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The Make-Believe Elephant

Mary Graham Bonner

In the hallway of Lucy's apartment building stood a stone elephant, exactly the grey-brown colour of a real one. Lucy passed it every day, and every day she felt a little sorry for it — always in the same spot, never going anywhere, day after day.

One night, the Dream King sent the elephant to call on her.

"I know you've been worrying about me," the elephant said, without even waiting for Lucy to curtsy.

"I have," Lucy admitted.



"Well, don't," said the elephant. "I'm perfectly happy. The reason is simple: I have no feelings and no brains. I can't be lonely, because I don't know what loneliness is. I can't be bored, because I don't know what boredom is."

"But surely—" Lucy began.

"If I were a *real* elephant," the elephant continued, "I'd want sunshine and food and games and parades. But I'm not a real elephant. I'm a stone one. I'm rather like a table or a chair — except shaped like an animal."

He gave a funny stone-elephant smile. (The Dream King was helping with that part.)

"It is very nice to be a stone elephant, if one has always been a stone elephant," he said thoughtfully. "And I suppose it is very nice to be a little girl, if one has always been a little girl."

He waved his trunk, and was gone.

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