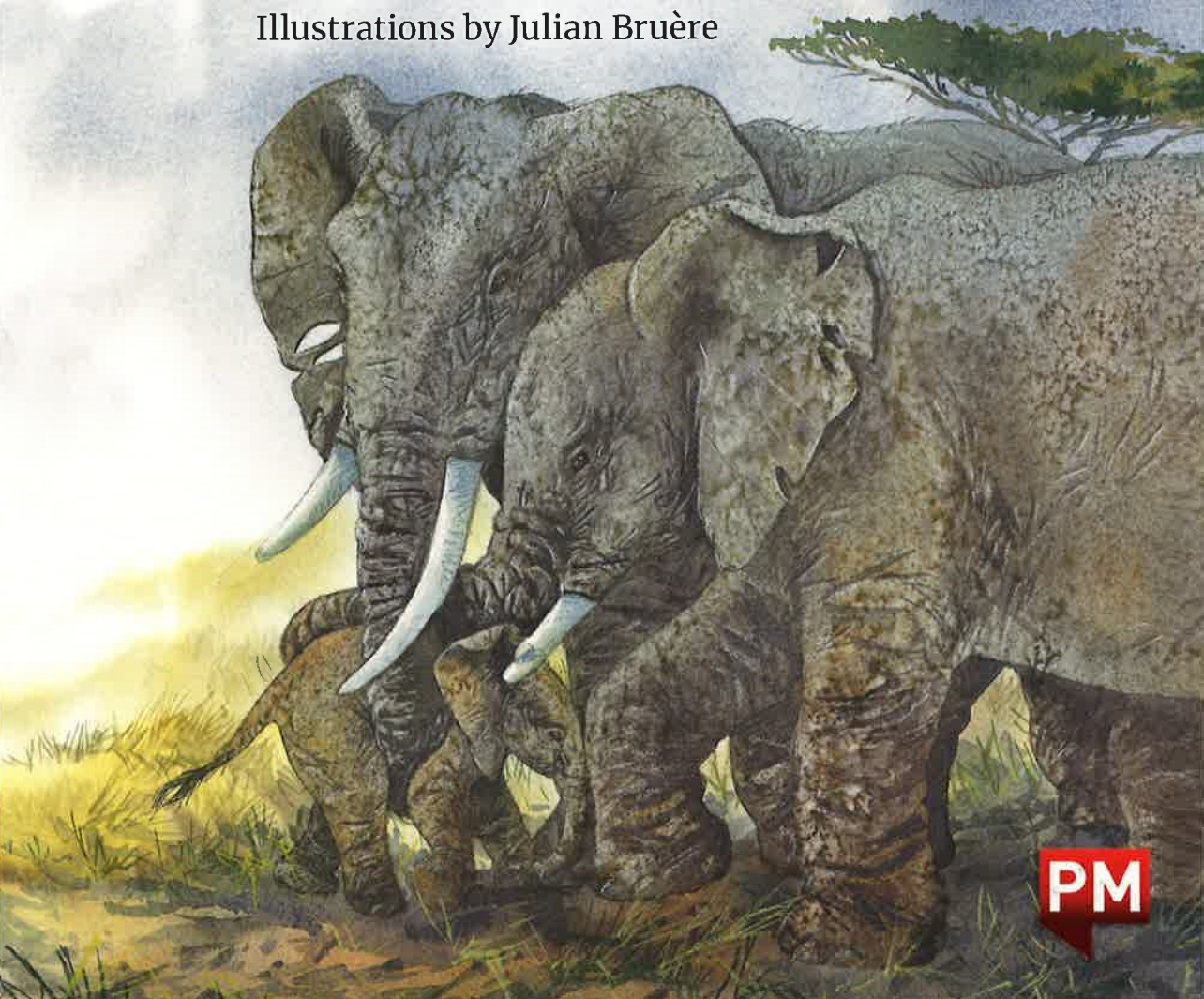


Nelson Is Kidnapped

Story by Beverley Randell
Illustrations by Julian Bruère



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When Nelson the baby elephant was six months old, the wet season arrived. Nelson had never seen rain before. Dark grey clouds filled the sky, and rain poured down, day after day.

The dry river beds filled and became swamps. Every time Nelson took a step, the water splashed up. He loved sloshing through this new wet world.

When the rainy season ended, the grass on the flat plain grew tall and strong. All the African animals had plenty to eat. Many elephant families walked a long way to get their share of the new grass.





Wherever Nelson looked, he could see families of elephants. There were large elephants and small elephants, old elephants and young elephants, cross elephants and kind elephants. Nelson had the time of his life. He kept running up to strange elephants and smelling them with his little trunk. He wanted to play.



It was fun to find another baby elephant and play pushing games. The other elephant would push back with its head, and soon they would find out who was stronger. Nelson loved these games.

Nelson's big sister, Nina, had a hard job looking after him. She didn't want her little brother to get lost, or scared, or hurt.



One morning, Nelson ran up to a new family of large elephants. He could not see any young elephants to play with, but the big ones seemed friendly. They dropped their trunks on his back and nudged him beside their legs. They felt him all over. Then the oldest elephant in the family pulled him right underneath her with her strong trunk.

But when Nelson tried to move away, she would not let him go! He pushed and struggled, but he could not escape. The other elephants in the family moved in and blocked his way. He was surrounded.

Nelson was a prisoner behind a solid fence of legs. He had been kidnapped!

