



My Travels
with Clara



MARY TAVENER HOLMES

Illustrated by JON CANNELL

J. Paul Getty Museum
Los Angeles



It was love at first sight.

SHE WAS JUST A BABY, even though she was covered in iron plates and weighed a thousand pounds. She was looking right at me with her soft brown eyes, and she was not one bit afraid. *I wasn't afraid either.*

We had great adventures together.

THIS IS OUR TRUE STORY.

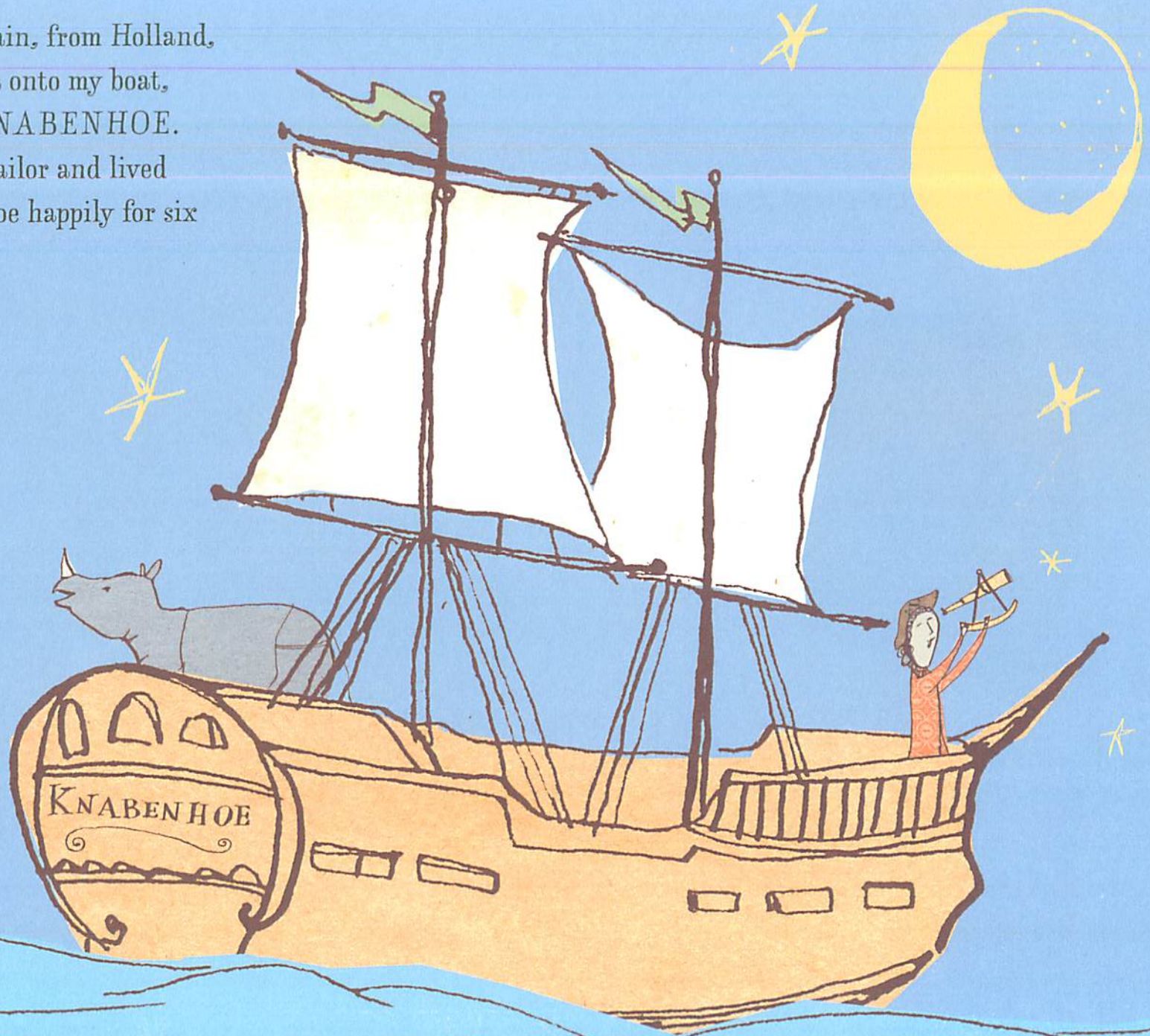




HER NAME WAS CLARA, and she was a rhinoceros. She was so young when she lost her parents. This was in India, in the late 1730s. A kind man took her into his house, where she walked carefully around the furniture and ate from plates.

Though tame as a kitten, she soon began to grow too big for her home. And so the man sold her to me, Douwe. *Douwe Van der Meer.*

I was a sea captain, from Holland,
and I took Clara onto my boat,
the good ship KNABENHOE.
She was a fine sailor and lived
on the Knabenhoe happily for six
long months.



CLARA'S FIRST JOURNEY, *from* CALCUTTA *to* ROTTERDAM, 1741

Atlantic Ocean



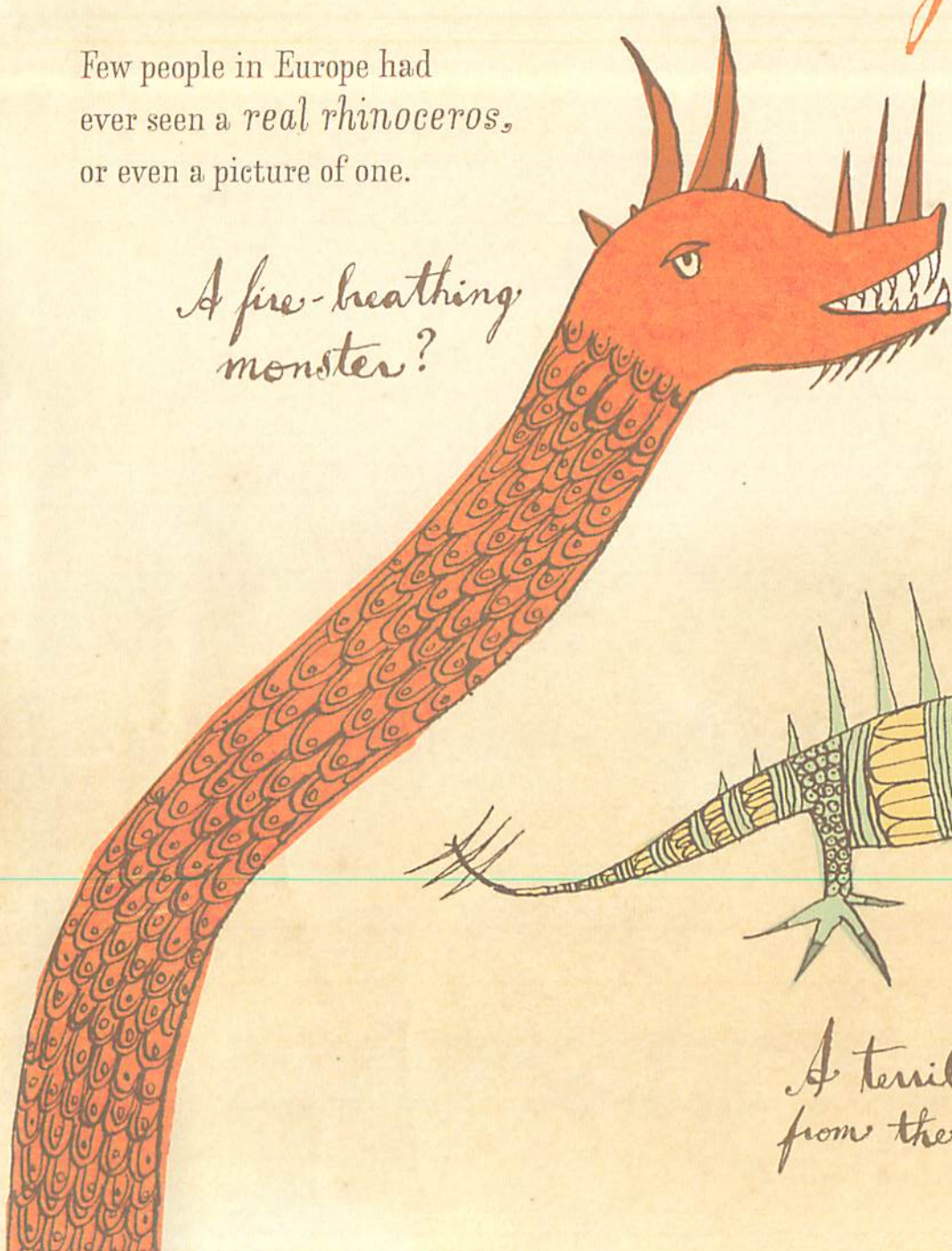
I WANTED CLARA to be comfortable and even made her a special skin lotion of fish oil and mud. She smelled terrible. She loved it.



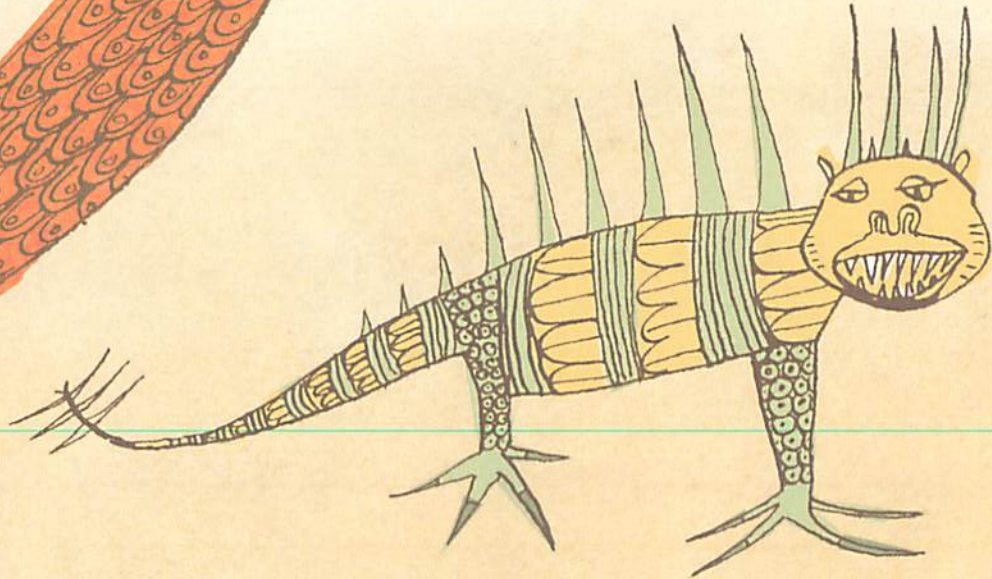
What, exactly, is a rhinoceros?

Few people in Europe had ever seen a *real rhinoceros*, or even a picture of one.

A fire-breathing monster?



A unicorn?

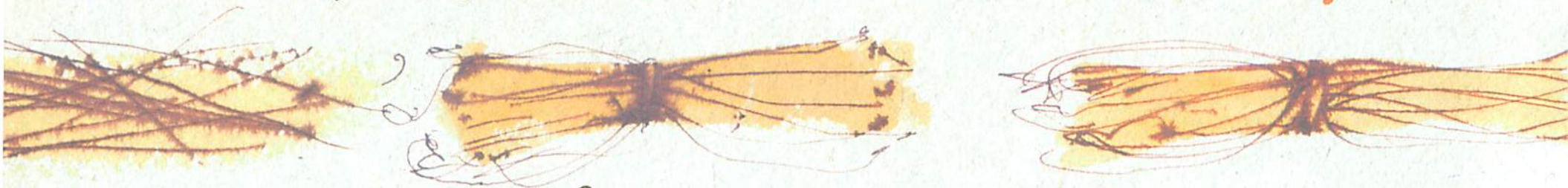


A terrible creature from the Bible?

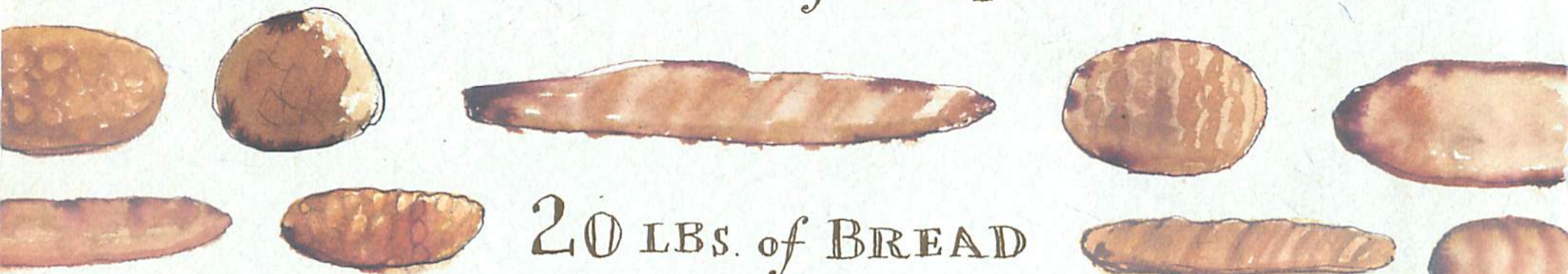
Everyone was fascinated...
So I decided we must let the world see Clara,
and let Clara see the world!
And so began our very first tour.

You must understand—a rhinoceros eats
all the time. ALL THE TIME:
60 pounds of hay, 20 pounds of bread...
washed down with 15 buckets of water... A DAY.

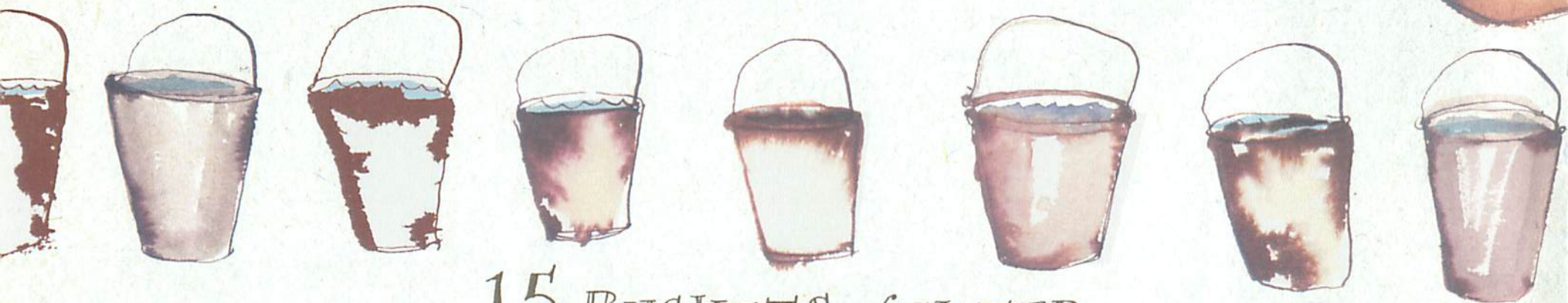
Care and Feeding



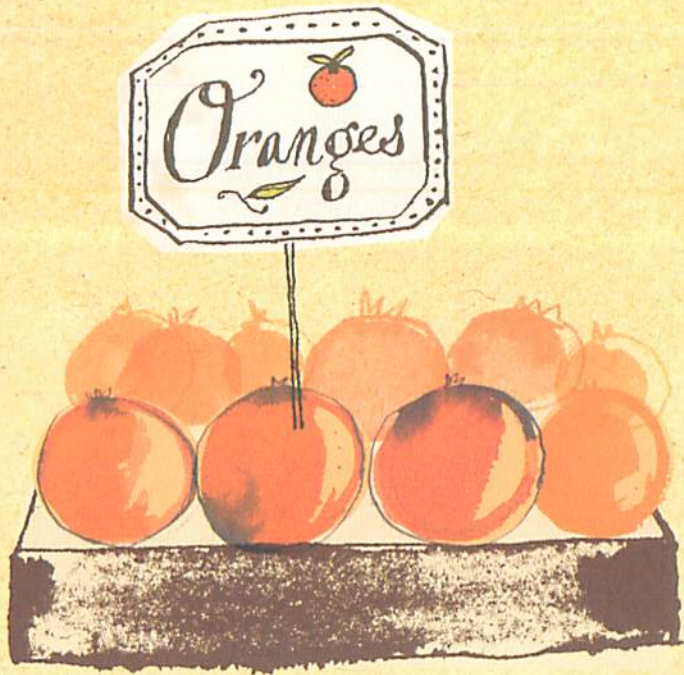
60 LBS. of HAY



20 LBS. of BREAD



15 BUCKETS of WATER



There were certain things she loved.
ORANGES. She could never get
enough oranges.

And, strange as it seems, beer,
which I gave her from a bowl.
This made her burp.



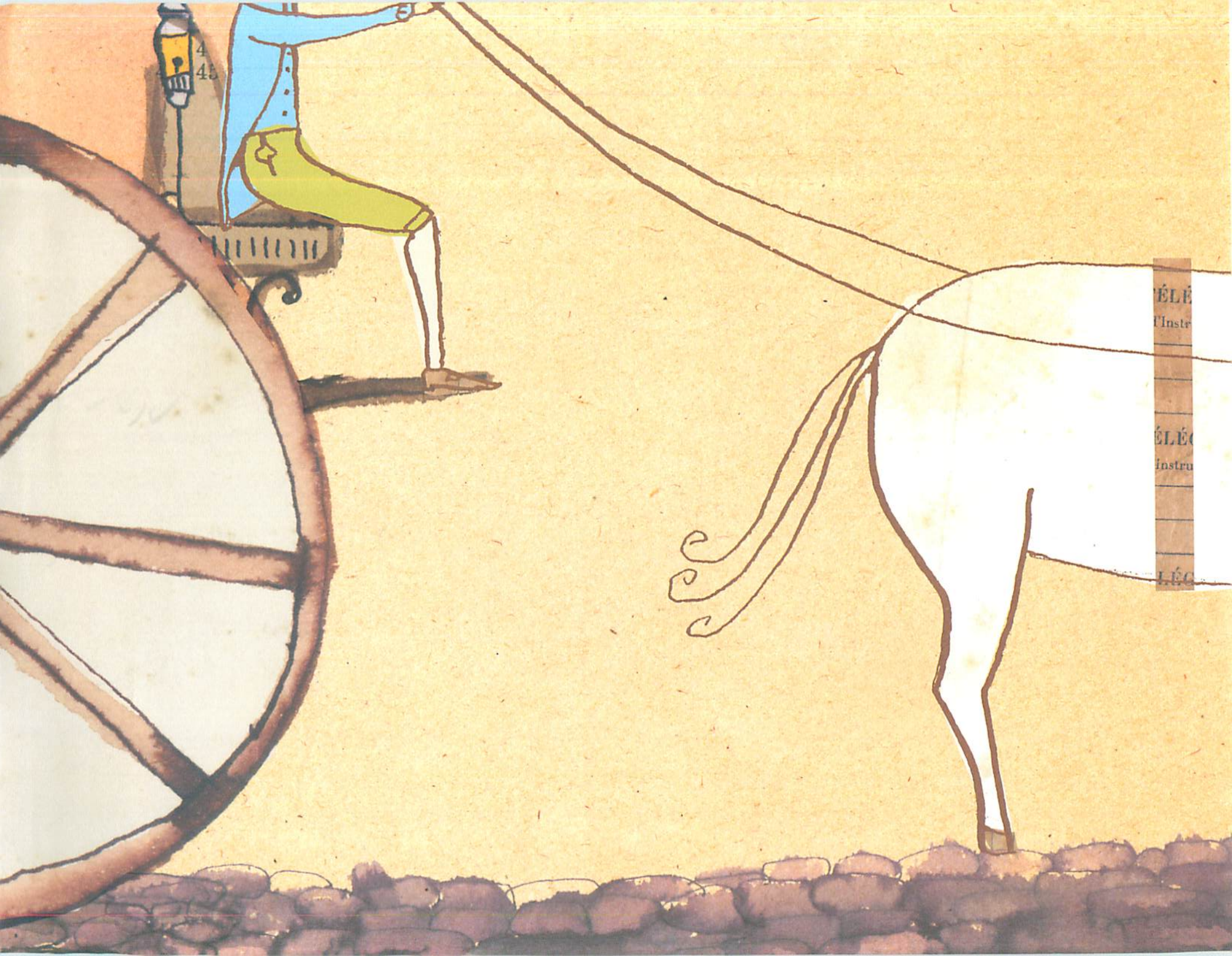
She liked the smell of tobacco, and
if I had been smoking my pipe—or
eating an orange—she licked my face.
She had a soft tongue, like a puppy's.

The Amazing CLARA

A LIVE
RHINOCEROS!

I MADE A SPECIAL CRATE for her. The crate fit onto a wagon. The wagon had huge wheels, and a ramp for her to climb up and down. We needed eight strong horses to pull our wagon and its heavy passenger over the rough roads.





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PLAN of OUR TRIP



• = CITIES TO VISIT



Road



River

ALTERNATE ROUTE?



BRIDGE

{ INVENTORY }

1. ORANGES
2. HAY = 60 lbs/day x ?? days
3. WATER
4. SOUVENIRS
 - a. POSTERS
 - b. MEDALS ← NEED TO DESIGN



Horses
for
Cart



ENGLAND

BERLIN

LEIPZIG

GERMANY

DRESDEN

VIENNA

AUSTRIA

• PARIS

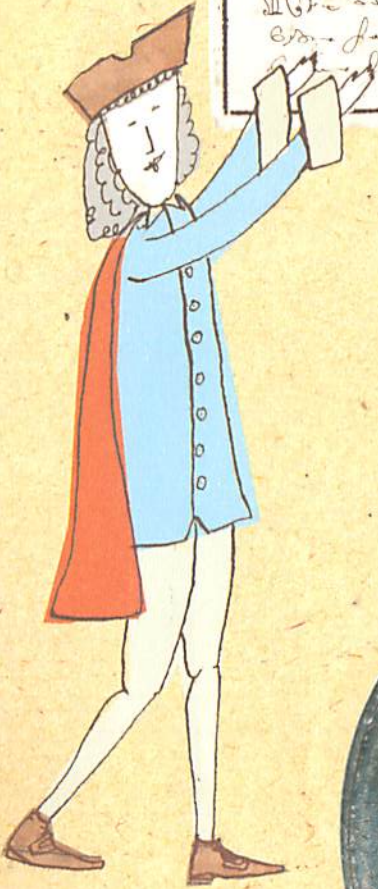
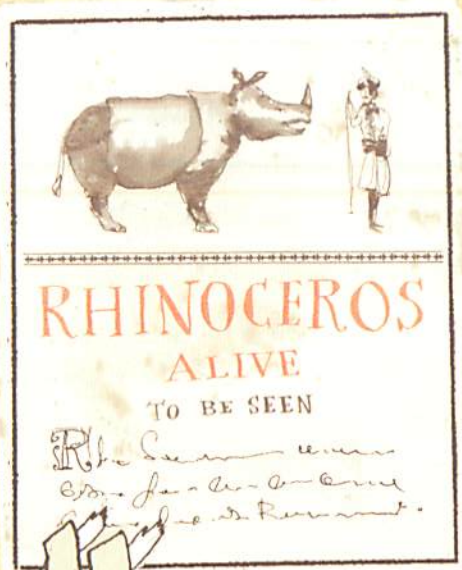
FRANCE

SWITZERLAND

• VENICE

• ROME

ITALY



We pasted posters all over Europe, to let people know that Clara was coming to town, and when they could see her—from nine to noon and from two to six—and how much they would have to pay.

Me!

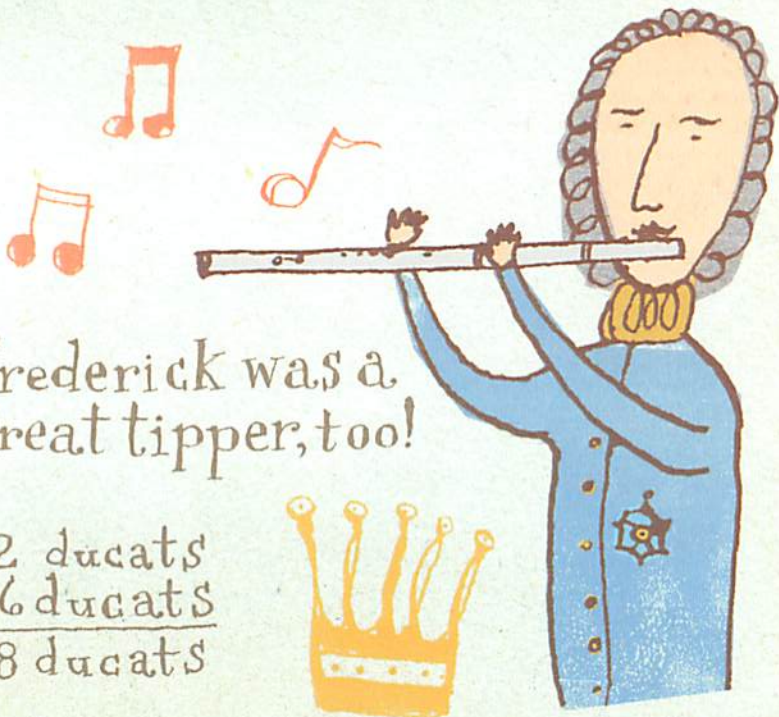


Finally, in the spring of 1746, we set out on our first tour—through Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

Souvenirs

JOURNAL-1746/47 A.D.

FREDERICK THE GREAT



Frederick was a
great tipper, too!

12 ducats
+ 6 ducats

18 ducats

April: Berlin. Frederick the Great,
the flute-playing ruler of Prussia,
comes with his whole court to visit
us and is astonished.

~~October~~
October

October: Vienna, the home of
the powerful Habsburg family and
of the Empress Maria Theresa.

She rushes to see Clara right away
and is so amazed that she comes
back with her children.
The empress has her son's
portrait painted with a
book open to a picture
of a rhinoceros.



EMPRESS
MARIA THERESA



MINIATURE
of ARCHDUKE
KARL JOSEPH
SON of EMPRESS
MARIA THERESA



AUGUSTUS HAD A FACTORY just for making porcelain—beautiful, fragile porcelain. Before you knew it, porcelain rhinoceroses began to appear all over Europe. I've also seen marble Claras, bronze Claras... I've even seen her portrait on coins.

Dresden: Augustus the Third, the Elector of Saxony, brings his son to see Clara. Like most people, Augustus falls in love with her.

AUGUSTUS
the THIRD



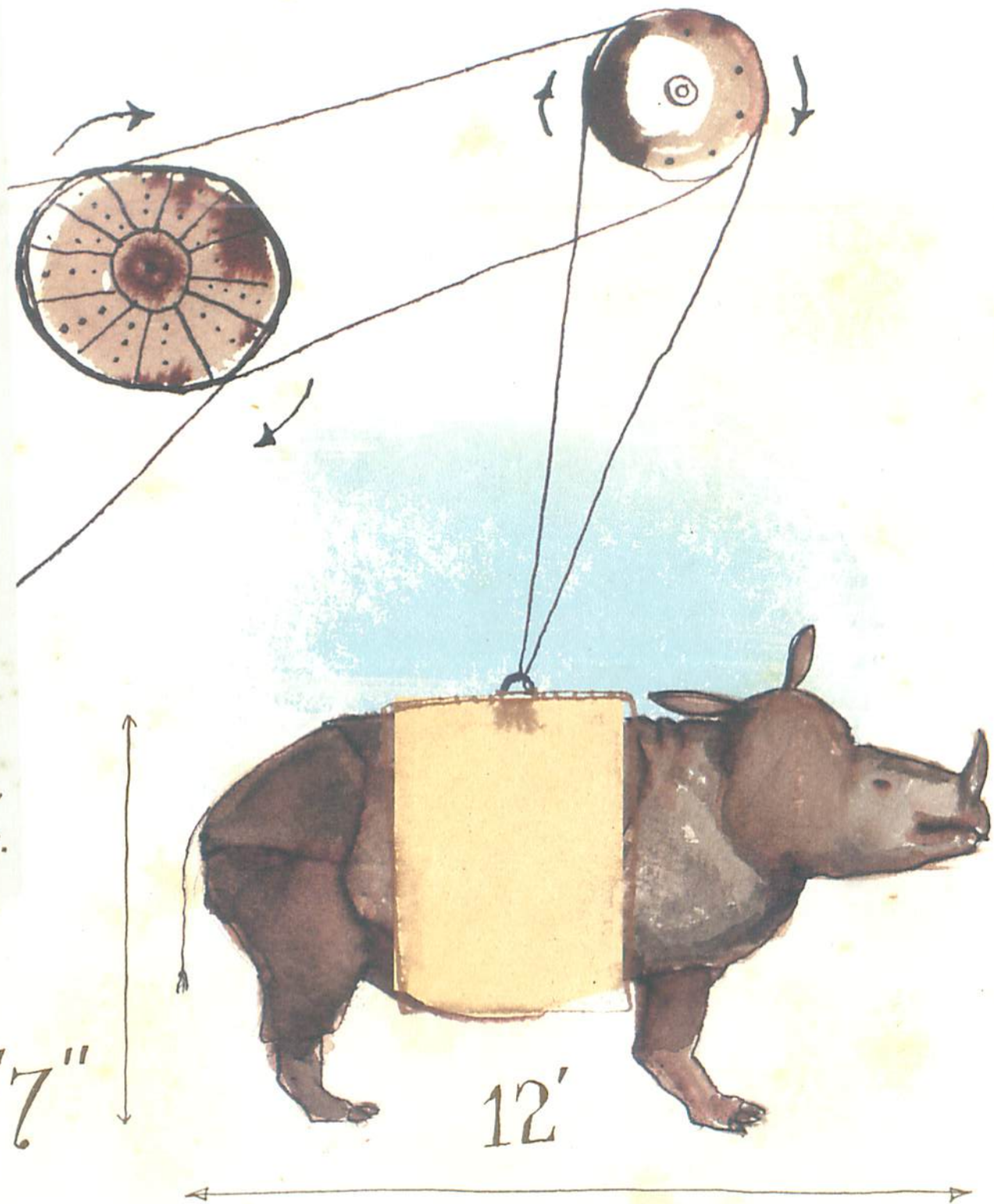
Made in the city of Meissen.

May 1747:

Leipzig. On the city's
fairgrounds we weigh
Clara by putting a
big strap around her
middle and lifting
her up with cargo
pulleys. She weighs
almost five thousand
pounds and is five
feet seven inches tall
and twelve feet long.



5'7"



12'

Along the Rhine



Versailles

1749 and a new destination: France.
We headed to Versailles, the great palace
outside of Paris, to visit King Louis XV.



LE SALON DE LA MENAGERIE que l'on voit icy par derriere est entoure d'une cour aussi de figure octogone, fermee de grilles de fer, qui la separe de sept autres cours remplies d'oiseaux rares, et d'autres animaux de divers pais doignes. La prem^{re} cour, à main gauche, en entrant contient les ascuries, les estables, et les bergeries; dans la 3^e à main droite est une voliere magnifique remplie de Pigeons de diverses especes curieuses. Paris chez N. Langlois. Avec privilege du R.

The royal Zoo in better days.



The dilapidated zoo at Versailles contained *one old camel, two wheezing lions, two tigers, a grumpy pelican, a seal*.... Louis was very taken with Clara, and for a short time it looked like Clara might be moving in with the other animals! But I couldn't leave her there.

No 5



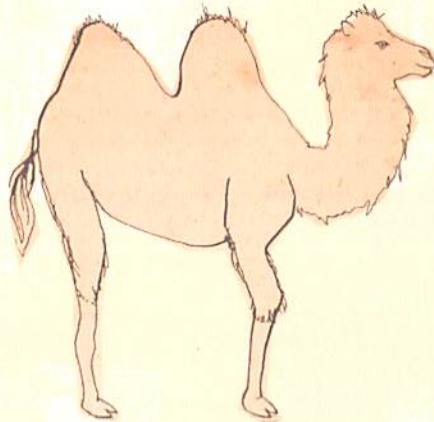
SEAL

No 1



TIGER

No 3



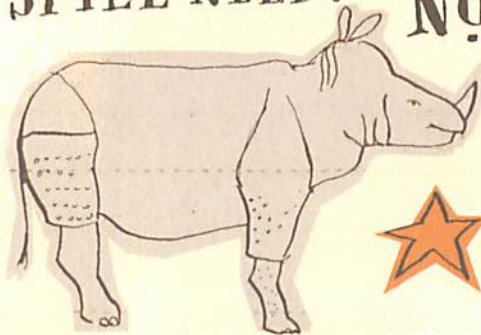
CAMEL

No 2



LION

STILL NEED! No 8



RHINOCEROS

No 4



PELICAN

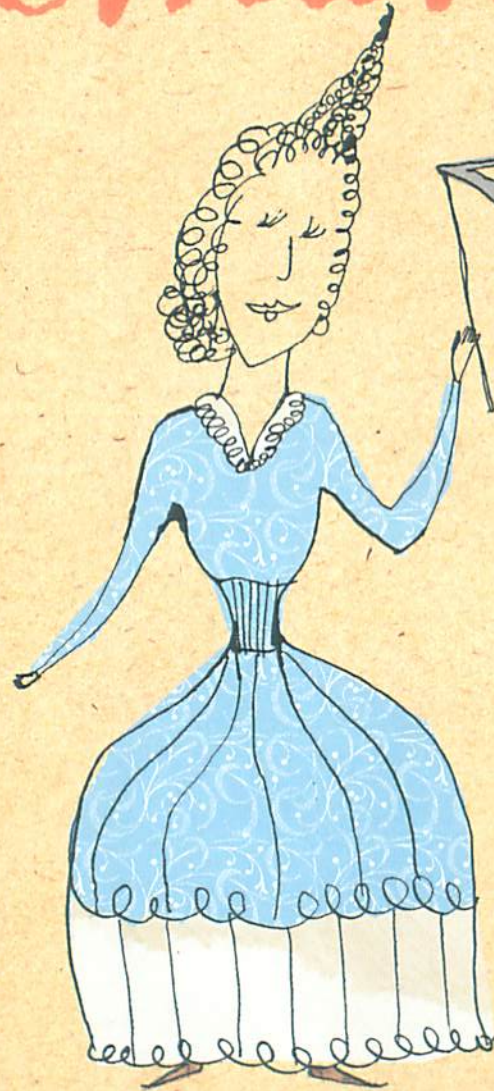
ON WE WENT to the
glorious city of Paris.
Never had I seen such a
reaction. *The whole city
went crazy with...*



Claramania!



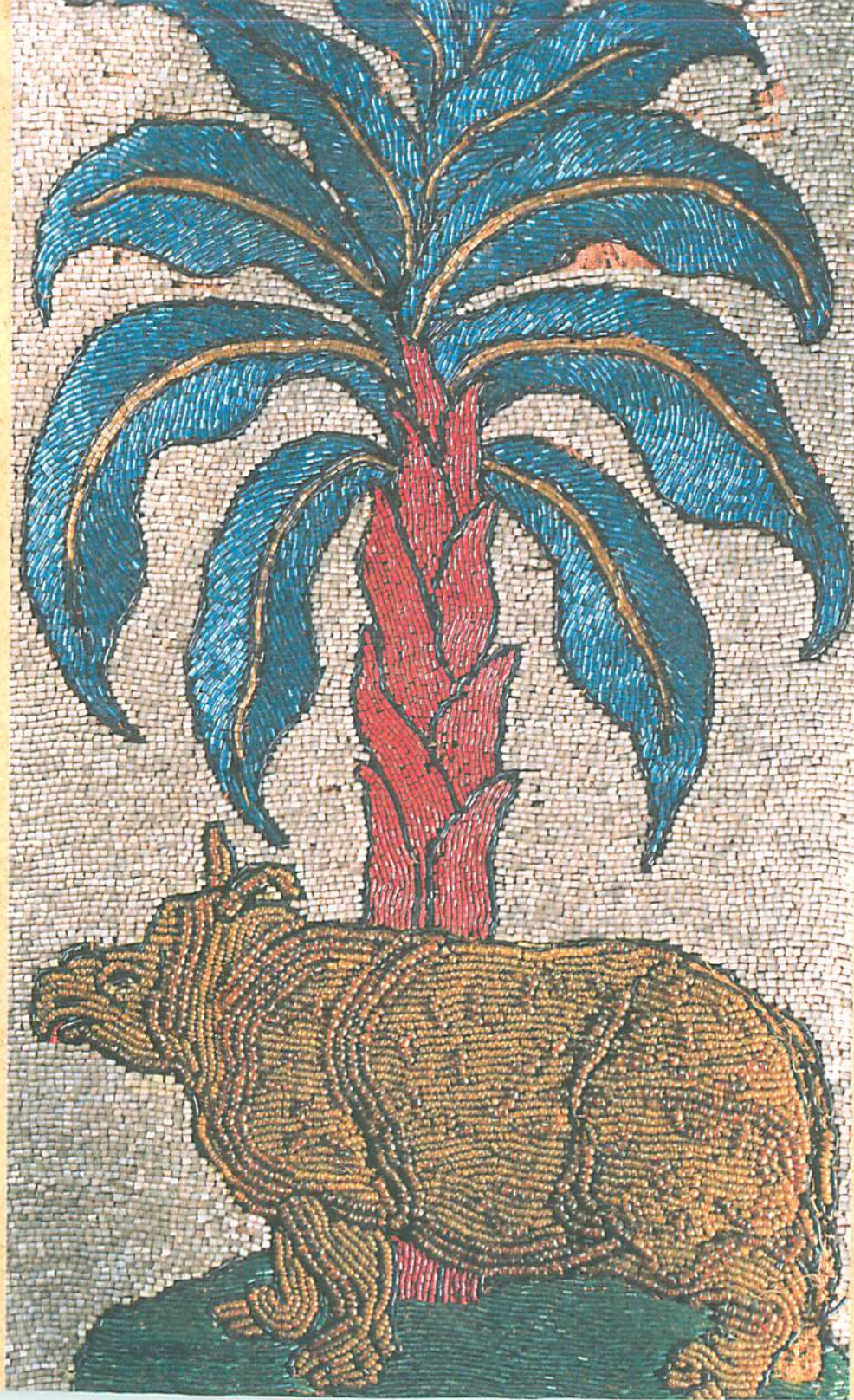
I saw clocks
that looked
like Clara...



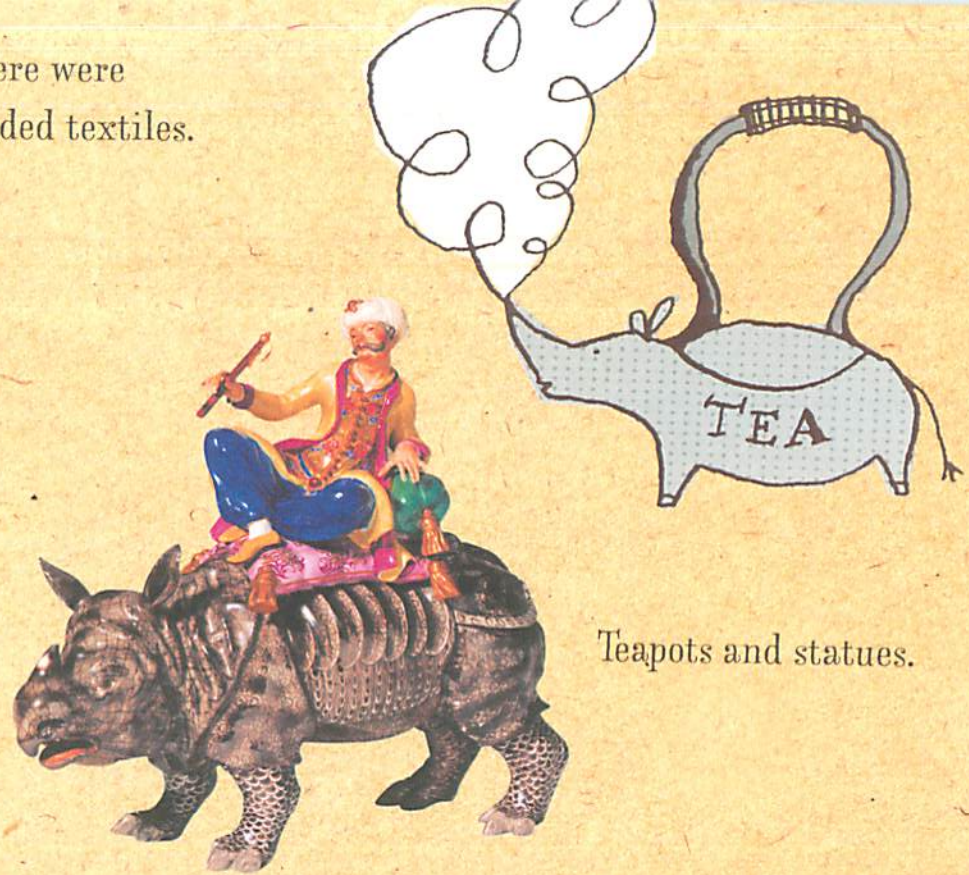
...hairstyles in
the shape of
rhino horns!

Rich people even
dressed up their
horses to look
like Clara.





There were
beaded textiles.



Teapots and statues.



Writers and philosophers stared and
stared at her and then described her
in their big encyclopedias.

Fantastique!

Jean-Baptiste Oudry came to take a look at Clara.
He had painted the king's hunting dogs; now he
announced he was going to make a portrait of Clara,
LIFE-SIZE. And so he did.

The soulful expression on her sweet rhinoceros face!



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Mary Tavener Holmes is an independent scholar who lives in New York City. She is the author of numerous publications, including *Nicolas Lancret: Dance Before a Fountain* and *A Magic Mirror: The Portrait in France, 1700-1900*, with George T.M. Shackelford.

Jon Cannell is the owner of Jon Cannell Design and Illustration. He has worked for such clients as Starbucks Coffee Company, *Chronicle Books*, the *Harvard Business Review*, and UNICEF. He lives in North Bend, Washington.



Pronunciation Guide



Douwe Van der Meer ~ DOO-vuh van der mare

Knabenhoe ~ Kuh-NA-ben-hoo -eh

Leipzig ~ lipe-sig

Pietro Longhi ~ pe-EH-troh LON-ghee

Louis ~ lu-ee

Meissen ~ MY-sen

Jean-Baptiste Oudry ~ zhon bap-teest oo-dree

Versailles ~ ver-sigh

Illustrations



Jean-Daniel Kamm, *Medal for a Rhinoceros*, ca. 1748.
Silver, diam.: 1½ in. Historisches Museum Bern.



Possibly by or after Jean-Daniel Kamm,
Clara Commemorative Medal. Perhaps lead with a copper core, diam.: 1½ in. Jeanne and Andrea Rothe.



Johann Joachim Kändler (German, 1706-1775).
Small Rhinoceros. Porcelain, 4 1/8 x 7 1/16 in.
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Porzellansammlung.



H. Oster, engraving after Anton August Beck (German, 1713-1787). *A True Delineation or Pourtraiture of a Living Rhinoceros (by some called Unicorn)*, 1747. Ink on paper.
© Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



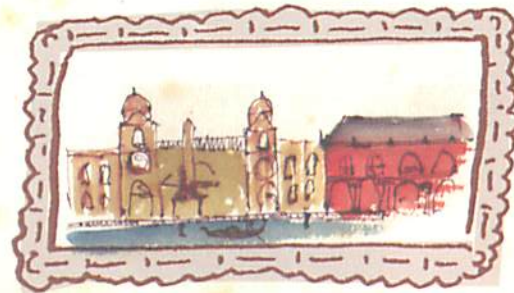
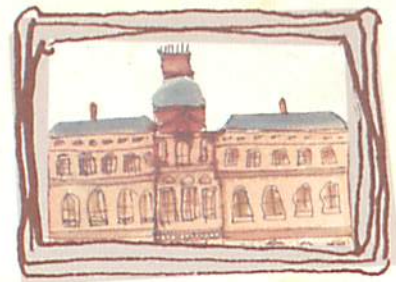
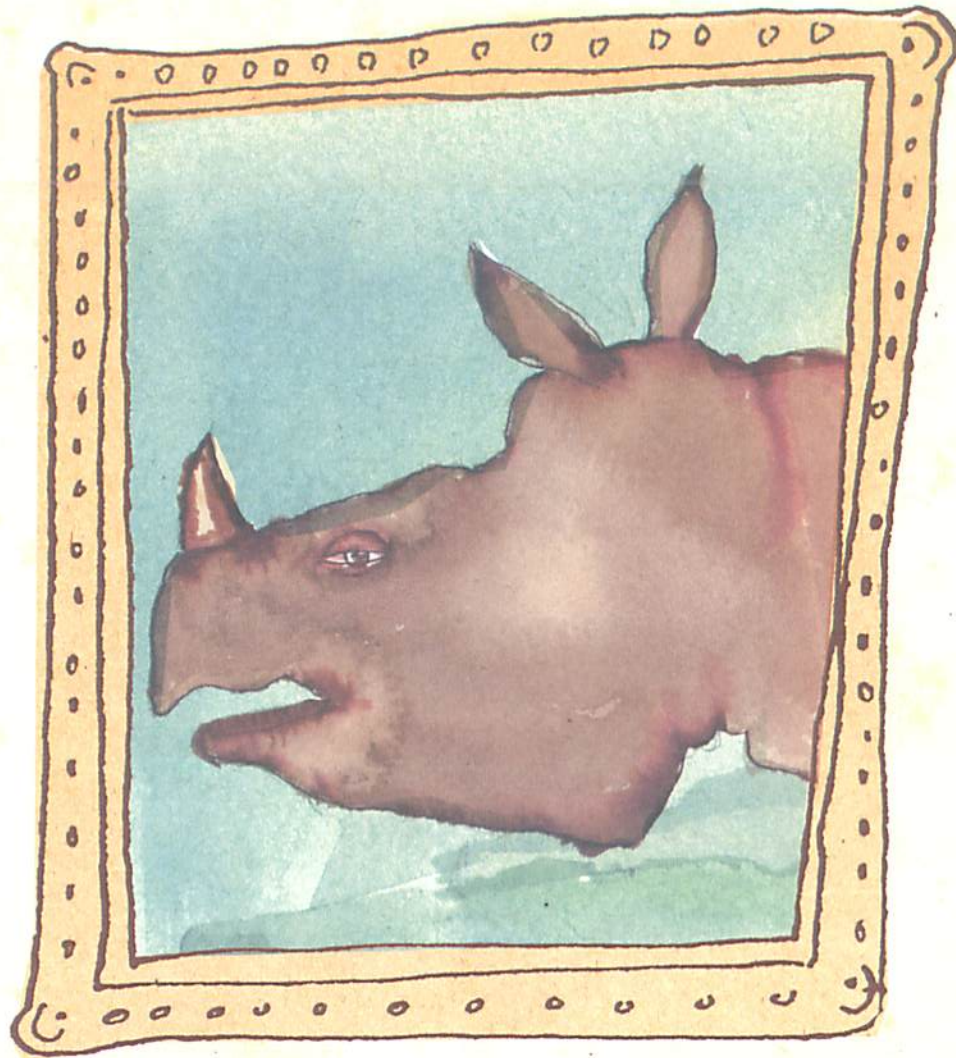
Maker unknown, *Beaded Panel*, ca. 1755 (detail).
Multicolored glass beads on a textile support.
12 ft. 8 3/16 in. x 1 ft. 7 11/16 in. Bernard Steinitz, Paris.



Jean-Joseph de Saint-Germain (French, 1719-1791) and François Viger (French, 1704-1784), *Rhinoceros Musical Clock*, ca. 1750. Painted and gilt bronze, enameled copper, glass, and wood veneered with tortoiseshell; clock: 22 7/8 x 15 3/4 x 7 1/8 in. Paris. Musée du Louvre, Département des Objets d'Art. Gift of Monsieur and Madame René Grog-Carven, 1973. © Photo: Jean-Gilles Berizzi/Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, New York.

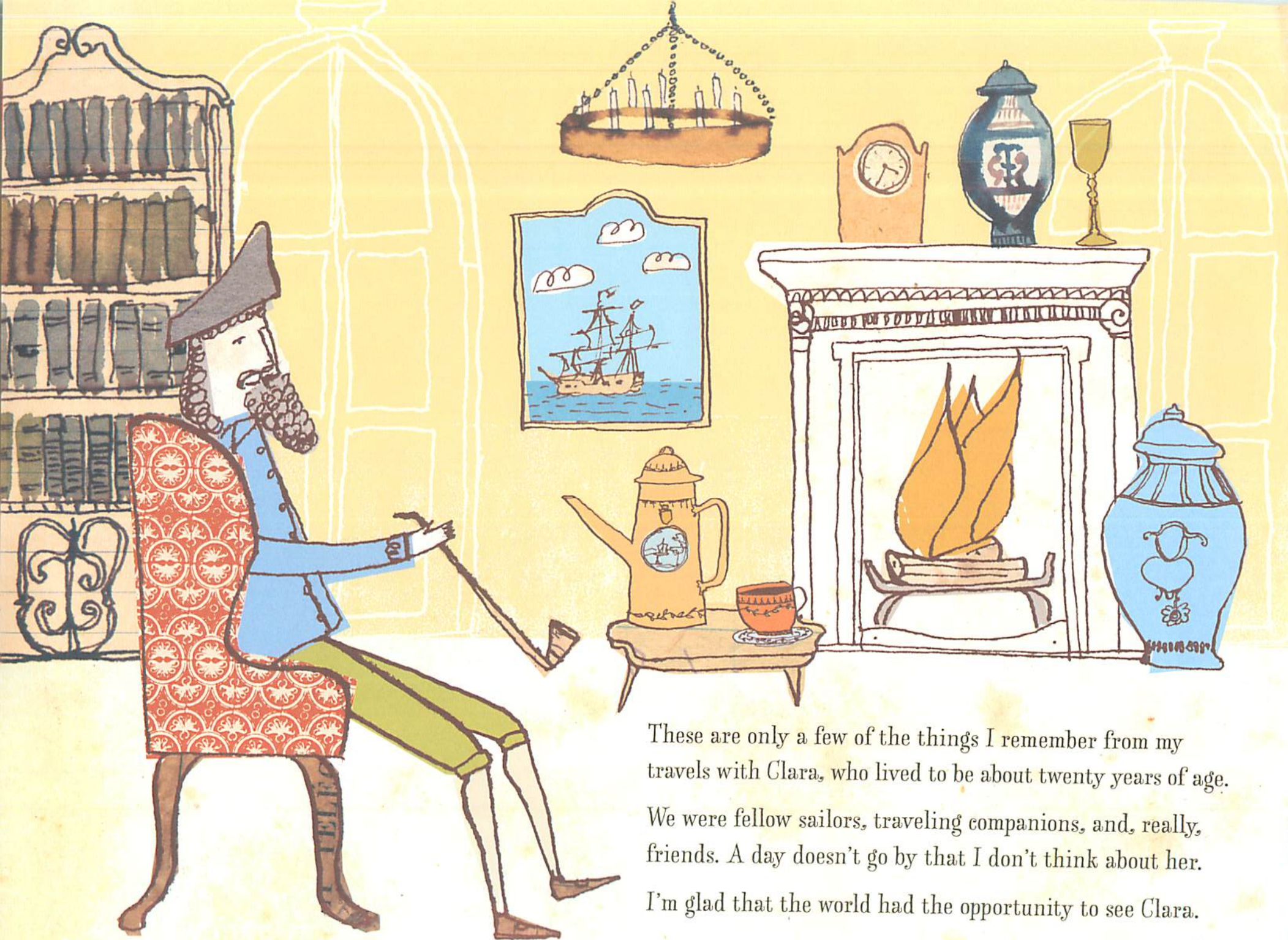


Nicolas Langlois (French, 1640-1703), *Vue générale de la Ménagerie de Versailles*. Engraving. Versailles, Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et du Trianon, inv. GRAV. 465.



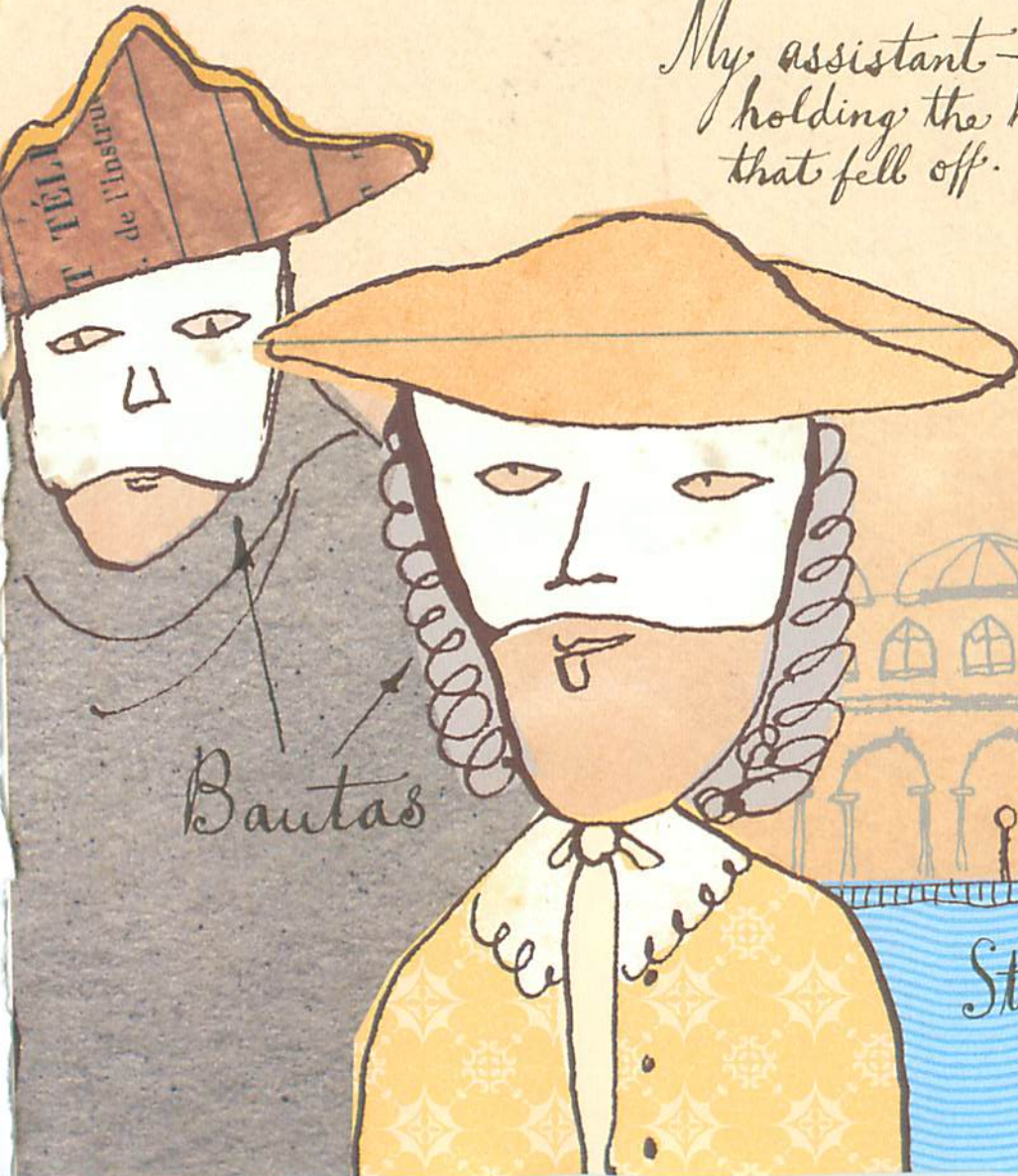
*Just as important,
I'm glad that Clara could
see the world.*



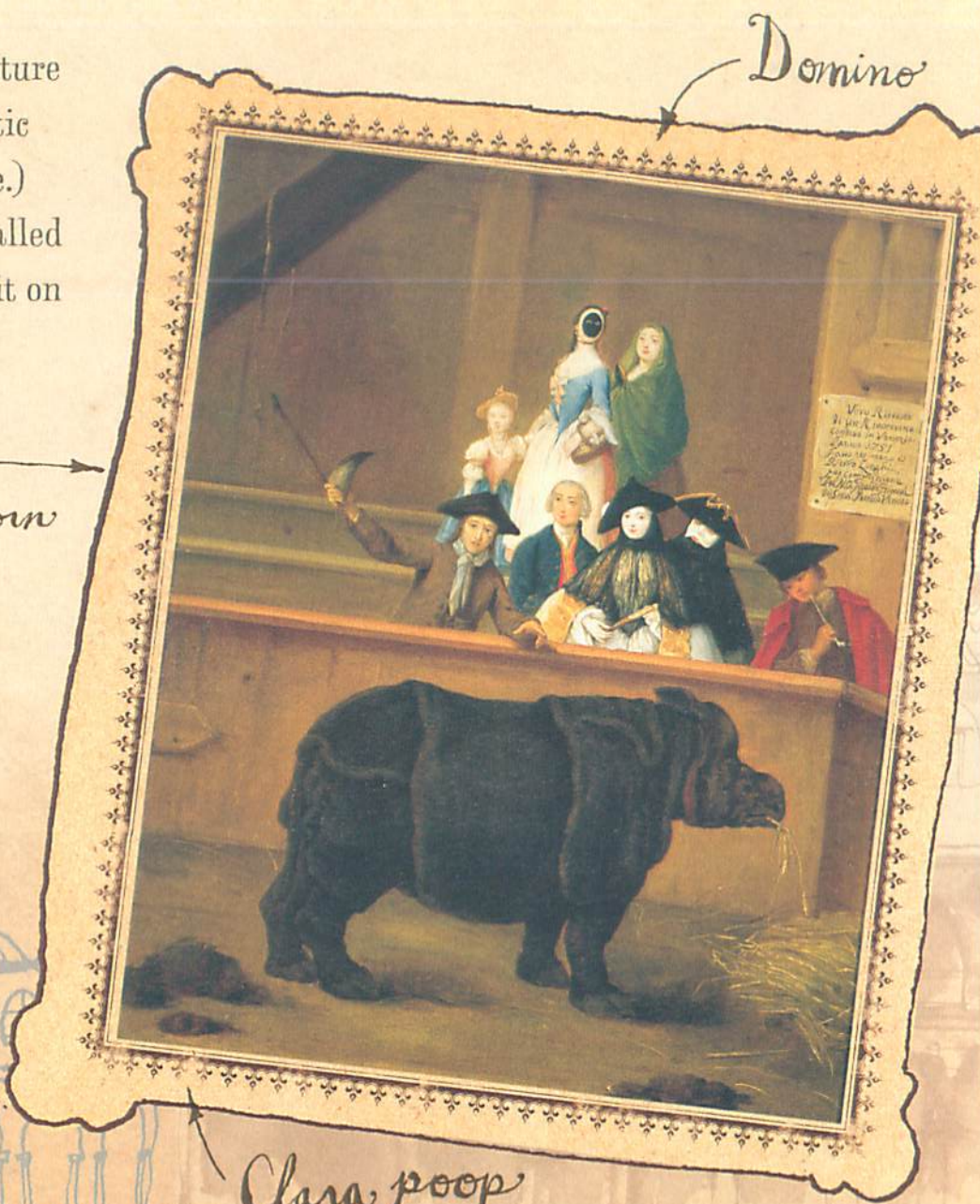


These are only a few of the things I remember from my travels with Clara, who lived to be about twenty years of age. We were fellow sailors, traveling companions, and, really, friends. A day doesn't go by that I don't think about her. I'm glad that the world had the opportunity to see Clara.

Pietro Longhi was a friend of mine, and he painted this picture of Clara in her stall, being visited by people in their fantastic Carnival masks. (That's me on the right, puffing on my pipe.) The masks were made of papier-mâché. A half-mask was called a *bauta*. A full mask was called a *domino*, and you kept it on your face with a button that you held between your teeth.



My assistant
holding the horn
that fell off.



Streets made of water



From Rome we traveled north to Venice.
We arrived in time for the biggest party
in all of Europe. It begins on the day after
Christmas and continues for months and
is called Carnival.



It was here that something terrible happened: CLARA LOST HER HORN.
She must have rubbed it off on her crate.

For days and weeks I was afraid she was sick. And what were we going to do?
A rhinoceros without a horn is not much of a rhinoceros.

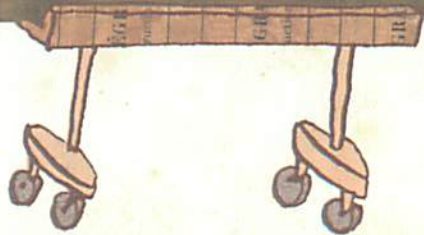
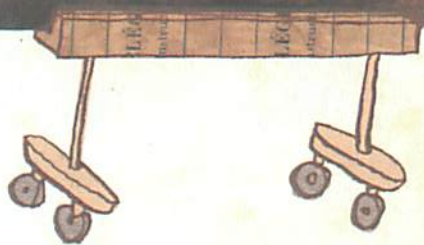
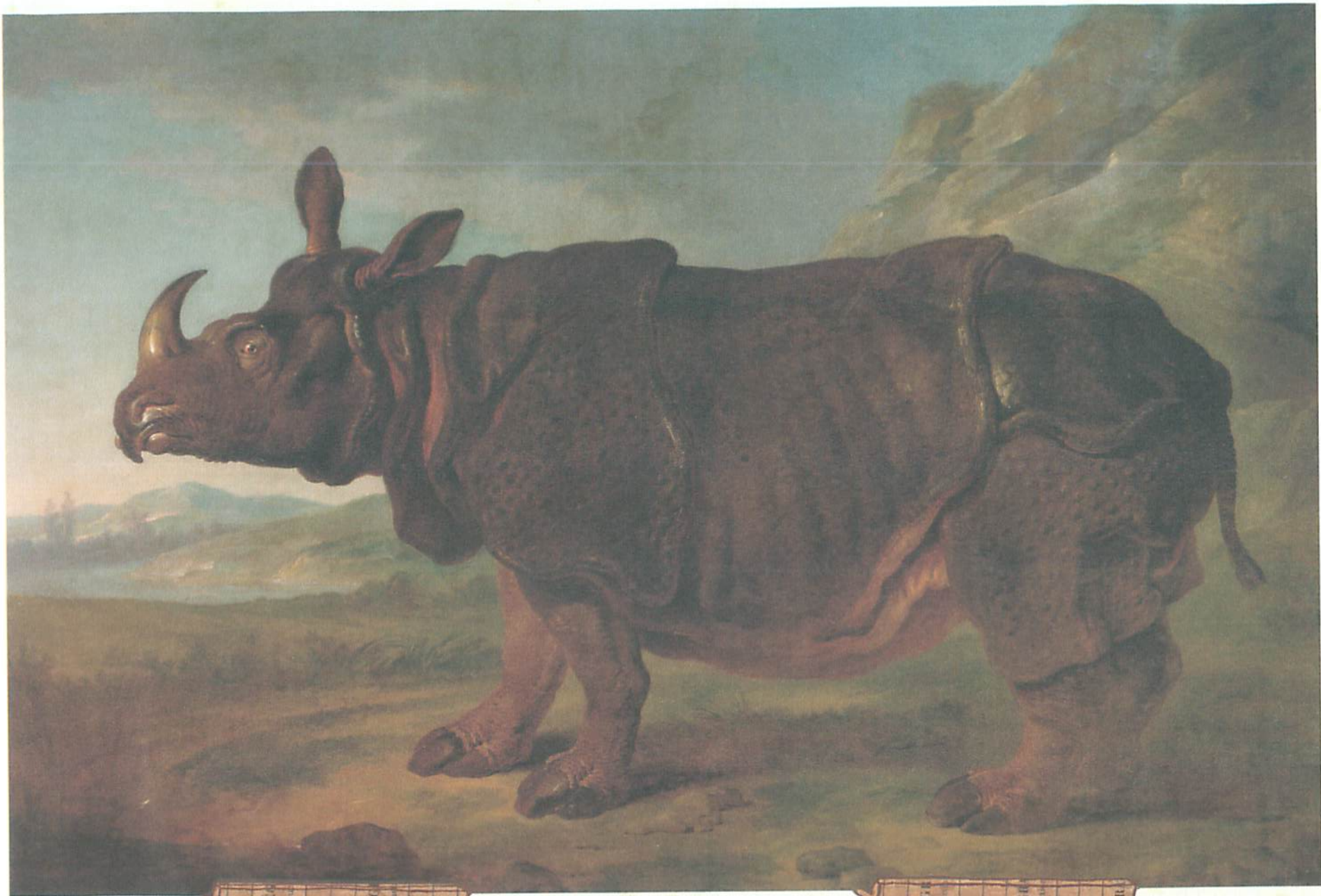
I'm happy to report that her horn eventually grew back, just like human
hair and fingernails do.



After our grand success in France, we decided to go to Italy.
By March of 1750, we were in Rome.

Rome







Johann Joachim Kändler (German, 1706-1775).
A Turk Riding a Rhinoceros. Porcelain, polychrome enamel
decoration, gilding, 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Historisches Museum Bern.



Jean-Baptiste Oudry (French, 1686-1755). *Rhinoceros*,
1749. Oil on canvas, 10 ft. $\frac{1}{2}$ in. x 14 ft. 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.
Staatliches Museum Schwerin.



Pietro Longhi (Italian, 1702-1785). *The Rhinoceros*,
ca. 1751. Oil on canvas, 23 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 19 $\frac{11}{16}$ in.
Venice, Museo del Settecento Veneziano di
Ca' Rezzonico.

