# One More Safari

A Family Adventure



# Back Behind the Wheel



Jennifer ran her hand over the safari truck's steering wheel and smiled.

"Just where I left it," she said.

"You really used to drive this?" Ellie asked, climbing onto the bench beside Dad.

"Trucks just like it. Every day."

Dad settled their bag beneath the seat. "Then I think we picked the right guide."

Jennifer tipped her hat. "Welcome aboard, explorers. Keep your hands inside, your eyes open, and your ears ready. The savanna always has a story to tell."

# A Very Tall Hello



The truck rolled out beneath the acacia trees.

A giraffe stretched for leaves above their heads. Zebras flicked their tails in the grass. Beside the water, a hippo's little ears twitched.

Ellie lifted her binoculars backward.

"That giraffe got very far away!"

Dad gently turned them around.

"Oh! There she is!"

Jennifer laughed. She had told hundreds of families about these animals. Today, her favorite two people were listening.

# The Call



Krrr-shhh.

The radio crackled.

"Simba One, this is Warden Wilson. Do you read?"

Jennifer eased the truck to a stop.

"Simba One here. Go ahead."

"Poachers have been spotted near the eastern boundary. Big Red and her calf are missing. Rangers are on their way. Please report anything unusual."

Ellie lowered her binoculars.

"Who's Big Red?"

Jennifer's voice grew gentle. "An elephant mother. And Little Red is her baby."

# Tracks in the Mud



At the next bend, Jennifer noticed something beside the road.

She stopped the truck again.

Broad elephant footprints crossed a patch of mud. Beside them were much smaller ones.

"A mommy and a baby," Ellie whispered.

Then Dad pointed farther along the track. "And tire marks."

Jennifer studied the deep, narrow grooves. They led toward an old service trail.

She lifted the radio.

"Warden Wilson, we've found elephant tracks and fresh tires by the eastern turn. I know where that trail comes out."

# The Old Trail



"Can you reach the lookout?" Wilson asked. "Stay on the marked road. The rangers will meet you there."

"On our way," Jennifer answered.

She turned onto a winding track beneath the trees.

"Is this a secret road?" Ellie asked.

"An old one. I haven't driven it in years."

Dad glanced at Jennifer. "Still remember the way?"

She smiled. "Ask me after the next bend."

Around the corner stood a crooked acacia.

"Hello, old friend," she said.

# A Little Trumpet



At the lookout, Jennifer switched off the engine.

For a moment, they heard only the grass rustling.

Then came a small, frightened trumpet.

Ellie sat up straight.

"There! By the fallen tree!"

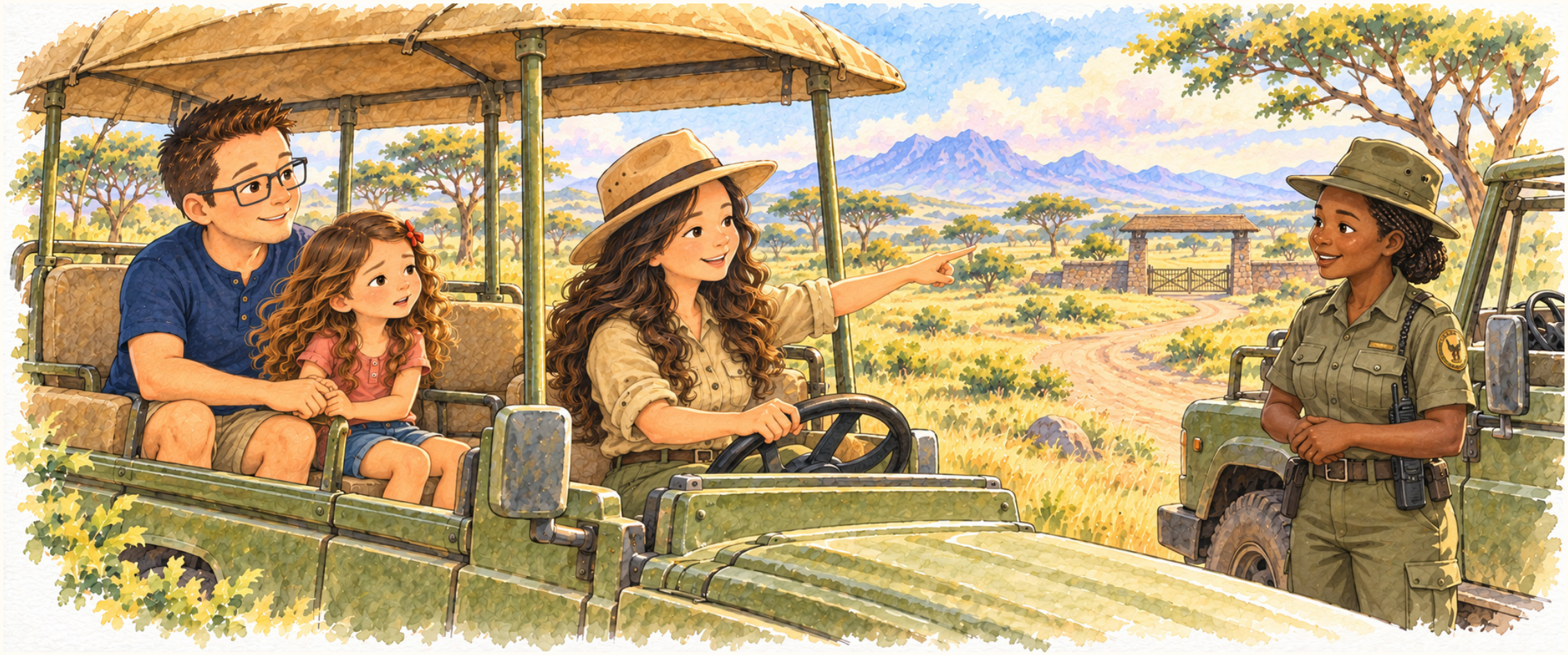
Through her binoculars she could see a little gray trunk reaching above the brush.

Farther away, a truck waited beside a gate.

Jennifer radioed their position. Dad unfolded the reserve map and found the nearest ranger road.

"You're doing well," Jennifer told Ellie. "Keep watching from your seat. Tell me what you see."

# Mom Knows What to Do



A ranger vehicle pulled quietly alongside them.

Jennifer pointed toward the gate. "Their truck is there. The calf is below us, near that fallen tree."

The ranger nodded. "We'll take it from here. Stay at the lookout."

As the rangers moved away, Ellie reached for Dad's hand.

"Will Little Red be okay?"

Dad gave her hand a squeeze. "Mom helped them find him."

Jennifer turned toward her daughter.

"Now we give the rangers room to do their job."

# The Gate



Down below, the poachers hurried toward their truck.

But a ranger vehicle had already reached the gate.

Another rolled up the road behind them.

There was nowhere left to go.

Ellie watched the rangers lead the poachers away.

"They stopped them," she breathed.

The radio crackled again.

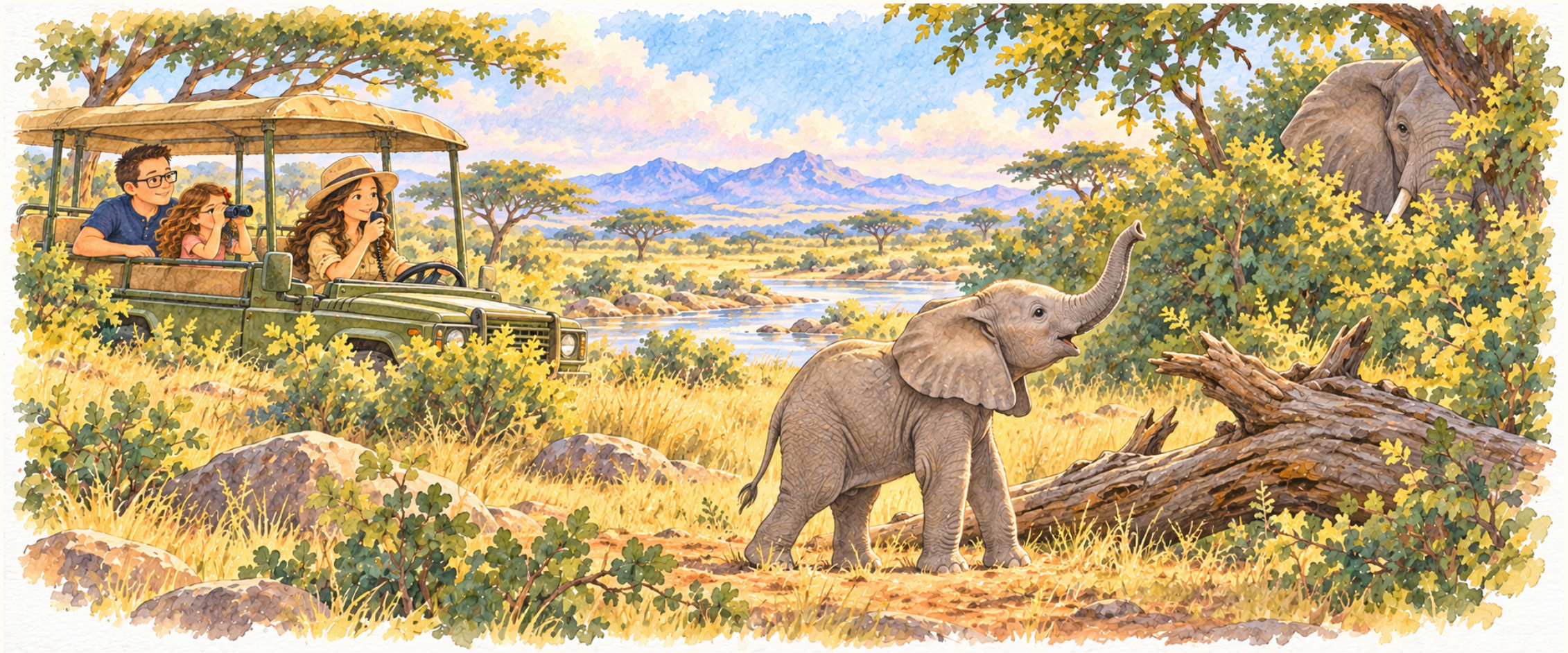
"Simba One, the poachers are in custody. Little Red is safe."

Dad let out a long breath.

Jennifer smiled, but kept listening.

"And Big Red?" she asked.

# Where Is His Mother?



"We're still looking," Wilson replied.

Little Red stood beside the fallen tree, his trunk reaching this way and that.

Ellie watched him through the binoculars.

"He's calling for his mommy."

Jennifer listened.

From beyond the trees came a low, rolling rumble.

She knew that sound.

"Warden, listen near the river bend. I think she's answering him."

A branch stirred.

Then another.

Something very large was moving through the leaves.

# Together Again



Big Red stepped into the clearing.

Little Red hurried toward her on his round, sturdy legs.

His mother reached out her trunk and touched his head. He pressed against her side, nearly disappearing beneath her great gray ear.

For a while, nobody in the safari truck said anything.

Then Ellie leaned against Dad.

"She found her baby."

Jennifer watched the two elephants walk toward the water together.

"Yes," she said softly. "She did."

# Thank You, Simba One



"Warden Wilson to Simba One."

Jennifer picked up the radio.

"Thank you for the help. All three of you."

Ellie sat a little taller.

"Did you hear that, Dad? All three!"

"I heard, explorer."

Jennifer tipped her hat toward them.

"Couldn't have asked for a better crew."

She started the engine, and the familiar little rumble filled the truck.

"Now," she said, "I believe we have a safari to finish."

# One More Safari



The afternoon sun turned the tall grass gold.

On the way home, Ellie spotted one last giraffe. Dad spotted a zebra foal tucked beside its mother.

Jennifer spotted both of them smiling in her mirror.

"Mom?" Ellie said.

"Yes, sweetheart?"

"I knew you used to drive a safari truck. I didn't know you were an adventurer."

Jennifer caught Dad's eye and smiled.

"Would you come on another adventure with me?"

Ellie leaned forward.

"Always."