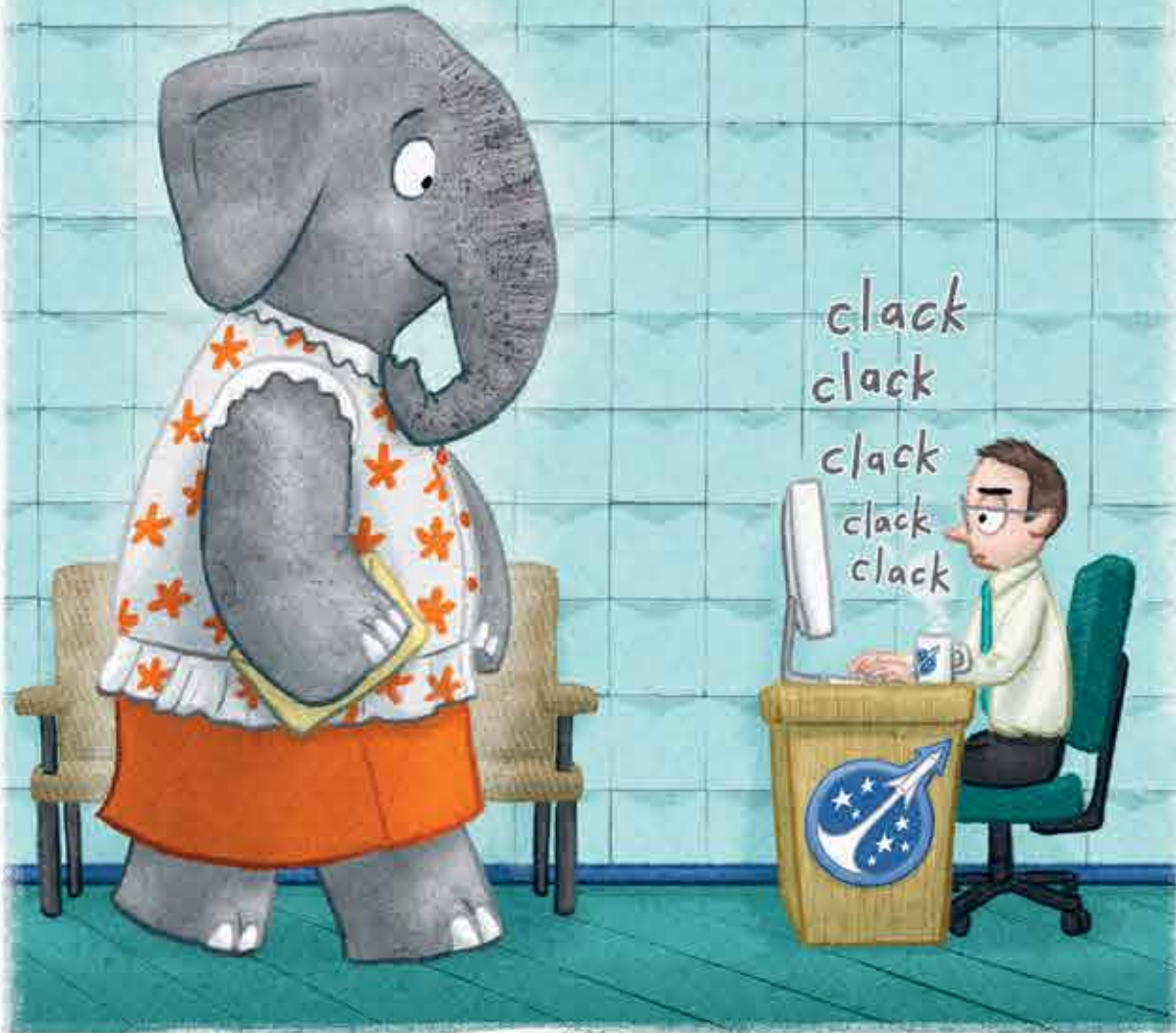
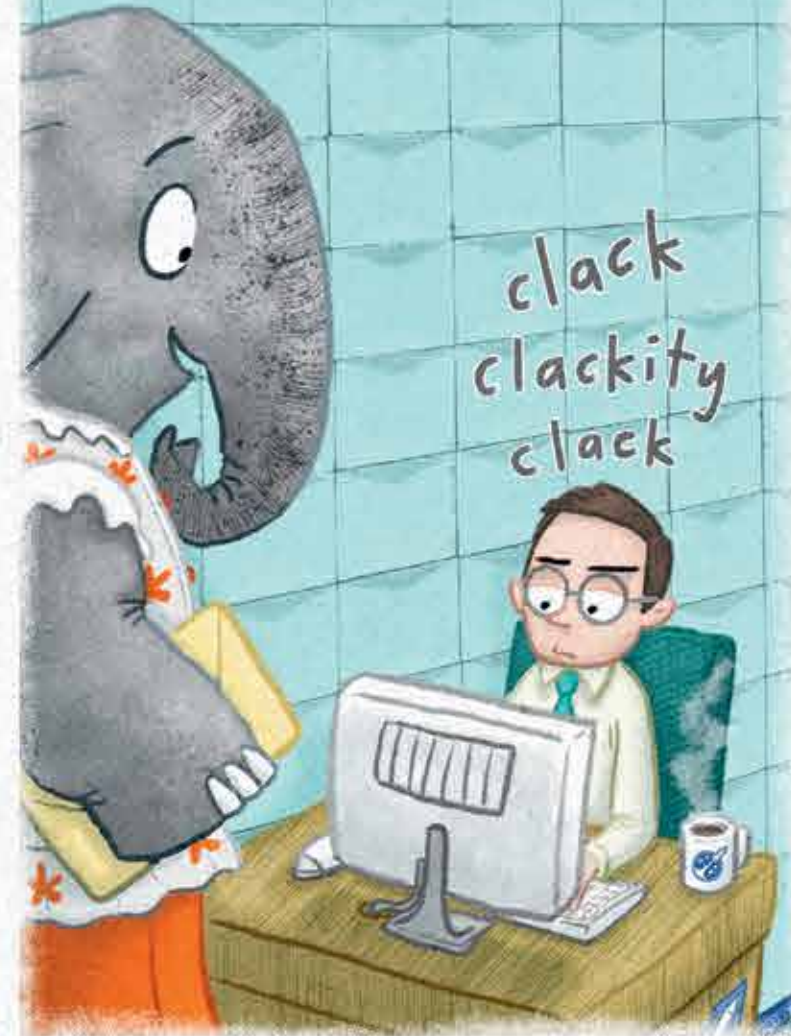


One ordinary Monday,
at 9am precisely,
Stella
walked into Space Command.



'Hello,' she said.
'I'd like to become
an astronaut.'



The man stopped
clacking on his keyboard
and looked up.

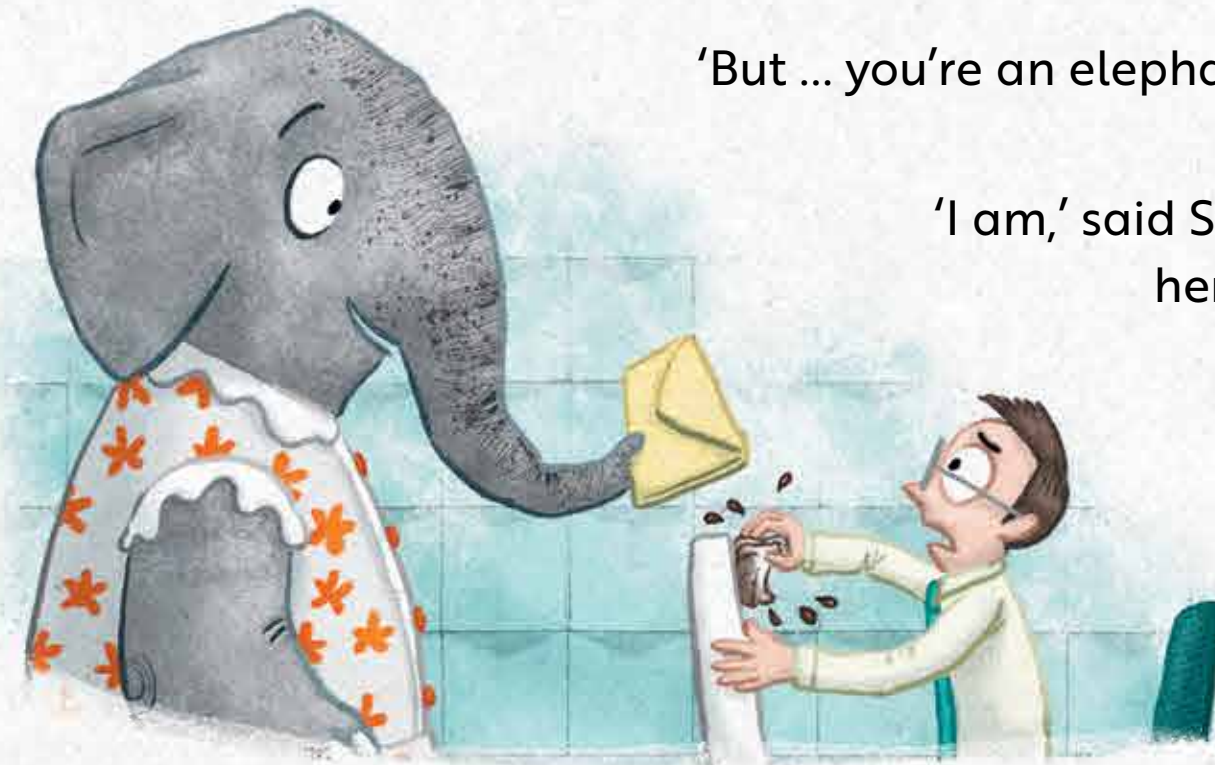


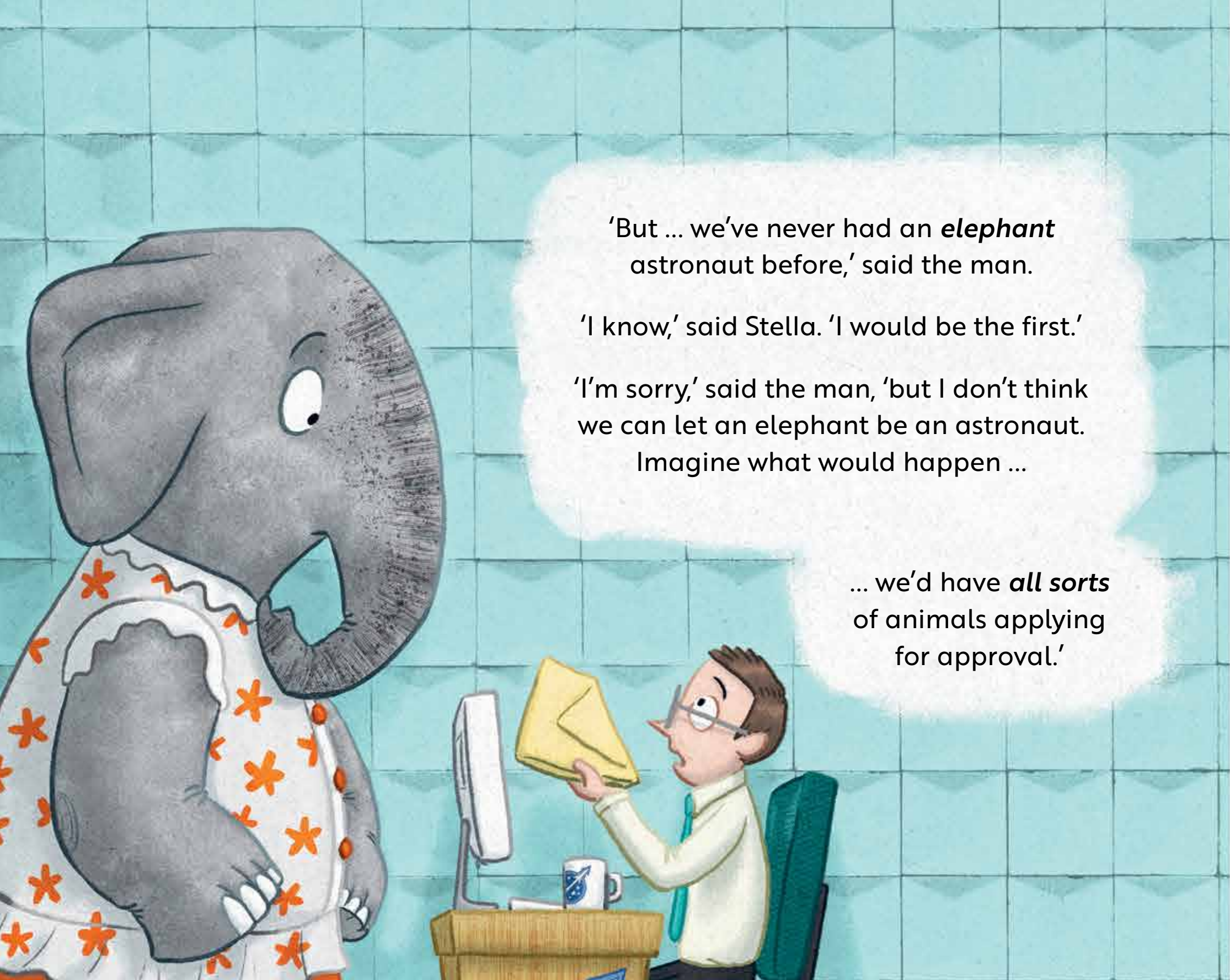
SPLURT!



'But ... you're an elephant,' said the man.

'I am,' said Stella, holding out
her application.



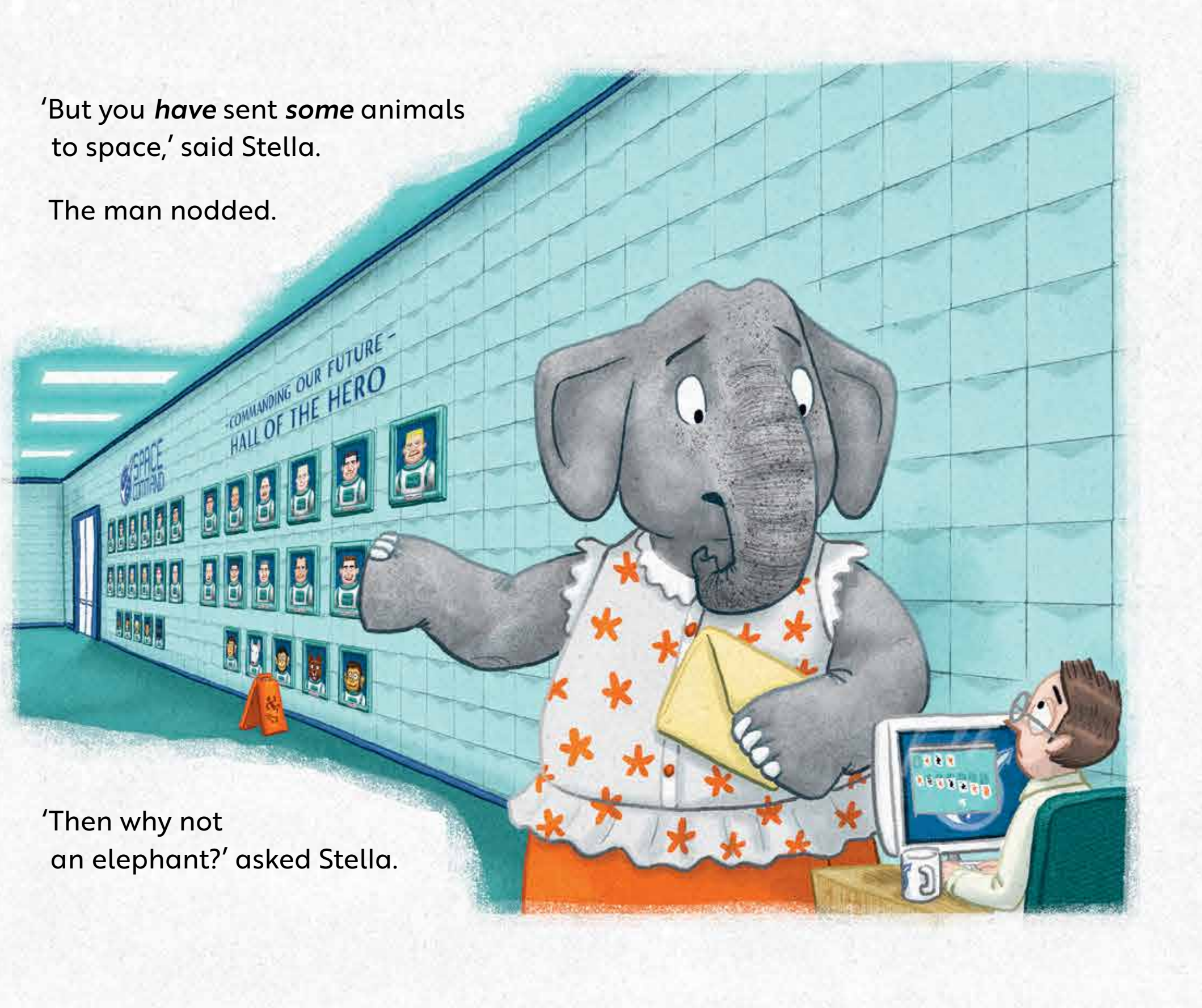


'But ... we've never had an *elephant* astronaut before,' said the man.

'I know,' said Stella. 'I would be the first.'

'I'm sorry,' said the man, 'but I don't think we can let an elephant be an astronaut. Imagine what would happen ...

... we'd have *all sorts* of animals applying for approval.'



'But you *have* sent *some* animals to space,' said Stella.

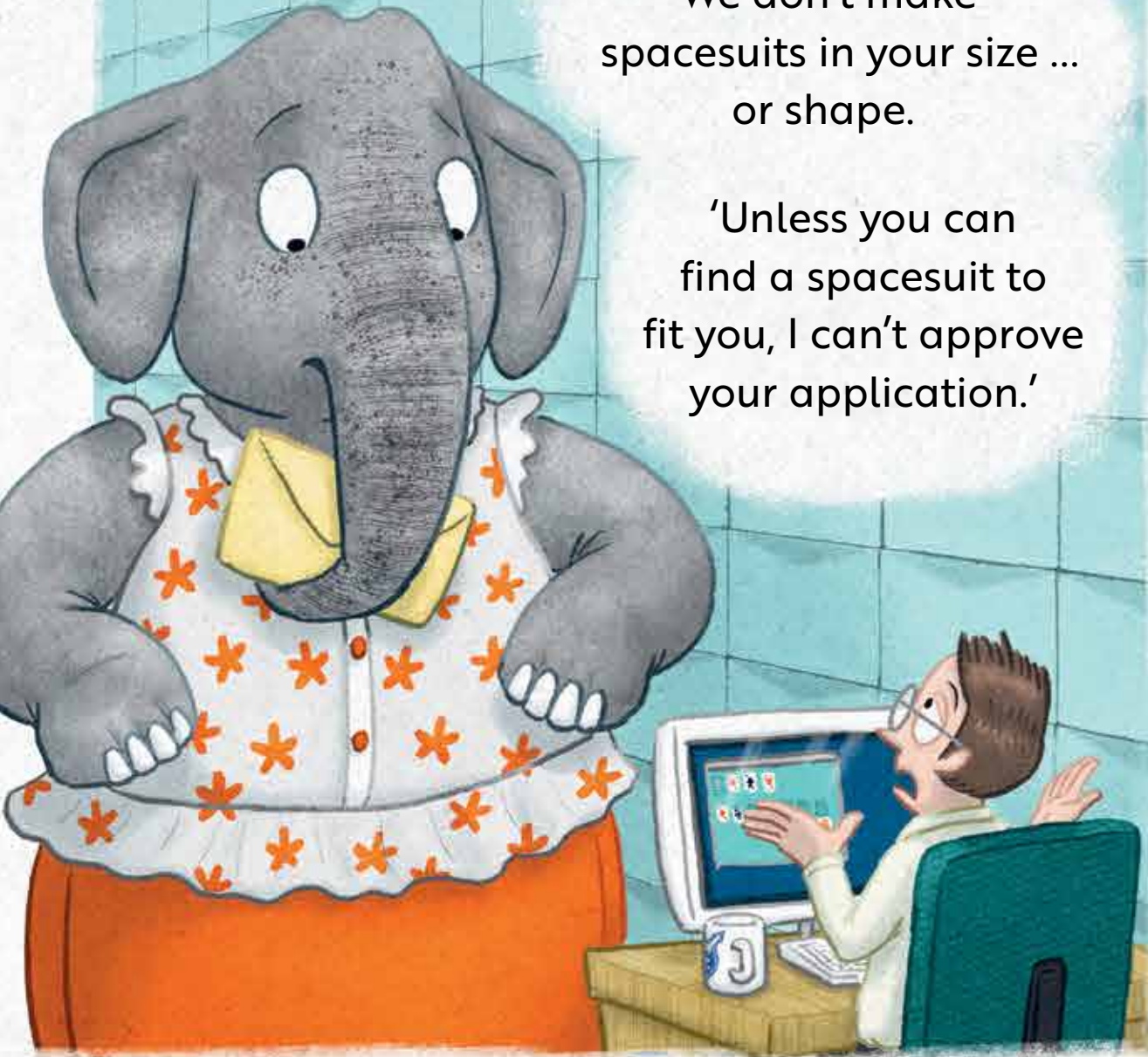
The man nodded.

'Then why not an elephant?' asked Stella.

'I'm sorry,' said the man,
'but the other animals were smaller.'

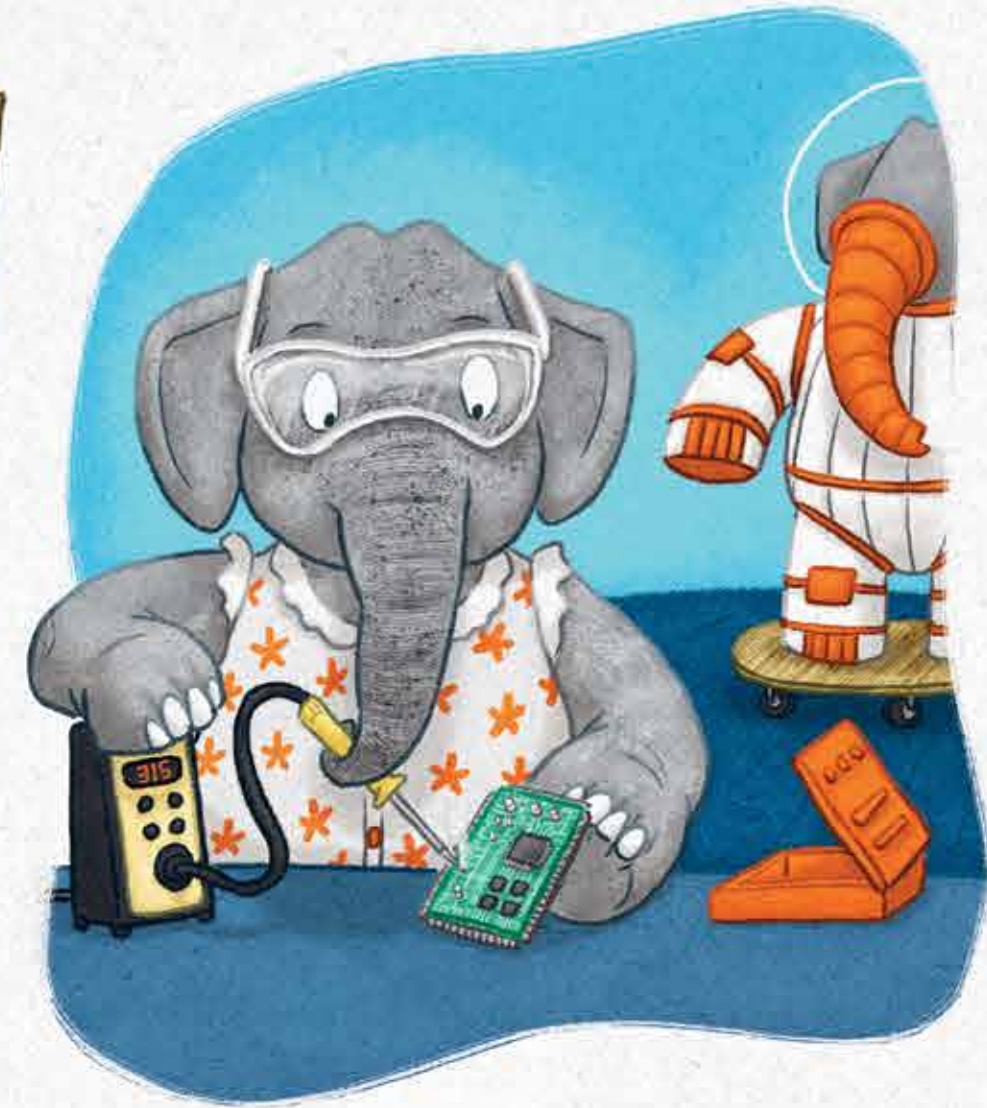
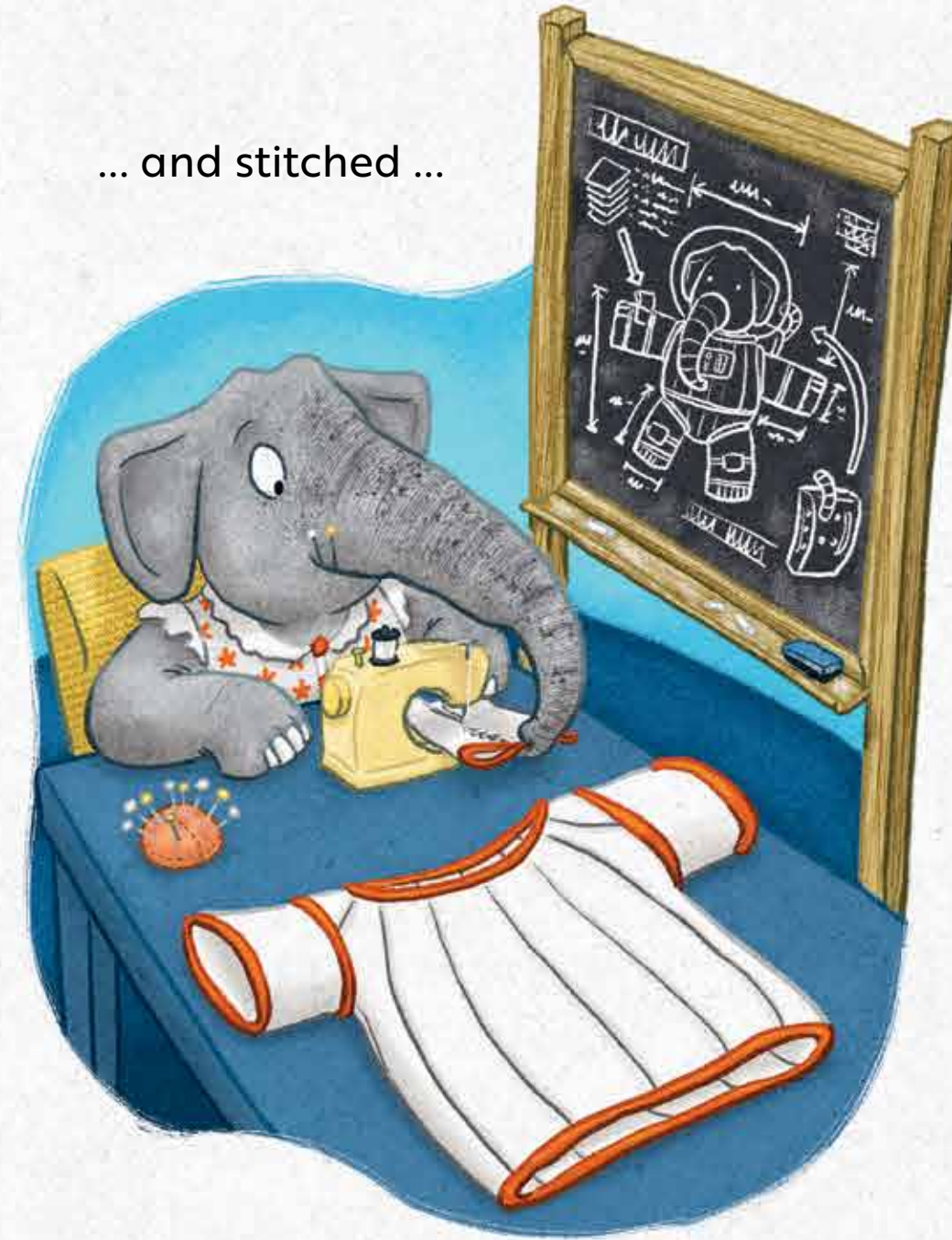
'We don't make
spacesuits in your size ...
or shape.'

'Unless you can
find a spacesuit to
fit you, I can't approve
your application.'



So Stella measured ...

... and stitched ...



... and tinkered ...

... until finally, it was ready.

'Now can I be an astronaut?'
asked Stella.

'I'm sorry,' said the man,
'but you'd need to complete basic
training, and ... we're just not set up
to train elephants.

'You're too big. You'd break
all our equipment.

'Unless you can find
training somewhere else,
I can't approve your
application.'



So Stella found teachers.

And she studied ...

