

## THE CASE OF THE MISSING ELEPHANT

By Juanita Preston Sparks © 12-27-99

It was a hot lazy Sunday afternoon. The temperature hovered around 100, and the humidity was high too. Officer Lenny was on Desk duty at the sub station when an excited man came bursting into the station.

“My elephant, my elephant, my elephant is missing!”

“Your what?”

“My elephant. Officer. I was taking my elephant to the City Zoo. We were walking along the road there, side by side.”

“When did you last see your elephant? “

\ “Well, now officer this gets a little embarrassing, but you see, I had a call of Nature.. I told my elephant to wait there by the side of the road. . And then I came back to the exact spot where I left the elephant.”

“And he was gone?”

“He? He who?”

“Your elephant, he was gone?”

“Oh, he weren’t a he, he was a she. I called her Bubbles. ”

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There had never been a missing elephant on Officer Lenny’s watch before and he wanted to make sure that he had all of the details.

“Now let me get this straight. You and your elephant, Bubbles, were walking along on the highway- was it on the highway or the Freeway?”

“Oh, no, not the Freeway- it is dangerous to walk on the Freeway. Me and Bubbles we were just walking along that road down there on our way to the zoo.”

Officer Lenny had a bona-fide report and he had to act on it, although an elephant is a pretty big thing to just disappear from sight.

Officer Lenny called the county seat and asked for help. “I have a missing elephant. Could you send a couple of patrol cars up here- you see, I’m alone on the desk and the other officer is out on patrol, we are a little short-handed here, it being Sunday and all.

The Sheriff’s office could not send anyone. It was a Sunday, it was hot, and there was speculation that maybe the heat had caused Officer Lenny to be imagining things.

Now an elephant doesn’t just disappear. It is too large and too much of an attraction to just fade away. “Maybe,” said Officer Lenny, “If I would call and ask for a helicopter.” Once again, Lenny called the sheriff’s office and asked for a helicopter to look for the elephant.

The helicopter was on its way to find a missing hiker, so the dispatcher told Lenny that she would see what she could do.

Officer Lenny and the man sat in the substation office; each one drank a couple of bottles of soda from the machine and tried to keep cool. Once again Officer Lenny questioned the man. “What kind of an elephant is Bubbles?”

“Oh, Bubbles is an Indian elephant. Know how you can tell an Indian elephant from an African elephant?”

“No. Don’t believe I do.”

“Well, an Indian elephant has small ears.”

“I didn’t know that.”

“Know how you can remember which elephant has the big ears and which one has the small ears?”

“No.”

“Well, you have to know a little bit about geography, but if you know that Africa is bigger than India you can remember that African elephants have big ears and Indian elephants have small ears.”

Officer Lenny was worried about how he was going to write up this report, He decided to fill out a regulation MISSING PERSONS report, since there was no form for missing elephants.

“Now, I’m going over this one more time, see if I have missed anything.”

**MISSING:**

An elephant named Bubbles.

National origin: India.

Small ears

Color Gray

. “ Gray, what do you mean gray?” The man interrupted. “Bubbles ain’t gray,” she is pink. A lovely- pink- elephant.”