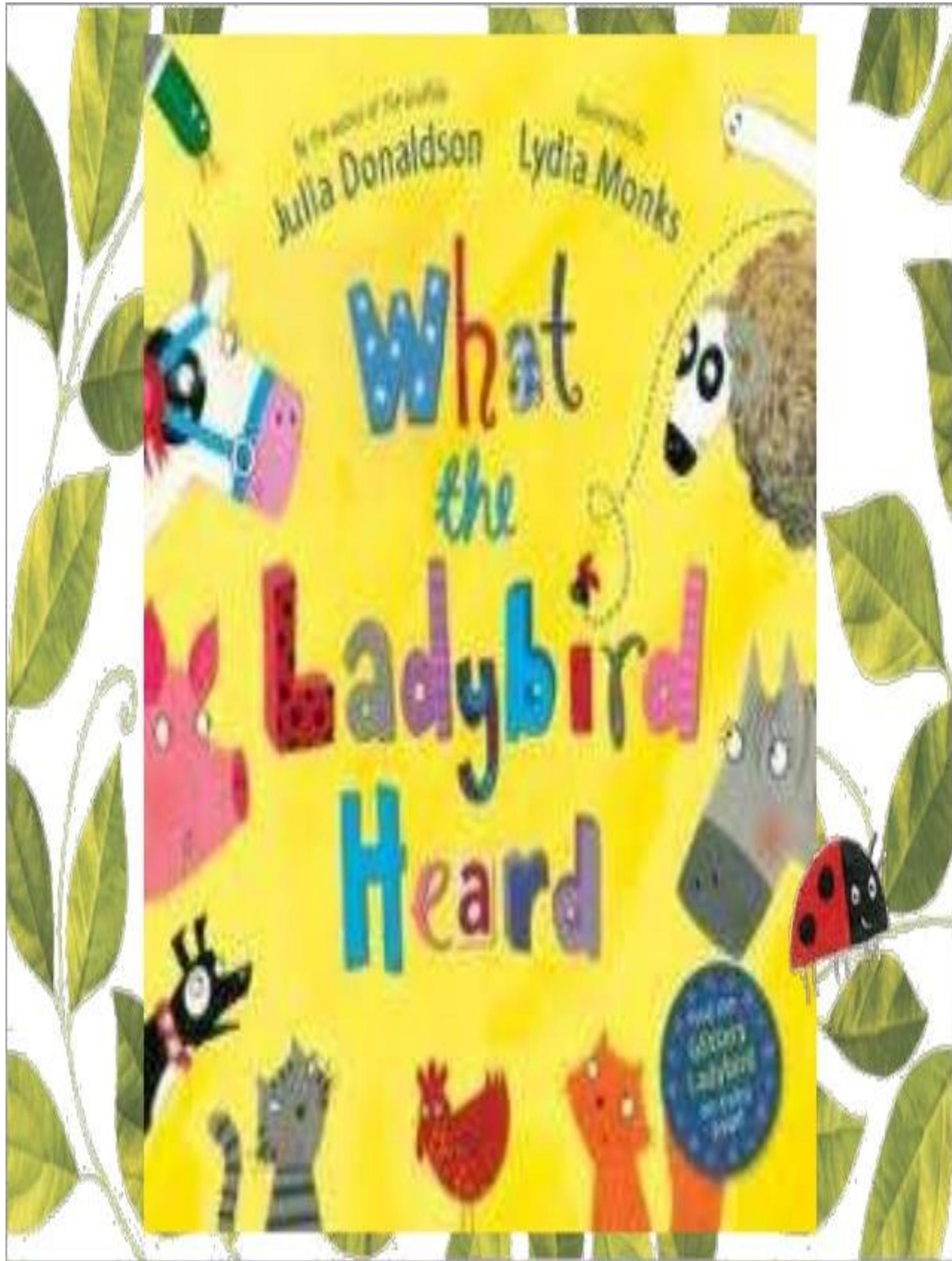
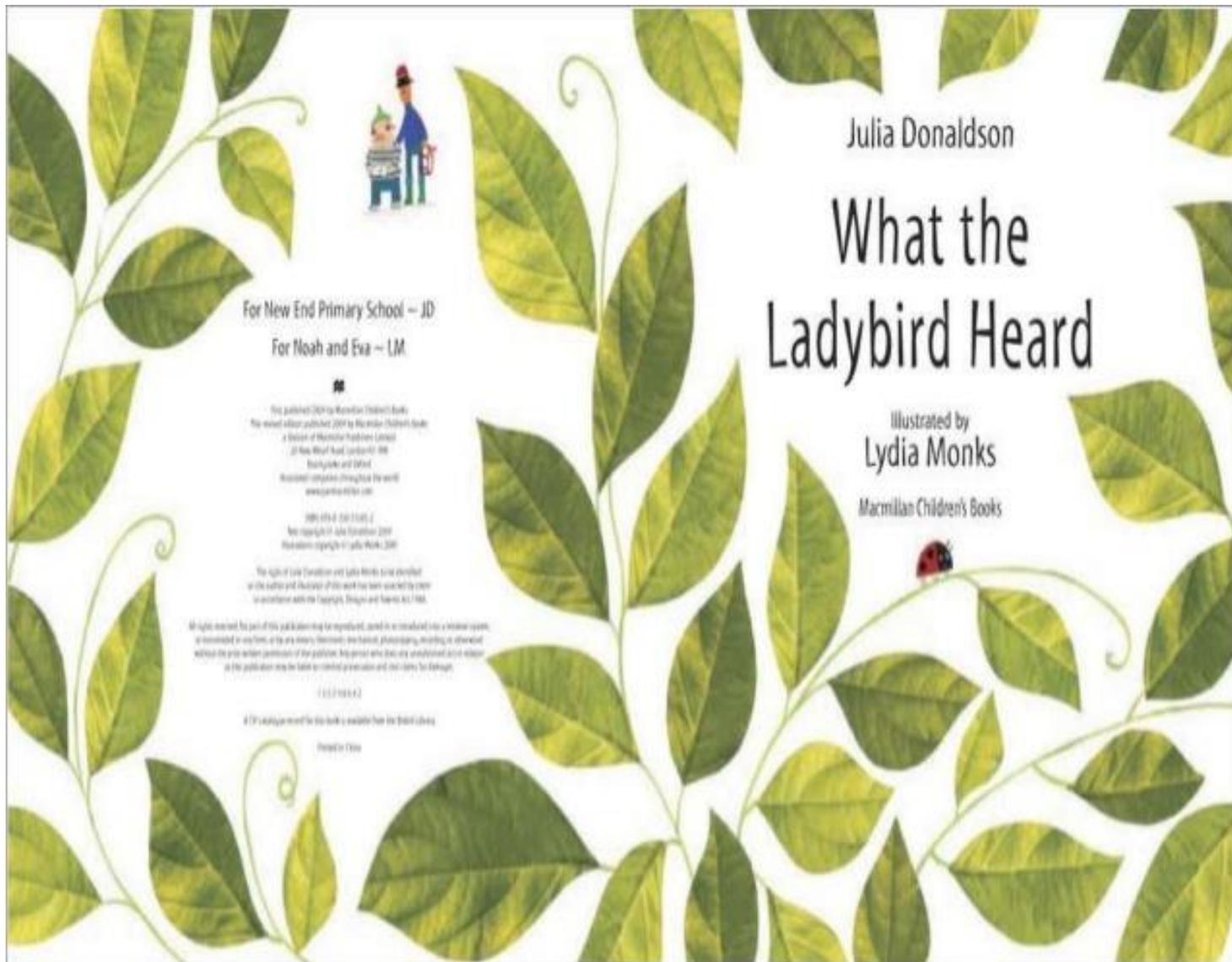


By the author of *The Giraffe*
Julia Donaldson
Illustrated by
Lydia Monks

What the Ladybird Heard

With an
afterword
by Julia
Donaldson





Once upon a farm lived a fat red hen, a duck in a pond and a goose in a pen, a woolly sheep, a hairy hog,

A handsome horse and a dainty dog,

A cat that miaowed and a cat that purred,

a fine prize cow... and a ladybird.

And the cow said, 'MOO!', and the hen said 'CLUCK!', 'HISS!' said the goose and

'QUACK' said the duck. 'NEIGH!' said the horse. 'OINK!' said the hog. "BAA!" said the sheep and "WOOF!" said the dog.

One cat miaowed whilst the other one purred...

And the ladybird said never a word.

But the ladybird saw and the ladybird heard.

She saw two men in a big black van, with a map and a key and a cunning plan.

And she heard them whisper, "This is how we're going to steal the fine prize cow:

"Open the gate in the dead of night, pass the horse and then turn right. Round the duck pond, past the hog (be careful not to wake the dog). Left past the sheep, then straight ahead and in through the door of the prize cow's shed!"

And the little spotty ladybird (who never before had said a word)

Told the animals this is how two thieves are planning to steal the cow:

They'll open the gate in the dead of night, pass the horse and then turn right. Round the duck pond, past the hog (being careful not to wake the dog). Left past the sheep, then straight ahead and in through the door of the prize cow's shed!

And the cow said, 'MOO!', and the hen said 'CLUCK!', 'HISS!' said the goose and 'QUACK' said the duck. 'NEIGH!' said the horse. 'OINK!' said the hog. "BAA!" said the sheep and "WOOF!" said the dog.

And both the cats began to miaow: "We can't let them steal the fine prize cow!"

But the ladybird had a good idea and she whispered it into each animal ear.

At the dead of night the two bad men (Hefty Hugh and Lanky Len)

Opened the gate while the farmer slept and tiptoe into the farm they crept.

Then the goose said, "NEIGH!" with all her might. And Len said, "That's the horse — turn right."

And the dainty dog began to QUACK. “The duck!” said Hugh. “We’re right on track.”

“OINK,” said the cats. “There goes the hog! Be careful not to wake the dog.”

“BAA BAA BAA,” said the fat red hen. “The sheep! We’re nearly there,” said Len.

Then the duck on the pond said, “MOO MOO MOO!” “Two more steps to go!” said Hugh.

And they both stepped into the duck pond — SPLOSH!

And the farmer woke and said, “Golly gosh!” And he called the cops and they came —

NEE NAH! And Then the cow said, ‘MOO!’, and the hen said ‘CLUCK!’, ‘HISS!’ said the goose and ‘QUACK’ said the duck. ‘NEIGH!’ said the horse. ‘OINK!’ said the hog.

“BAA!” said the sheep and “WOOF!” said the dog.

And the farmer cheered, and both cats purred.

But the ladybird said never a word.