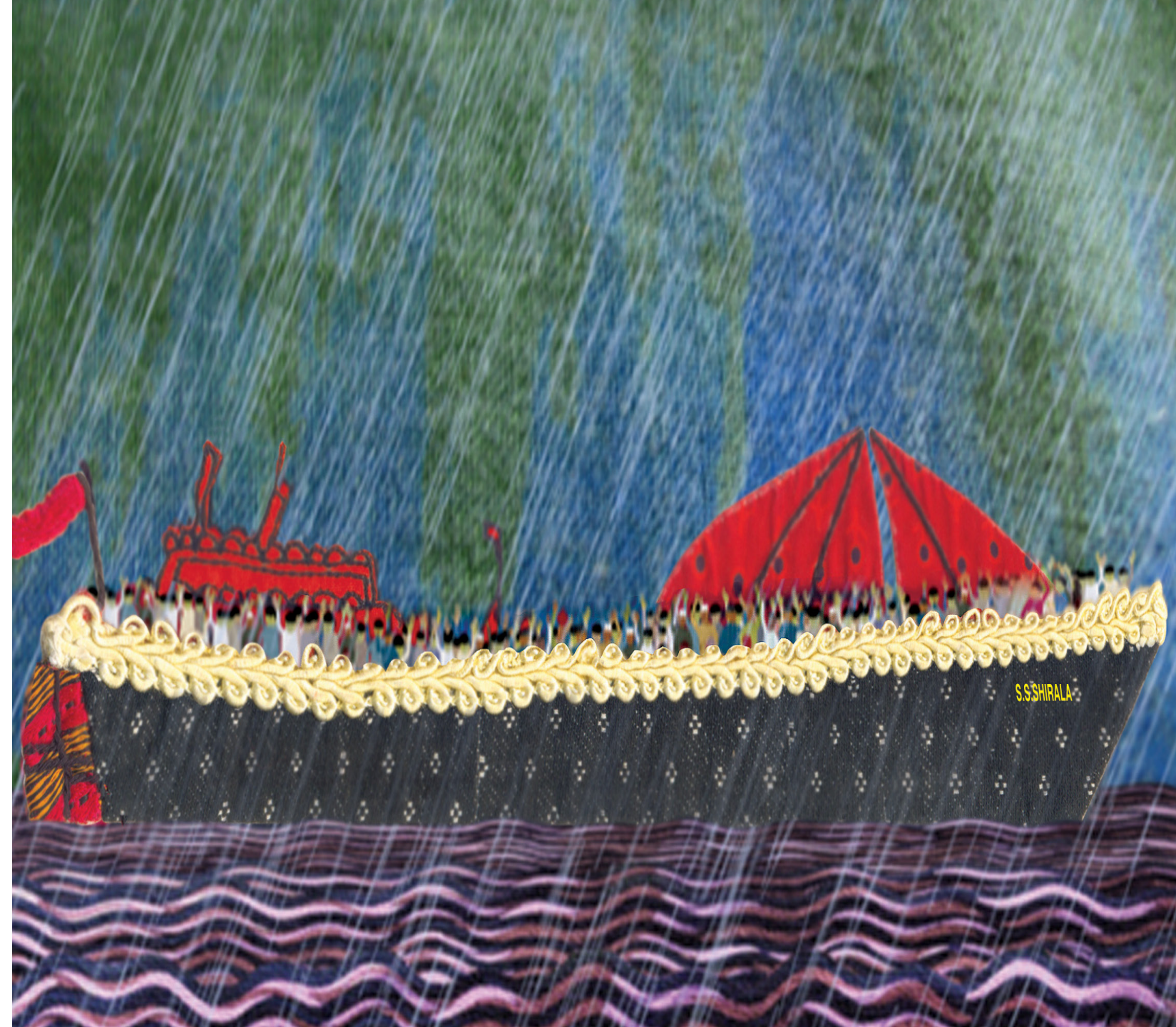


Mukand stands by the ship's railing and looks at Riaz.  
Riaz waves to him. Mukand takes off his favourite cap  
and throws it to Riaz.





The ship begins to move. The two friends wave to each other. They wave and wave, until they cannot see each other any more.







Mukand and Riaz never met again. But every time Mukand saw the Jinnah cap, he thought of his best friend.

This is what Mukand told me. Mukand was my father.







**Mukand and Riaz (English)**

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# Shared memories

The story is set against the background of the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. But friendship between children knows no barbed wire fencing: all children play games, enjoy ice-cream and feel the

## Shared histories

loss of friends. Based on the memories of her father, animator Nina Sabnani made this film for the Big Small People Project, Israel, using the art of women's appliqué work, common to both Sindh in Pakistan and Gujarat in India, to provide a rich and textured visual experience. The film won a certificate of merit from the Tokyo Broadcasting System, Japan. *Mukand and Riaz* is essentially about every child's right to friendship and a home. Through shared memories, shared craft, and shared histories, it offers deeply moving layers of meaning with which to identify and from which to draw strength.

## Shared crafts

**Nina Sabnani** is an artist-storyteller-filmmaker. Passionate about exploring collaborations with indigenous artists, her doctoral thesis is on the Kaavad tradition of Rajasthan, based on which is also her unique stand-up book *Home*. The 2016 Rajat Kamal National Award was given to her animation film *Hum Chitra Banate Hain*, which became Tulika's picture book *A Bhil Story*. She has also received the Little Big Book Award for lifetime achievement for illustration from Tata Trusts in 2018. Her most recent book for Tulika is *We Are the Dancing Forest*, for which she teamed up with award-winning Gond artist Venkat Shyam.



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