

## MoHagani vs King Salmon

**M. C. MoHagani Magnetek**

**Janine Carrington, Illustrator**

Edutainment Nite Publishing (Feb 1, 2025)

\$24.99 (22pp)

979-899036920-7

*MoHagani vs King Salmon is a thrilling picture book adventure in conflict resolution.*

In M. C. MoHagani Magnetek's picture book *MoHagani vs King Salmon*, a girl stands up to a fouled-mouthed salmon.

When MoHagani lies about becoming a fish, neither the whales nor the ravens want to hear it. She expands her tall tale to discuss wrestling a bully, King Salmon, into submission. King Salmon called her on the phone, MoHagani says, and mocked her with backhanded “yo mama” jokes. Despite her forceful protests, King Salmon carried on joking and laughing, setting the stage for an epic wrestling match that played out across lands, skies, and seas. A moral about the downsides of resolving conflicts through violence follows: While MoHagani's anger is righteous, she nonetheless emerges from the battle transformed. The twist ending deepens her otherwise straightforward tale about good forces confronting bad ones.

Catchy one-liners that have the rhythms of ordinary speech abound, including in the inventive “yo mama” jokes that King Salmon tells. A few obscure sentences break the book's flow early on, though.

The crisp, graphic novel–influenced illustrations include riotous injections of color and kinetic energy. MoHagani and King Salmon are shown in exaggerated closeups; each clash and attack is embellished by lines indicating motion, injury, and exultation. Even scenes of their verbal sparring over the telephone are given this treatment: King Salmon's provocative words spray across the page, impacting MoHagani in a physical way. This effect is heightened by the creative way words are displayed: Some remain locked in black text bubbles, while others explode outward in huge, colorful, capitalized fonts.

*MoHagani vs King Salmon* is an exciting picture book about facing bullies and the consequences of using violence.

WILLEM MARX (January 28, 2025)

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