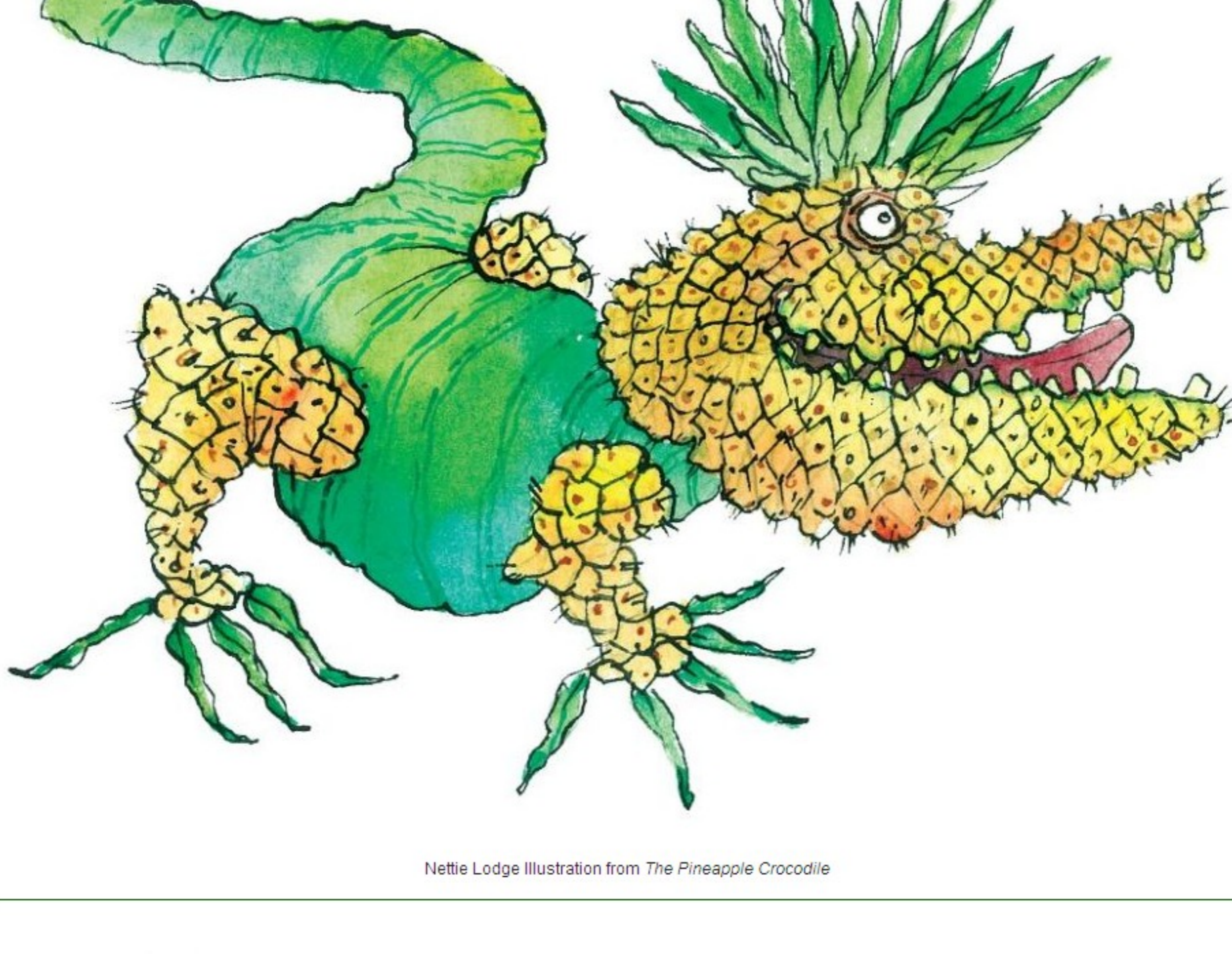


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## Nettie Lodge Cooks up Exciting Illustrations for Healthy-Eating Series



Nettie Lodge illustration from The Pineapple Crocodile

## Kindy Kitchen

FOOD TO MAKE THEM SHINE

### Nettie Lodge Cooks up Exciting Illustrations for Healthy-Eating Series

Local illustrator and painter, Nettie Lodge, talks about why she got involved in the Kindy Kitchen Book Series.

How did you get involved with the Kindy Kitchen Books?

Jess asked me to! It started gradually I guess, because we started doing some other illustrations for Kindy Kitchen, trying out ideas and then eventually it evolved into the book series, when Jess wrote the poems. I also did logos and quite a few different images, helping to find a voice for it.

What are these books about from an Illustrator's point of view?

From an illustrator's point of view they are an irreverent look at how kids treat food and how they can play with food, have fun with food, but good food obviously. The whole message behind them is to eat properly and eat well and eat more fruit and veges. But it's about food from a kid's point of view and for me to illustrate them is about finding that edge. It's more play than learning, but they go hand in hand without kids realising it. They're really fun and there's a humour in them that kids really relate to.

Why did you agree to such a project?

Because I believe in it! I think it's a fantastic project and I love illustrating and I think it has enormous potential. And so even though we were kind of walking into the dark with it, without really knowing where it was going to go, I just really believed in it as a project... it's a great project and I wanted to be involved in it.

What inspired the style of illustration?

The poems themselves inspired the illustrations and I love them, they're brilliant. They were so visual and so narrative. They've got a sort of Roald Dahl feel to them that gives them that edginess and I wanted those kids not to be sweet, pretty little children. I wanted them to be cheeky kids, playing with food monsters. So the characters are not like anything I've done before. I wanted to come up with a completely different feel.

What technique did you use? How did you illustrate them?

They're in watercolour because I obviously wanted them to be really bright. And I wanted them to be loose, I wanted a looseness and freedom to them. So watercolour was the best medium, I used a loose pen ink line as well to further animate the elements in each picture.

How long did each book take?

Each book was a good week. I roughed out the characters first and spent time developing a look for each of them because I wanted all the children to be quite different, as they carry the story, they are the story-tellers. I wanted each character to lend itself to a picture-book too, so the characters of the children are really important.

Was it tricky making the food characters look delicious but also edgy and humorous?

I don't know if I did make them look delicious! I think it all comes down to the way kids eat. The Watermelon Man for example, is missing chunks from his side because that is just the way kids like to eat, you know it runs down their face and it's all stained and squashed. And they should be able to play with it, you know, feel the skin of a pineapple and squash watermelon through their fingers!

Did you have any children in mind when you illustrated these characters?

I didn't have anyone in mind, I didn't base them on anyone. I just created really funky little kids that I liked, kids that I would like, if I met them. They are kind of mischievous and intrigued by things. And I just wanted them to have character, not bland characters who do what they are told. And I guess that they are quite rebellious, and I liked that about them... and maybe that was based on me as a kid!

Do you have a favourite book, character or story from the Kindy Kitchen series?

I like the boy and the boat story, The Capsicum Boat, I think that's my favourite. It's so improbable and it's so surreal, this little bean sailor taking his capsicum boat for a sail in the kitchen sink. I really like the smashed crocodile as well in The Pineapple Crocodile.

What do you think children will like most about the books?

I think that they will like that they can make something, the food character, at the end of the story. And hopefully the illustrations will take them on that journey, where they can imagine this for themselves and take it further. So they can see beyond what is set out on the dinner table. That would be cool. Then they can make their own stories from food, which I think is the essential ingredient in all of this – to teach kids to love and use their imagination when they're eating good food, proper food like vegetables. And to know that things like fruit and vegetables have this personality and have value.

Are you happy with how it's going?

Yeah! Getting people's reaction to them has been really exciting. All the people who have bought them have loved them. I also think everyone involved did such a great job, getting those books written, illustrated, designed, printed, photographed, edited – it was a massive team effort and it worked so beautifully.

How does it make you feel to know that pretty soon your illustrations will inspire schools across the state, with Kindy Kitchen's involvement in Fruit and Veg Month?

It's great. It's fabulous!

What's the feedback on these books from parents in Pittwater?

The kids love them and they have favourites they want to make. The children that I know of who have these books have really taken to them!

Right. Nettie's illustration from The Watermelon Cupcake

#### About Nettie Lodge

For the past seven years Nettie Lodge has been writing and illustrating children's books.

In 2005, her children's picture book BIRD, published by ABC Books, won a NOTABLE BOOK MERIT at the Children's Book Council of Australia Awards. Her most recent book NATEMBA, published by ABC Books, is based on the plight of orphaned animals in Africa, for which she researched as a volunteer at a Vervet Monkey sanctuary in South Africa. Her current project is a picture book called DAVE about the plight of a Tasmanian Devil.

Nettie lives and paints in her studio on Scotland Island in Pittwater.

See: [www.annettelodge.com](http://www.annettelodge.com)

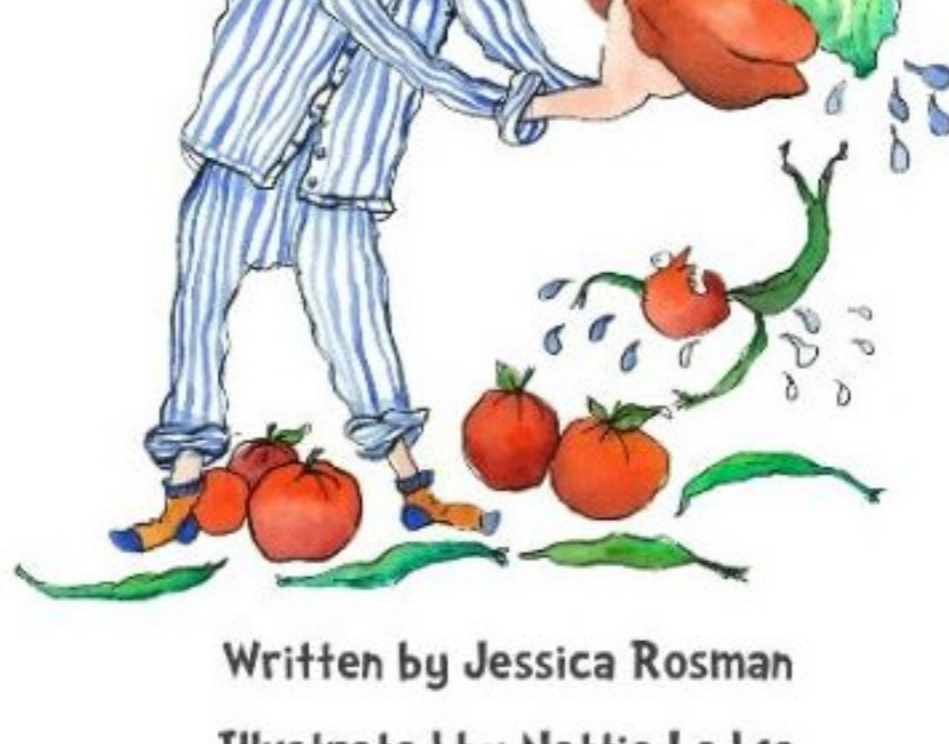
If you would like to know more about the Kindy Kitchen series, or would like information on how you can register your school for Fruit and Veg Month, please email [info@kindykitchen.com](mailto:info@kindykitchen.com).

You can also visit the website at [www.kindykitchen.com](http://www.kindykitchen.com) or join the newsfeed at [www.facebook.com/kindykitchen](https://www.facebook.com/kindykitchen)



## The Capsicum Boat

Rhyme and Recipe Book



Written by Jessica Rosman

Illustrated by Nettie Lodge

There once was a boat that looked ever so sweet.

With a ruby-red hull and a sail you could eat.

"A sail you could eat?" I hear you cry.

It's the truth, I swear - why would I lie?

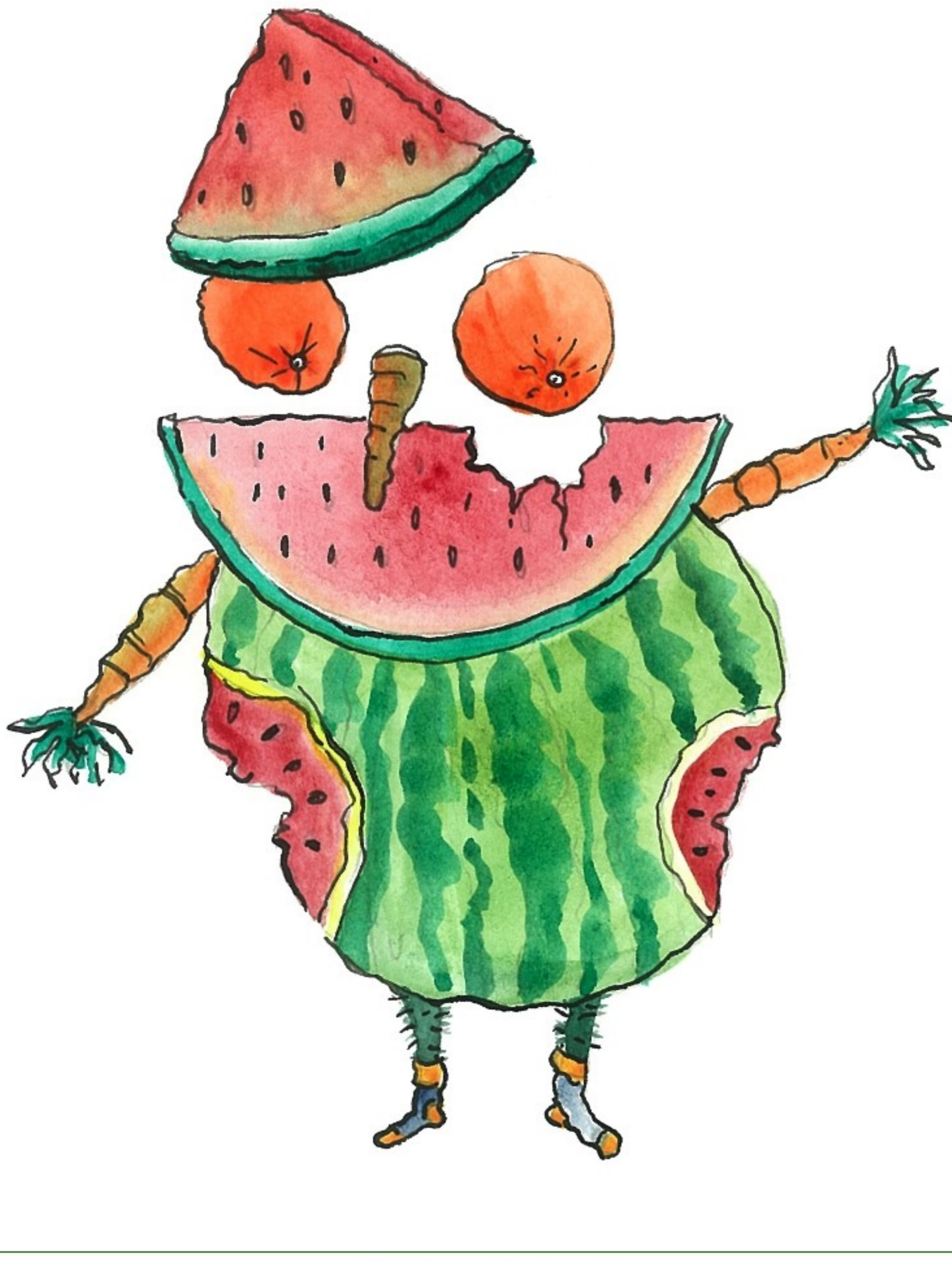
It also had a captain, a noodle-like bean.

Who had bright tomato eyes with a sailor's gleam.



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#### The Watermelon Cupcake - Illustrations



#### The Pineapple Crocodile



By Jess Rosman, 2014

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