For Rafiki yangu, Helen –
AKA Twiga.
C.G.

For Mum and Dad,
S.U.

Published in 2021 by Welbeck Editions
An Imprint of Welbeck Children's Limited,
part of Welbeck Publishing Group.

20 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JW

Text © 2021 Charlotte Guillain
Illustration © 2021 Sam Usher

Charlotte Guillain and Sam Usher have asserted their moral rights to be identified as the author and illustrator of this Work in accordance with the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988.

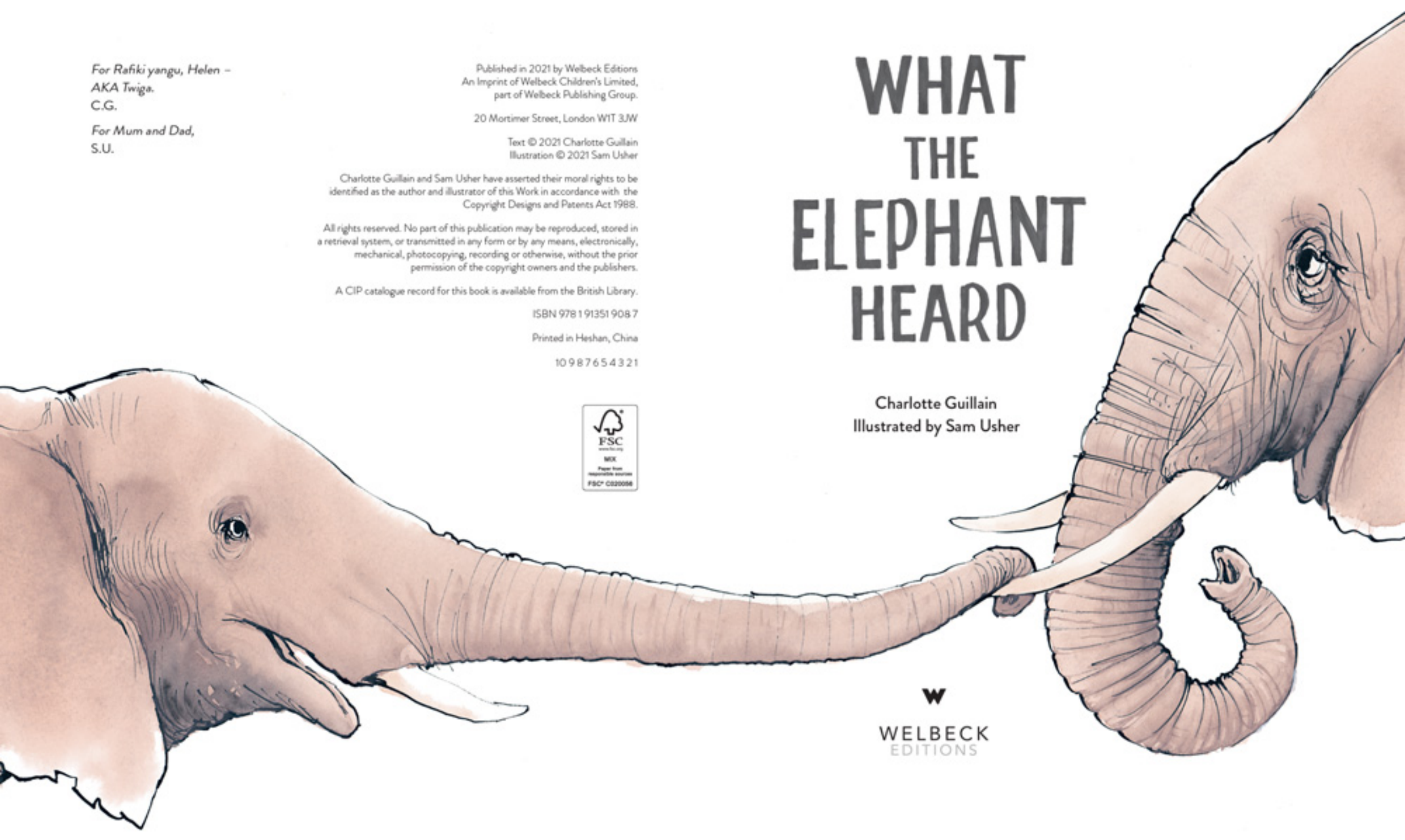
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronically, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owners and the publishers.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978 1 91351 908 7

Printed in Heshan, China

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

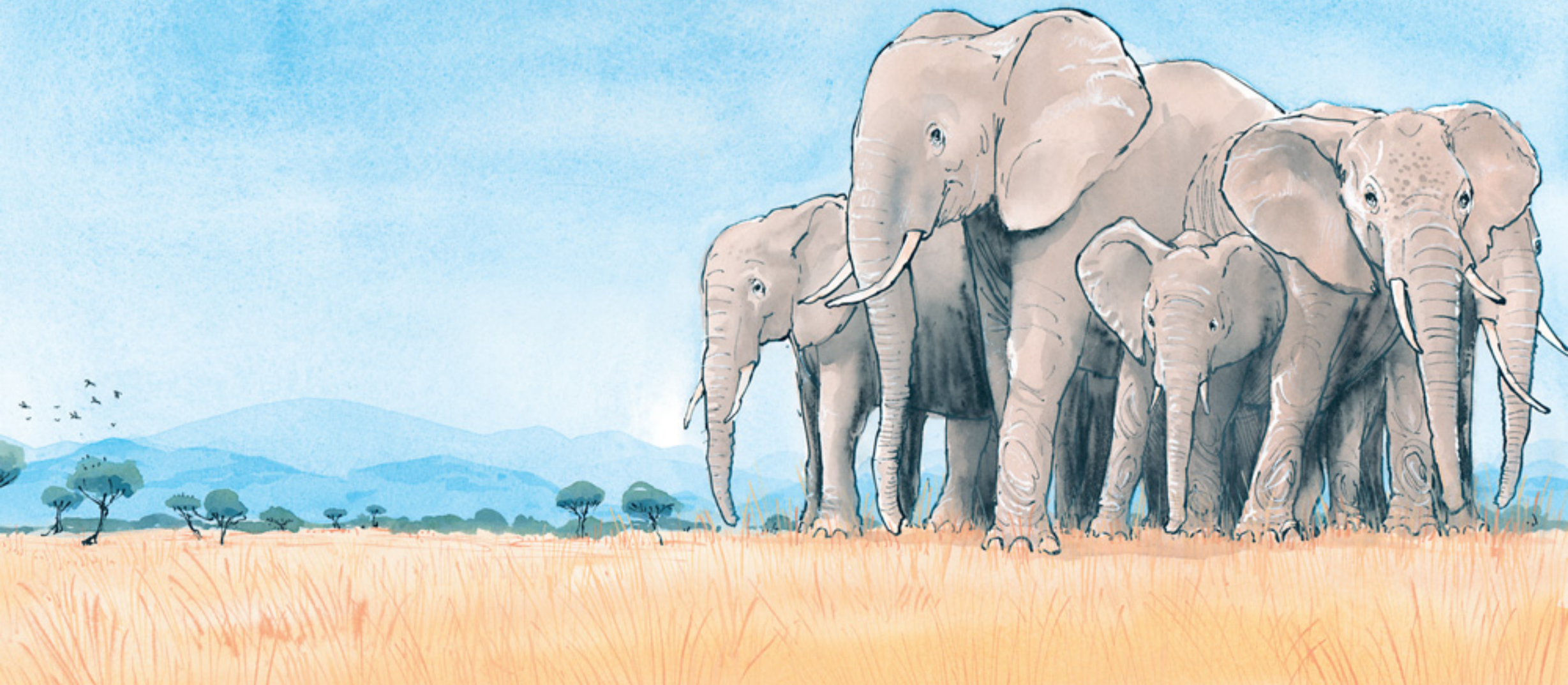


WHAT THE ELEPHANT HEARD

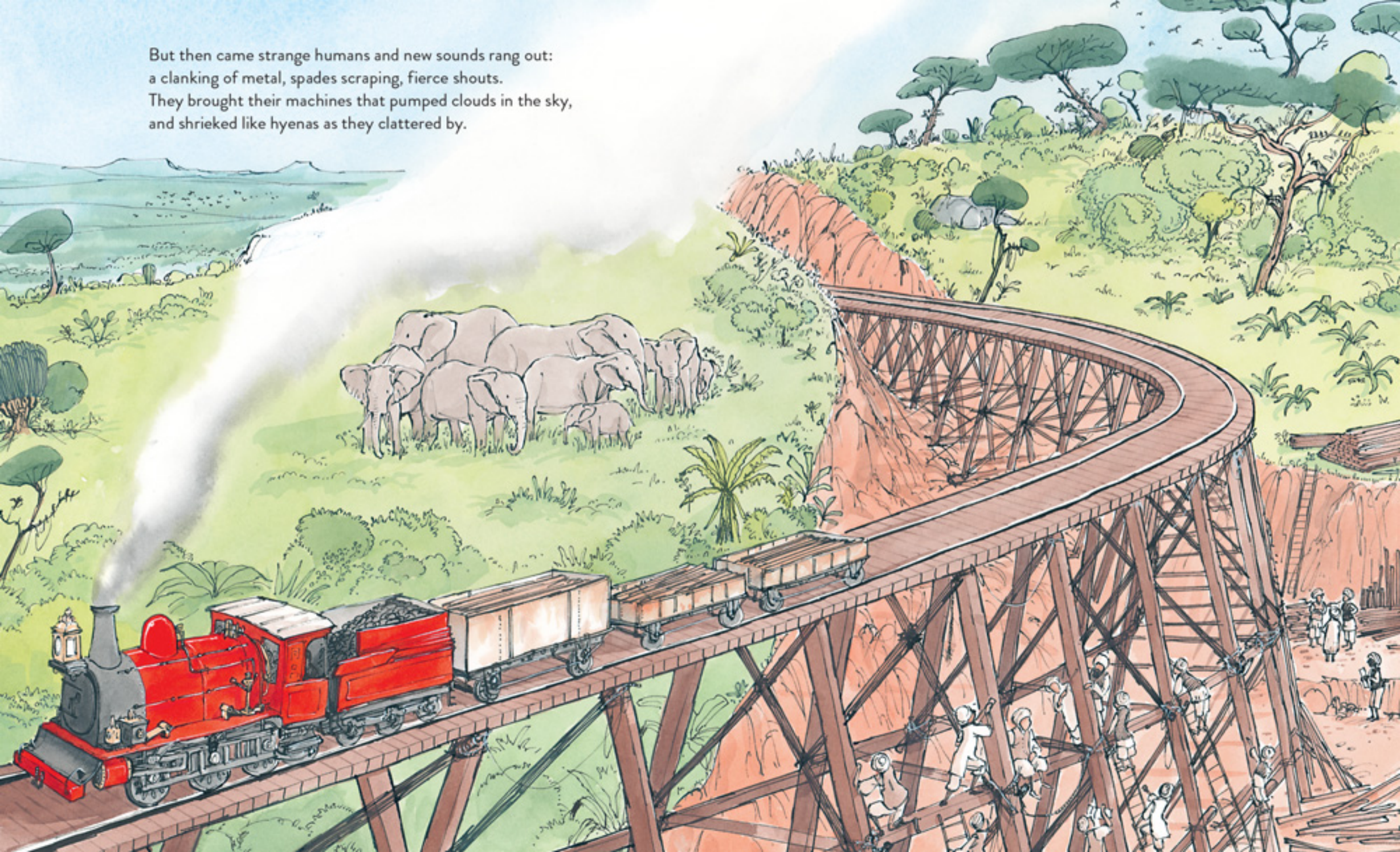
Charlotte Guillain
Illustrated by Sam Usher

WELBECK
EDITIONS

Here on the savannah, I live with my herd.
I'll tell you our history – hear every word.
My grandmother has so much knowledge to share.
She leads us to water, she somehow knows where.



But then came strange humans and new sounds rang out:
a clanking of metal, spades scraping, fierce shouts.
They brought their machines that pumped clouds in the sky,
and shrieked like hyenas as they clattered by.



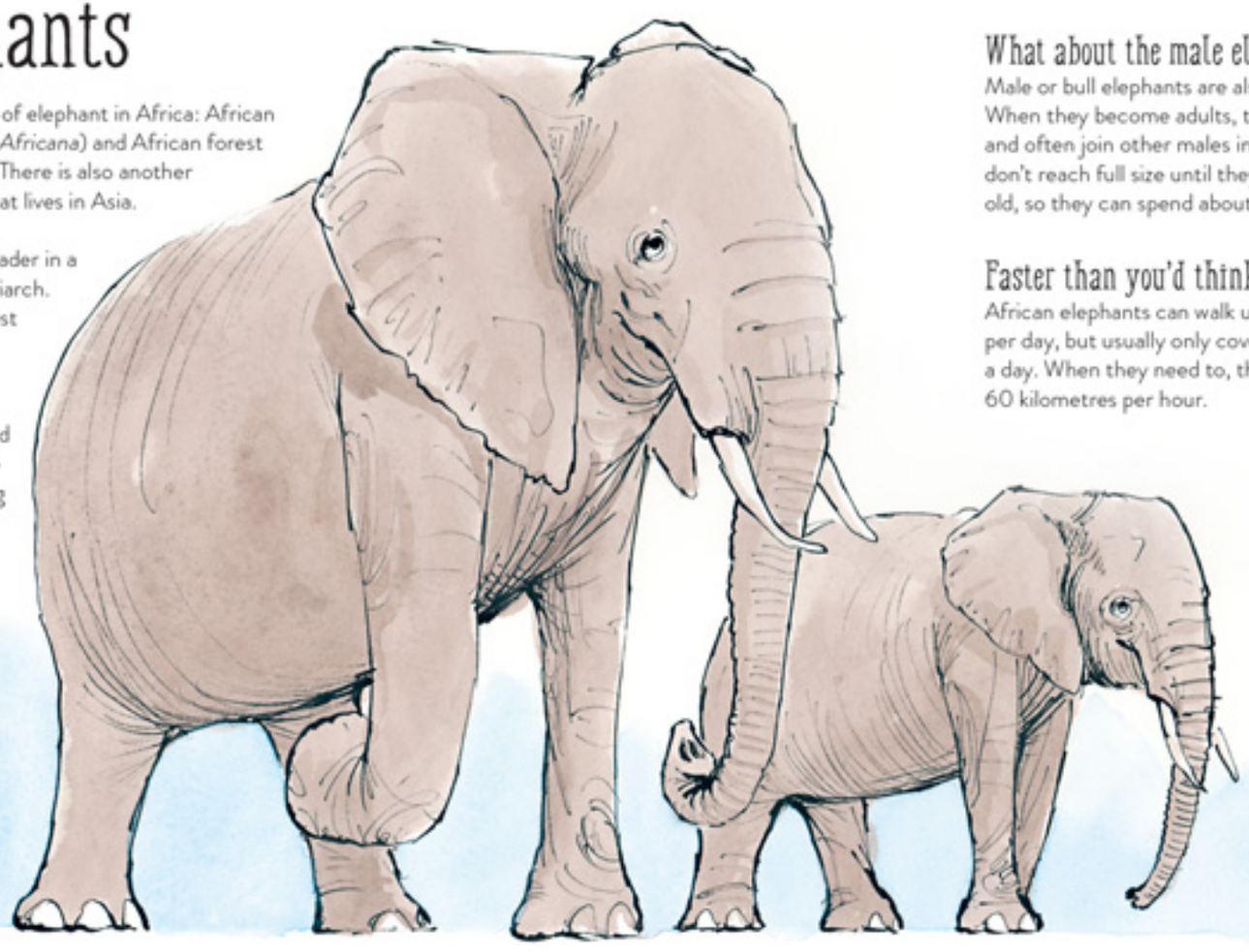


... what will we hear?

All about Elephants

There are two species of elephant in Africa: African savannah (*Loxodonta Africana*) and African forest (*Loxodonta cyclotis*). There is also another species of elephant that lives in Asia.

There is usually one leader in a female herd, the matriarch. She is usually the oldest female and leads her daughters and their calves. The matriarch has the experience and knowledge to help the herd survive by finding water and food and avoiding danger.



What about the male elephants?

Male or bull elephants are also known as 'bachelors'. When they become adults, they leave their mothers and often join other males in small groups. They don't reach full size until they are around 35 years old, so they can spend about half their life growing!

Faster than you'd think

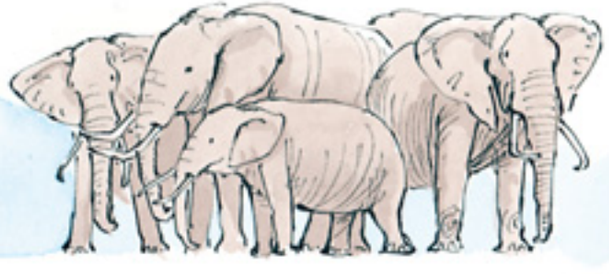
African elephants can walk up to 195 kilometres per day, but usually only cover around 25 kilometres a day. When they need to, they can run at speeds of 60 kilometres per hour.

Talking to each other

Elephants can communicate with each other using around 70 different calls. These range from deep rumbles to loud trumpets. It's thought they can also sense seismic waves travelling through the ground using their sensitive feet.

Growing old, growing big

A male elephant can grow as tall as four metres and weigh up to seven tonnes. The average African elephant has a life span of about 70 years. That's a long time to remember where to find the best sources of water!



A very useful trunk

An elephant's trunk is made up of its upper lip and nose. It can grow to be over two metres long and weigh as much as 140 kilograms. An elephant can use its trunk to pick up tiny objects, comfort other elephants, defend itself, push over trees and suck up water to drink.

A pretty cool skin

The skin of an elephant can be up to 2.5 centimetres thick. Elephants roll in mud and dust to remove bugs from their skin and keep cool. Elephants' ears are designed to pump blood around them to help cool the elephant down under the hot African sun. The more the ears flap, the hotter the elephant is.

Mighty teeth

Elephants' tusks are extra-long incisor teeth that start to grow when they are about two years old. Male elephants' tusks can weigh over 100 kilograms. Elephants have six sets of teeth that grow one set after another, throughout their lives. Most elephants have started to use their final set by the age of 50.

A big appetite

African elephants are herbivores and only eat grasses, herbs, fruit, plants and trees. An African elephant can eat as much as four to seven per cent of its body weight every day! Elephants know how to dig down into dry river beds with their feet, trunk and tusks to find water under the ground.