

Ernie

and mom's girls can't do that



BY SUSAN BRANDT

These people and their wiliness to believe in magic still exists in the world have contributed in someway in making these books and other books on our website possible.

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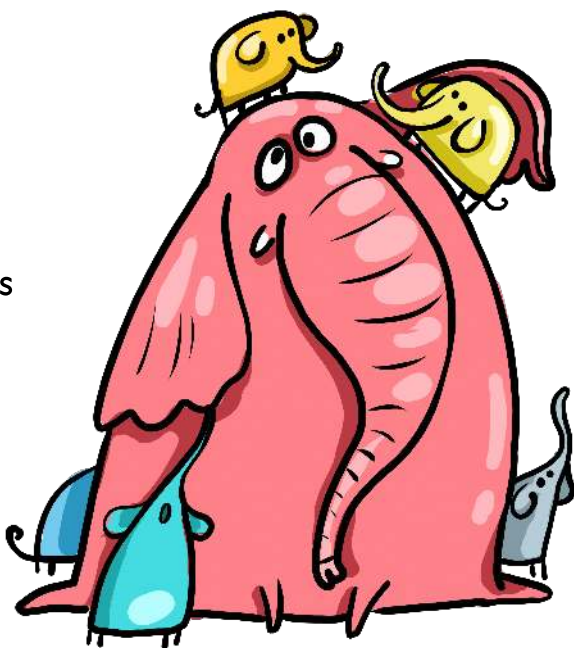
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ERNIE AND MOTHER DISCOVER CAN'T YOU CAN DISCOVER THESE WORDS

C C O A L E R N E S T I N E E V Q K
 F J H U O A N S H E D C Y A R D H B
 I A A N E I D O C E N T I P E D E T
 M F P T U L N V N J V T I H R F X E
 O R P I M L E S E S G E R H A J Z A
 T I Y E B Z O P E N E I R O K P G R
 H C C S R M M T H C T N R N U K P S
 E A S O E S I S T A T U S L I B Z Y
 R N Y U L Z L Z J O N S R E S E L D
 C R H N L X R A T T Y T G E O I H E
 M V G D A H R O A R T Q V S S R F W
 N O Y W O U N D S T R E T C H I U S

ADVENTURES
 AFRICAN
 AUNTIE
 GENTLEPEDE
 ELEPHANT
 ERNESTINE
 ERNIE
 GIRL
 HAPPY
 INSECTS
 LOTTO
 MOTHER
 NONSENSE
 RATTY
 ROAR
 SHED
 SOUND
 STRETCH
 TEARS
 TROUBLE
 UMBRELLA
 WOUNDS
 YARD

Find the following words in the puzzle.
Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘.



Ernie entered the family's yard with the umbrella tucked under ear, in hopes her mother would not see it. She had barely gotten into the yard when she heard her mother trumpet the calling sound.

That was not a good sound. Ernestine did not have a middle name for Mother to call when she was upset. She just made this deep, long trumpet sound. You instantly knew there was trouble.

Mother had spotted her. Ernie stopped. There was no

backing out of the yard, or as the humans called it a lotto. That would mean more trouble. The best thing to do was to just stopped right were you were.

"Auntie tells me, you were in her girl's shed."

"Yes, ma'am."

"Did you ask?"

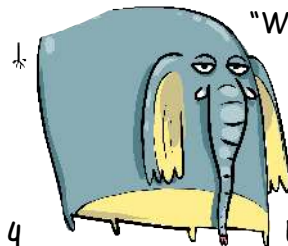
"No. I did put everything back," Ernie said in a very rapid voice, showing she had been good in following Auntie's rules.

"That's good. What did you place behind your feet? That blue thing!"

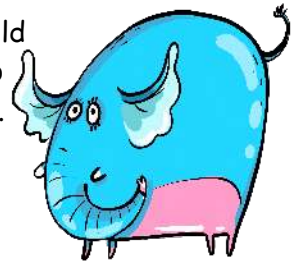
"It's an umbrella" Ernie said with a bit of pride but not wanting to show her mother.



"Why does an African elephant need an umbrella? Did you get Auntie's approval? Were you going to tell me about it? Does it have anything to do with your nonsense about having adventures?"



would ask her repeated questions without giving her a chance to answer. She would hold her breathe until she was blue as she tried to listen. Then things would get all out of order. Eventually Ernie and her mother would knock heads. Not pleasant in Ernie's world.



"Well, aren't you going to say something?" Mother bellowed. She was very upset Ernestine didn't accept her role in life and stop her adventure nonsense.

"Yes, ma'am" squeaked out Ernie. She and her mother had similar discussions like this before. Ernie always felt was if she would always end up on the short end of things. Often, she would feel as if she wasn't good enough. She didn't like that feeling.

"Deep breath," the little elephant thought, while trying to remember all the questions Mother had asked.

"Yes, it has to do with adventures. (Oh! she remembered what Stretch had said) Sometimes those adventures start right here at home.



"Mother, please do not call my adventures nonsense. They are about learning new things. Why things do what they do. My friend, Ratty, said he hears the teachers talk about these things at the schools. We are smarter Mother, so why can't we learn too?"

"I did not ask Auntie if I could have the umbrella," Ernie said, "she has numerous times told me I could have anything in her "girl shed" as long as I didn't leave a mess."

Mother Elephant thought to herself, "I wish my sister hadn't done that. I will have to talk to her about this nonsense." Mother also thought that what Ernestine was saying. It made some sense. **BUT STILL** there are certain things that were traditions. Ernestine was a girl, after all. Those things should be learned by boy elephants.

Mother was in deep thought. Ernie thought she could back out.

Get away. It has happened before. One step back. Stop. Pick up umbrella, whisk with trunk and stash behind her right floppy ear. Another step back. Then there was the trumpet sound. Ernie stopped in her tracks. Awkwardly, with one foot up and three feet down she stood there.

"Where are you going?" Mother sounded like a lion roaring.

"To the hill of rock, by the watering hole, to play," Ernie said.

"Leave the umbrella," Mother barked.

Ernie rolled her trunk. She had wanted to go to the high rocks so she could test the umbrella, to if she could float. Sometimes it was best to meet half way. She laid the umbrella down by the entry gate and headed to the hill of rocks at the top of the hill where the waterfall began.



see
Mother

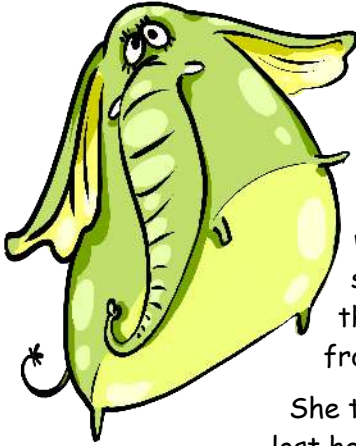
Along the way she ran across the centipede. They called him PT. No one ever said why. Everyone just gave him, and all those little legs, room to move about.

This particular day, she sat on a rock next to him and they talked. Ernie was so excited about her adventures. She talked on and on and on. PT was just sitting there listening. All of the sudden, he was jealous of Ernie. All his ugly energy kicked in.



As a centipede, he could catch birds and eat vermin inside out. Each one of his arms would bite into his victim.

He didn't like seeing Ernie so happy. "Animals shouldn't be this happy," he thought. He begin to think ugly thoughts. That is it!



He started crawling loser and loser, very slowly so Ernie would not notice. When she stood up, PT bit the inside of your foot.

She jumped into the air. **Ow!** How and where did this pain come from? She shook her whole body, trying to shake off the pain. Is this why everyone shies away from PT at least 8 feet?

She tried to shake of what she was feeling, lost her balance and tumbled down the stack of rocks.

As she sat there at the bottom of the rocks, she thought, "Mother was wise in not letting me bring the umbrellas to the rock pile."

Ernie needed to limp home now. Her knees had tiny rocks embedded into them. Blood was running down her legs to her ankles. Did PT bite her? Why? She was just sitting there telling him of all the wonderful things in her life. Whatever it was it hurt to no end and the scraps from the tumble down the rocks didn't help. She wanted to cry with every step she took.

She figured mother would have something ugly to say. What she really needed was just a little care and some hugs.

When Ernie crossed the gate into the lotto Mother was picking up loose branches and she saw her little girl limp in.

At first, the older elephant wanted to bellow out thoughts of, "I told you so." She stopped herself. She realized the once little girl, wasn't so little anymore. As bad as the knees were scraped, Ernestine was not crying. Mother was so proud of her. "I would be crying huge tears" the thought, holding back tears of pride.



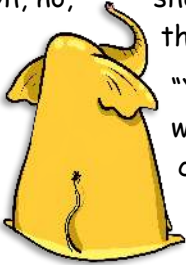
When Ernie got to her mother, she looked up and told her what happened. Mother was fierce. Centipides where such cruel animals.

This one had actually bit Ernie several times. Mother told Ernie the pain in her feet was PT's bite, just like she had suspected. Ernie was frustrated about that cause she was just being friendly why.

Mother was a good mom. She cleaned up Ernestine's wounds and bites and they sat next to each other. Mother was really quiet for a very long time.

"Ernestine, I have been thinking. About your accident," Mother said then was quiet for a very long time.

"Oh, no, she'll never let me out of the lotto now," Ernie thought.



"You did not cry. Elephants much larger than you would have cried to no end. You had courage to come home for care. You knew what I would probably say." Mother elephant stopped again.

Ernie was nervous. Her knees hurt too bad to knock. She just looked at the ground.

"Ernestine," Mother said quietly, her forehead wrinkled as she thought. "Can I ask you a favor?"

Ernie was confused. This was not the way Mother normally acted. The smaller elephant squeaked out a, "Yesssss."

Mother look at the little elephant in the setting sun of the day. She was gold colored in the reflection. So precious a metal so precious a child with such spirit.

"Would you give me the honor of calling you Ernie from now on?" Mother elephant drew in a really deep breathe. "Sometimes grown-ups don't always see their children growing up and we forget they aren't always babies anymore.

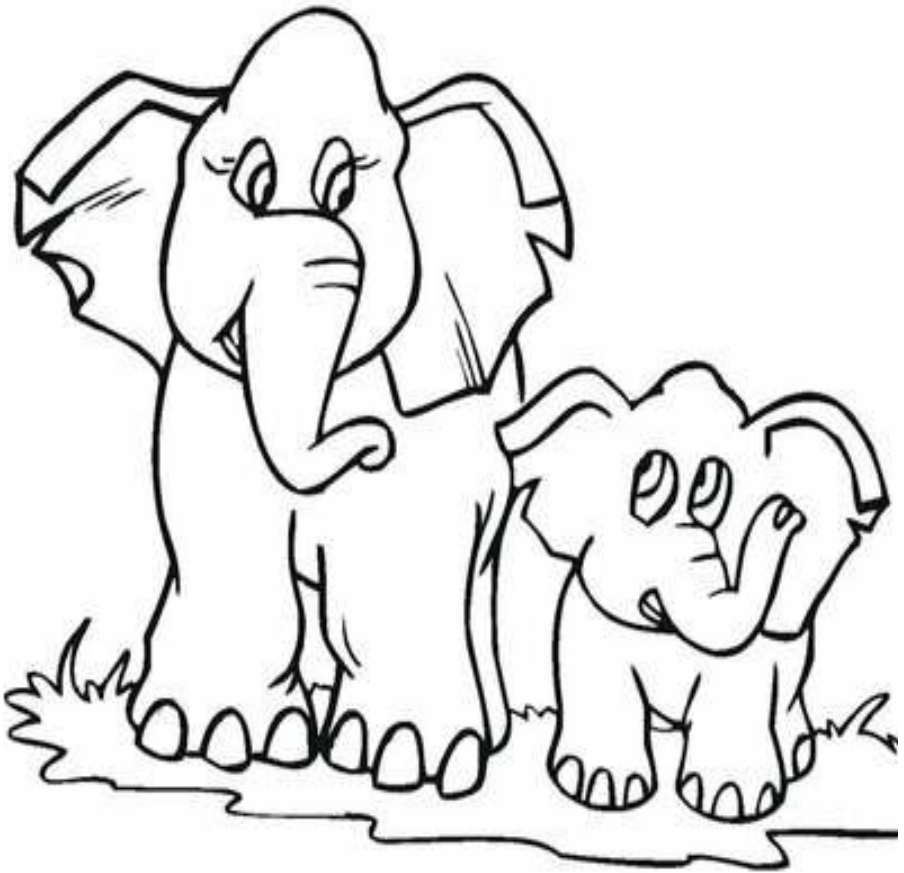


"You have grown into an wonderful elephant, Ernie. It's hard for me to say this," she drew a deep breath and blurted it out, "you will be the girl elephant who has adventures. "

Ernie could not think of a single thing to say. The two just looked at each other with admiration.

The smaller elephant thought, "Stretch, (her giraffe friend,) was right... sometimes the best adventures are right at your feet..."

With that Ernie crawled up in a ball to sleep the night away and start discovering the world tomorrow.



Elephant Fun

Count the number on the left. Match to the dice face in the center and then to the correct number in the right hand column



HELP ERNIE FIND HER
WAY TO THE ROCKS?

