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Awaken  
Children's Series

APD 75



# The Elephant that Can Fly, and Other Short Stories

♥ by Agnes Gabriel

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Please pass this book to someone else if you do not need it anymore. As the Buddha taught, the gift of Truth surpasses all other gifts! May all have the chance to know the Dharma.

It is very, very rare for one to have a precious human life and still be able to encounter the Buddha-Dharma, therefore please handle this book with utmost respect and care.



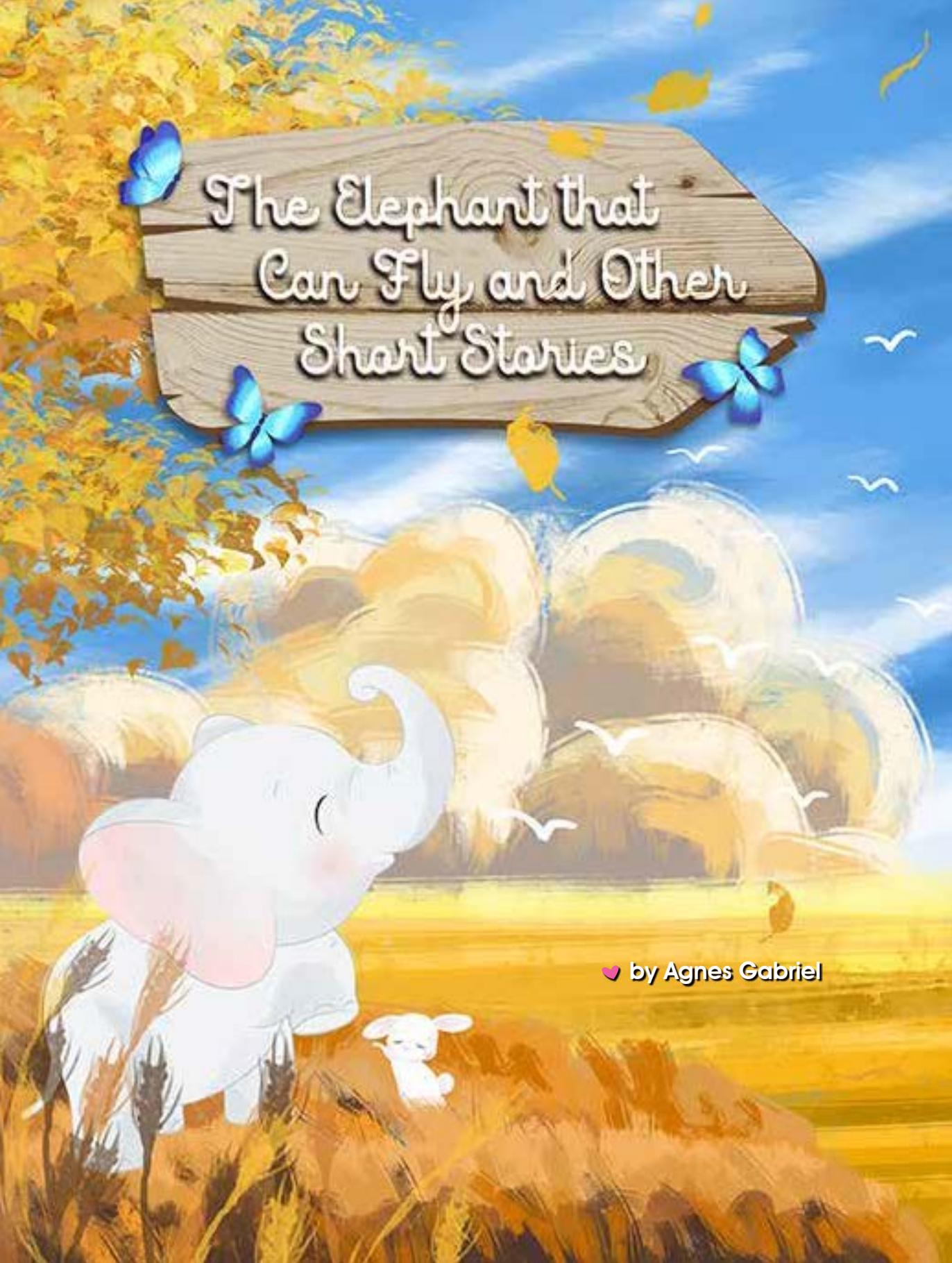
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The book cover features a whimsical illustration of a white elephant with its trunk curled, standing in a field of golden grass. In the background, there are rolling hills under a blue sky with white clouds and several white birds flying. A wooden signpost is positioned at the top, with the title written on it. The scene is decorated with blue butterflies and falling yellow leaves.

The Elephant that  
Can Fly and Other  
Short Stories

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## The Sad Elephant

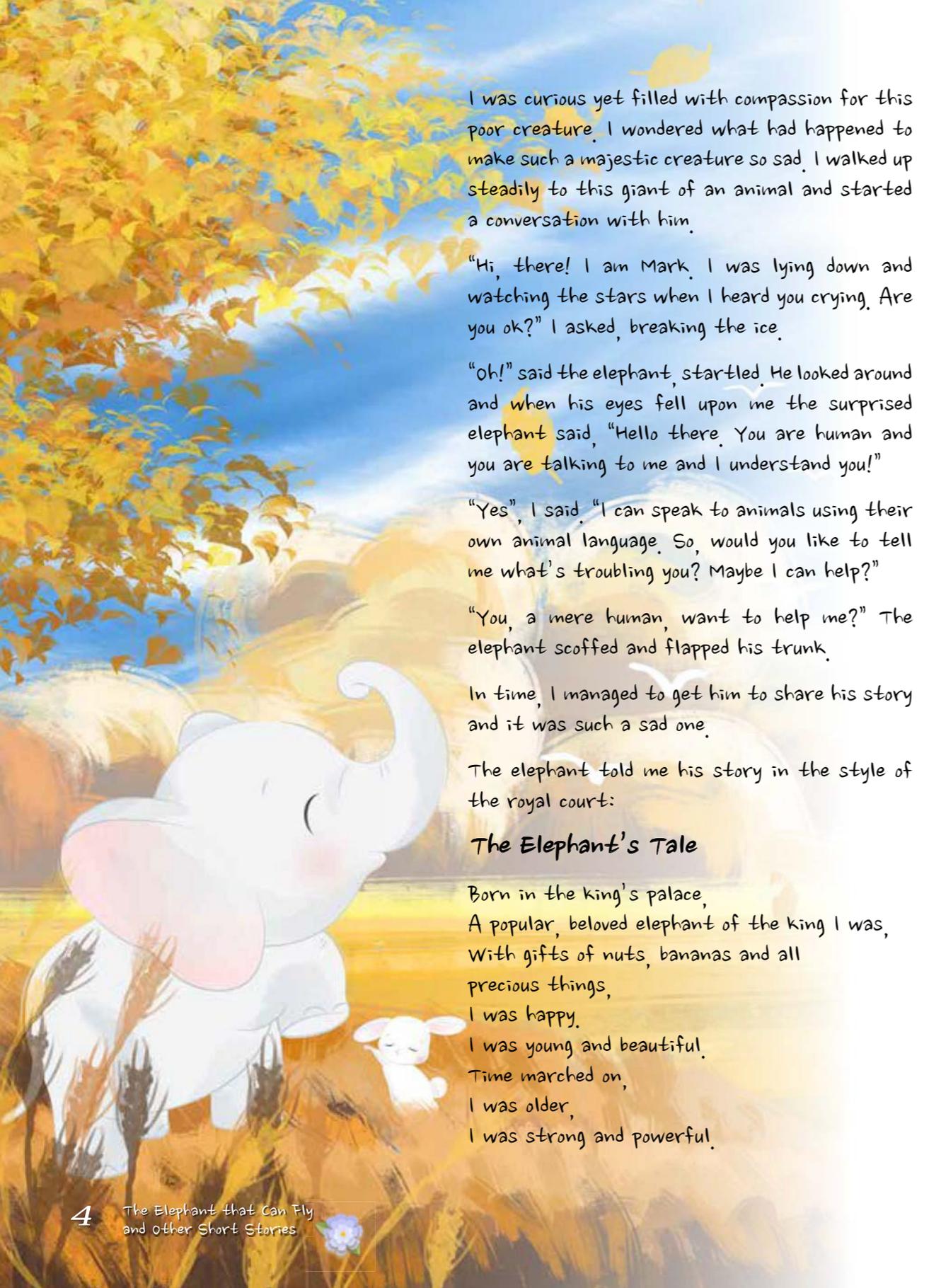
It was a beautiful night. The sky was putting on a show of shooting stars flying across the night sky. I was lying down on my straw mat, admiring the stars.

My name is Mark and I was glad for this short holiday. It had been a really busy, hectic time for me. I had been working with animals in another country. After the war, lots of animals and humans were hurt, scared and frightened. My job was to talk to them and heal them. I had become known as the 'Animal Whisperer'. I loved my job as a person who could talk to animals.

Suddenly, the calm and peace of the night was shattered as loud crying filled the air with sadness and sorrow. After listening to this desperate sound, I got up from the mat, dusted myself off and went in search of the person or creature who was so unhappy.

Listening intently, I followed the crying sobs across a muddy field, disturbing slumbering cows along the way until I came to a clearing. A strange sight appeared before me. An elderly elephant was sitting on a log and was crying. His ears were floppy and his body was slouched. Even his trunk looked sad.





I was curious yet filled with compassion for this poor creature. I wondered what had happened to make such a majestic creature so sad. I walked up steadily to this giant of an animal and started a conversation with him.

"Hi, there! I am Mark. I was lying down and watching the stars when I heard you crying. Are you ok?" I asked, breaking the ice.

"Oh!" said the elephant, startled. He looked around and when his eyes fell upon me the surprised elephant said, "Hello there. You are human and you are talking to me and I understand you!"

"Yes", I said. "I can speak to animals using their own animal language. So, would you like to tell me what's troubling you? Maybe I can help?"

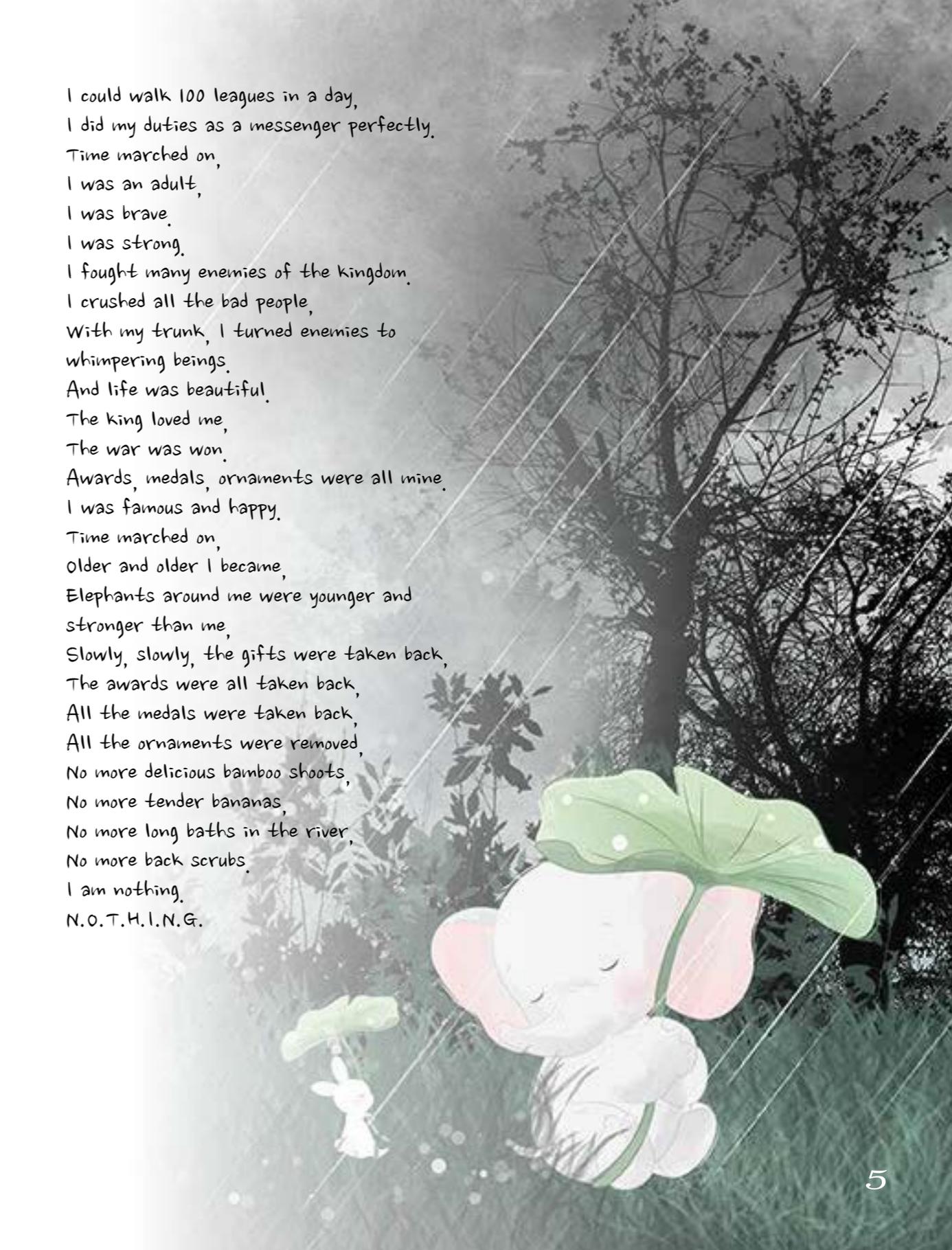
"You, a mere human, want to help me?" The elephant scoffed and flapped his trunk.

In time, I managed to get him to share his story and it was such a sad one.

The elephant told me his story in the style of the royal court:

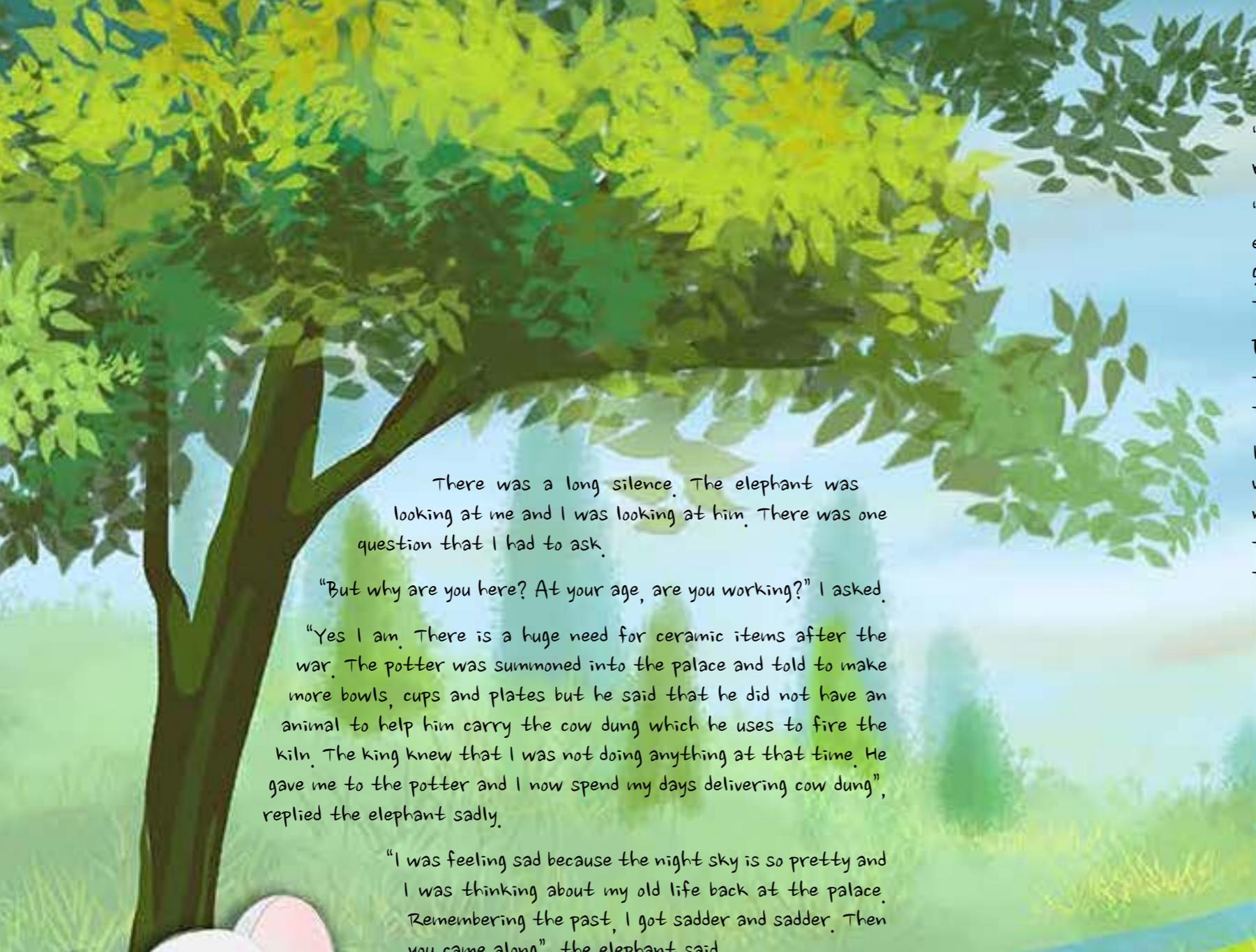
### **The Elephant's Tale**

Born in the king's palace,  
A popular, beloved elephant of the king I was,  
With gifts of nuts, bananas and all  
precious things,  
I was happy.  
I was young and beautiful.  
Time marched on,  
I was older,  
I was strong and powerful.



I could walk 100 leagues in a day,  
I did my duties as a messenger perfectly.  
Time marched on,  
I was an adult,  
I was brave.  
I was strong.  
I fought many enemies of the kingdom.  
I crushed all the bad people,  
With my trunk, I turned enemies to  
whimpering beings.  
And life was beautiful.  
The king loved me,  
The war was won.  
Awards, medals, ornaments were all mine.  
I was famous and happy.  
Time marched on,  
Older and older I became,  
Elephants around me were younger and  
stronger than me,  
Slowly, slowly, the gifts were taken back,  
The awards were all taken back,  
All the medals were taken back,  
All the ornaments were removed,  
No more delicious bamboo shoots,  
No more tender bananas,  
No more long baths in the river,  
No more back scrubs.  
I am nothing.  
N.O.T.H.I.N.G.





There was a long silence. The elephant was looking at me and I was looking at him. There was one question that I had to ask.

“But why are you here? At your age, are you working?” I asked.

“Yes I am. There is a huge need for ceramic items after the war. The potter was summoned into the palace and told to make more bowls, cups and plates but he said that he did not have an animal to help him carry the cow dung which he uses to fire the kiln. The king knew that I was not doing anything at that time. He gave me to the potter and I now spend my days delivering cow dung”, replied the elephant sadly.

“I was feeling sad because the night sky is so pretty and I was thinking about my old life back at the palace. Remembering the past, I got sadder and sadder. Then you came along”, the elephant said.

“Don't be sad”, I said. “I will speak to the king and get him to restore your honour.”

“Oh, ok. You can try. I was just thinking about all the work experience that I have - was it all for nothing?” The elephant gave a loud sigh and then slowly got up and ambled to a corner to sleep by the tree.

By the time the sun had risen in the sky, I was on my way to the palace to speak to the king. I had to also update him about the work that I had been doing in the neighbouring country.

In the official chambers of the king's palace, I explained the work that I had done over the past few months and then narrated last night's encounter, describing how I was watching the meteor shower in the countryside when I heard a cry and then met the old elephant.



The  
king listened  
and grew quiet as the tale  
went on. The king himself had also grown old.  
His beard and hair were sprinkled with grey and white. He  
started to stroke his beard.

"Your Majesty, this elephant has given his life to the country and you gave him  
awards and ornaments when he was young. He helped you to win the war. Should good  
deeds be forgotten when one grows old?" I asked the king. "Can one pretend the good  
deeds never happened? He is old and all he wants is recognition for his deeds and to be

able  
to live the  
rest of his days in peace."

"Yes, I remember the elephant", the king said.  
"I loved the elephant. Mark, you have given me a lot to think  
about. Don't worry. Something will be done about this." With that, the  
king waved his hands and I got up and left the chambers.

Not long afterwards, the elephant was brought back to the palace to live out  
the rest of his days. All the honour and awards were also restored to this  
senior elephant.





### Moral of the story

We should be grateful and not forget the kindness and goodness that friends and others have shown to us.

### List of words and phrases

1. **hectic** - very busy
2. **desperate** - feeling or showing a hopeless sense that a situation is so bad as to be impossible to deal with
3. **slumbering** - very deep in sleep
4. **compassion** - a strong feeling of sympathy and sadness for the suffering or misfortune of others and a desire to help them
5. **breaking the ice** - saying or doing something which makes people who have not met before feel more comfortable and relaxed with each other



### Good Friends

Kutta was hot, hungry and thirsty. He was sniffing the ground, searching for scraps of food. His stomach rumbled angrily. His four legs ached. Finally, at the nearest shed, he collapsed to the ground, panting.

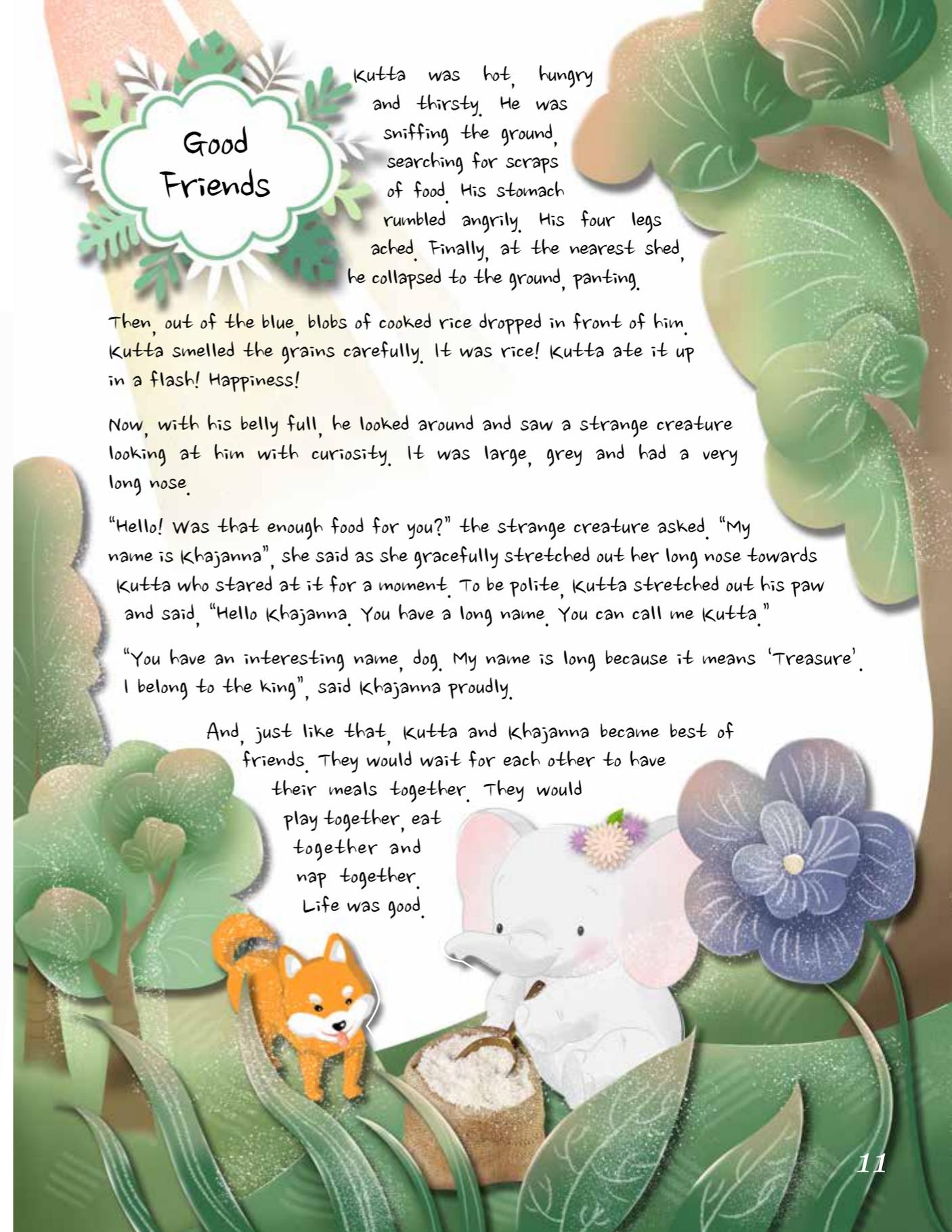
Then, out of the blue, blobs of cooked rice dropped in front of him. Kutta smelled the grains carefully. It was rice! Kutta ate it up in a flash! Happiness!

Now, with his belly full, he looked around and saw a strange creature looking at him with curiosity. It was large, grey and had a very long nose.

"Hello! Was that enough food for you?" the strange creature asked. "My name is Khajanna", she said as she gracefully stretched out her long nose towards Kutta who stared at it for a moment. To be polite, Kutta stretched out his paw and said, "Hello Khajanna. You have a long name. You can call me Kutta."

"You have an interesting name, dog. My name is long because it means 'Treasure'. I belong to the king", said Khajanna proudly.

And, just like that, Kutta and Khajanna became best of friends. They would wait for each other to have their meals together. They would play together, eat together and nap together. Life was good.





One day, Kutta did not appear. It was as if he had disappeared into thin air. Khajanna was worried and lost all appetite for food. She did not want to go out and the king was told that his beloved elephant was not eating. The keepers did not know what was wrong because the royal vets had given her a check-up and Khajanna was not sick. The king went down to talk to Khajanna, but she did not want to come out to meet the king. This worried the king even more.

The very concerned king summoned a wise man in the kingdom to come to the palace. The king shared the problem with the wise man and asked the wise man to figure out what was troubling his beloved Khajanna.

After a while, the wise man returned and reported to the king that Khajanna was missing her best friend and was worried about her friend's safety.



An immediate proclamation was sent to all corners of the land that a huge reward would be given to anyone who could bring Khajanna's best friend back.

After a few days of restless waiting, news finally came to the king. One of the keepers had brought Kutta home to be a family pet. Khajanna was then reunited with Kutta. The king decided to designate Kutta the 'Royal Escort to Khajanna' so that he would have a place to stay next to Khajanna.

From that day onwards, Kutta and Khajanna lived happily ever after.





### Moral of the story

A true and good friend can come from any race, language or religion. A true friend is kind and caring. He shares with us and makes us a better person by giving us wise counsel.

### List of words and phrases

1. collapsed - suddenly fell down or gave way
2. out of the blue - suddenly and unexpectedly
3. in a flash - very quickly
4. disappeared into thin air - vanished in a mysterious way
5. appetite - a desire to eat
6. summoned - required to come
7. proclamation - an official public announcement
8. reunited - brought together again

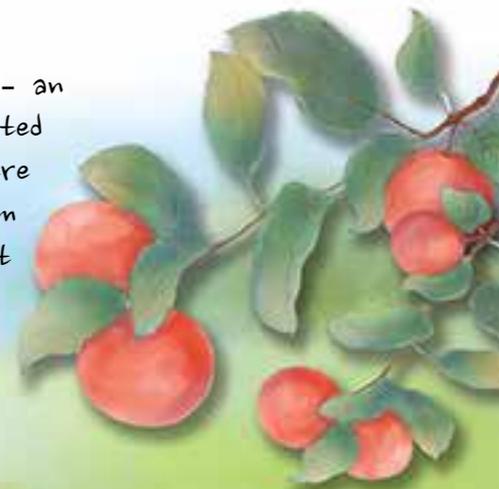


This is the poop that saved the seed and three friends.

Let me tell you a very special story of how something good can come out of something so smelly!

Once upon a time, long, long ago, three friends - an elephant, a monkey and a partridge - were seated around a tall, wide apple tree whose branches were heavy with bright, red apples. All three of them were breathing heavily. They were so tired that they hardly had enough energy to stand up!

Earlier in the day, the three friends had spent the morning arguing and fighting about who would be the first one to take apples from the tree. They had a crazy, mad dash to see who could reach the apples first, but nobody could because they were all determined not to let their friends get hold of the fruits before they did.



It ended with the elephant sitting on the monkey. Meanwhile, the monkey was fiercely plucking out the partridge's feathers as the partridge squawked in pain!

The partridge cried out, "Stop! This is crazy. Stop it, Monkey! I have a plan. I have a plan! Elephant, help me!"

The elephant slowly got off the monkey. The monkey, who was not happy about being flattened like a pancake, slowly freed his fingers from the partridge's feathers. The three friends then very carefully stayed away from one another as they sat in the shade around the apple tree, feeling angry and exhausted.

"So, what is your plan, Partridge?" asked the elephant, who then saw that the monkey was not paying attention.

"Hey, Monkey! Stop staring at the apples on the apple tree", trumpeted the elephant.

The monkey looked down, wiped away the saliva dripping from his mouth and saw his friends, the elephant and the partridge, looking at him crossly.

"Sorry. I am hungry. We have not eaten for a few days now and there are apples, ripe and ready for picking."

"Yes, we know. We are hungry too! Concentrate, Monkey!" said the partridge.

"We need to find out who is the oldest amongst the three of us. We will then follow the suggestions given by the oldest", the partridge explained. "Then we can stop fighting and arguing. All this fighting and arguing cannot continue. At this rate, I will end up being a bald partridge!"

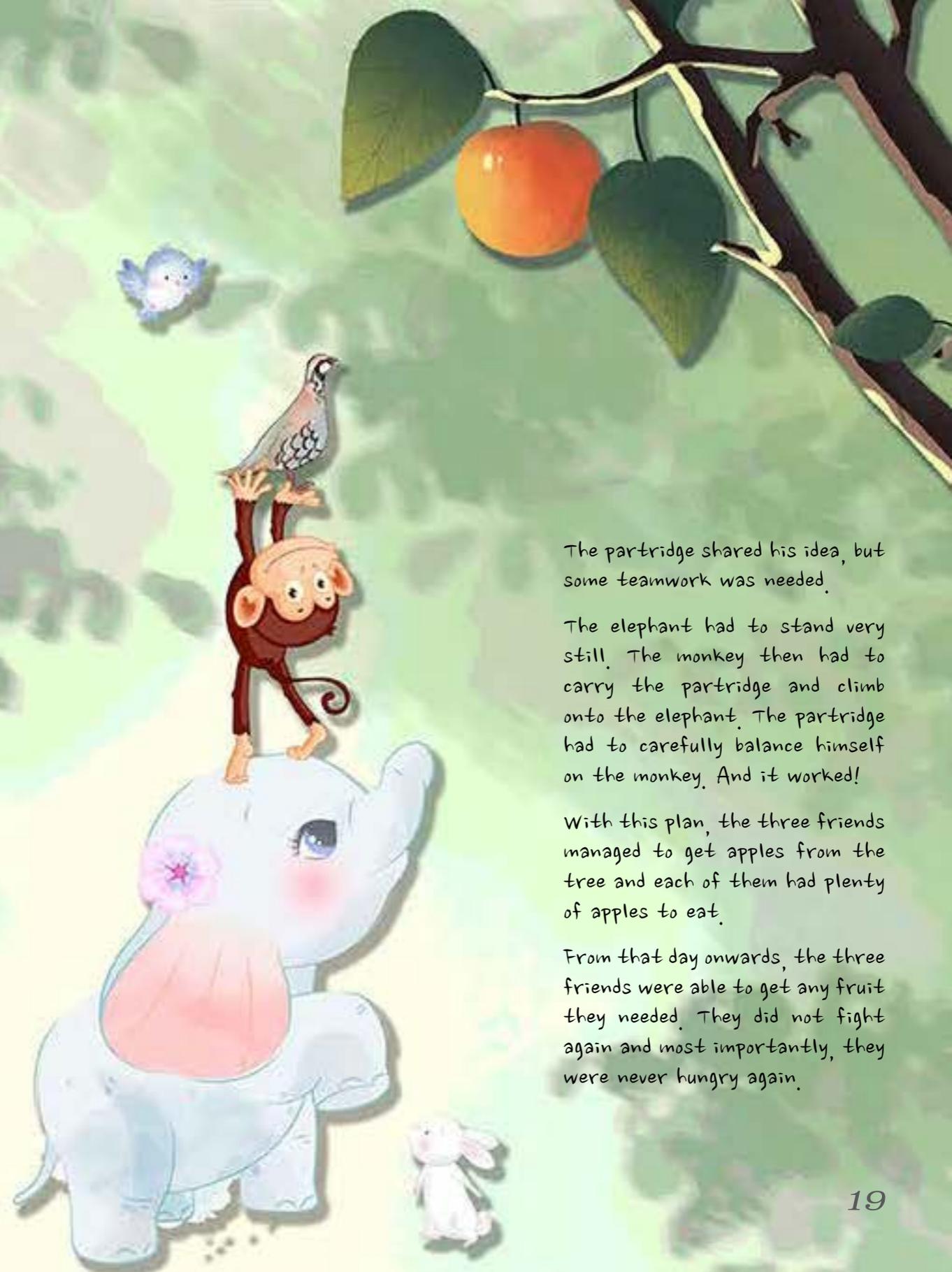
The monkey hid a secret smile behind his hand.

"Oh, that is a good idea. I can tell you who is oldest. I am! I am the biggest amongst all of us and I am definitely also the oldest", said the elephant proudly as he dusted off his chest and then trumpeted with pleasure. "When I was a baby, this tree was so small. I could walk over it and the branches would tickle my belly."

"Wait a minute. Not so fast!" the monkey said anxiously. "I think I am the oldest because when I was little, I had only to stretch my neck as I sat on the ground and I could eat the most tender fruits from the top of this very tree." The monkey sat down feeling very pleased with himself.

"I have known this tree for the longest", said the partridge. "My friends, there is a similar tree not far from here. I ate a whole apple that fell from that tree. I ate the seeds, the skin and the flesh. Then, I pooped right here where this apple tree is. The seeds and my poop made it possible for this apple tree to grow."

The three friends thought for a while and agreed that the smallest member of their group, the partridge, must also be the oldest. The elephant and the monkey agreed to listen to any suggestions that the partridge had so that they could get some apples to eat.



The partridge shared his idea, but some teamwork was needed.

The elephant had to stand very still. The monkey then had to carry the partridge and climb onto the elephant. The partridge had to carefully balance himself on the monkey. And it worked!

With this plan, the three friends managed to get apples from the tree and each of them had plenty of apples to eat.

From that day onwards, the three friends were able to get any fruit they needed. They did not fight again and most importantly, they were never hungry again.



### Moral of the story

No man is an island. Teamwork and harmonious friendships can allow everyone to fly higher and achieve more in life.

### List of words and phrases

1. concentrate - to direct your attention and focus towards a particular activity, subject or problem
2. fiercely - acting in a frightening and violent way
3. flattened - causing something to be squashed flat
4. tender - gentle, loving and kind
5. teamwork - the ability of people to work together



## The Elephant that can Fly

In a grand palace in Rajagala, a little elephant was born. He was one of the many elephants that belonged to King Magadha. This little elephant was special. He was all white, like virgin snow. Years passed and the little elephant grew up. His beauty and cleverness grew and the King loved him very much and made him a State Elephant.

One day, King Magadha decided to have a grand procession through the city of Rajagala. He gave orders for his State Elephant to be dressed in the finest decorations that money could buy. King Magadha had majestic gold clothes tailor-made so that he would look fantastic riding on his State Elephant.

Finally, the day arrived. It was a clear, bright and sunny day and the people of Rajagala gathered in the streets. Guards, footmen, court ladies threw fresh flowers on the road as the dignified State Elephant carried the king past the adoring crowds.

Everywhere they went, the crowds yelled with delight at the gentle, stately elephant, but there was no mention of how grand and handsome the king looked.





He called out to his mahout, "Mahout, I am tired. Take us to the cliffs, not far from here." Then, he turned to his guards, footmen and court ladies and said, "All of you can go back to the Palace, except the team with the Imperial Tent. They are to follow me."

The mahout took them to a cliff which was so high up in the mountains that white clouds drifted by and the town of Rajagala looked like miniature toys. The imperial tent was swiftly set up and the mahout brought the State Elephant to the side to rest. The king got off his elephant and retired into the tent with two servants standing next to him, waving large fans slowly.

The king called out impatiently to the mahout, "Is my State Elephant well-trained?"

"Yes, Your Majesty", replied the mahout.

Looking down his nose, the king cried, "Well, I am not convinced. Ask him to stand on three legs!"

The mahout gave the instruction and the elephant slowly balanced himself on three legs.

"Now make him stand on his two front legs", continued the king as he waved his hand indifferently.

Very, very slowly and carefully, the state elephant raised his hind legs and stood on his two front legs. The king saw this and was shocked that the elephant did not lose his balance and topple over the precipice.

"Now, get him on one leg and be quick about it", yelled the king.

Incredibly, the elephant stood on one leg!

Seeing that his plan had failed, the king cried out angrily, "Now if you can, please make him stand in the air!"

With that order, the mahout whispered into the elephant's ear, "The king wants you to fall over and get killed. He is not worthy of you. If you have the power to journey through the air, I will go with you and let us fly to the Kingdom of Benares."

The elephant nodded his head, as the mahout climbed onto his back.

They stepped onto the precipice.

Floating mid-air, the mahout turned to face King Magadha. The king's face was white and his jaw dropped wide open at seeing the floating elephant.

"Your Majesty," said the mahout, "your elephant is very well-trained. He is obedient and intelligent. He is too good for you. None but a wise and good king is worthy of such an elephant."

The elephant flapped his ears slowly, all the way to Benares.



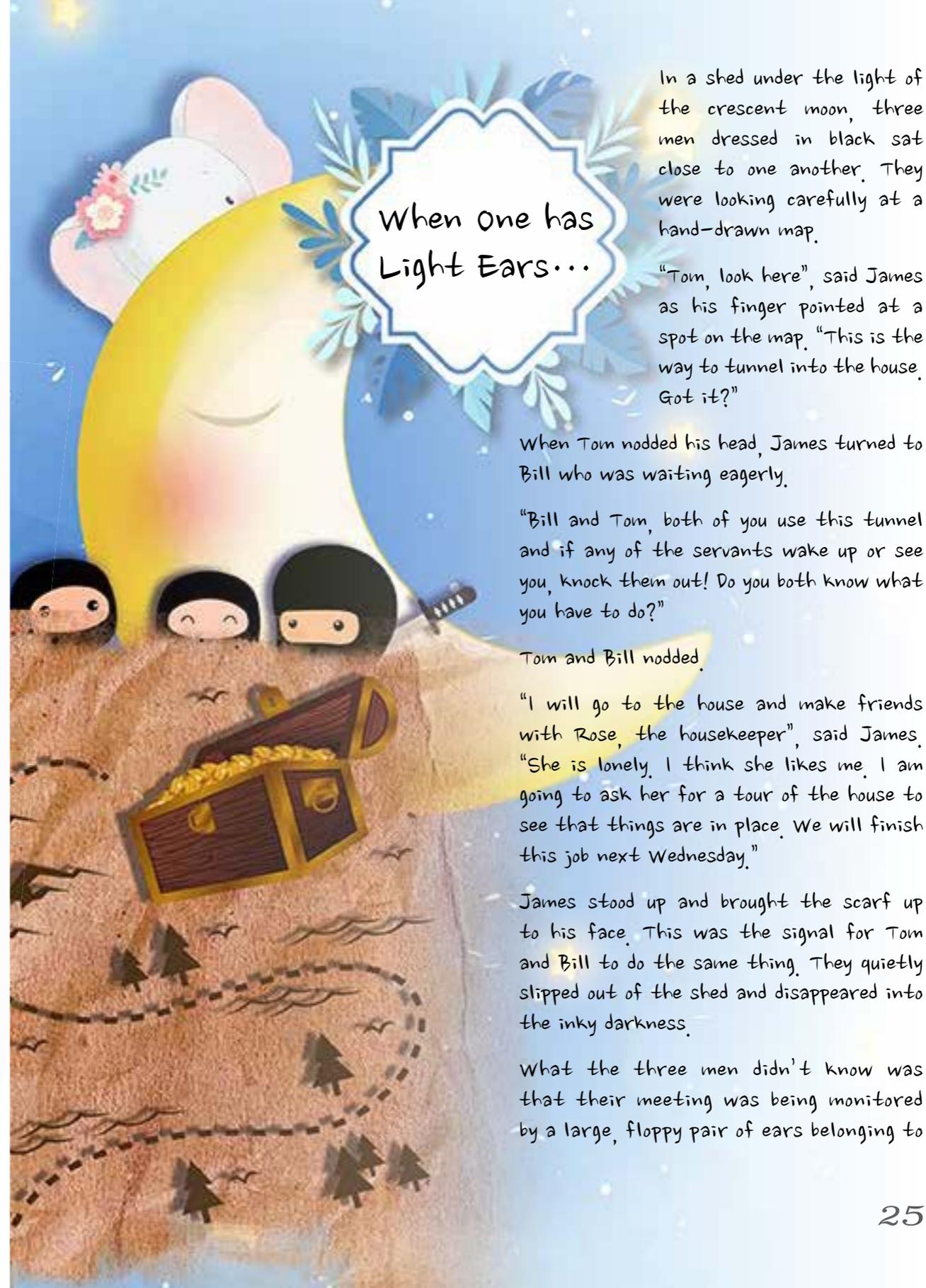


### Moral of the story

A true and good friend is loyal and respectful. He rejoices with you when good things happen to you, and will never hold harmful, jealous and malicious thoughts towards you. We should learn to walk away from people and situations that threaten our peace of mind, self-respect and worth, values and morals.

### List of words and phrases

1. majestic - something which is beautiful and powerful, causing great admiration and respect
2. dignified - controlled, serious and calm, deserving of respect
3. adoring - showing a very strong love
4. precipice - a very steep side of a cliff or mountain



### When one has Light Ears...

In a shed under the light of the crescent moon, three men dressed in black sat close to one another. They were looking carefully at a hand-drawn map.

"Tom, look here", said James as his finger pointed at a spot on the map. "This is the way to tunnel into the house. Got it?"

When Tom nodded his head, James turned to Bill who was waiting eagerly.

"Bill and Tom, both of you use this tunnel and if any of the servants wake up or see you, knock them out! Do you both know what you have to do?"

Tom and Bill nodded.

"I will go to the house and make friends with Rose, the housekeeper", said James. "She is lonely. I think she likes me. I am going to ask her for a tour of the house to see that things are in place. We will finish this job next Wednesday."

James stood up and brought the scarf up to his face. This was the signal for Tom and Bill to do the same thing. They quietly slipped out of the shed and disappeared into the inky darkness.

What the three men didn't know was that their meeting was being monitored by a large, floppy pair of ears belonging to

an elephant named Damsel. She was King Charlie's elephant. She was there in the shed too, out in the woods, because she was recuperating from her illness. It was a special place for Damsel to recover as it was close to the woodlands.

Damsel was well-known in the kingdom for being a gentle, virtuous and very well-behaved elephant. She learned all the commands very quickly. She was clever and could infer any instructions given. She overheard what the men had talked about and decided that she, too, needed to be cruel and violent because James was one of her trainers and she had heard him telling the other men to act in that way. She liked James as he was very nice to her and gave her delicious treats. She wanted to make him happy by showing him what she could do.

At daybreak, people were running around the palace and medics were called in to attend to the people who had been injured. Three elephant trainers covered in blood were brought into the palace to meet the king. With trembling, fearful faces, they told a very concerned king what had happened that morning in the shed out in the woods.

"Your Majesty, when John went to Damsel's pen this morning, Damsel flew into a rage. She picked John up and threw him against a



wall. When one of us ran in to attend to John, she ran out and hurt 15 more people. Some of them have broken bones!"

The king listened to what they had to say before sending them off to rest. Still wearing his pyjamas, the king paced up and down in his chambers. This did not sound like Damsel, he thought. Normally, she would never hurt a fly. Maybe she would be fine tomorrow. The king then left the matter at that, but Damsel did not get better.

She continued her shocking behaviour for another day, until there was no one left to care for her and the other elephants in the shed! Everyone was now frightened of Damsel.

At his wits' end, the king summoned a sage to the palace.

The sage arrived at the palace and was told about the problem. He calmly nodded his head and walked out of the palace. He went to the elephants' pen and observed Damsel. She was quietly eating her bamboo shoots and green, leafy vegetables. It was like nothing bad had happened at all.

The sage was a very special man. He was an animal whisperer. He had the unique ability to communicate to any animal. Thus, he was well-loved not only by the people of the land but by the animals too.

Damsel and the sage conversed with each other using their minds. Finally, the sage nodded his head, patted Damsel on her trunk and went back to report his findings to the king.





In the king's private chamber, the sage bowed and informed the king, "Your Majesty, Damsel behaved like this because a few nights ago, she heard a group of men talking of robbing a house and one of them was her trainer, James. Damsel thought James wanted her to behave likewise."

The king answered, "oh dear! What should we do then?"

The sage paused for a while and then said, "Your Majesty, you need to locate and capture James. However, before the police take him away, get him and a few other men to gather at Damsel's pen and talk about good behaviours for Damsel to hear. Then the police can lock James and his accomplices in jail."

The king carried out the sage's advice. Guess what? It worked.

Damsel reverted to her usual gentle self. Peace and laughter were back at the royal elephants' pen. James and his friends were imprisoned.

Later on, the sage went to visit Damsel and told her that if she overheard any conversations and wanted to do anything, she should think carefully about whether it was really the right thing to do, or to speak to him about it first.



### Moral of the story

A true and good friend conducts himself in an honest way with integrity. We should think and carefully consider conversations we overheard from friends before making a conclusion, judgment or decision.

### List of words and phrases

1. **signal** - an action, motion or movement that gives information, a message, a warning or an order
2. **inky** - something which is very dark
3. **infer** - to guess that something is true because of the information you have
4. **at wits' end** - so worried, confused or annoyed that you do not know what to do next
5. **unique** - something that is extremely unusual or special
6. **accomplices** - those people who help someone else to do something wrong



All the stories in this book focus on good friendship.  
The below are the **essential qualities** of a good friend:



Do the activities on the following pages to better understand how you can be a good friend.



## I can be a good friend

Cut out the sentences listed below and paste them in the right section of the chart in the top half of this page.



I yelled at her.	I shared my food.
I was bossy.	I shouted at him when he told me the truth .
I asked her if she needed help.	I told him the truth.
I talked when he was talking.	I thanked her for doing something nice for me.

# 7 Qualities of a Good Friend

Look for these words in the Word Search.  
Colour them in when you find them.

- honest
- accepting
- undemanding
- neutral
- loyal
- respectful
- trustworthy

t	r	u	s	t	w	o	r	t	h	y
b	f	t	p	s	o	e	i	y	o	l
a	c	a	p	t	i	n	g	d	n	o
a	c	c	e	p	t	i	n	g	e	y
a	n	d	m	a	n	g	o	h	s	a
r	e	n	e	u	t	r	a	l	t	l
r	e	s	p	e	c	t	f	u	l	l
u	n	d	e	m	a	n	d	i	n	g



s	u	i	p	u	a	w	e	p	u	n
l	i	n	j	i	c	e	d	s	e	r
i	t	i	a	r	i	n	e	u	e	r
a	s	h	o	s	u	a	w	p	u	a
e	g	u	i	l	i	c	e	a	c	e
o	a	d	u	i	t	i	d	a	p	u
l	o	y	i	e	o	s	i	d	f	b
h	y	t	r	o	w	s	t	r	u	s



# Qualities of a Good Friend Crossword

See if you can figure out what the missing words are in the sentences below and then fill them in on the crossword puzzle.

(Clue: The words can also be found in the Word Search.)

## Down

- When speaking with the king, Mark was \_\_\_\_\_.
- The elephant was \_\_\_\_\_ to the dog.

## Across

- The monkey, the elephant and the partridge were \_\_\_\_\_ towards each other in the end.
- The elephant had a \_\_\_\_\_ relationship with the mahout.
- Damsel the elephant needed to be \_\_\_\_\_ and not accept things at face value.

The crossword puzzle grid is partially filled with letters and numbers. The grid is 10 columns wide and 10 rows high. The letters are as follows:

- Row 1: Column 8 has 'h' (1).
- Row 2: Column 2 has 'r' (3), Column 4 has 's'.
- Row 3: Column 8 has 'n'.
- Row 4: Column 2 has 'p' (4), Column 9 has 'f' (2).
- Row 5: Column 10 has 'y'.
- Row 6: Column 10 has 'a'.
- Row 7: Column 4 has 't' (5), Column 5 has 'r'.

At the bottom of the grid, there are colored boxes with words: 'loyal' (orange), 'honest' (blue), 'trustworthy' (purple), 'respectful' (pink), and 'neutral' (yellow).

# Friendship Game

**Start**

1  
Players take turn to roll a game die, and move forward the number of spaces rolled.

2  
If the instructions on the space you land on tell you to do something, do it before the next person has their turn.

3  
If you land on a star, choose someone else who is playing the game and come up with a challenge for the person to do.

4  
If you land on an elephant, you get an extra turn so roll again.

Explain what a friend is



Miss a turn

Move ahead 3 spaces



Tell us the names of 3 of your friends

Move ahead 3 spaces

Tell us something that you like to do with your friends



Miss a turn

Tell us something that one of your friends enjoys doing



Miss a turn

Tell us a game that one of your friends likes to play

Tell us something that one of your friends likes to eat

Tell us something that you like to do



Move back 3 spaces

Miss a turn



Move back 2 spaces

Tell us something that one of your friends does not like to eat

Tell us the favourite colour of one of your friends



Miss a turn

Sing a song

**Finish**

# 28-Day Kindness Challenge

Colour in each box  
as you complete  
each act  
of kindness

Say  
"thank you"

Write a  
nice note to  
one of your  
friends

Speak  
nicely to  
your friends

Let a sibling  
or friend go  
first

Play with a  
different friend  
from usual at  
recess

Be a problem  
solver

Ask your  
Mum or Dad  
how his or  
her day was

Share toys  
with your  
siblings or  
friends

Do something  
nice for your  
teacher

Give  
someone a  
compliment

Speak to a  
new person in  
school

Offer to help  
your parents

Do something  
nice for your  
parents

Give an  
Auntie a  
compliment

Donate  
old toys to  
charity

Offer to  
help your  
teacher

Offer  
to help  
clean up

Give an Uncle  
a compliment

Give a friend  
a hug

Pick up  
rubbish from  
the ground  
and throw it  
into a bin

Say  
"please"

Call one  
of your  
Grandparents  
and have  
a chat

Speak  
nicely to  
one of your  
friends

Ask one of  
your friends  
how his or  
her day was

Make a  
new friend

Give someone  
a compliment

Do something  
nice for one of  
your friends

Volunteer  
to do  
something

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The gift of truth excels all other gifts — The Buddha

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By the merit of publishing this book,

May the little ones, buddhas to-be,

who encounter this book

awaken the seeds of happiness,

and all roots of goodness.

May they water them

throughout their lives

with love and compassion.





*The Elephant That Can Fly and Other  
Short Stories* is a collection of five stories  
about the qualities of a good friend.

Written in a simple and reader-friendly manner,  
these stories demonstrate  
to children how one can be a true friend.

This book also includes fun activities that  
guide children in developing these noble  
qualities in themselves.