

# How the Sunbird Got Its Colours

Written by Basil Mills

Illustrated by Basil Mills

Designed by Tom Jeffery





This book belongs to

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## *How the Sunbird Got Its Colours*

Written by Basil Mills, drawing on southern African mythology

Illustrated by Basil Mills

Designed by Tom Jeffery

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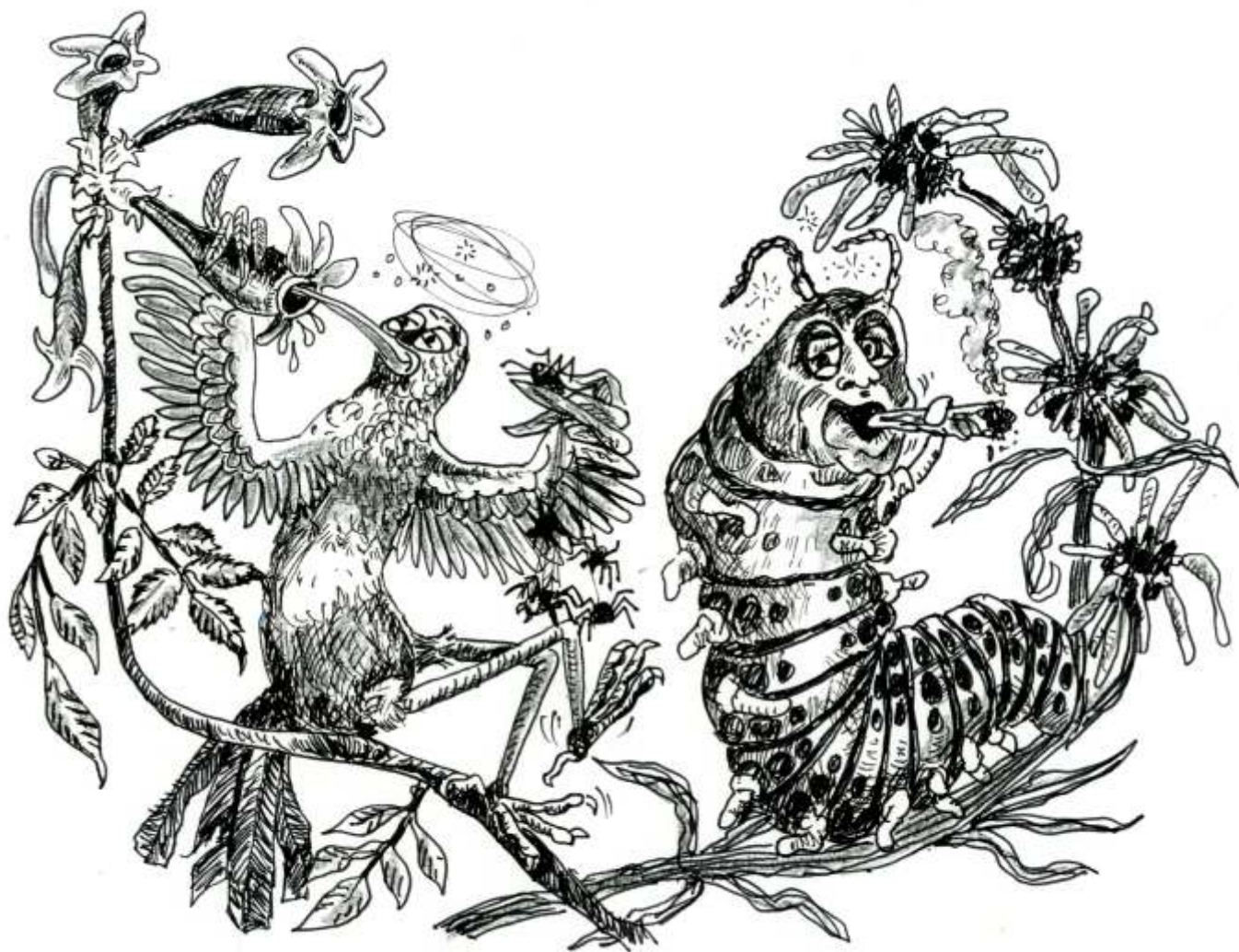
Rain Queen married the Elephant Hapoor. As a present she offered each of the animals colour. However, Elephant forgot to visit her and he only got a grey coat.

In a rage, he smashed trees. Rain Queen was very disappointed and returned home to the sky.





Sunbird also forgot to get his colours as he  
and caterpillar smoked wild dagga and  
drank nectar.



Sunbird's wife was very cross with him as she had worked all day fixing their nest with kapokbos and weaved it with spiders' webs. She told him to read a bedtime story to the little chicks.





Rain Queen took the rain away.

Elephant ordered white crow who has  
a beautiful voice to try and sweet talk  
Rain Queen to return.



Crow flew to Rain Queen and pestered her, but she sent lightning to frighten him away.

Poor Crow's feathers were burnt and a huge bush fire raged.





The animals fled to the river but it was full of crocodiles.

Sunbird was terrified for their nest.





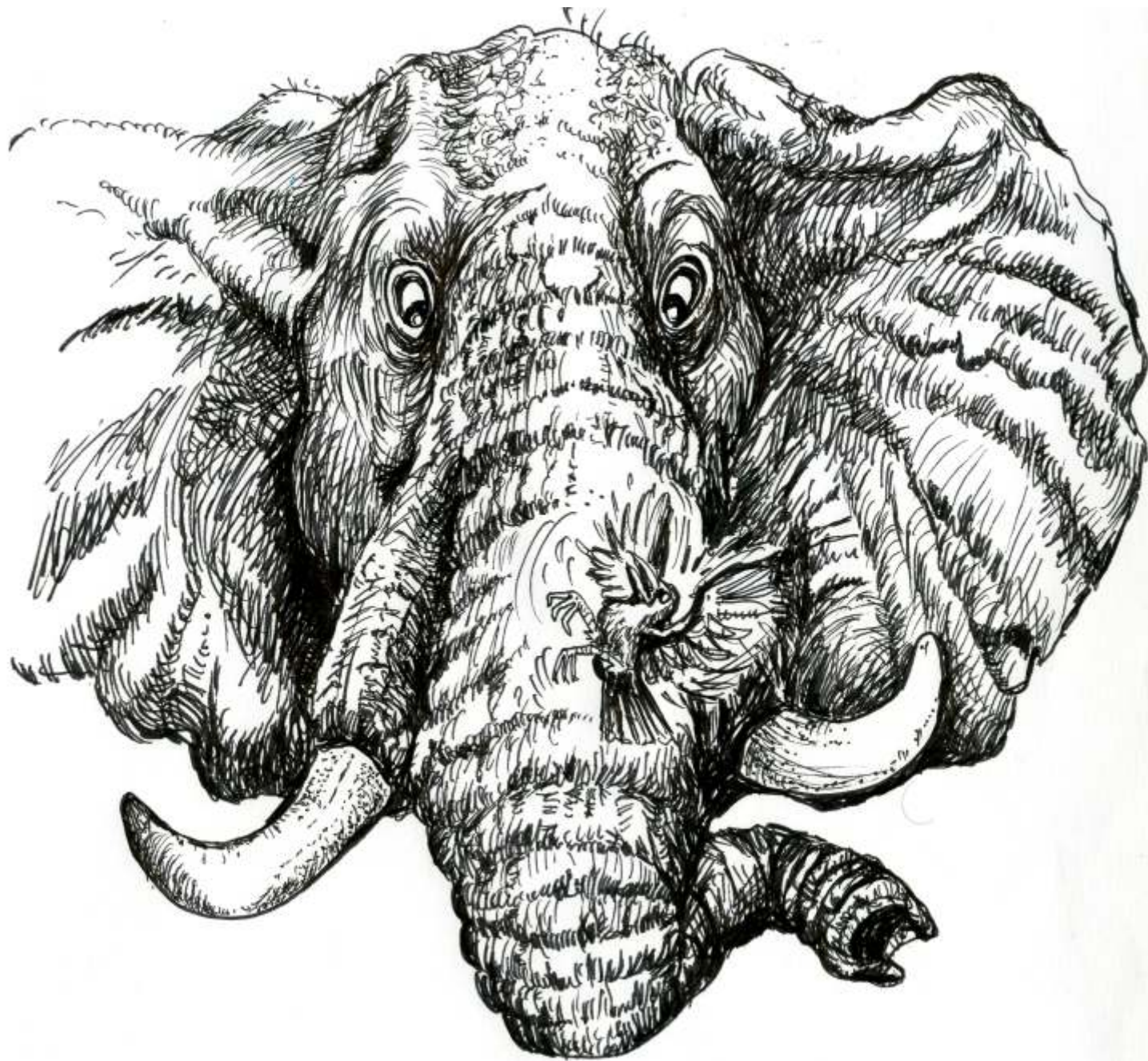
Sunbird pleaded with other animals,  
but no-one came to help.

Sunbird flew to the river, collected  
droplets of water and sprayed them  
onto the fire.





Sunbird begged elephant to use his trunk to put out the fire. Sunbird's actions inspired other animals but he saw more help was needed.



Sunbird begged the clouds to help,  
but they were too scared of Rain  
Queen.

Sunbird stuck spiders' webs onto the  
clouds and called other birds to pull  
them to the fire.





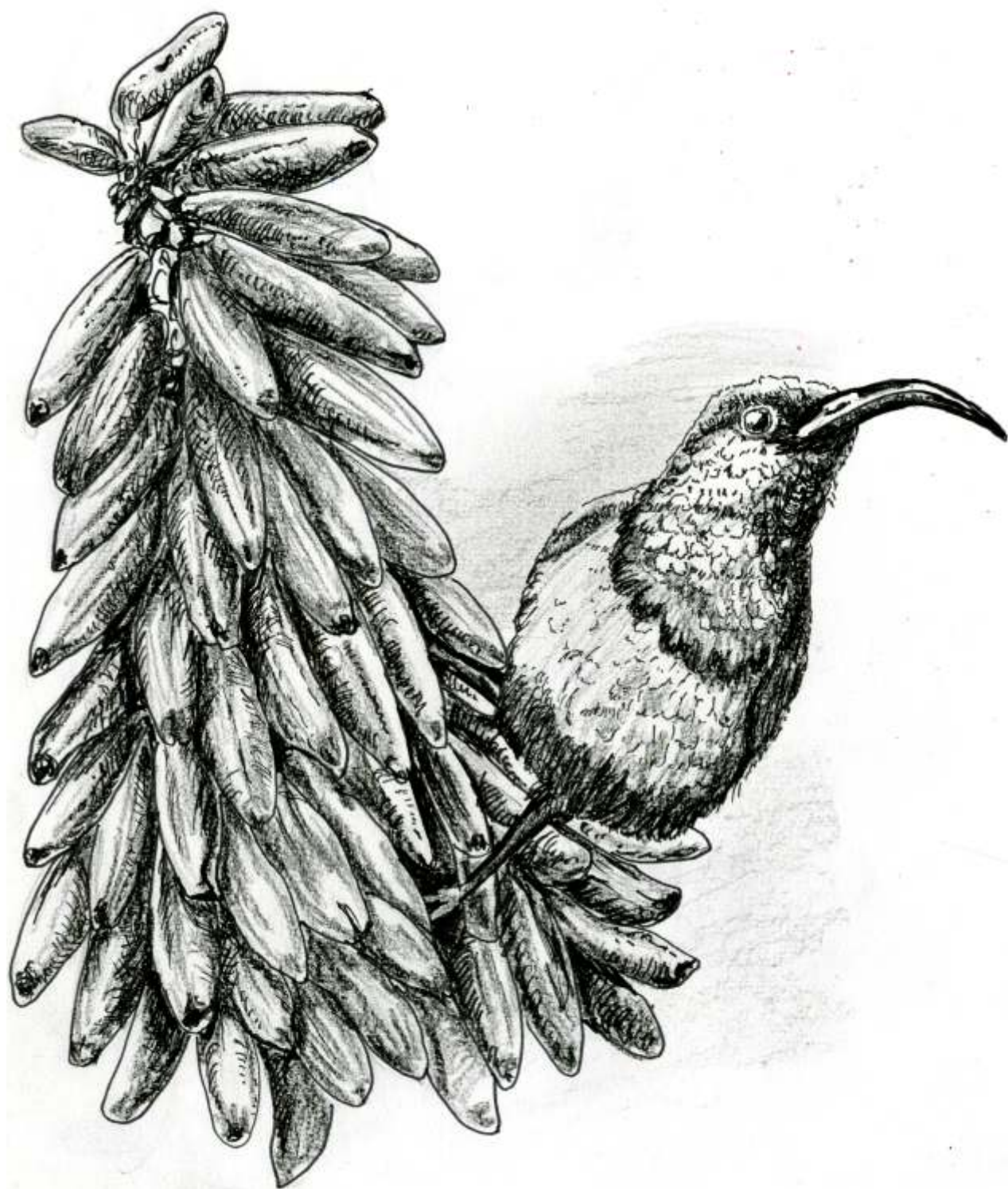
Rain Queen was so amazed at  
sunbird's bravery that she ordered  
rain clouds to put the fire out.





To reward the Sunbird the Rain Queen  
made him the guardian of the veldflowers,  
and the herald of the seasons.





Then, she swept the rainbow girdle  
over him. And that is how the sunbird  
got his beautiful colours.





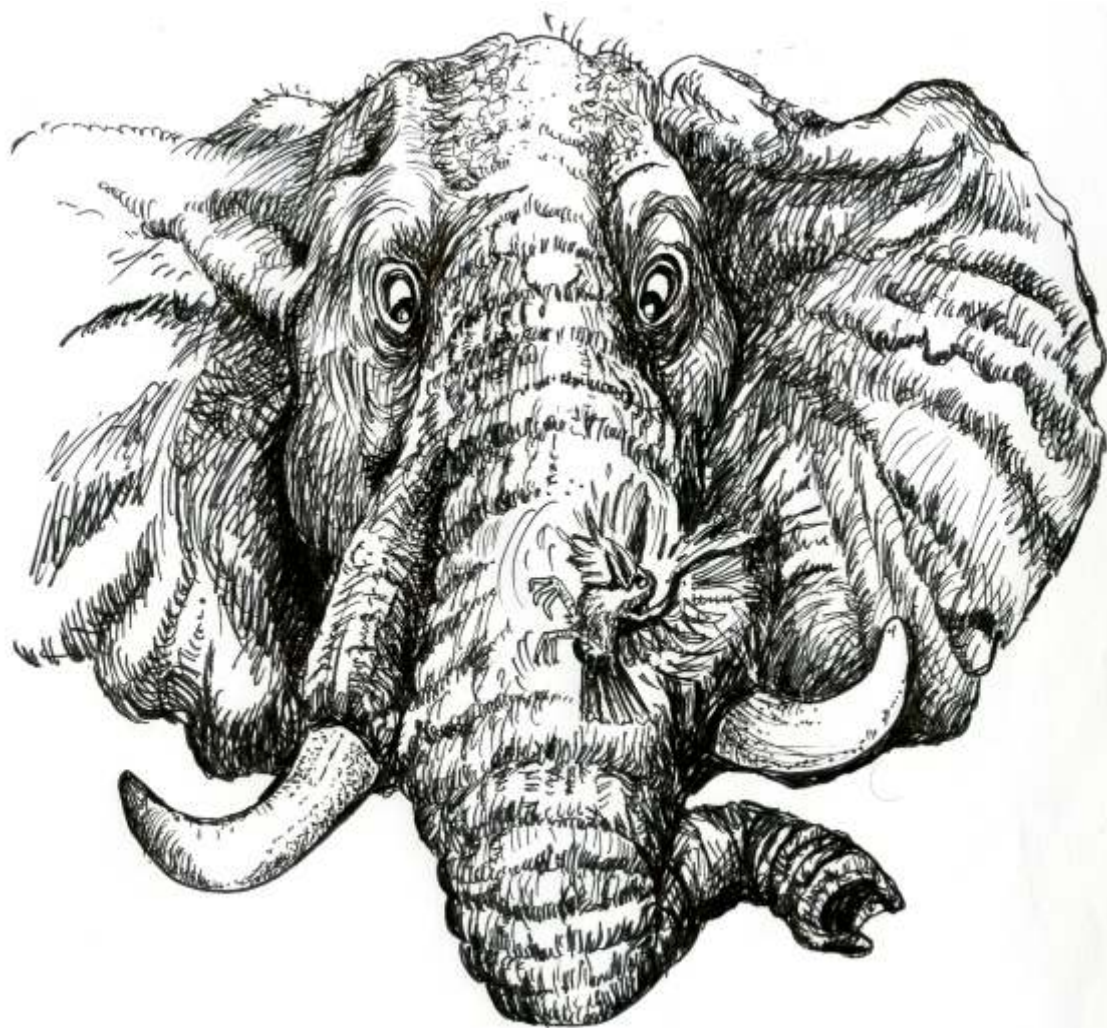
















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