

## The Elephant in the Room



Daphne was a forgetful girl.

She didn't mind doing her chores, but most of the time she had her nose stuck in a book. She'd get so wrapped up in a good story that she would simply neglect everything else.

That's why Daphne wasn't surprised when her brother Phil waded over her piles of dirty clothes and tapped her on the arm.



"We need to talk about the elephant in the room," he said.

"Why, am I missing something?" Daphne looked up from her dolphin book and gazed at the piles of laundry around her. "Oh! You mean the laundry!" She hopped up and began gathering piles of pants and shirts.



“Wait! That’s not what I meant,” Phil started to say. But Daphne was already busy stuffing her dirty clothes into the washer and cranking the controls.

“It’s okay,” she said. “You’re right. It’s my turn to do the laundry.”

“But there’s an elephant in the room,” Phil said.

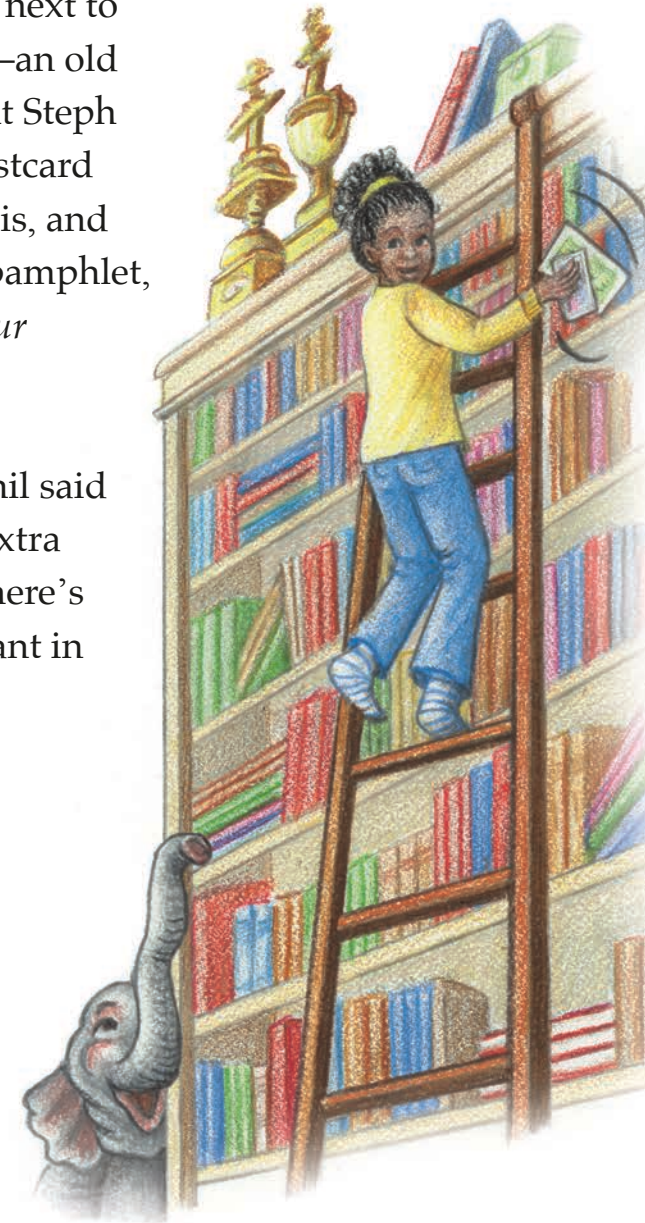
Daphne slapped her hand to her forehead. “Oh! I was supposed to dust and alphabetize all the books today! I forgot that, too!”

“That’s not what I meant,” said Phil.



“Wow, there’s a lot of dust up here.” Daphne sneezed from the top of the ladder. “Look what I found next to the trophies—an old photo of Aunt Steph and me, a postcard from Memphis, and my missing pamphlet, *Aphids Are Our Friends*.”

“Daphne,” Phil said with a little extra emphasis, “there’s *still* an elephant in the room.”



Daphne moved her ladder. “Oh, look! Here’s your old book *How to Fix Anything with a Crescent Wrench*. Can you help me alphabetize these? Which comes first: *101 Crafts to Make with Phony Feathers* or *The Case of the Noisy Nephew*?”

Phil shrugged and slumped in his beanbag chair while Daphne happily dusted and alphabetized her books. He waited until she was done and he had her full attention before mentioning the subject to her again.



“Daphne, I don’t mean to make a scene, but we really, really, *really* need to talk about the elephant in the room.”

“*Now* what did I forget?” asked Daphne. “Oh, I know! It’s my turn to make dinner. I suppose the rest of the books will have to wait.”

When Daphne got to the kitchen, she found the biggest mess she had ever seen. The table was littered with bits of peanut butter bars and oatmeal dribbled down the table leg. A puddle of milk spread across the floor.





“What in the world happened in here? It looks like a group of monkeys broke in and had a party!”

“Well, not exactly,” said Phil. “We need to talk.”

Daphne interrupted him. “For once, this mess is not my fault.” She stared at the kitchen and sighed. “I’ll go get the cleaning supplies from the bathroom closet.”

“Wait a minute!” Phil called out. “We haven’t talked about the elephant!”

And that’s when he heard Daphne shout.

“Phil, come quick! There’s an elephant in the room!”



Phil threw his hands in the air. “That’s what I’ve been trying to tell you all afternoon!”

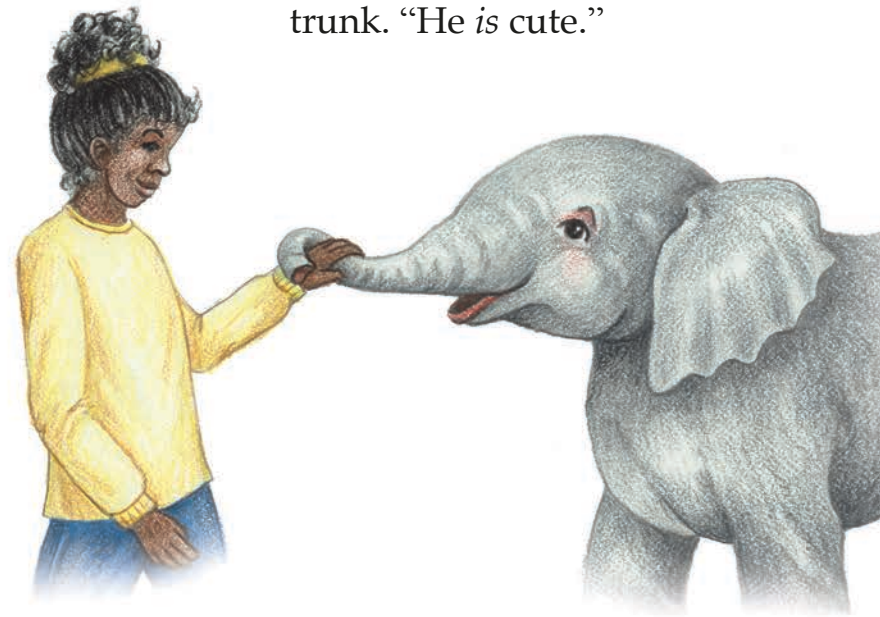
Daphne stood in the doorway and stared at the elephant. “Where did he come from? And what’s he doing in our bathroom?”

Before Phil could reply, the elephant grabbed a bath towel and started drying the shower walls.



“Hey, it looks like he’s a self-cleaning elephant!” Daphne was impressed.

Daphne patted the elephant’s trunk. “He *is* cute.”



The elephant followed his new friends into the kitchen. “There’s just one thing, Elephant,” said Daphne. “We can’t have these kinds of messes around here.”

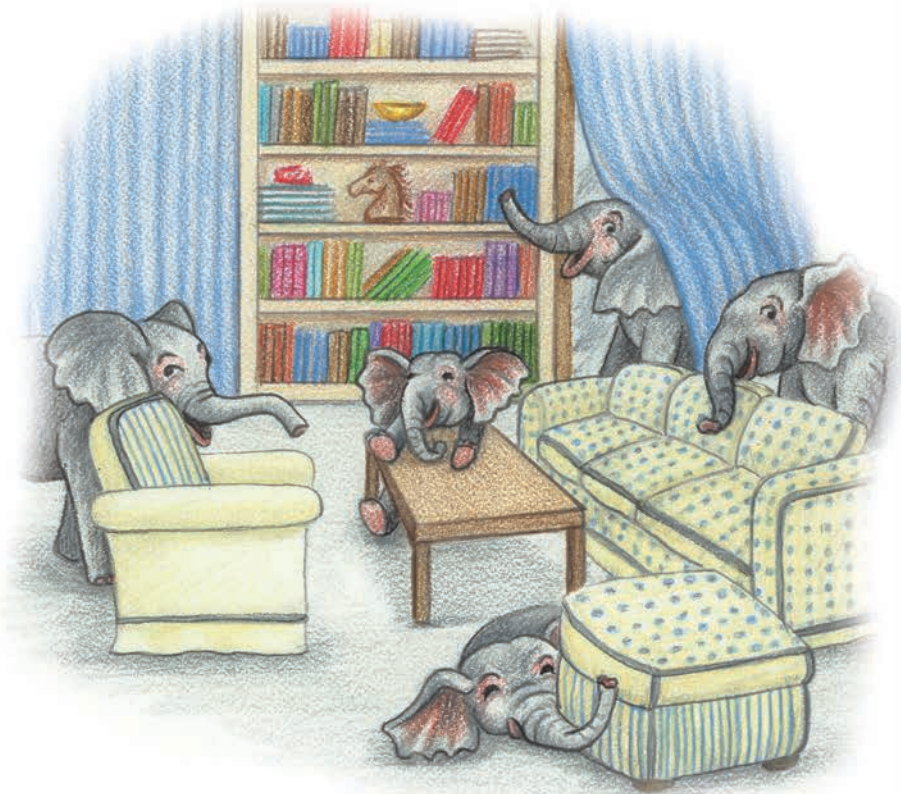
The elephant wiggled his ears happily.

“Maybe it’s not such a bad idea to have an elephant in the house. What do you think, Phil?”



“I don’t see anything wrong with keeping him. How much work could one little elephant be?” Phil said. “Find your book about elephants to see what he likes to eat.”

Daphne headed to the bookshelf.



“Uh, Phil, I think we need to talk.”

## The End





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