



# The little HIPPO

Anja Klauss  
Géraldine Elschner

*A Children's Book  
Inspired by Egyptian Art*



 PRESTEL





*To Oliva and Stephan, diggers of the earth  
and of ancient history  
G.E.*

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The Little  
**HIPPO**

A Children's Book  
Inspired by Egyptian Art

Text by Géraldine Elschner  
Illustrations by Anja Klauss

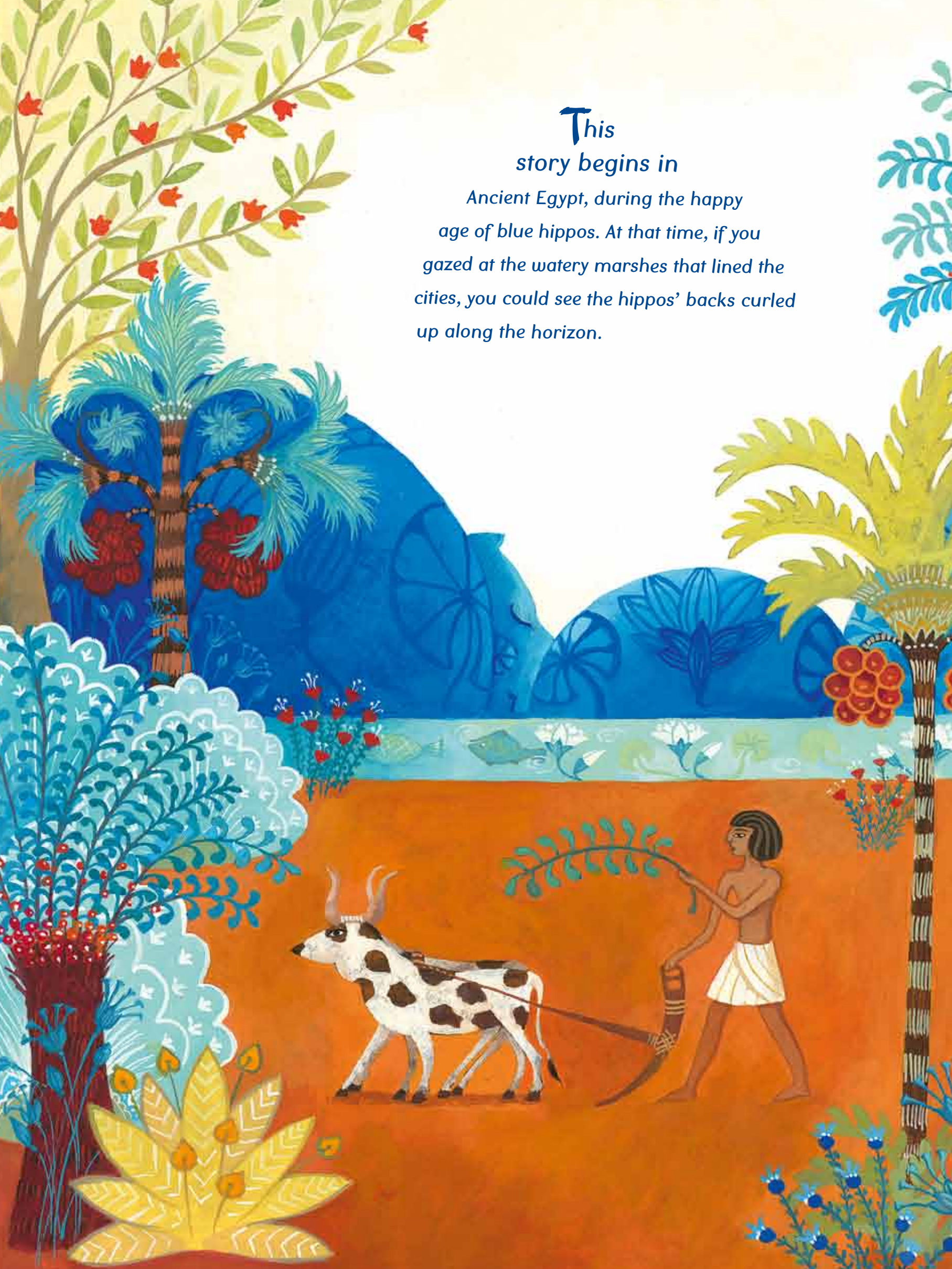


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*This  
story begins in*

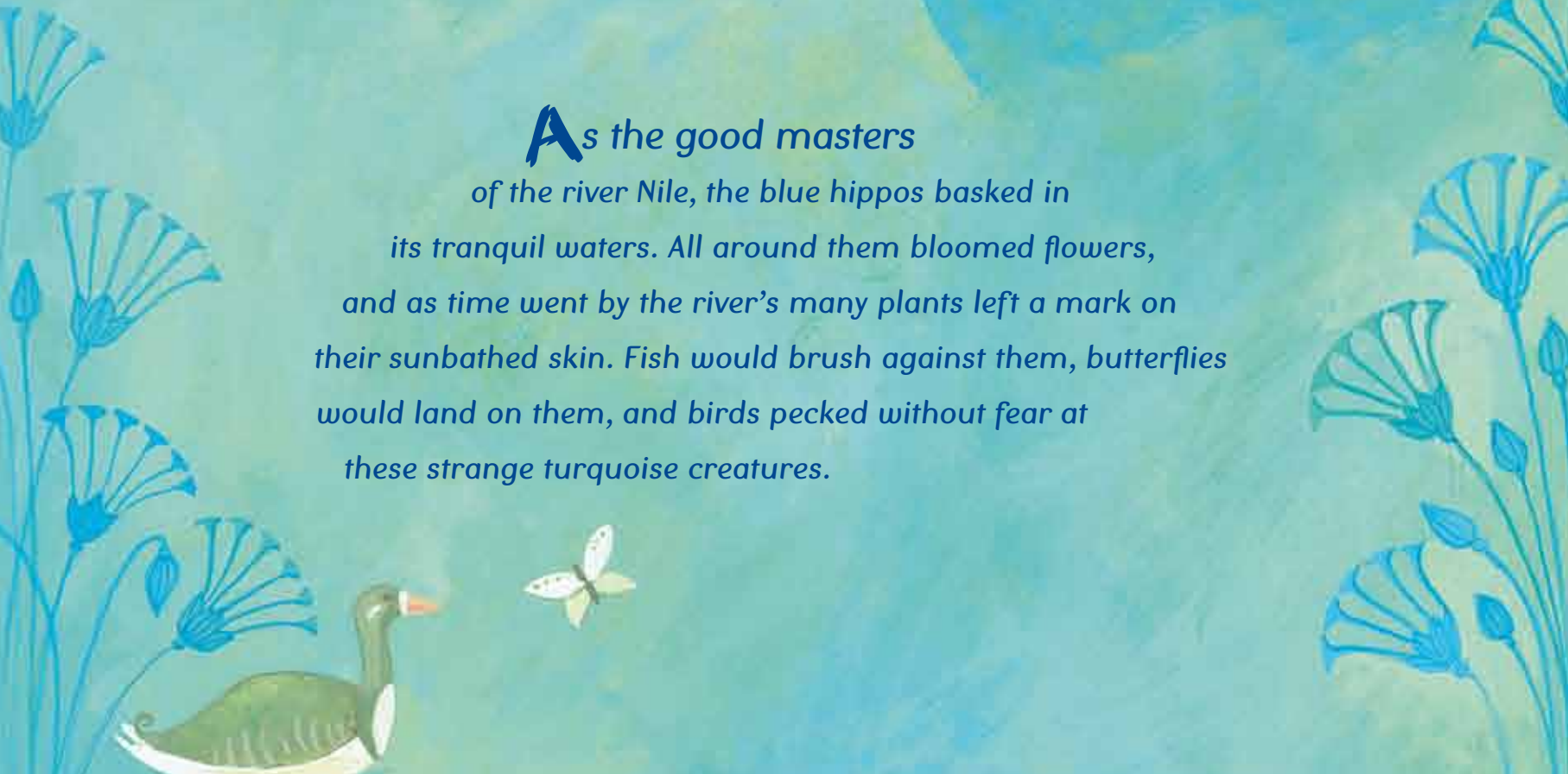
*Ancient Egypt, during the happy  
age of blue hippos. At that time, if you  
gazed at the watery marshes that lined the  
cities, you could see the hippos' backs  
curled up along the horizon.*







**A**s the good masters  
of the river Nile, the blue hippos basked in  
its tranquil waters. All around them bloomed flowers,  
and as time went by the river's many plants left a mark on  
their sunbathed skin. Fish would brush against them, butterflies  
would land on them, and birds pecked without fear at  
these strange turquoise creatures.









*One day the youngest amongst them—the one they called Little Hippo—became the friend of Antef, a tall old man with white hair. Every night, side by side, Antef and Little Hippo would admire the setting sun.*

*“The sun dies each day to be reborn each morning,” the old man would say. “Soon I too will fall asleep just like him. Then a long journey will begin.”*





*When Antef left for this unknown kingdom, and when he was laid below the ground, Little Hippo lay down beside him and fell into a deep slumber. Time went by: days, months, centuries ...*





*Hidden deep inside their tomb, Antef and Little Hippo seemed to be forgotten. Then one bright morning, at the first light of dawn, shovels began to dig through the earth. Hands began to search slowly through everything. One by one, the diggers removed a multitude of objects, each one more precious than the other. All this commotion woke up Little Hippo, who became frightened and hid beneath a stone. It was only then that he noticed his size: instead of growing all these years, he had been getting smaller and smaller ...*

