

Film Presentation

Topic: Folktale from Kerala

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Masters in Design, Animation

By

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Animation and Film Design

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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, BOMBAY

2017-19

Approval

The Report Committee for Animation Design, Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay certifies that this is the approved version of the following report on: Folktale from Kerala by Harikrishnan S, 176340006.

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Date:

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the project work done in relation to my graduation film and submitted as a written report to the Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay is a record of the original work done by me under the guidance of Professor Shilpa Ranade. Unless otherwise stated, the contents of this report in the form of the text and images are entirely my own. The views expressed in the documentation as part of the written submission of the project are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay.



Harikrishnan S

June, 2019

Abstract

India is a land of a lot of myths and folktales. Most of the regional stories are so interesting that they can be turned into wonderful pieces of art, through illustration and animation. This 2D animation film is an adaptation of 'Kolathiriyum Samoothiriyum', a story from 'Aithiyamaala', a collection of century-old stories from Kerala that cover a vast spectrum of life, famous persons and events. It is about the rivalry of the rulers of two regional kingdoms, packed in humour. Set in the later medieval period, the film explores various aspects of the northern part of the present day Kerala state, like culture, geography, architecture, cuisine, etc. through visuals as well as dialogues.

KEYWORDS: Regional stories, Aithiyamaala, Kingdoms, Humour, Later medieval period, Culture, Architecture, Cuisine

Content

Research.....	1
Story.....	8
Character Design.....	9
Storyboard.....	11
Reference.....	64

Research

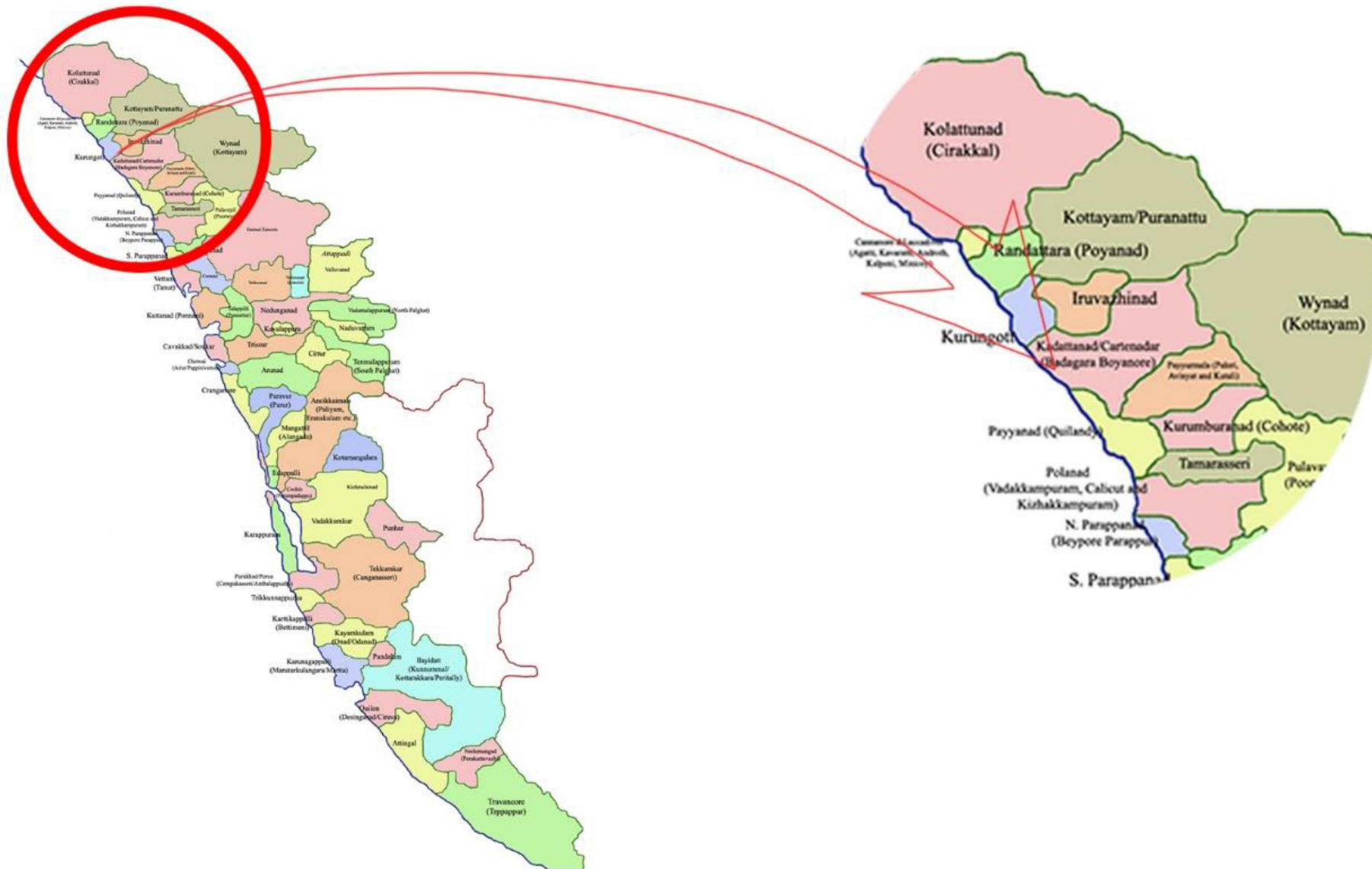
As mentioned earlier in the abstract, the book 'Aithiyamaala' by Kottarathil Sankunni is a collection of century-old stories from Kerala. The chapter '*Kolathiriyum Samoothiriyum*' (Kolathiri and Samoothiri) tells the story of rivalry between two regional kings in a humorous way. An intense research on many aspects like the geography, political division of the kingdoms, architecture, costumes, culture, has to be done in order to do justice to the film.

The exact year or century in which the incident in the story is said to have taken place is not mentioned. However, historical records make it clear that it was during the later medieval period when Samoothiri and Kolathiri dynasties ruled Kozhikode and Kolathunadu kingdoms respectively.

The 12th century political map of Kerala shows that there were about fifty regional kingdoms during that period. The prominent kingdoms among them were Travancore in the south, Cochin in the central part, Kozhikode and Kolathunadu in the north. The Samoothiri of the Kozhikode kingdom developed trade relations with the Arabs much before the advent of the Europeans. Kozhikode became a busy port. This led to the emergence of the Samoothiri dynasty as the strongest among the kingdoms of north central Kerala.

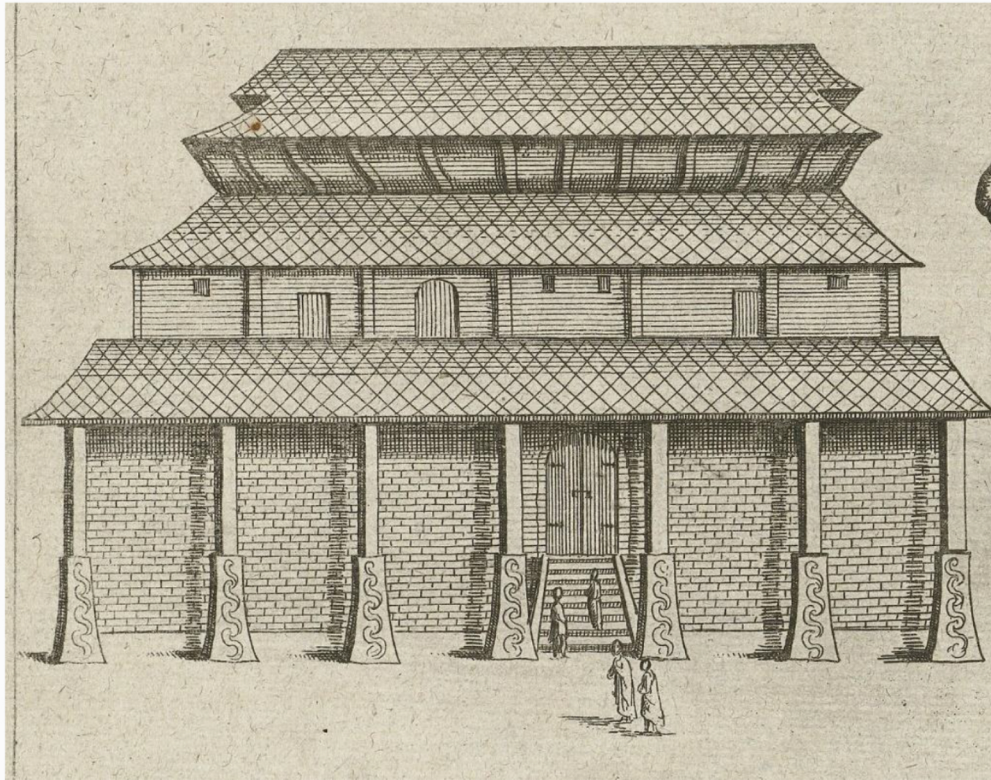
The Kolathunadu kingdom (Kolaswaroopam), also known as Chirakkal, comprised parts of the northern districts, mainly Kannur. This kingdom was ruled by the Kolathiri dynasty. Even though King Kolathiri had accepted King Samoothiri's suzerainty, the former had a long standing feud with the latter.

A lot of Indian period films reflect the history, culture, architecture, costume, etc. of north-Kerala in the pre-colonial era. The two main films taken for reference are Hariharan's *Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja*(2009) and Santosh Sivan's *Urumi*(2009). The latter has the kings Samoothiri and Kolathiri appearing as characters.

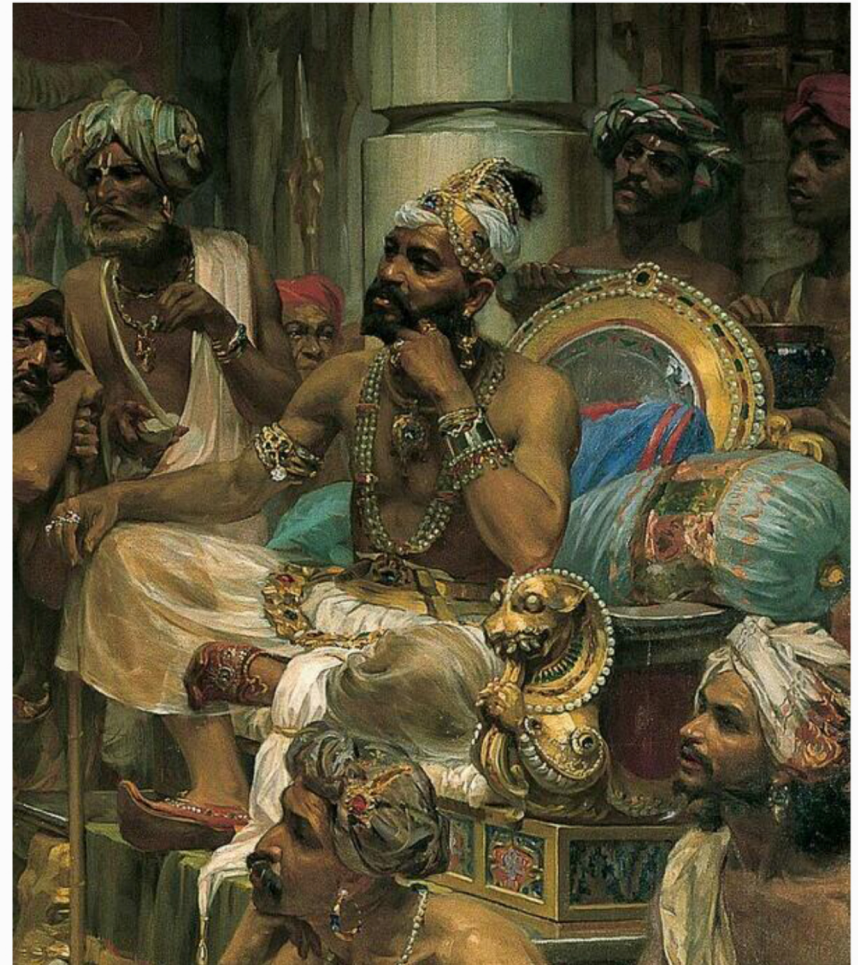
12th century map of Kerala



Kozhikode port (16th century)



King Samoothiri's palace, Kozhikode
(17th century – from Dutch archives)



King Samoothiri (1495-1500)
painted by Veloso Salgado in 1898

Padmanabhapuram palace





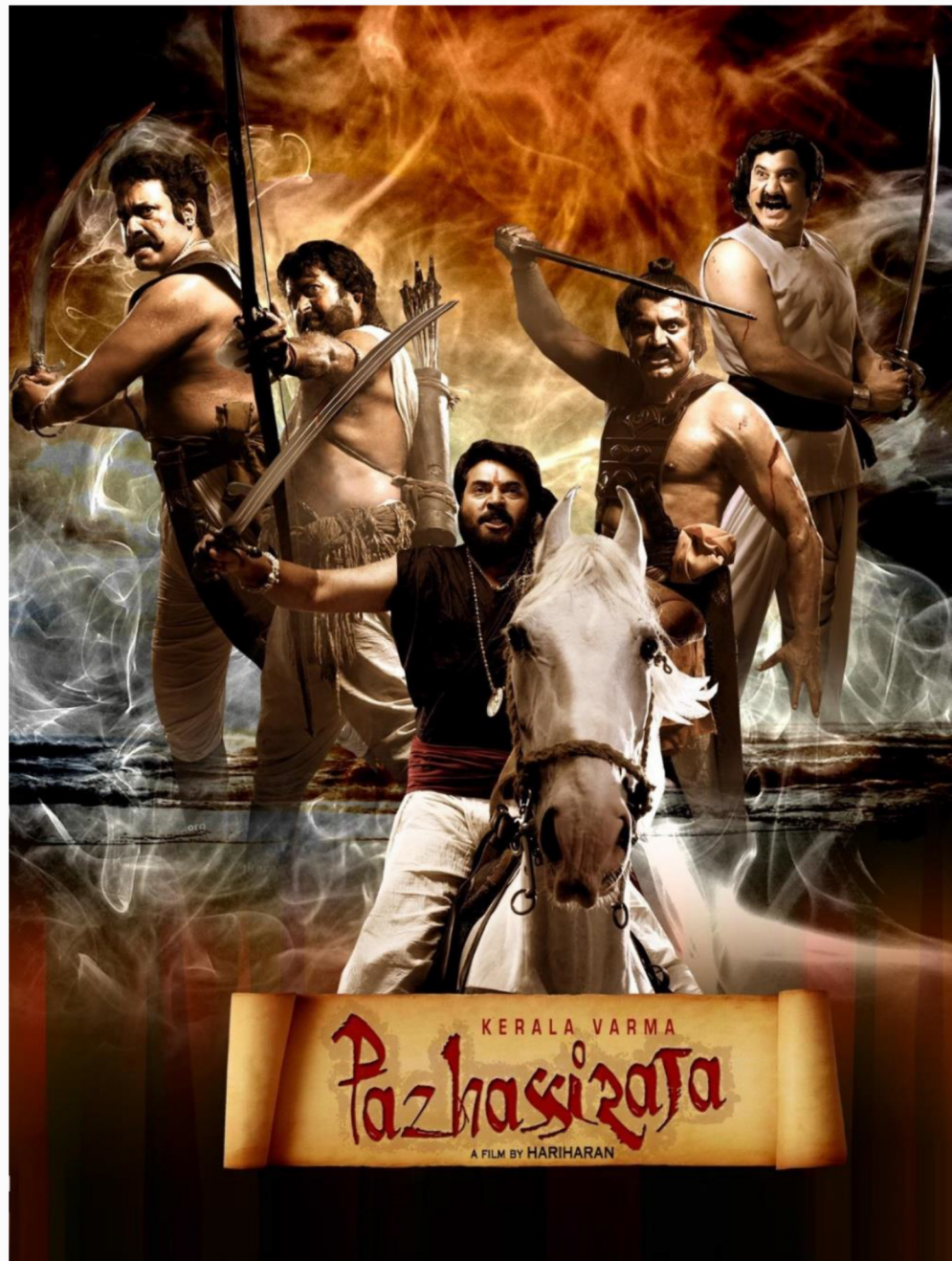
Urumi



King Samoothiri (sitting)



King Kolathiri (right) and his minister (left)



Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja

Story

Before the advent of the British, the Samoothiri (origin: Samoodrathiri meaning the overlord of the oceans) Raja of Kozhikode (Zamorin of Calicut) used to rule over the Malabar coast of Kerala.

The kingdom of Calicut was the most powerful one in North-Central Kerala with trade ties with countries across the seas. The smaller states surrounding his kingdom accepted his suzerainty. However Kolathiri of Kolathanadu had a long standing feud with the Samoothiri.

Once when Kolathiri was paying a visit to Samoothiri, he asked Samoodiri:

‘Sa moori kuthumo?’ Will the bull sting? (moori means bull).

Samoothiri asked him in return:

‘Kolathiri kathumo?’ Will Kolathiri burn? (thiri means wick).

Kolathiri replied:

‘Kolathiri chilappo kathyekkam, sookshikkanam.’ (Kolathiri may burn, be careful).

To which Samoothiri replied

‘Kolathiri kathiyaal samoori kuthum’ (If Kolathiri burns then Samoodiri will sting).

A few days later Samoodiri received an exquisitely carved treasure chest as a gift from Kolathiri. Now the minister who was present during the meeting of the kings, remembered the conversation and advised the guards to dip the chest in water before opening it.

When they opened it was found to be full of now wet gunpowder explosives which would have gone off.

In return Samoodiri ordered a gift to be sent to Kolathiri on the advice of the minister. News of how the minister saved Samoodiri’s life had reached Kolathanadu.

On receiving the gift Kolathiri’s Prime Minister decided to imitate Samoothiri’s minister and ordered the casket to be immersed in water. On opening, a swarm of bees emerged, extremely annoyed at being wet and stung Kolathiri and his courtiers hard.

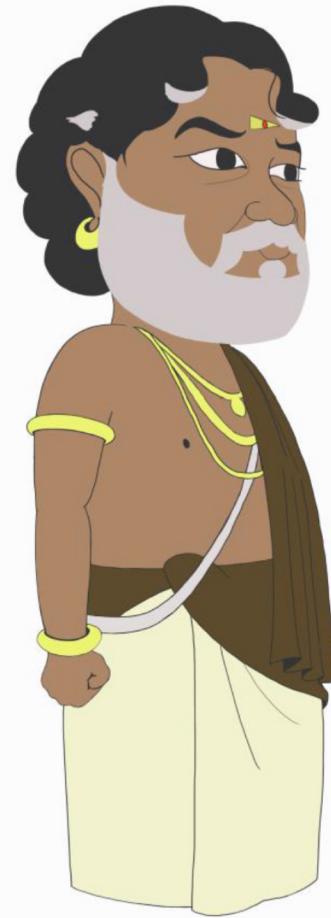
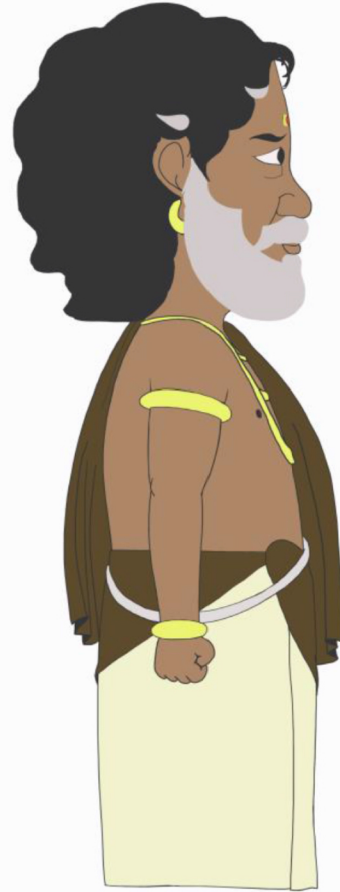
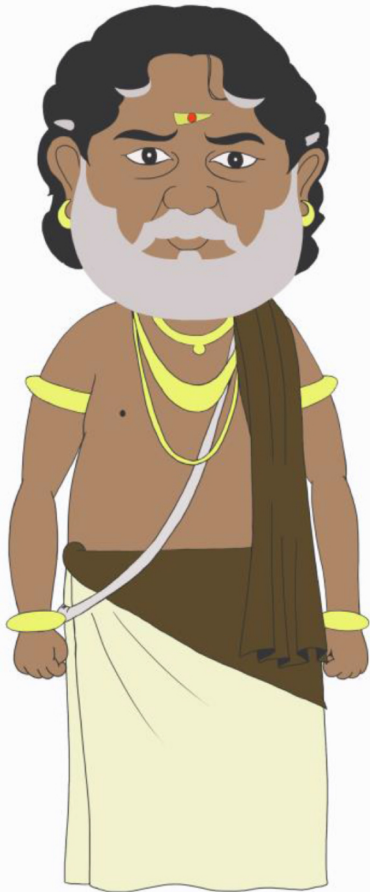
Character Design

SAMOOTHIRI - The King of Kozhikode



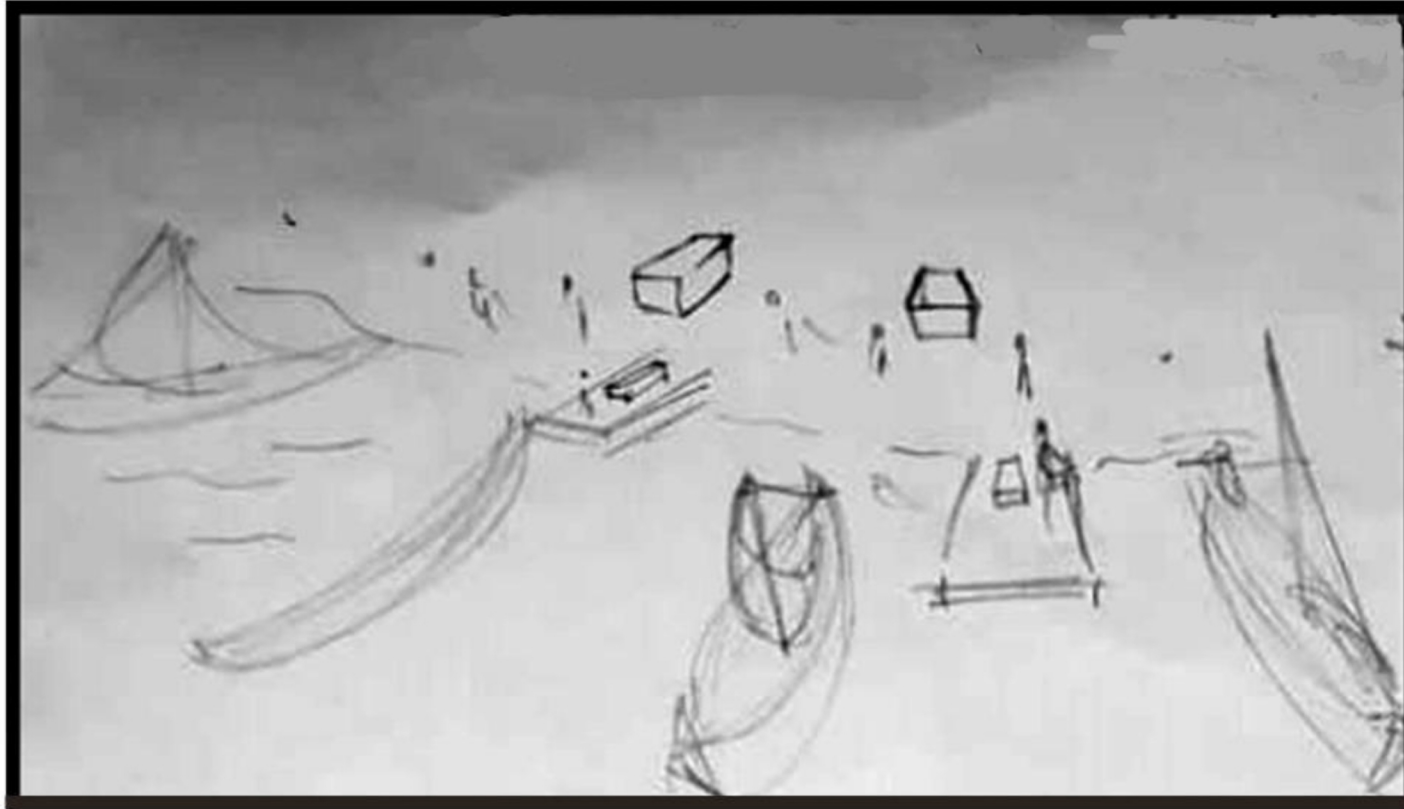
Character Design

KOLATHIRI - The King of Kolathunādu



Storyboard

SCENE 1



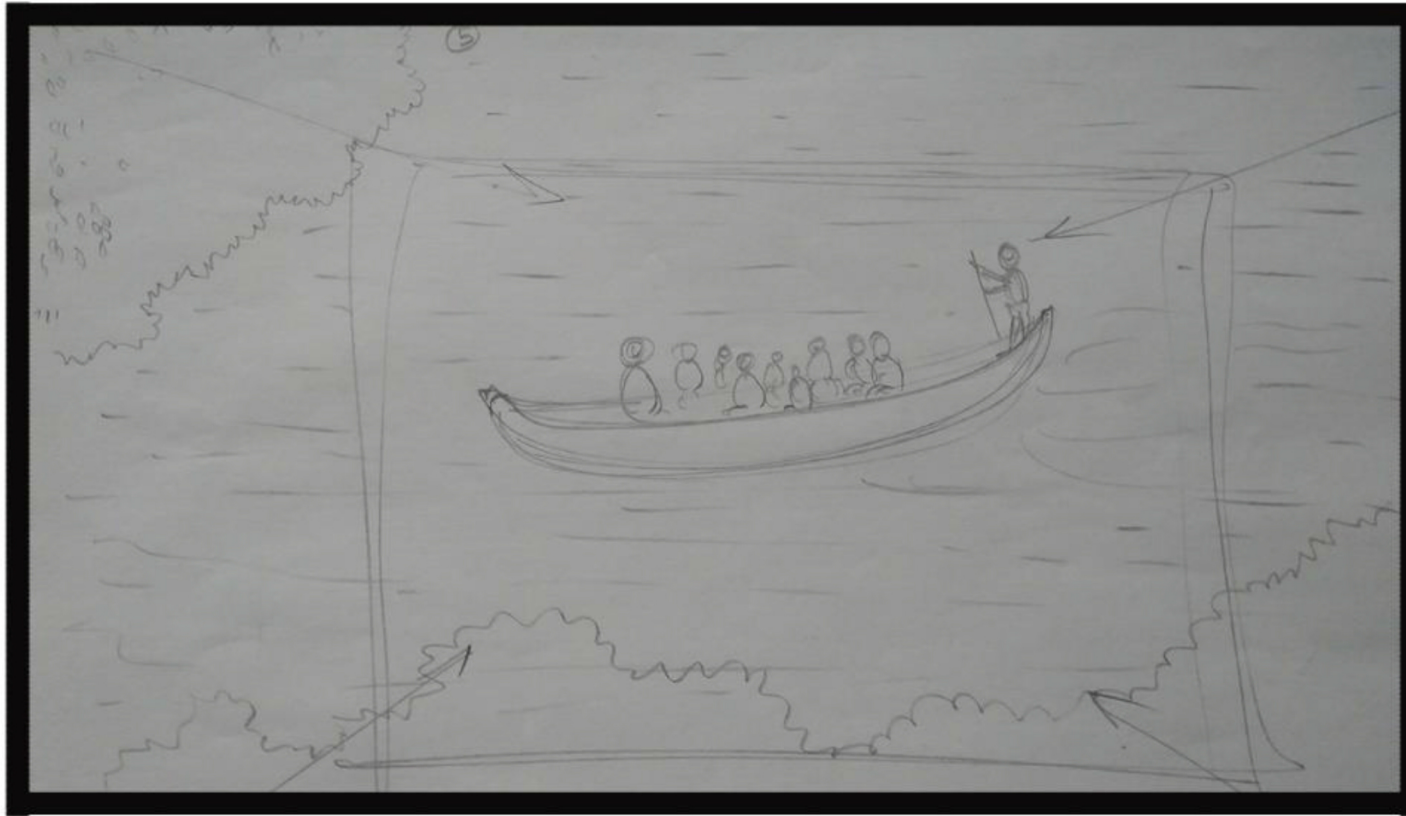
Shot 1: Establishing shot - The busy port of the erstwhile Kozhikode kingdom(later medeival period)

SCENE 1



Shot 2: Long shot - The busy streets of the market(Kozhikode Bazar)

SCENE 1



Shot 3: Establishing shot. Zoom-in to a ferry boat with passengers and a boatman, crossing a river

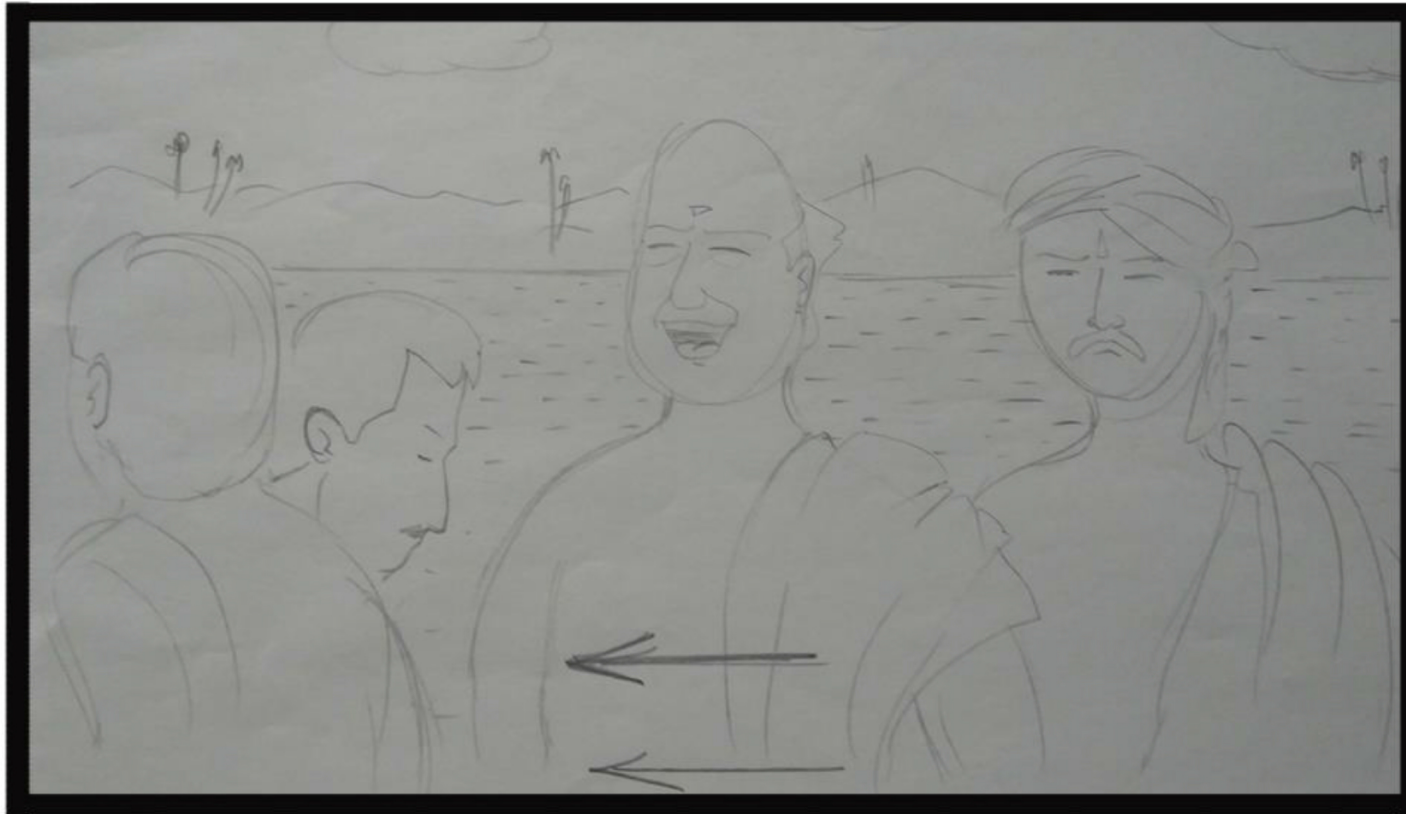
SCENE 1



Shot 4: Medium shot.

Dialogue(Passenger 1): "Hey friends... Today the king Kolathiri raja of Kolathunadu kingdom is visiting our kingdom. Right now he must be on his way to Samoori raja's palace."

SCENE 1



Shot 5: Close-up shot.

Dialogue - Passenger 2(outside the frame): "Oh... Really? But they are rivals of each other, right?"

Passenger 1(laughing): "Yes, but they visit each others' places once in a while. Something funny will happen today for sure. Let's wait and see!"

SCENE 1



Shot 6: Close-up shot.

Dialogue - Boatman(pointing at something far-away): "Hey, look at that!"

SCENE 1



Shot 7: Medium shot.

The passengers suddenly (curiously) looking at the river bank where the boatman just pointed at.

SCENE 1



Shot 8: Long shot.

Zoom-in to the procession on the river bank.

Dialogue - Passenger 1(not in the frame): "Ya, it's them. Kolathiri raja's procession." -End of scene 1

SCENE 2



Shot 1: Establishing shot. Entrance gateway of Samoothiri raja's palace.
Kolathiri raja's procession arriving.

SCENE 2



Shot 3: Full shot. Palace interior- Samoorthiri welcoming Kolathiri.

SCENE 2



Shot 4A: Close-up shot.

Dialogue - Kolathiri: "Well, your kingdom has developed a lot in the past couple of years. I just can't believe it."

Samoothiri: "Of course, Kozhikode kingdom is the best."

SCENE 2



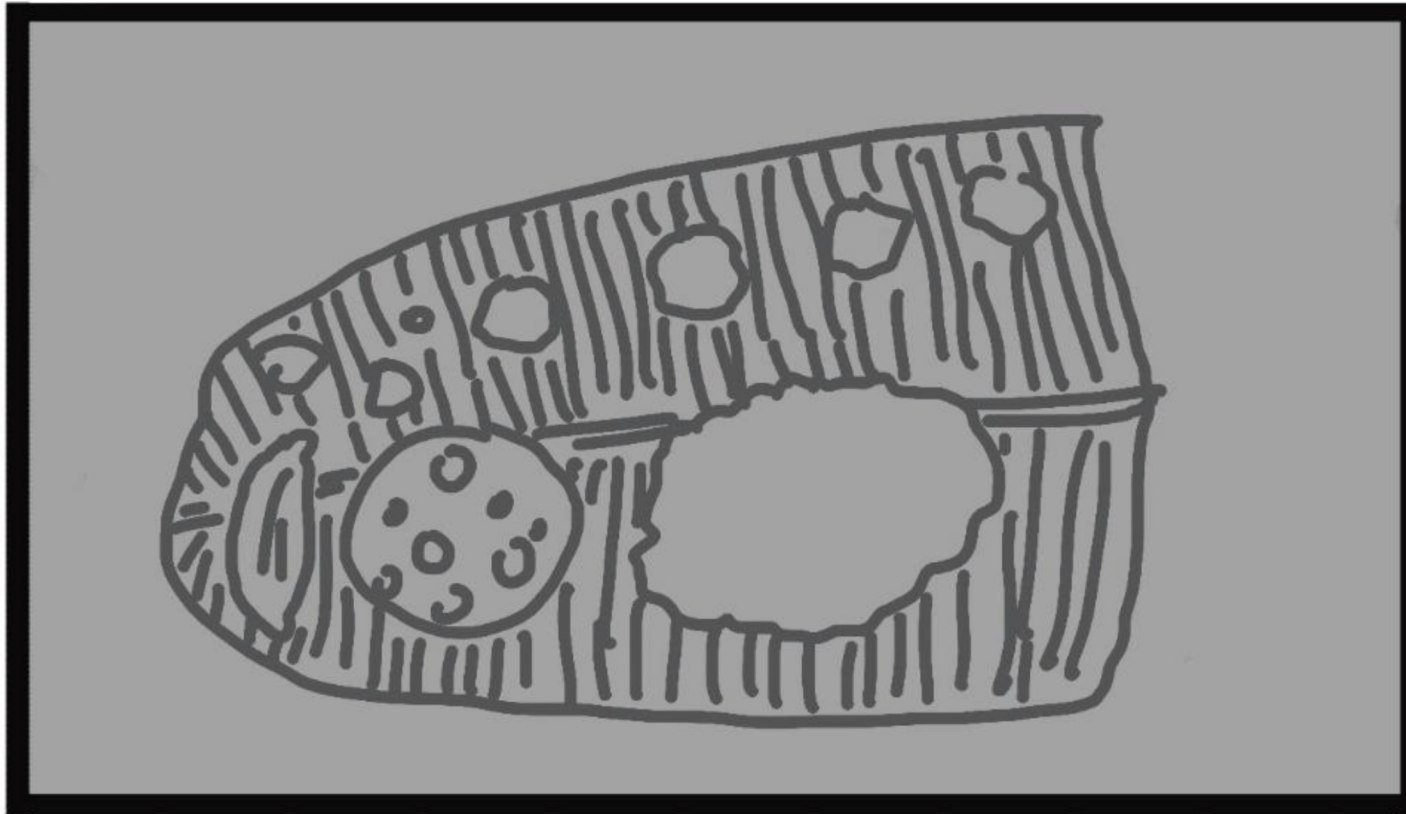
Shot 4B: Close-up shot.

Kolathiri gets offended by Samoothiri's reply.

Dialogue - Samoothiri: "Well, come on... Let's have lunch."

Kolathiri: "Ok."

SCENE 2



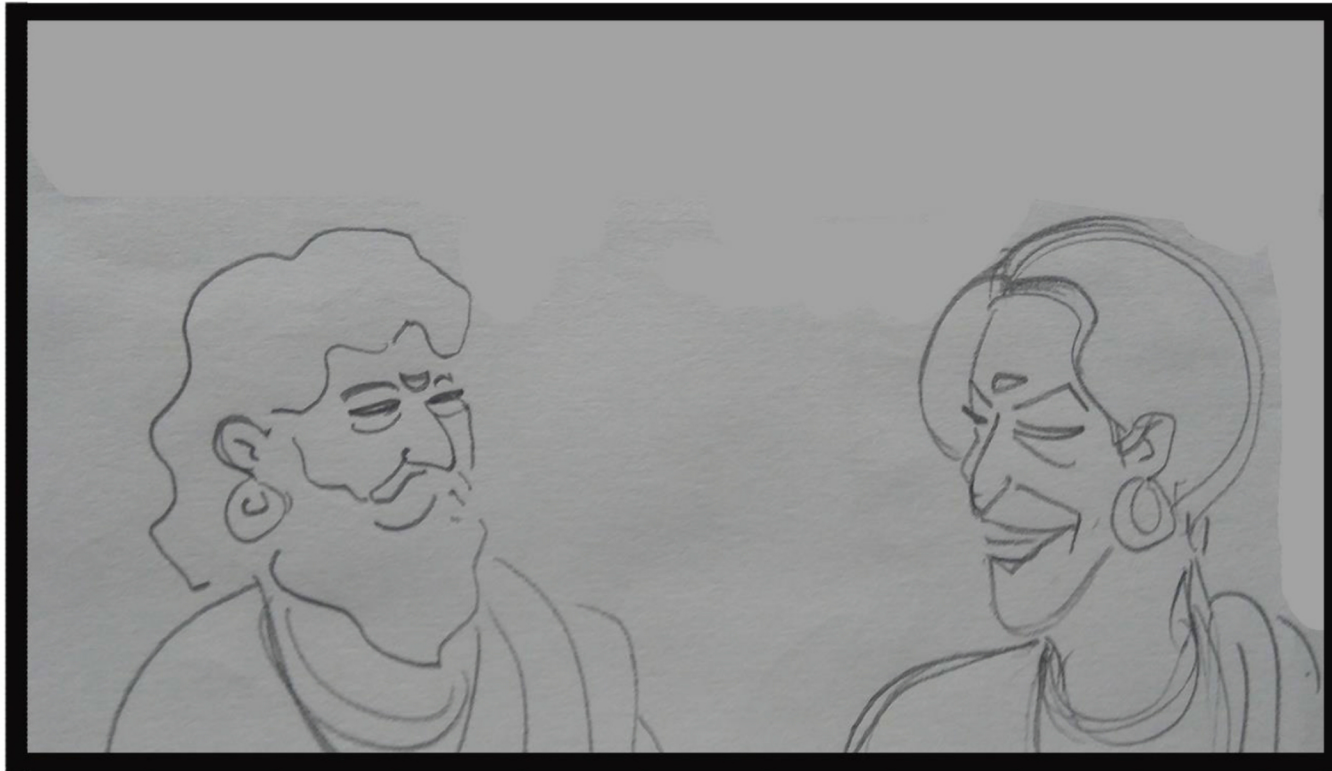
Shot 8: Est Top angle(Close-up) shot.
Lunch(Sadya) served on plantain leaf

SCENE 2



Shot 9: Medium shot.
Samoothiri and Kolathiri having lunch(feast) together.

SCENE 2

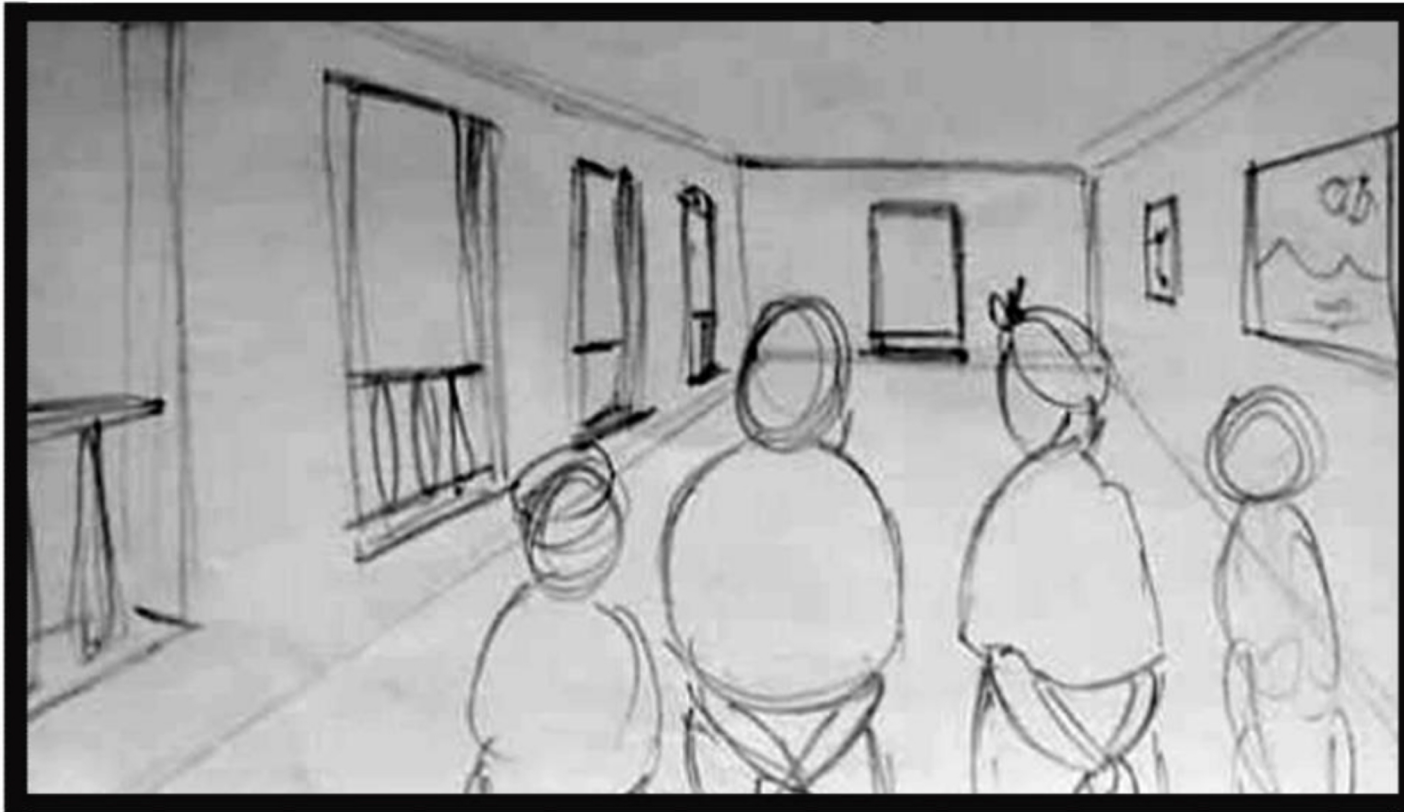


Shot 11: Close-up shot.

Dialogue - Kolathiri: "The rice payasam is so delicious."

Samoothiri: "Oh... it's not rice payasam. It's paalada pradhanam, an exclusive dessert item of Kozhikode cuisine."

SCENE 2



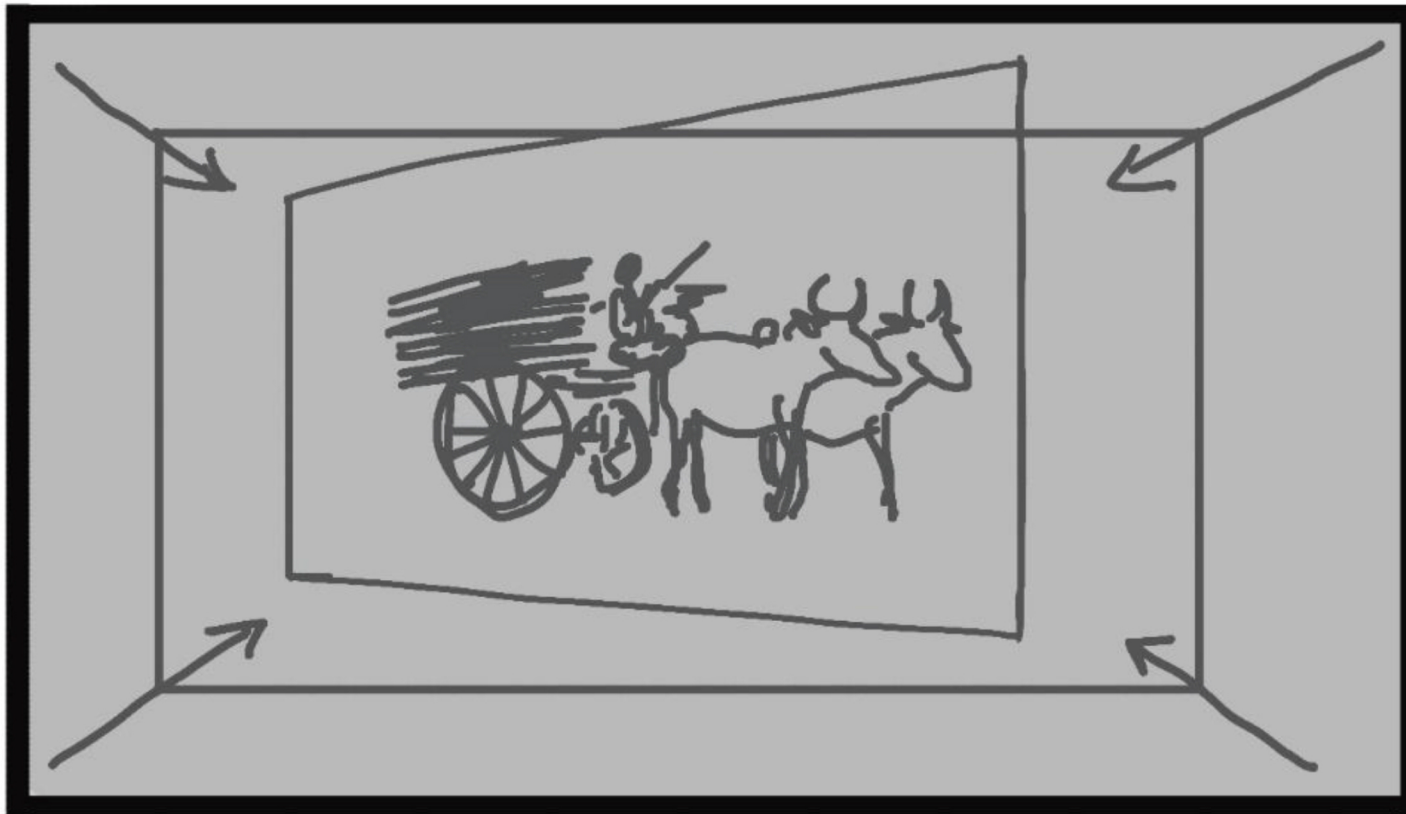
Shot 12:
Samoothiri taking Kolathiri for a walk along the palace corridors.

SCENE 2



Shot 13: Extreme close-up shot
Kolathiri noticing something on the wall

SCENE 2



Shot 14:
Zoom-in to a painting of a bullock-cart on the wall.

SCENE 2



Shot 15: Close-up shot.

Dialogue - Kolathiri: "Will Sa-moori(bull) sting?"

SCENE 2



Shot 16: Close-up shot.
Samoothiri's minister's reaction(surprised)

SCENE 2



Shot 17: Close-up shot.

Dialogue - Samoothiri: "Will Kola-thiri(wick) burn?"

SCENE 2



Shot 18: Close-up shot.

Dialogue - Kolathiri: "Kolathiri might burn. You've to be careful."

SCENE 2



Shot 19: Close-up shot.

Dialogue - Samoothiri: "If Kola-thiri burns, then Sa-moori will sting."

SCENE 2



Shot 20: Extreme close-up shot.
Kolathiri's reaction. Zoom-in to Kolathiri's face.
Fade-out. End of scene 2.

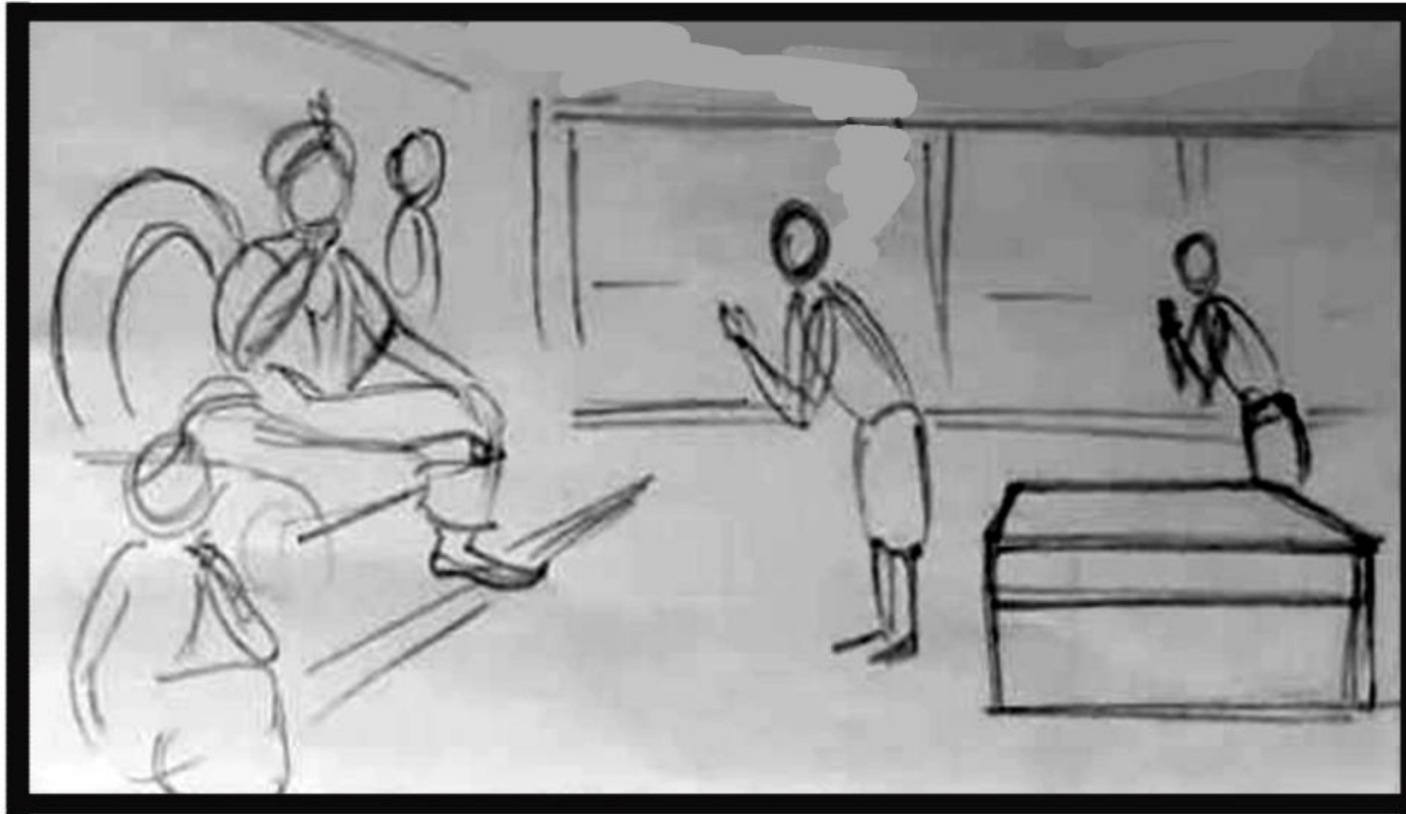
SCENE 3



Shot 1: Establishing shot.

Entrance gateway of Samoothiri's palace. Two men carrying a wooden box(chest) entering the palace.

SCENE 3



Shot 2: Full shot.

Dialogue - Man 1: "Your honour, his highness Kolathiri raja has sent this chest as a gift for you."

SCENE 3



Shot 3: Close-up shot.
Dialogue - Samoothiri: "Ok. Open it."

SCENE 3



Shot 4: Extreme close-up shot.
Minister recollecting the kings' conversation.
Sound(VO): "Will Kola-thiri burn?"

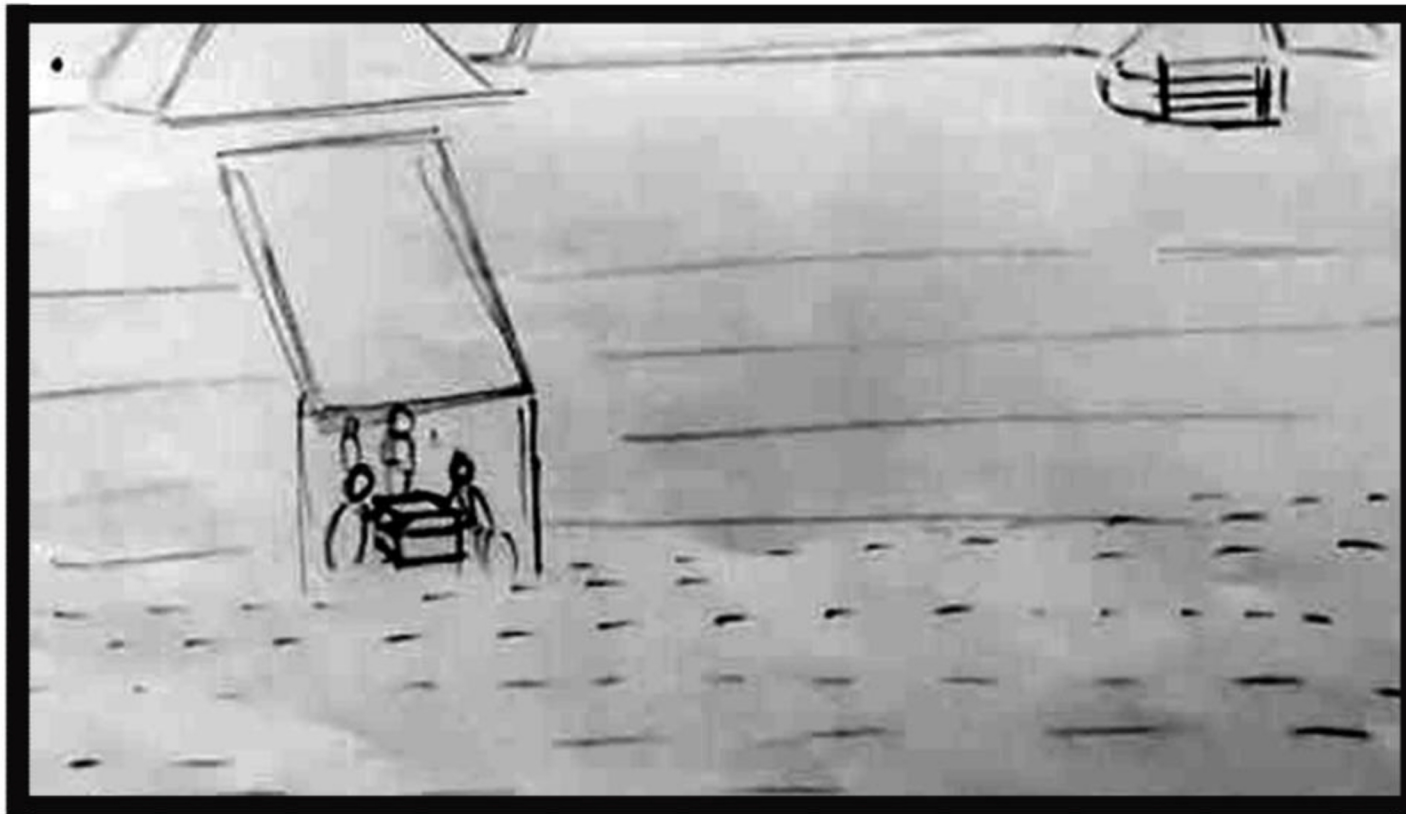
SCENE 3



Shot 5: Extreme close-up shot.

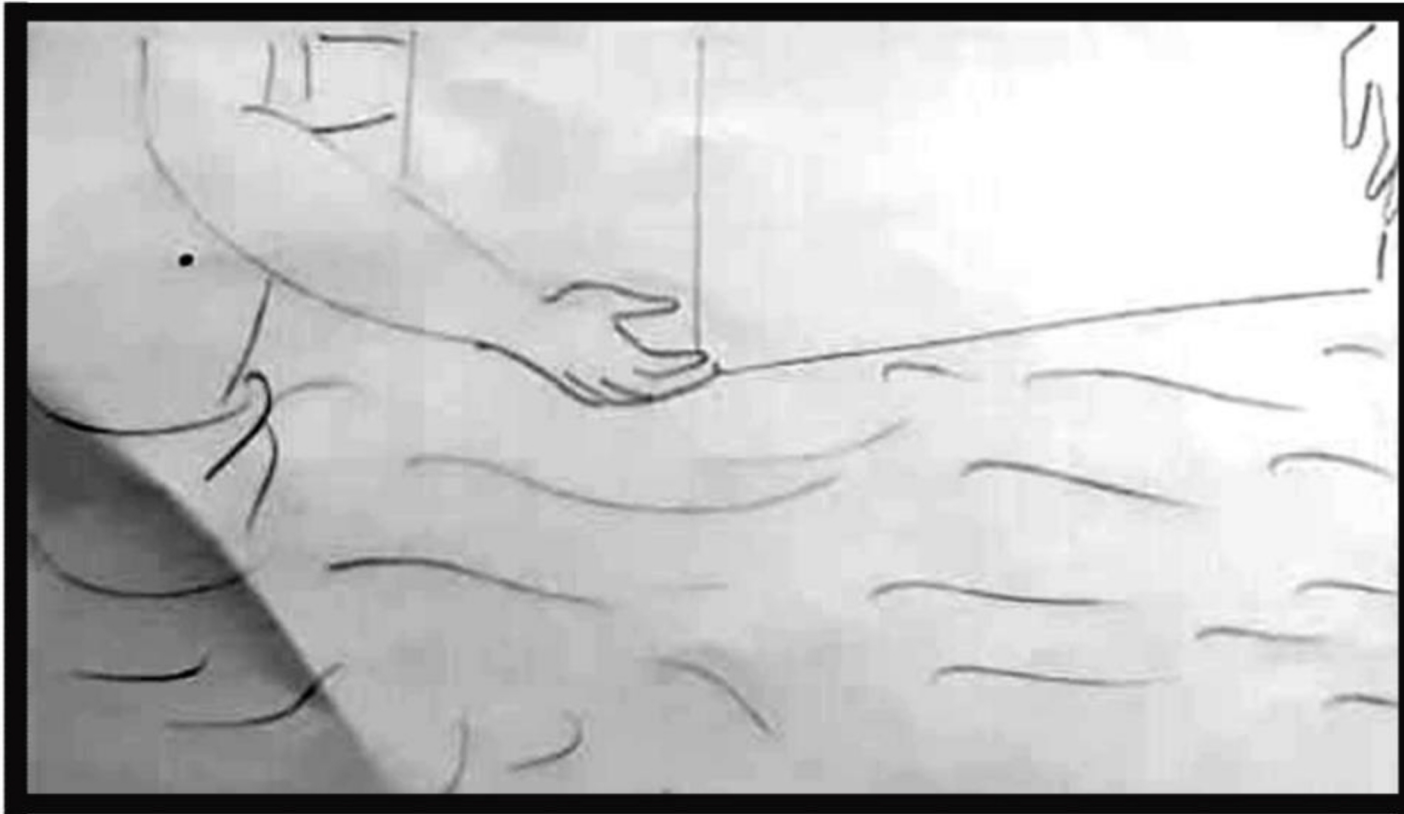
Dialogue - Minister: "My Lord, I sense something wrong. Let's dip the box in water before opening it."

SCENE 3



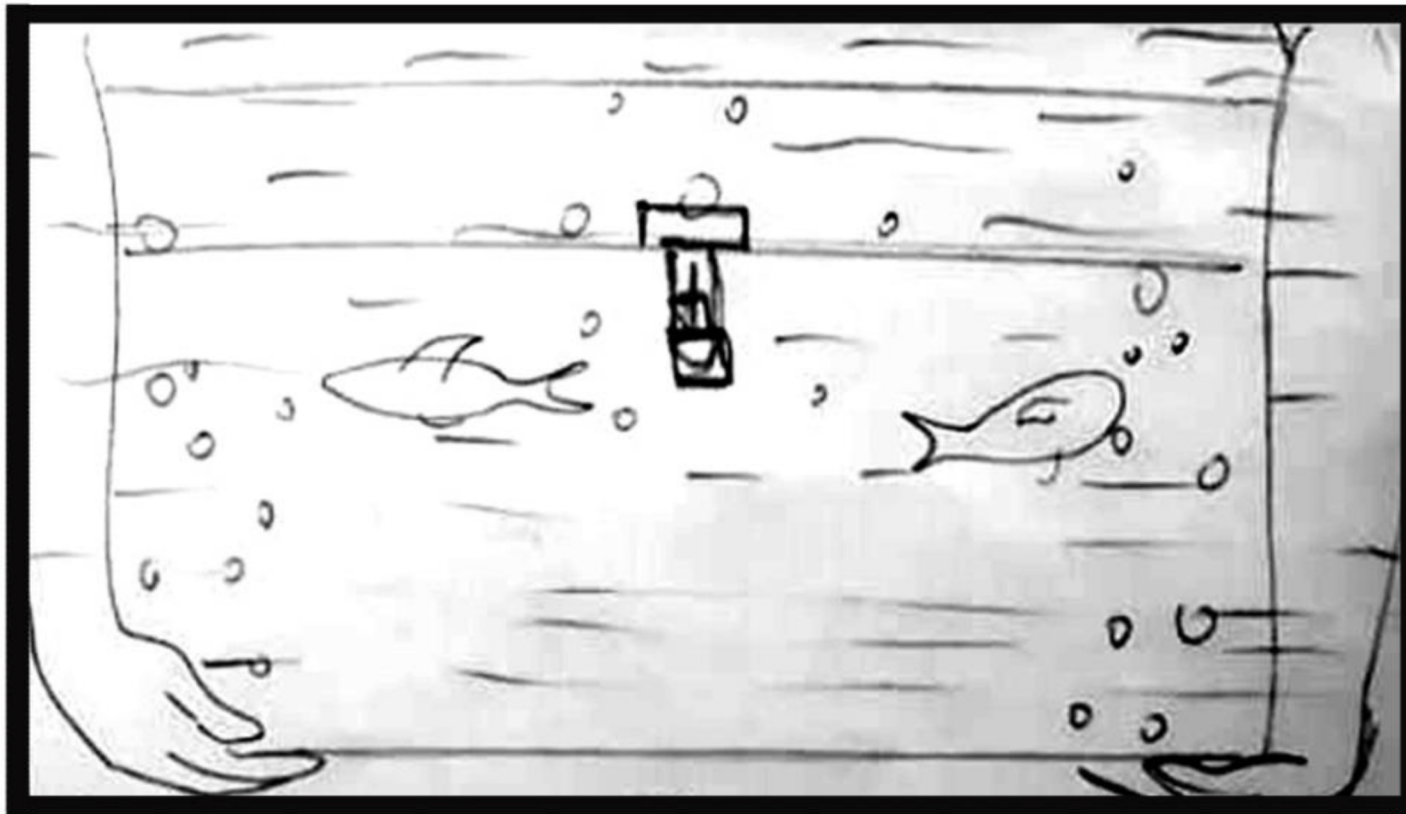
Shot 6: Down shot.
The minster and his men taking the box to the pool.

SCENE 3



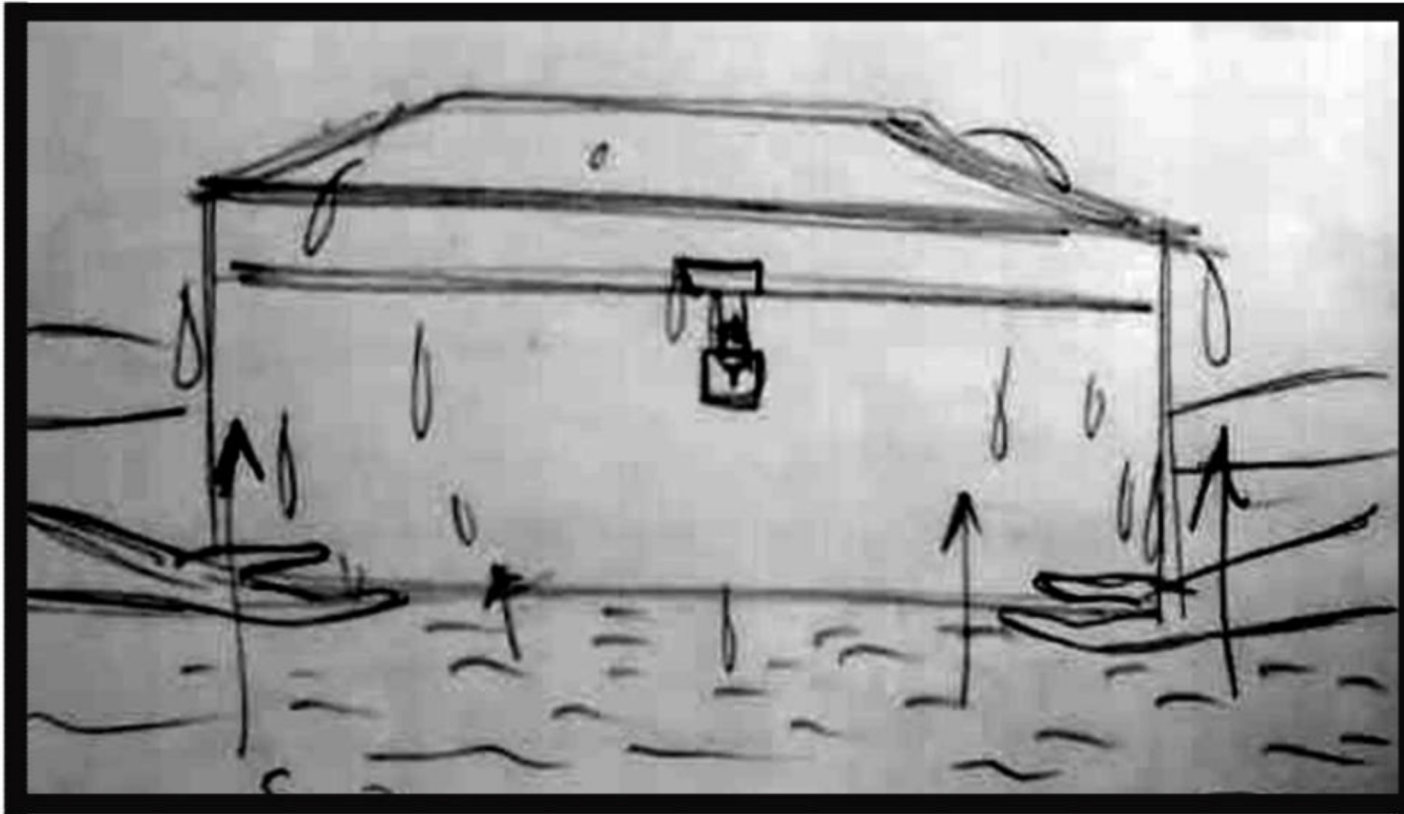
Shot 7: Extreme close-up shot.
The box being dipped in water.

SCENE 3



Shot 8: Close-up shot.
The box under water. Fish visible in the foreground as well as background.

SCENE 3



Shot 9: Close-up shot.
The box being taken out of water.

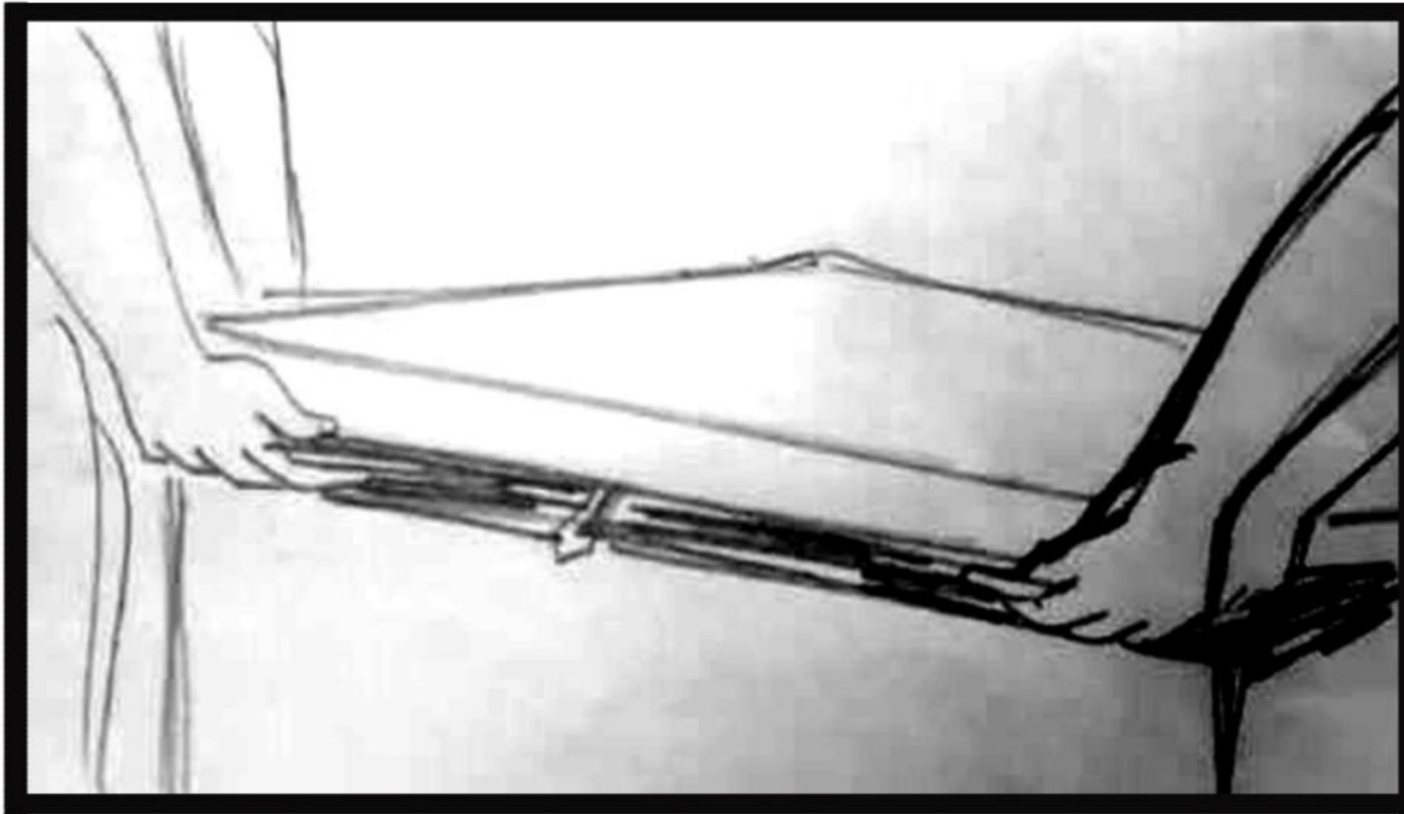
SCENE 3



Shot 10: Medium shot.

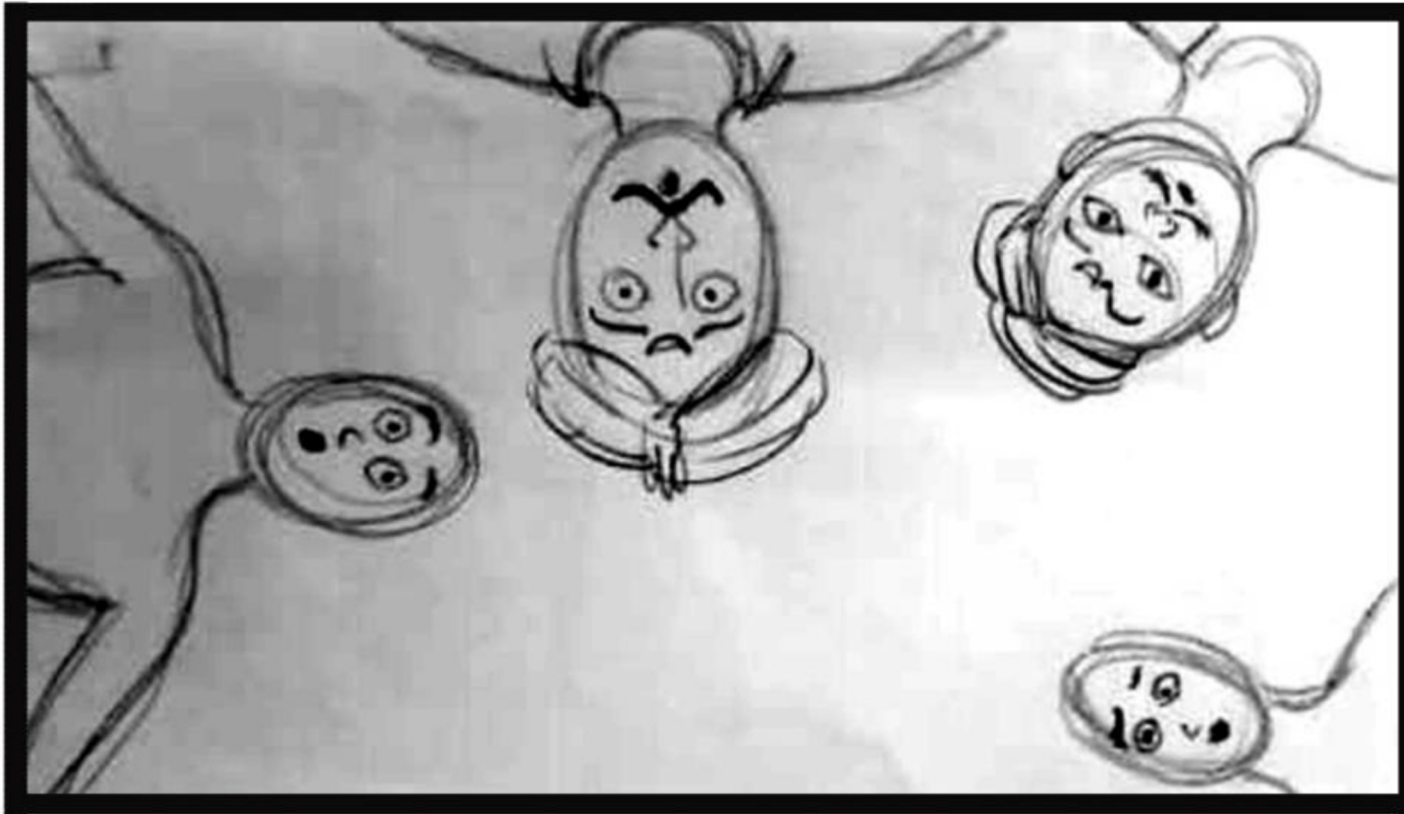
Dialogue - Samoorthiri: "Now open it."

SCENE 3



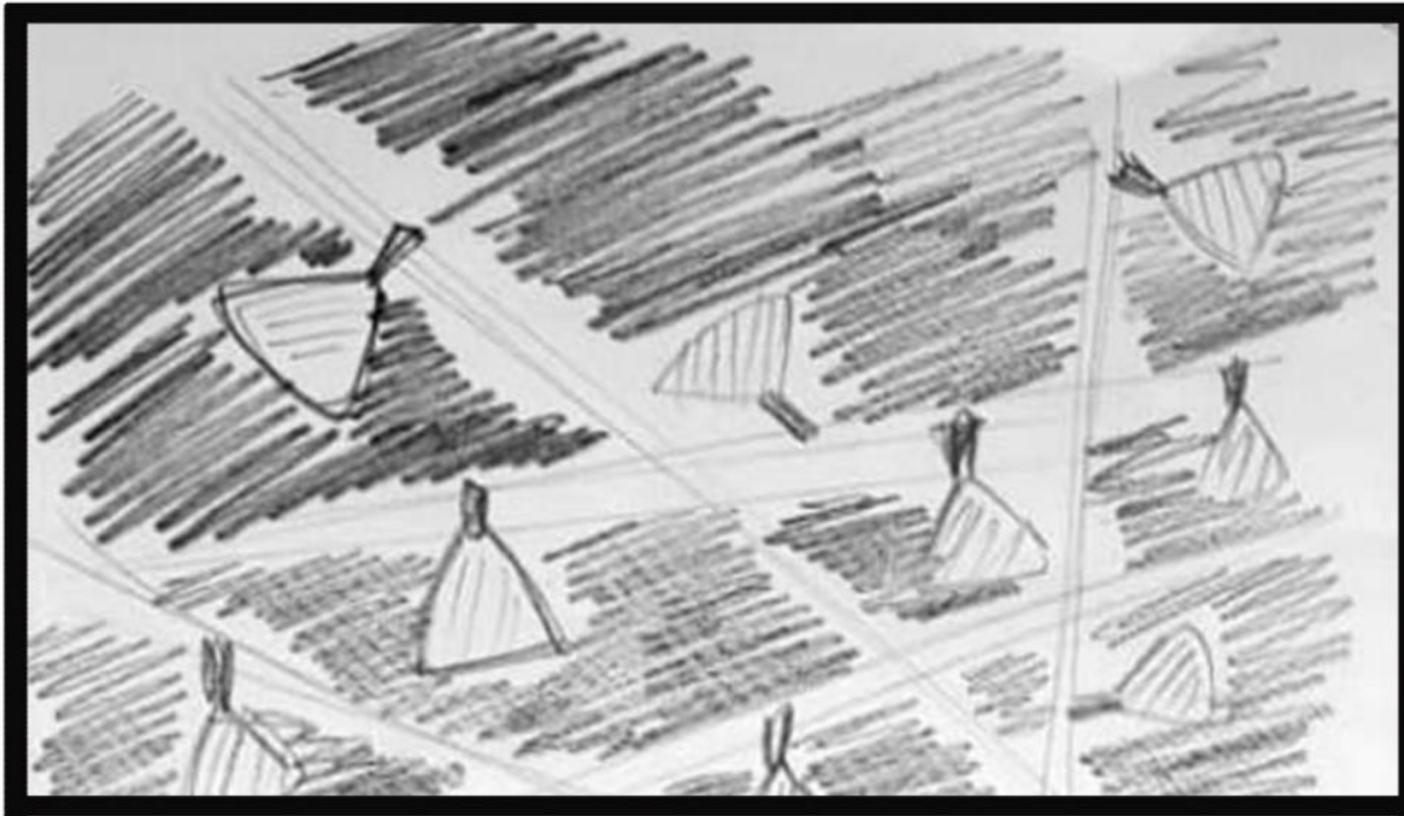
Shot 11: Close-up shot.
The box being opened.

SCENE 3



Shot 12: POV(up) shot.
The men's reaction - All are shocked.

SCENE 3



Shot 13: Close-up shot.

Inside the box - Gun powder set in such a way that it would have gone off, if opened without dipping in water.

Sound - Men: "Oh my god! gun powder!"

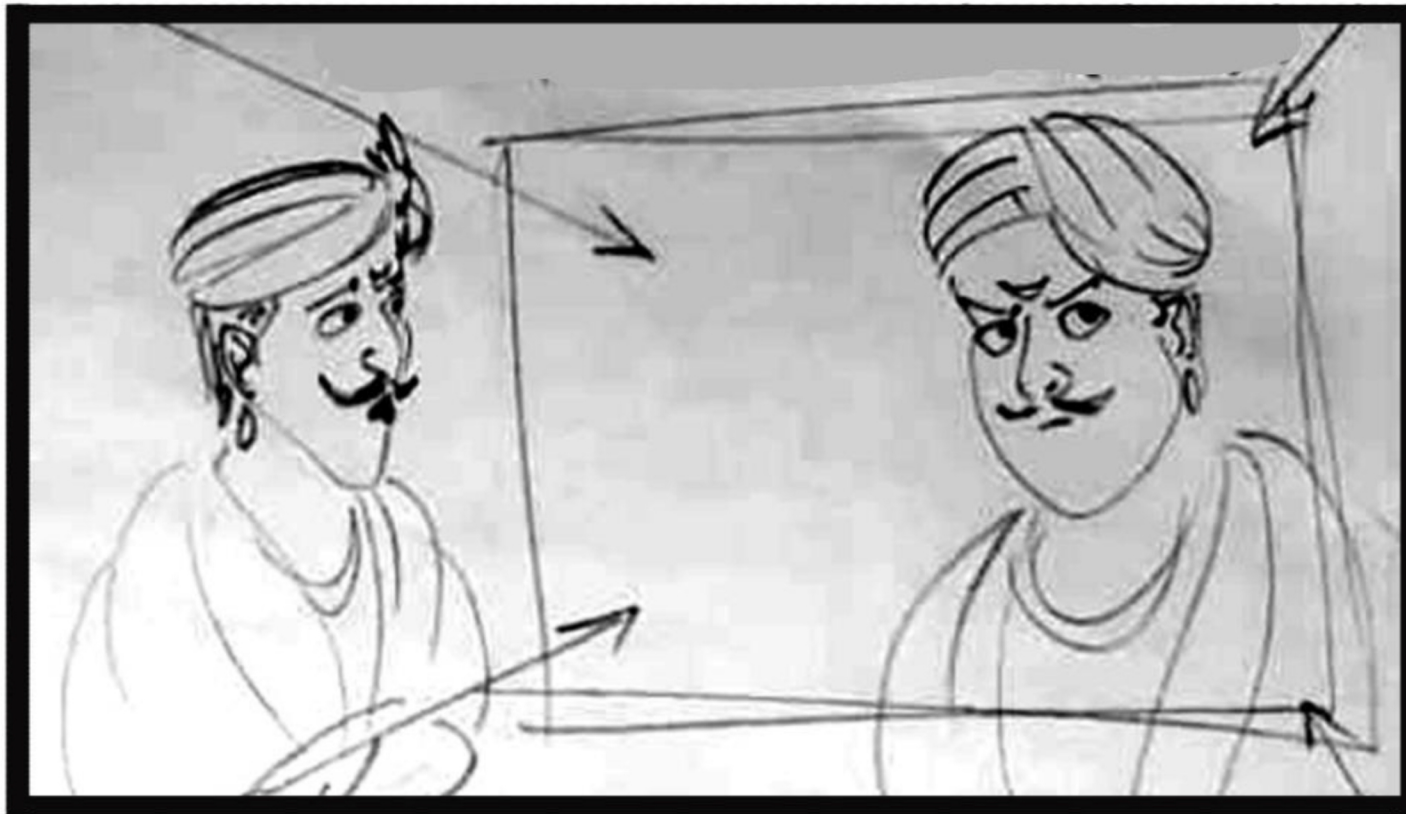
SCENE 3



Shot 14: Medium shot.

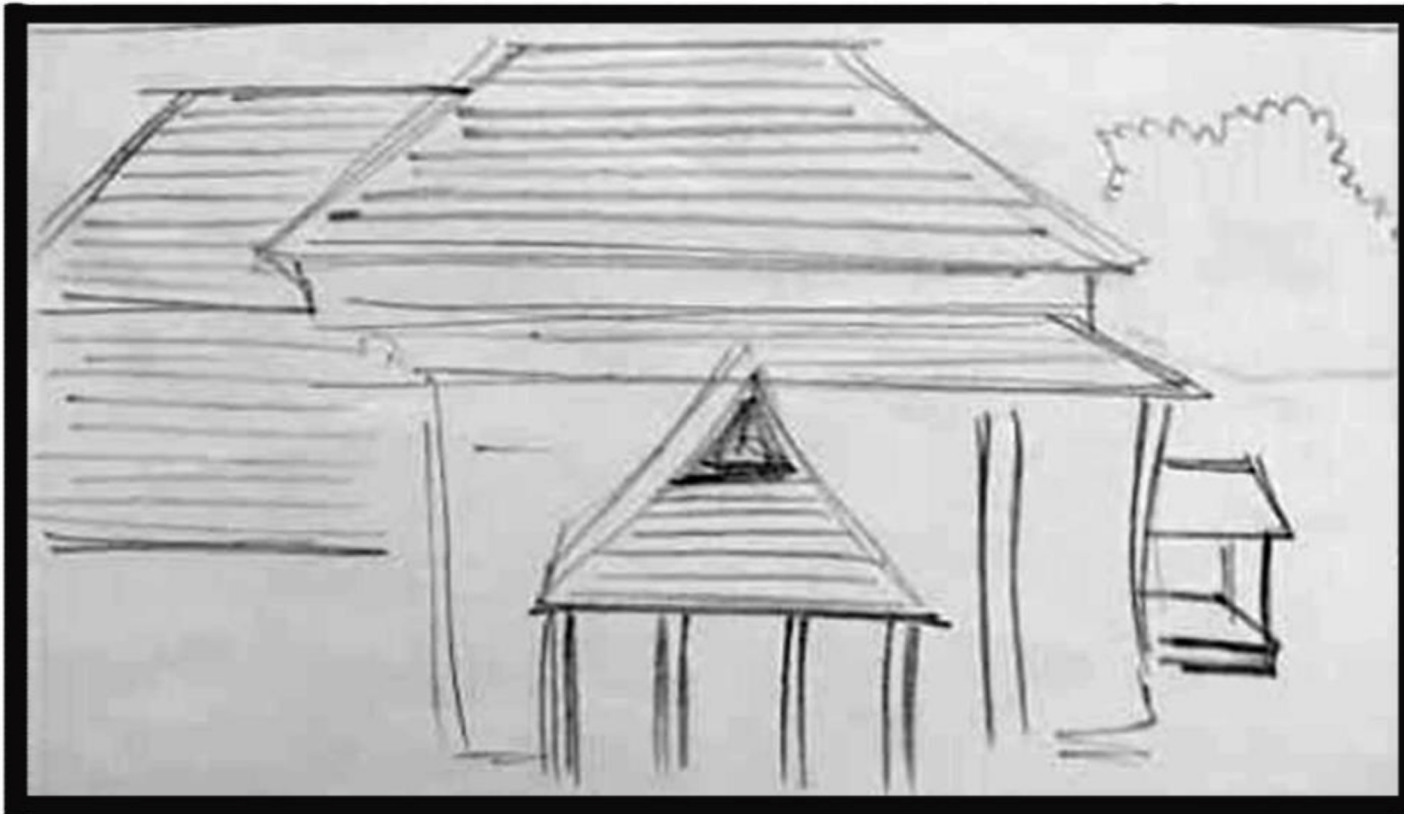
Dialogue - Samoothiri: "Oh my god!"

SCENE 3



Shot 15: Close-up shot.
Minister thinking(planning) something. Zoom-in to his face.

SCENE 4



Shot 1: Establishing(down) shot.
Kolathiri's palace, Kolathunadu

SCENE 4

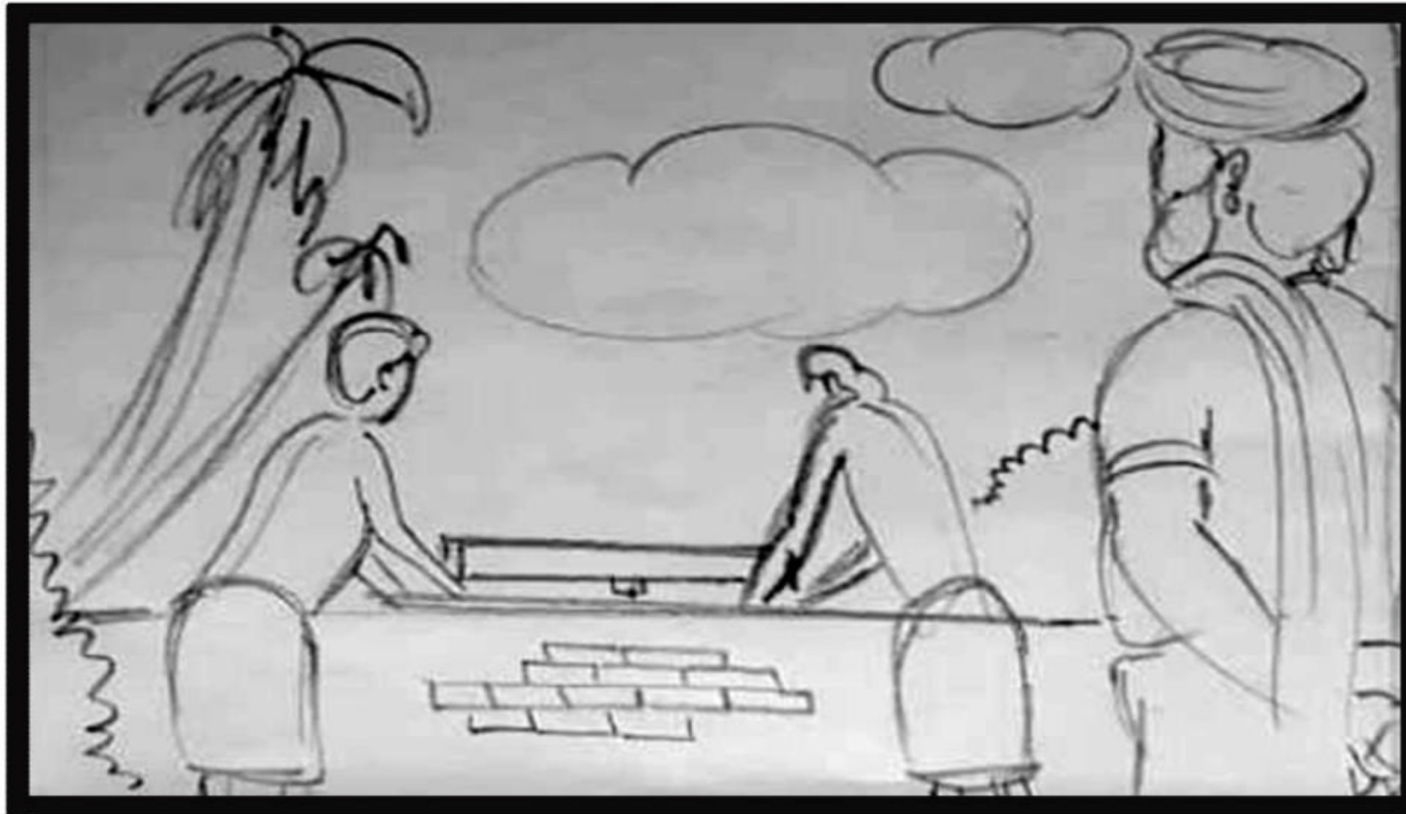


Shot 2: Up shot(medium).

Dialogue - Man1 : “My lord, his highness Samoothiri raja has sent a return gift for you.”

Kolathiri(laughing): “What a fool he is? Applying the same trick on me? Well, let’s dip it in water.”

SCENE 4



Shot 3: Medium shot.

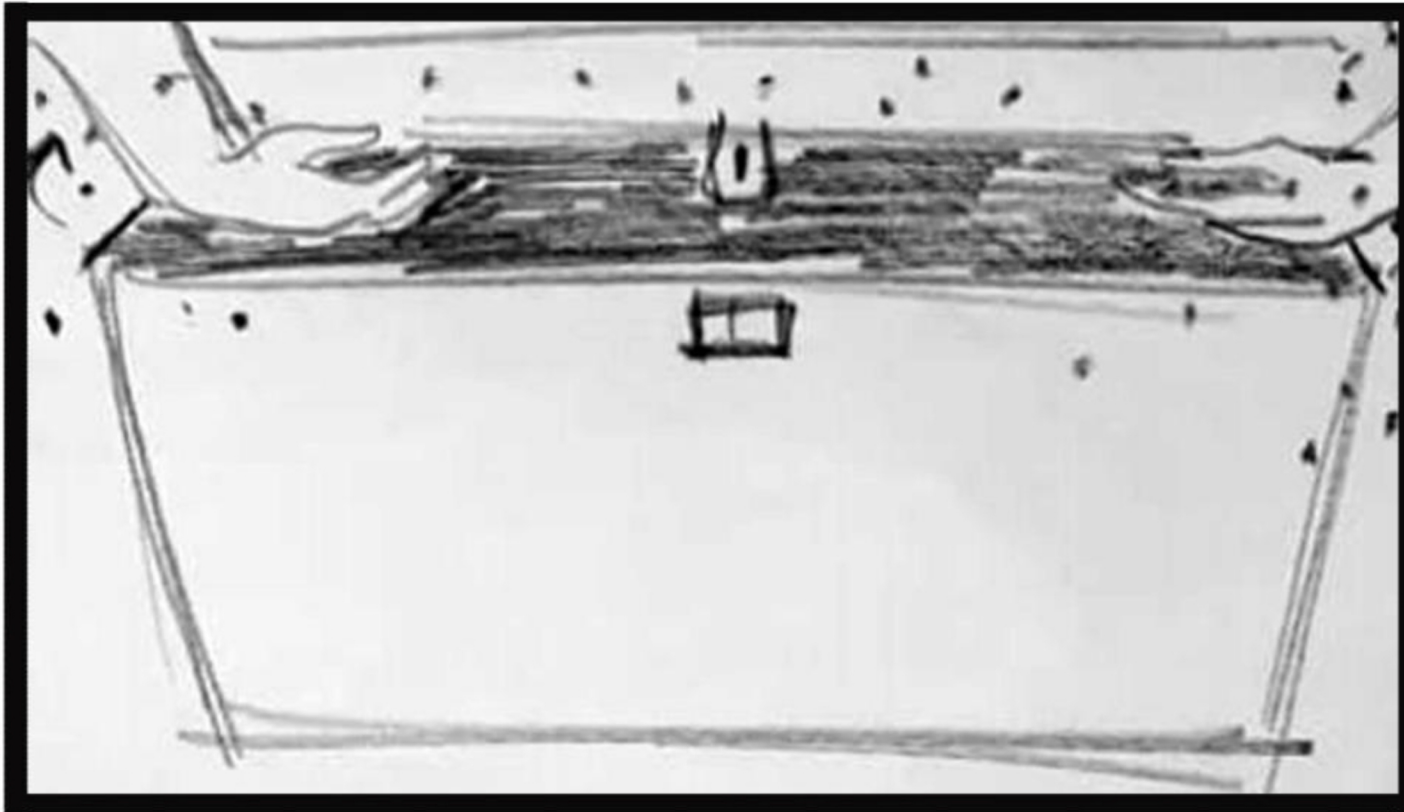
Kolathiri's men dip the box in water in a tank, as he watches on.

SCENE 4



Shot 4: Close-up shot.
Dialogue - Kolathiri: "Open it."

SCENE 4

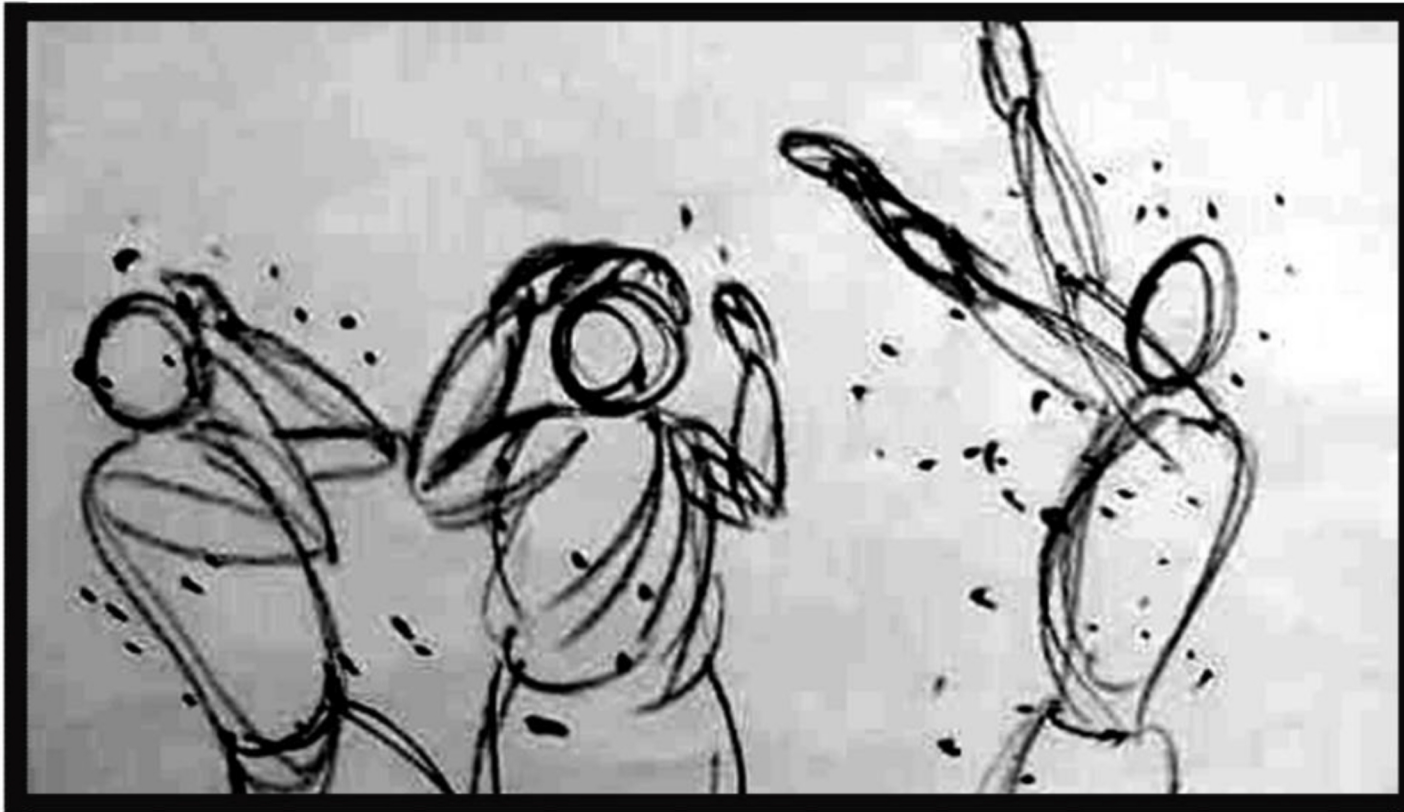


Shot 5: Close-up shot.

The box being opened. A swarm of bees coming out.

Sound - The buzzing noise of the bees.

SCENE 4



Shot 6: Medium shot.

The bees stinging everybody. The men screaming and running for help.

SCENE 4



Shot 7: Close-up shot.

Kolathiri getting badly stung by the bees, screaming for help.

SCENE 4



Shot 8: Up shot.

Kolathiri running towards the water tank and jumping into the water. Water splashing. Camera panning up, towards the sky. Fade out.

-THE END

Reference

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<http://books.sayahna.org/ml/pdf/aithihyamala.pdf>

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHY-6PjbhsU>