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Opening extract from

Five Minutes' Peace

Written & Illustrated by

Jill Murphy

Published by

Walker Books Ltd

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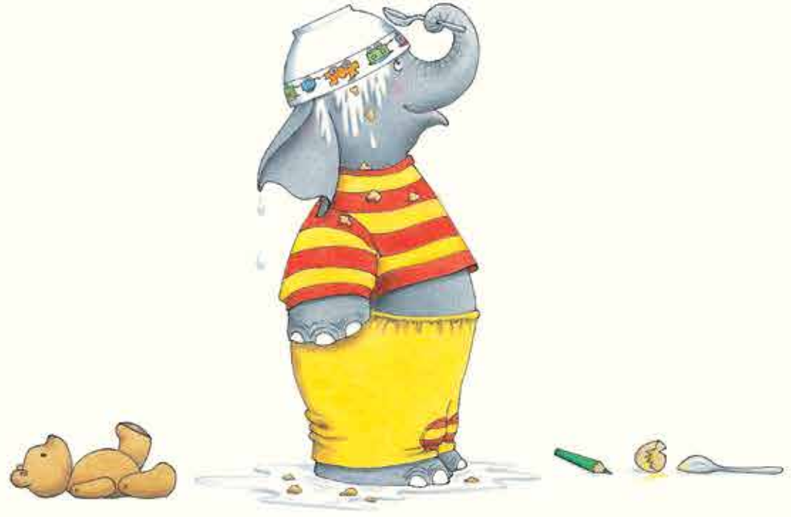
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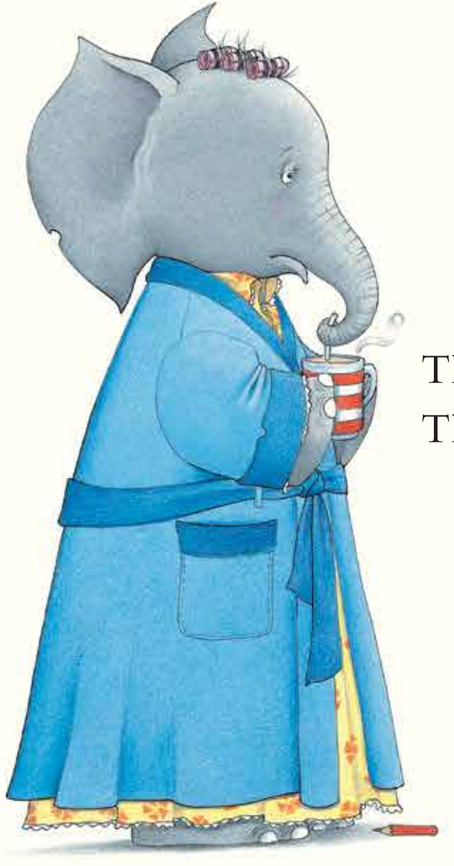
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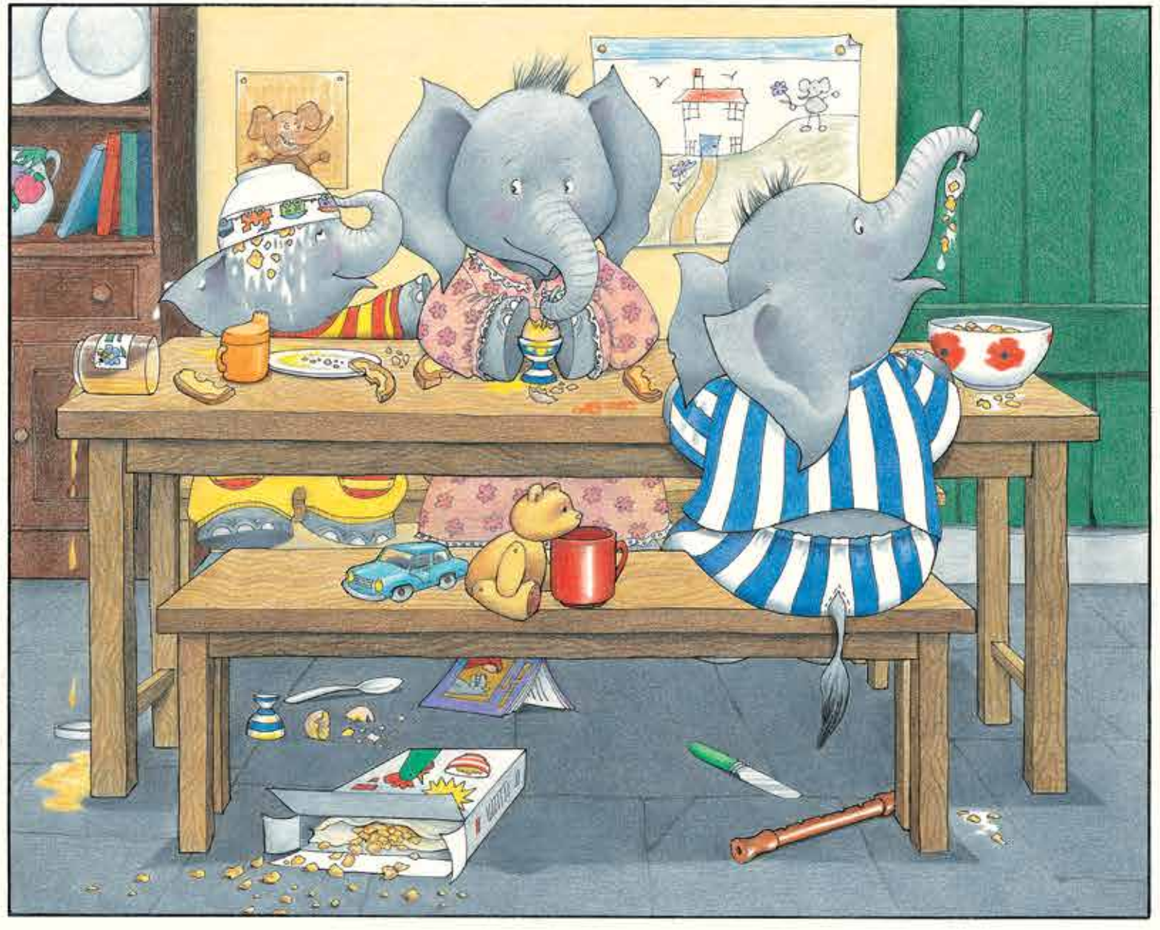
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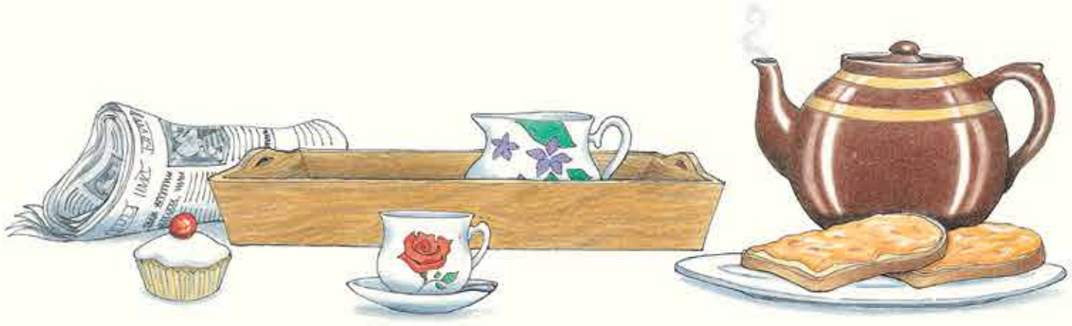
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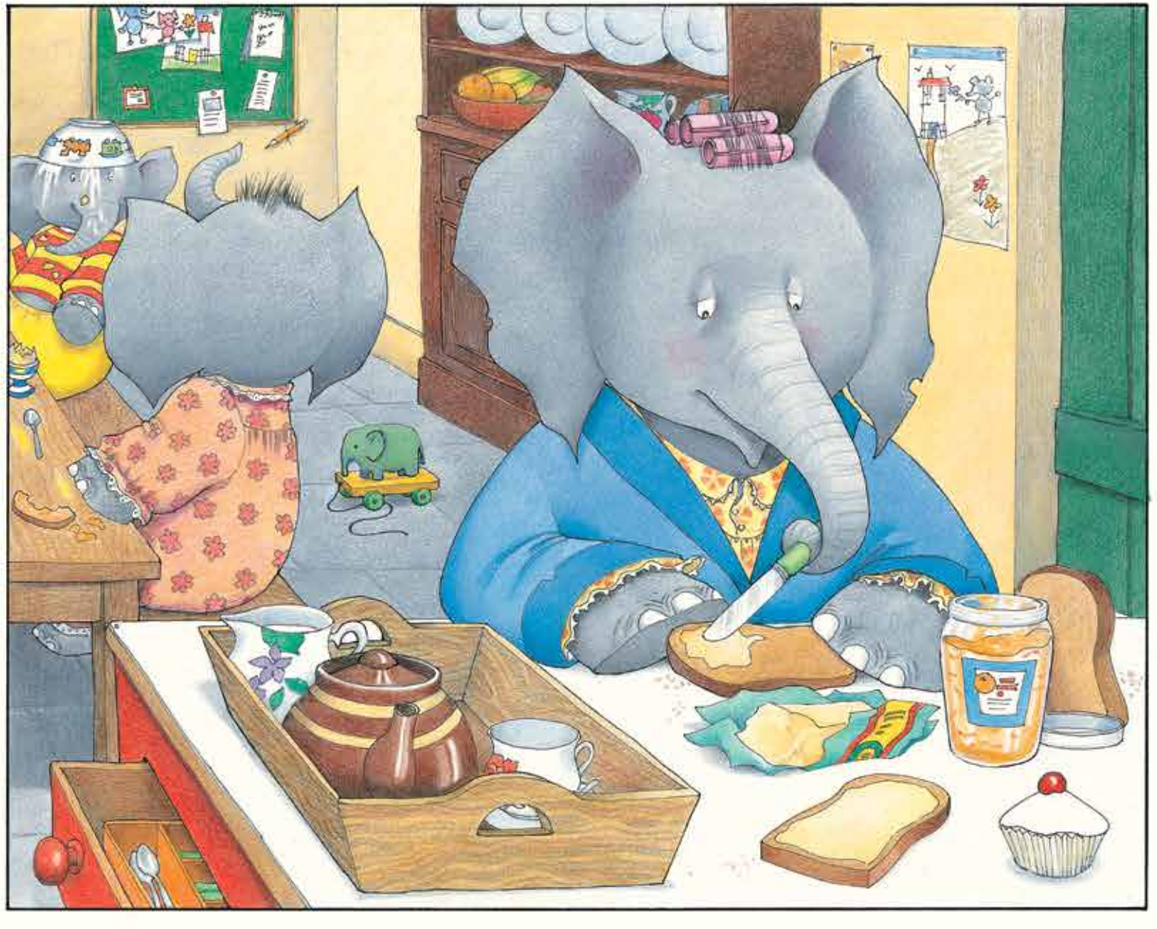
The children were having breakfast.
This was not a pleasant sight.







Mrs Large took a tray from the cupboard. She set it with a teapot, a milk jug, her favourite cup and saucer, a plate of marmalade toast and a leftover cake from yesterday. She stuffed the morning paper into her pocket and sneaked off towards the door.





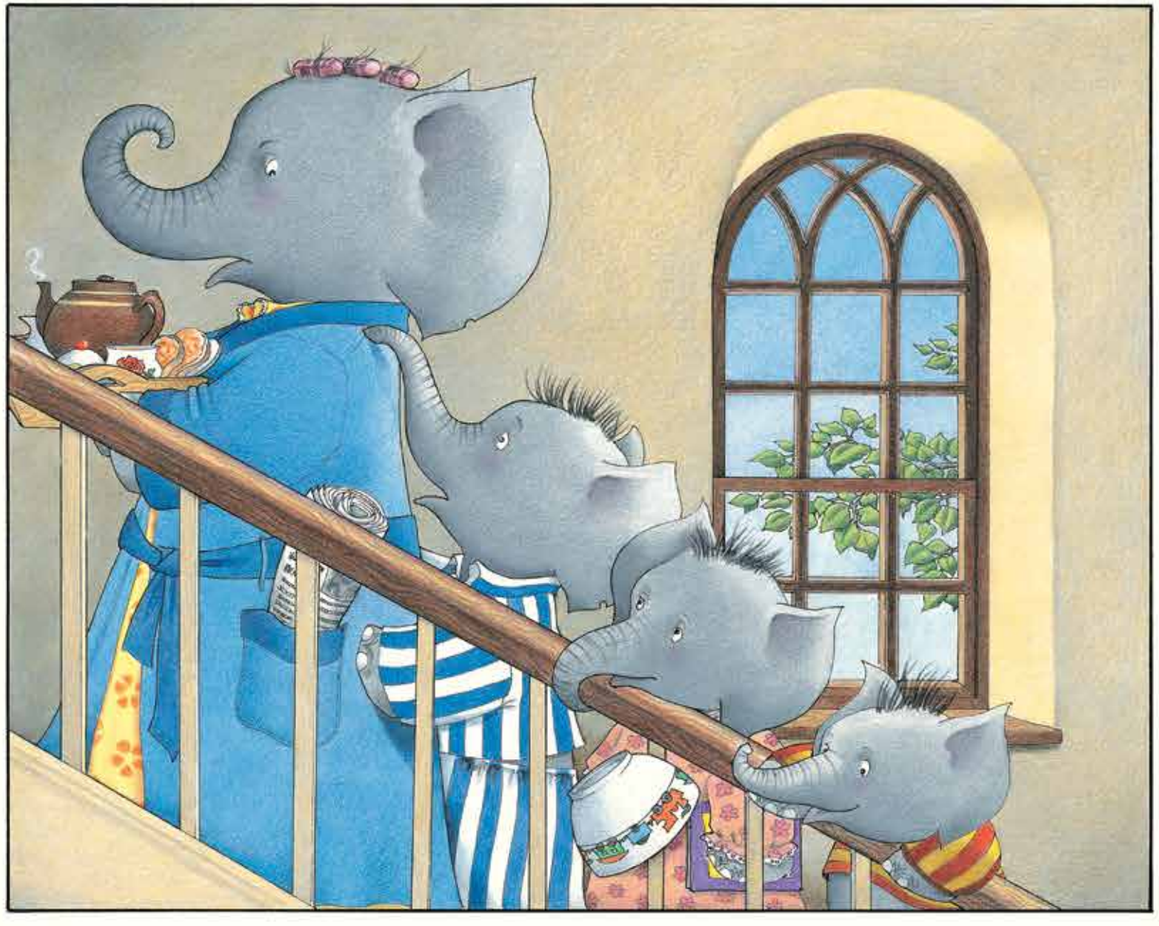
"Where are you going with that tray, Mum?" asked Laura.
"To the bathroom," said Mrs Large.
"Why?" asked the other two children.
"Because I want five minutes' peace from *you* lot," said Mrs Large.
"That's why."







"Can *we* come?" asked Lester as they trailed up the stairs behind her.
"No," said Mrs Large, "you can't."
"What shall *we* do then?" asked Laura.
"You can play," said Mrs Large. "Downstairs. By yourselves. And keep an eye on the baby."
"I'm *not* a baby," muttered the little one.





Mrs Large ran a deep, hot bath.
She emptied half a bottle of bath-foam into
the water, plonked on her bath-hat and got in.
She poured herself a cup of tea
and lay back with her eyes closed.
It was heaven.





"Can I play you my tune?" asked Lester.

Mrs Large opened one eye. "Must you?" she asked.

"I've been practising," said Lester. "You told me to.

Can I? Please, just for *one* minute."

"Go *on* then," sighed Mrs Large.

So Lester played. He played "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" three and a half times.

