Helping your children choose books they will love

I reading

Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website created for parents and children to make choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from

Mouse Bird Snake Wolf

Written by

David Almond

Published by

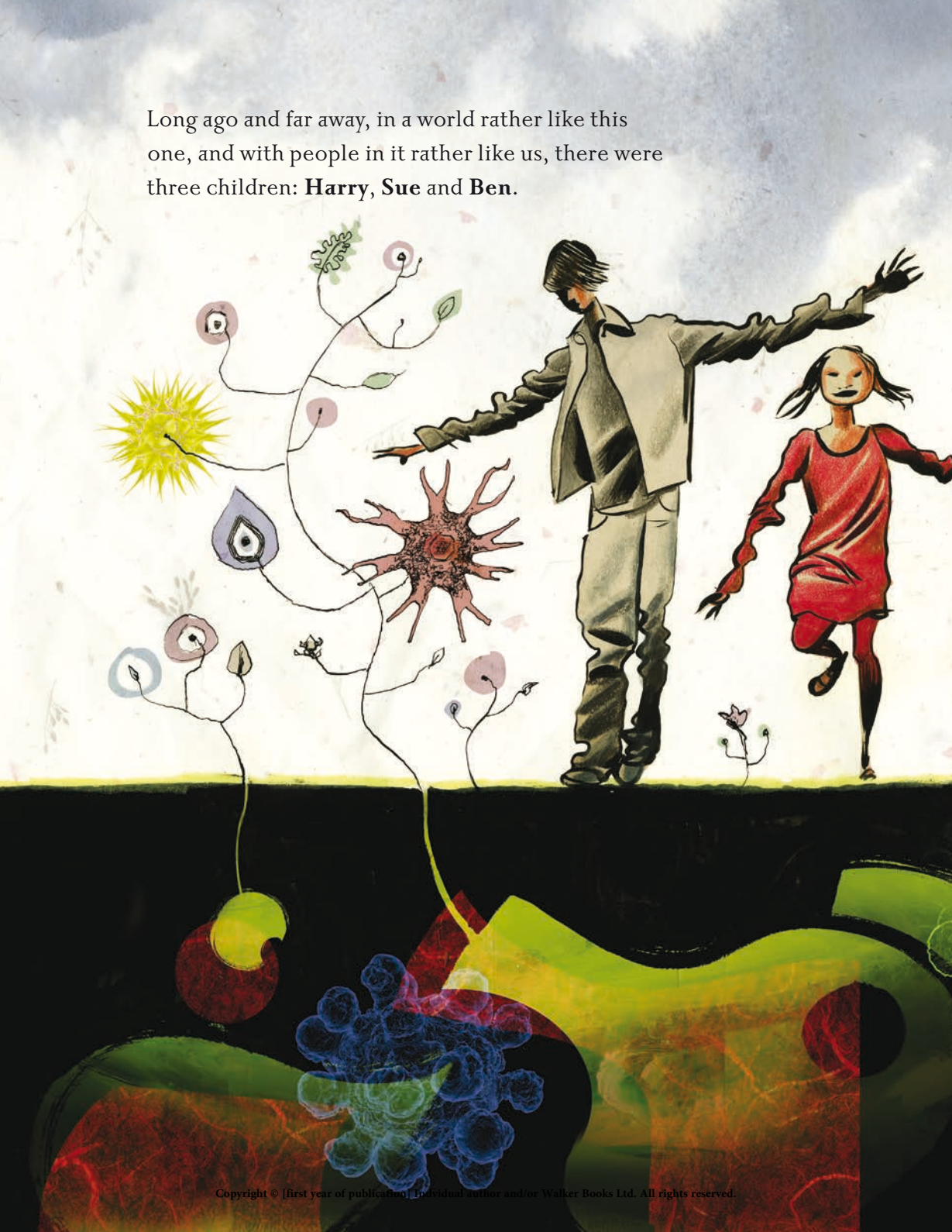
Walker Books Ltd

All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.

Lovereading4kids.co.uk

Long ago and far away, in a world rather like this one, and with people in it rather like us, there were three children: **Harry**, **Sue** and **Ben**.

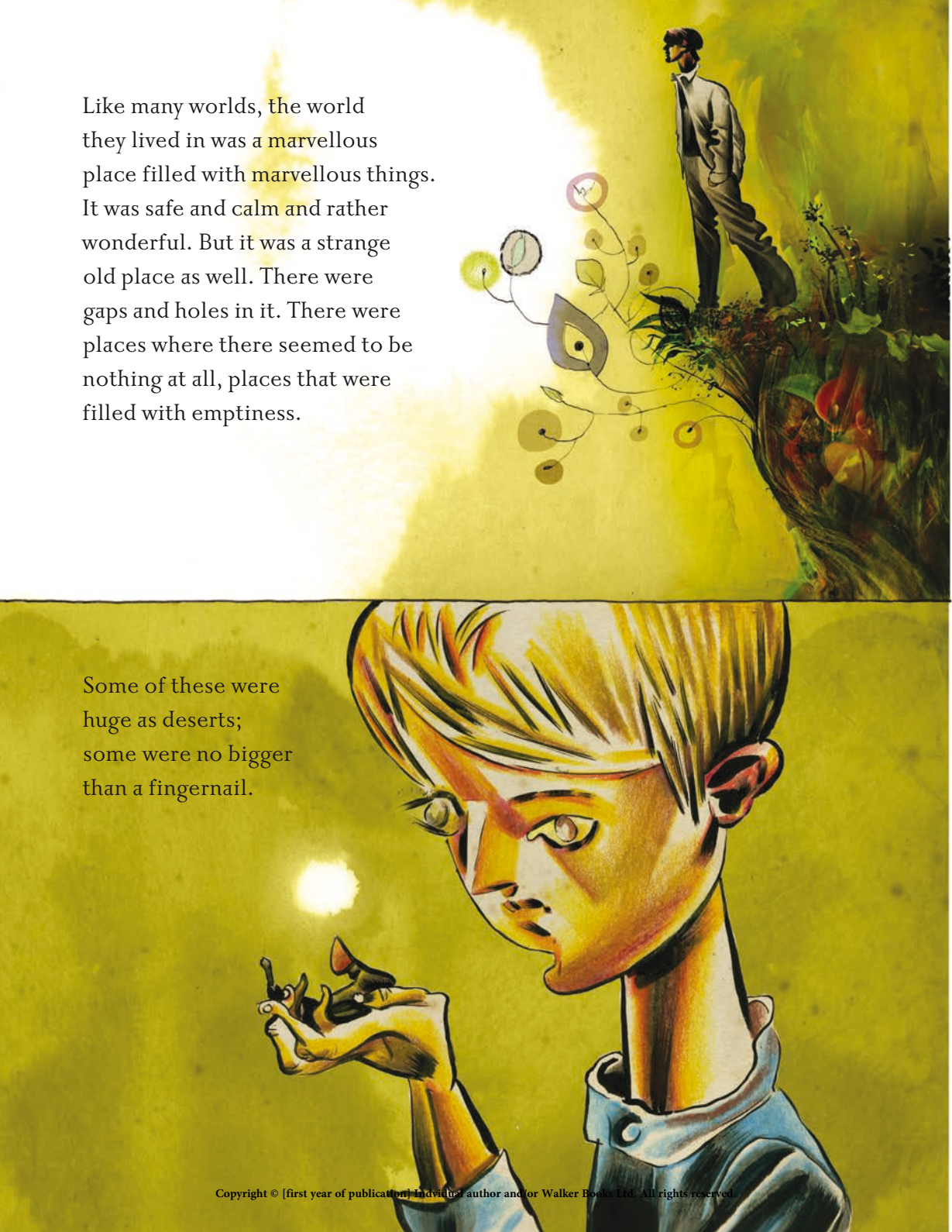


Copyright © [first year of publication] Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.



Copyright © [first year of publication] Indvidual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

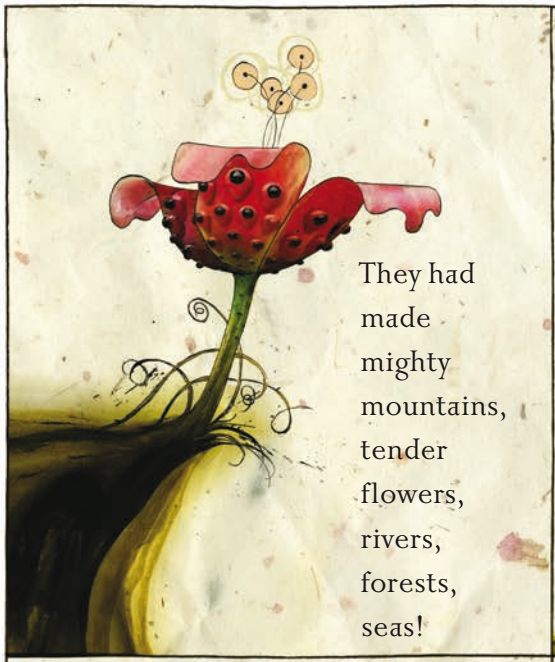
Like many worlds, the world they lived in was a marvellous place filled with marvellous things. It was safe and calm and rather wonderful. But it was a strange old place as well. There were gaps and holes in it. There were places where there seemed to be nothing at all, places that were filled with emptiness.



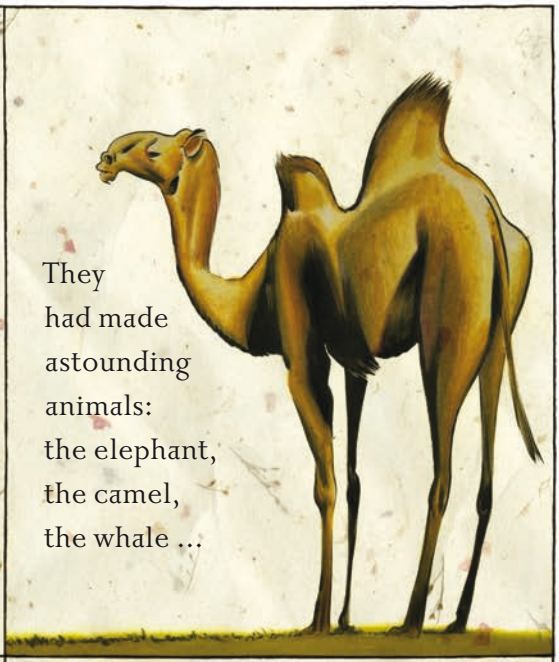
Some of these were huge as deserts; some were no bigger than a fingernail.

Copyright © [first year of publication] Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

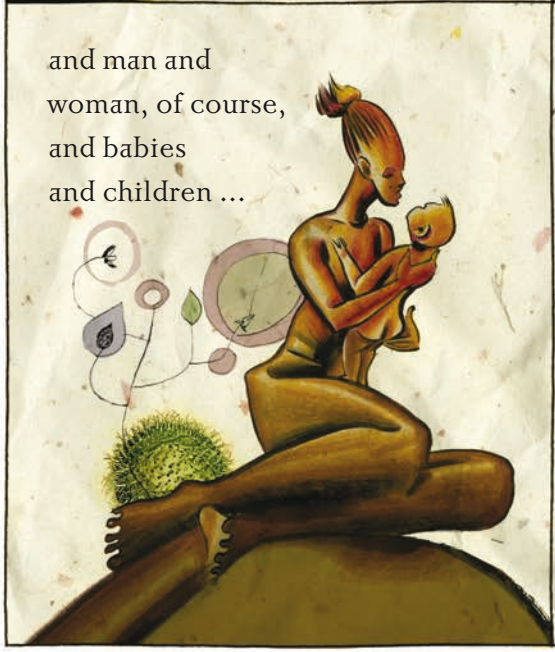
The trouble was, the gods who had made the world had become rather fat and rather too pleased with themselves. Oh yes, they had worked great wonders in days gone by.



They had made mighty mountains, tender flowers, rivers, forests, seas!



They had made astounding animals: the elephant, the camel, the whale ...

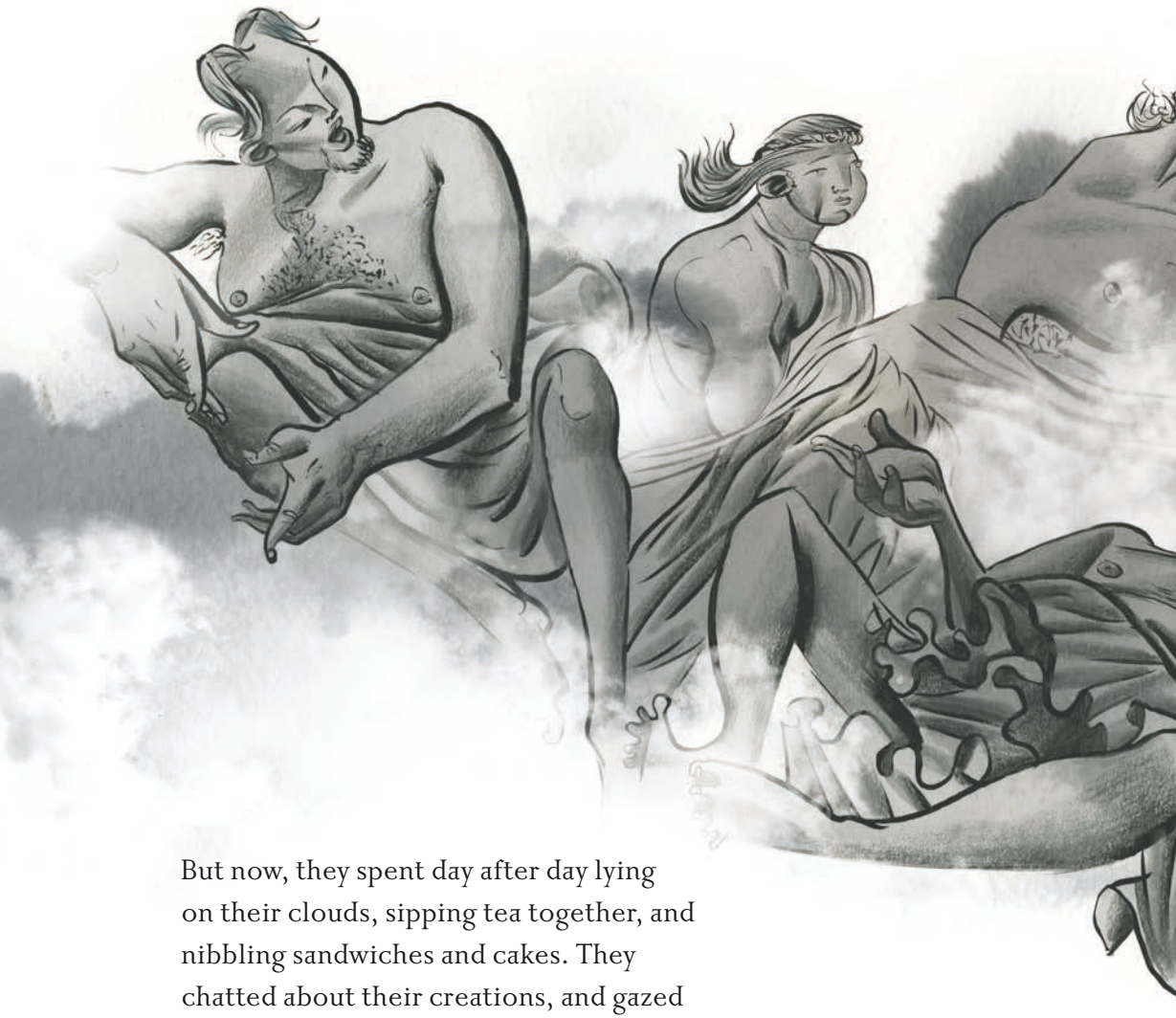


and man and woman, of course, and babies and children ...



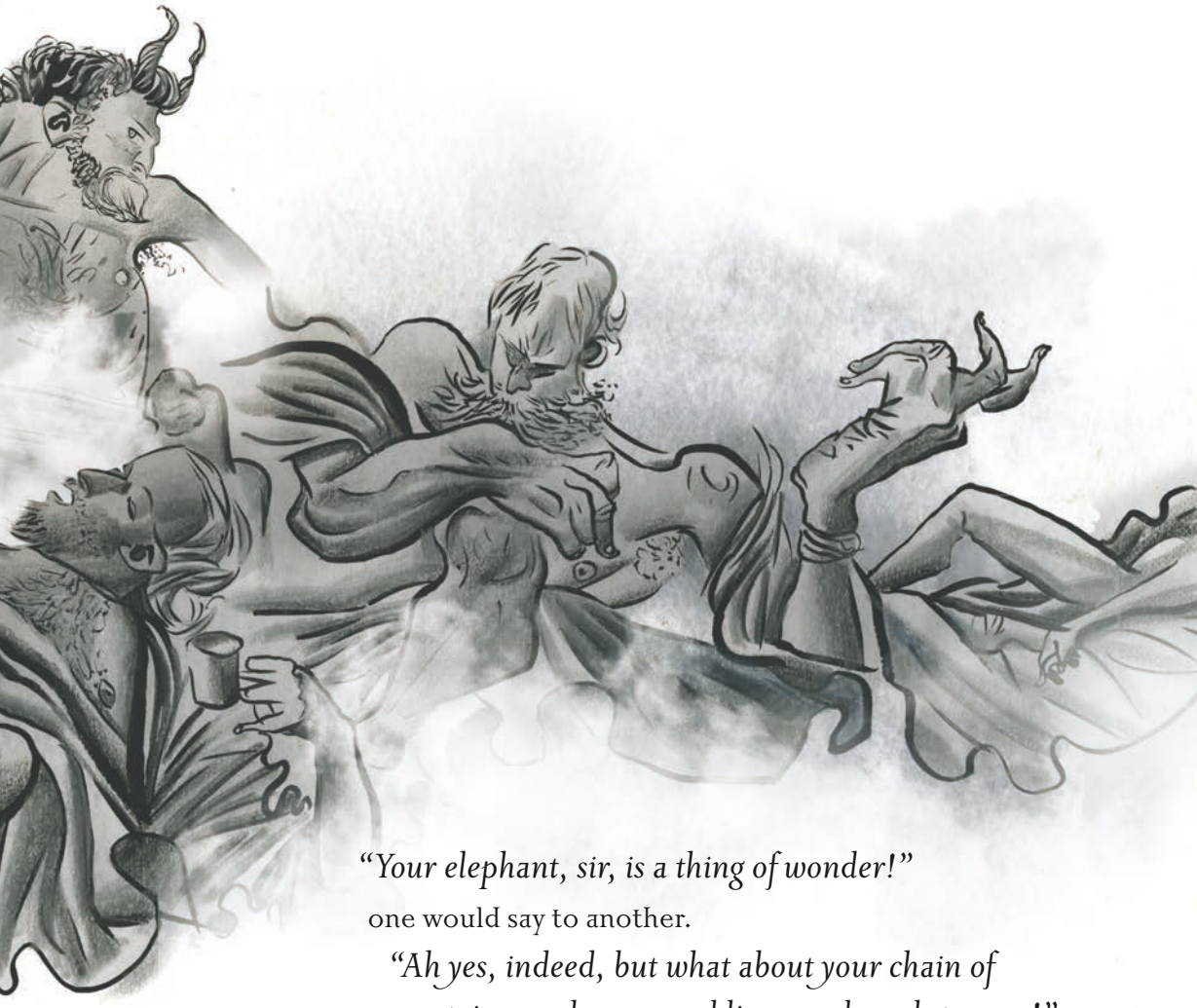
and beasts that we in our world have no names for.

Copyright © [first year of publication] Indvidual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.



But now, they spent day after day lying on their clouds, sipping tea together, and nibbling sandwiches and cakes. They chatted about their creations, and gazed down at them with deepest fondness.

Copyright © [first year of publication] Indvidual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.



"Your elephant, sir, is a thing of wonder!"
one would say to another.

"Ah yes, indeed, but what about your chain of mountains, and your sparkling ponds and streams!"

"But each time I see your wisteria, my eyes fill with tears. Such restraint, such delicacy. Oh, and those sweet daisies…"

Copyright © [first year of publication] Indvidual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.



"But your humpback whale!
Such magnificence!"
"And your extraordinary zowet!"
"Your gazelle!"
"Oh, but your brant!"

And they would shrug, and blush, and lower their eyes.

They'd be silent for a time; then they'd whisper, *"Could any other gods come up with anything more astonishing?"*

Copyright © [first year of publication] Indvidual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.



And in their smiles they'd answer, "*No. There are no other worlds like this one. There are no other gods like us. We are indeed the best of all gods in the best of all worlds.*"

Copyright © [first year of publication] Indvidual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.



And so they lay on their clouds, and floated through the sky, and took tea, and slept and snored. And yes, they did tell one another what they would make once they got back to work, if only they had the energy, and if only they had the time, but in truth their world was still unfinished, still had many gaps and spaces in it, and there was still much making to be done.

Copyright © [first year of publication] Indvidual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.