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Opening extract from  
**Zeraffa Giraffa**

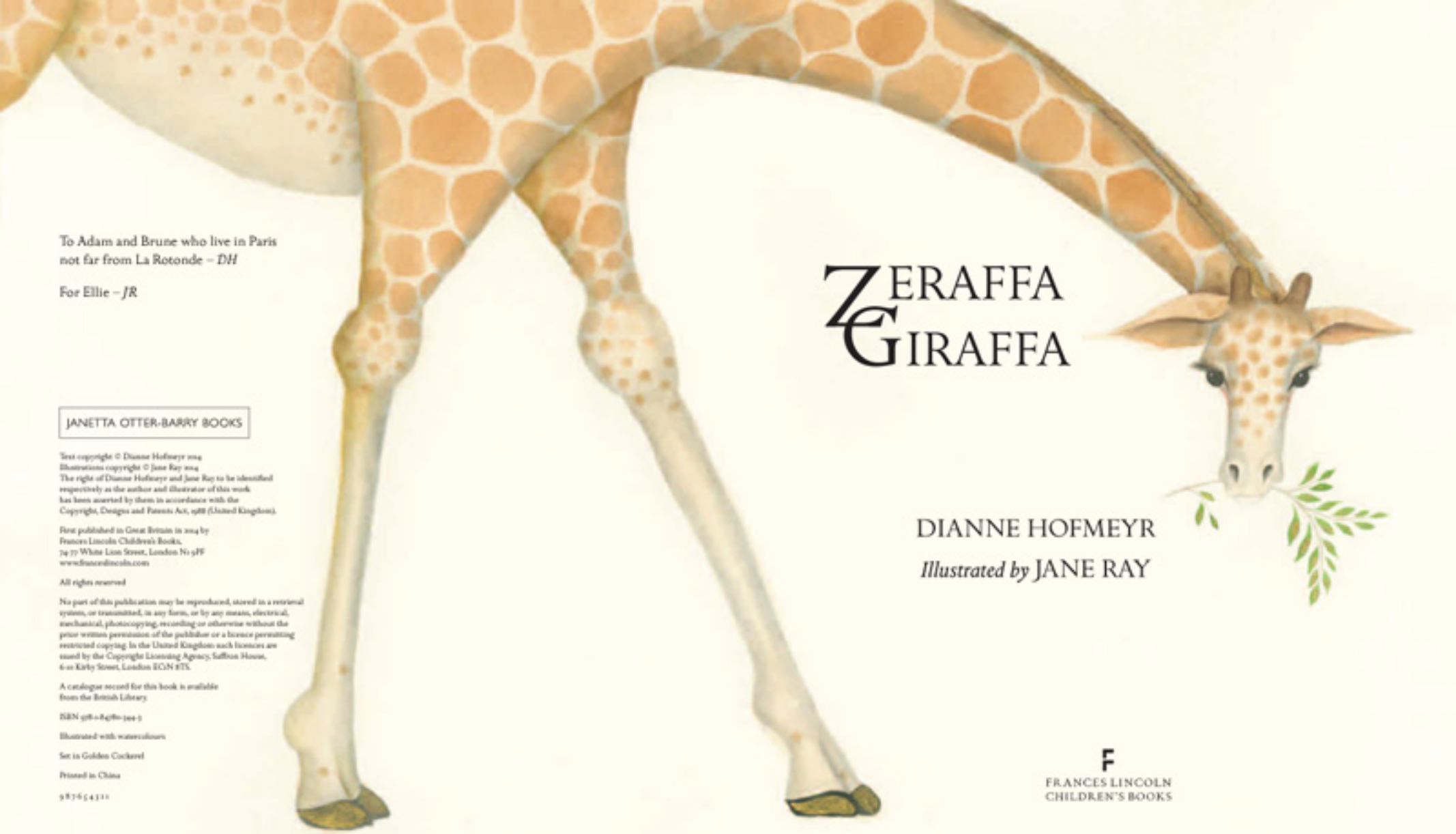
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**Jane Ray**

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To Adam and Brune who live in Paris  
not far from La Rotonde – *DH*

For Ellie – *JR*

JANETTA OTTER-BARRY BOOKS

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# ZERAFFA GIRAFFA

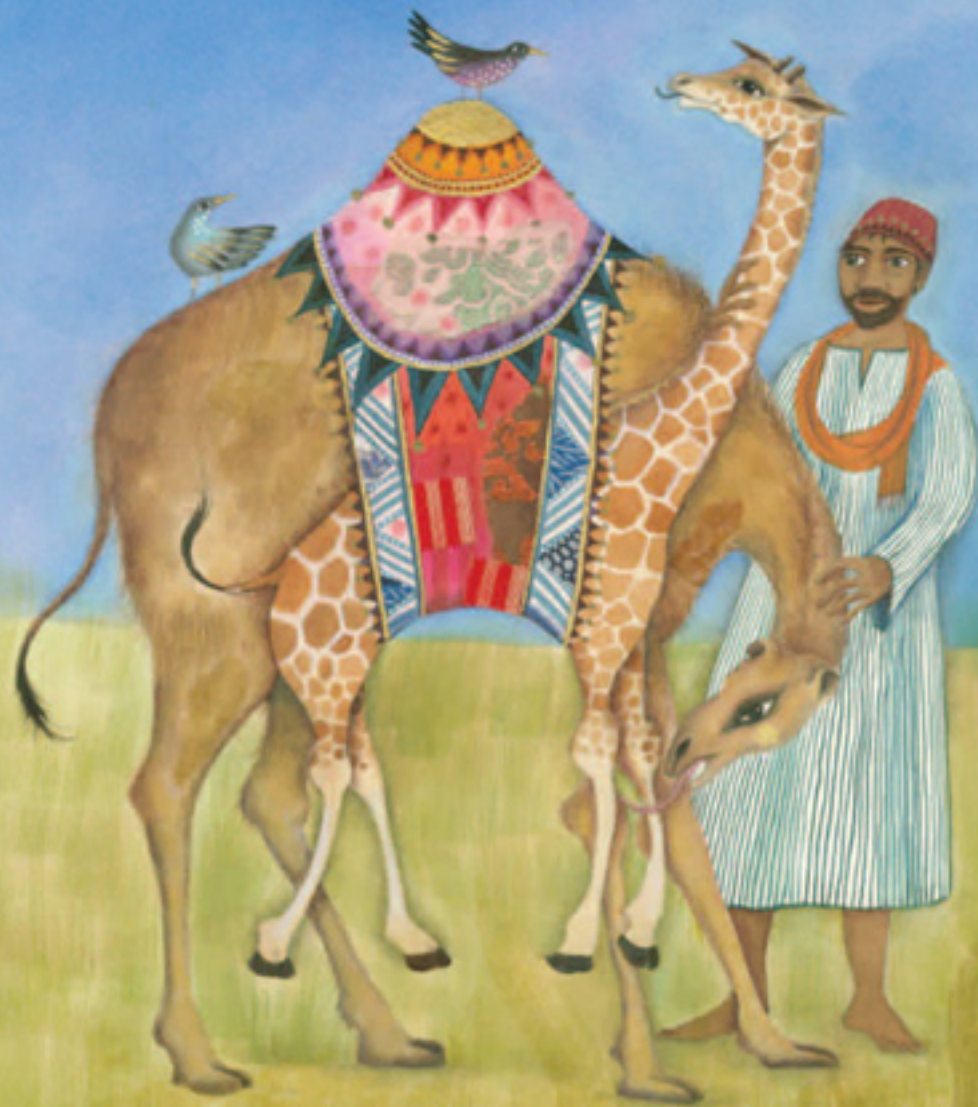
DIANNE HOFMEYR

*Illustrated by* JANE RAY

**F**  
FRANCES LINCOLN  
CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Across the plains of Africa where grass grows tall and acacias taste sweet, came the hunters from the Great Pasha of Egypt and the Sudan.

When they captured a small giraffe, no taller than the tallest of them, they tied her in a sling to the side of a camel and kept her alive on camel's milk on the journey home.



The Pasha was delighted.

"She is the perfect gift for my friend, the King of France!"

He appointed his servant boy, Atir, as her keeper and handed him a letter addressed to the King, along with a map.



Atir unrolled the map and measured the distance. Paris was very far away. It was beyond the edge of Africa, over the sea on the other side of the world.


But first they had to sail down the River Nile.



A *felucca* was built, with two elegant sails that see-sawed and pivoted to catch the breeze, with an awning to protect the little giraffe from the sun.

"I'll name you Zeraffa," Atir whispered as he hung an amulet around her neck. "I'll feed you milk sweet as lake water, and at night I'll roll back the awning so you can look at the stars."





Out past the markets of Khartoum  
they sailed, with the hot *haboob*  
wind filling their sails. . . past the  
silent giraffe paintings of Luxor. . .

They sailed past ladies combing  
their hair with porcupine quills  
who offered them dates  
and pomegranates. . .

past the lion-faced Sphinx  
and her Pyramids.

until they came to the place  
where the sea sipped up the Nile.



Atir led Zeraffa on board a boat bound for France.  
And at night the sailors sang songs to the  
beautiful long-necked creature that gazed down  
at them from between the sails.

On the cobblestones of Marseilles, people pushed  
forward for a glimpse of her.  
The Mayor threw up his hands when Atir told him  
he needed to travel to Paris.

“With a giraffe? How? It’s impossible! We must consult  
Monsieur Stravganza, inventor of things *extraordinaire*.”

