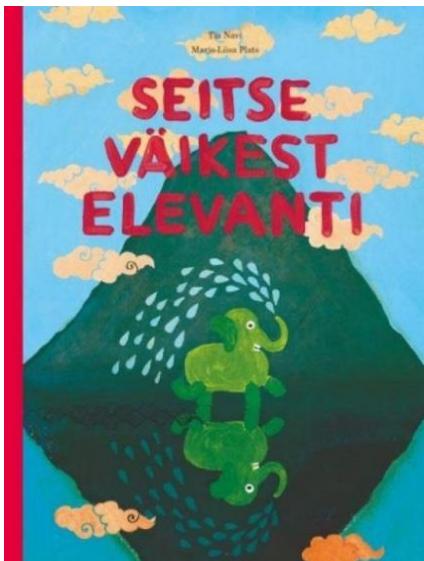


Seven Little Elephants



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Near a big, blue sea lives a herd of wonderful elephants. There is the always-energetic Hiphant, Sandyphant (who is the best at playing hide-and-seek), Seaphant (who is a good swimmer), Shyphant (who is quite timid), Firephant (who is rather talented), and the gleeful Merriphant. They always have fun times together. Even so, problems and arguments always seem to crop up with one of the elephants. No one can remember her real name, but the other elephants call her Terriphant. One day when Terriphant is grumpy after getting stung by a jellyfish, he insults

Merriphant so badly that all the other elephants are saddened, too. Even so, Terriphant himself is the glummest of them all. What can be done to make everything right again?

Reading example

Translated by Adam Cullen

Seven little ELEPHANTS lived on the shore of a big, blue sea.

What did they do there?

They played ball. They chased one another around.

They had water fights using their trunks.

They ate, and they slept.

Sometimes, they had to answer the call of nature. You know how it goes!

1. Pictured here is HIPHANT.

He is a very polite little elephant.

He always says "Hi!", "Goodbye!", "Please!", and "Thank you!", just like all polite little elephants do.

When Hiphant opens his eyes in the morning, he trumpets loudly and cheerfully: "GOOD MORNING! Oh, what a lovely day! Rise and shine!"

The other little elephants don't always like this.

Sometimes, they would prefer to lie around a little longer.

"Hey, Hiphant – quit hollering!" they grumble.

"It's nighttime!" Then, they roll over and snore soundly onward.

2. Pictured here is a little elephant who is almost entirely white from trunk to tail.

Her name is SANDYPHANT.

Her skin is so fair that sometimes when she lies down and doesn't move, the other little elephants think she's a sand dune.

When they take a closer look, it turns out that the dune has two mischievous little eyes!

Sandyphant is the world's best hide-and-seek player.

Extract from *Seven Little Elephants* by Tia Navi. English translation by Adam Cullen.

3. Here is SEAPHANT.

He's wild about the smell and taste of SEAwater.
Seaphant splashes into the sea every chance he gets.

Seaphant's favorite game is to spray water with his trunk. Seawater sure is salty, but that doesn't discourage him. You just have to make sure not to swallow it!
When Seaphant gets tired of romping through the shallows, he floats happily on the waves, his legs sticking straight up and his ears sloshing in the sea.

**4. But here, we have... well, she's... how should I put it...
This little elephant is the BLACK SHEEP of the family.
Strange, isn't it? An elephant and a sheep, all in one...**

Do you know what a "black sheep" is? The black sheep of a family gets into trouble over and over again, or tends to say mean things to others. It's a never-ending fight with her. Sometimes, it can all get pretty TERRIBLE. No one can remember the name the elephant's mom and dad gave her anymore. Now, everybody just calls her TERRIPHANT.

"Hah!" Terriphant trumpets. "I *want* to be terrible!
You're all dummies! It's better to be terrible than a dummy."
And with that, she stomps away, her trunk held high.

I feel a little bad for her. Do you?

5. Now, let me introduce – SHYPHANT!

Kind of a weird name, isn't it? She is a little elephant who is friendly and kind towards all, but she's a little afraid of new things. Whenever Shyphant comes across a plant or animal she's never seen before, then she always acts a little shy. Even so, she TIMIDLY steps up to it and takes a careful closer look.

Now and then, her shyness is a good thing, too. I can remember how, oh, maybe five or seven days ago, Shyphant discovered a nifty little bug crawling across a thorny cactus. Shyphant worked up all her courage, took a few tiny steps closer to the cactus, and chatted with the bug from a safe distance.

But then, Terriphant trotted up, and... Yep, you guessed it! She stuck out her trunk to inspect the bug, and... ow-ow-ow!

How many little elephants do you already know?
But how many elephants are there left?

6. This here is FIREPHANT!

She's the oldest and most skillful of all the little elephants.
Who lights the FIRE on campfire night? Firephant, of course!

Sometimes, when she's in an especially good mood, Firephant juggles lit torches on dark, warm nights. Then, all the other little elephants sit nice and quiet with their mouths hanging open, watching their friend perform. When the show is over, they give a loud round of elephant applause, all stomping their feet on the ground in unison.

Firephant is awfully talented, isn't she? And she can paint with a paintbrush, too!

7. And last, but not least... You guessed it!

This is MERRYPHANT. He's the jolliest and MERRIEST elephant you'll ever see. He loves to tell jokes and then laugh so hard that his roly-poly little body quivers.

When Merryphant laughs, then all the other elephants do, too—not because the jokes are all that funny, of course, but because Merryphant's laughter is so contagious!

And that's how the seven little elephants lived on the shore of the big, blue, warm sea. They played, ate, slept, sometimes argued a little, and then made up again, just like friends do.

Until one day...

...until one day, Terriphant was in a very bad mood. She had just stepped on a poisonous jellyfish while sloshing in the sea, and her leg hurt.

"Out of my way, fatty!" she yelled at Merryphant when he accidentally got in her way.

Merryphant sat down on the ground and big, hot tears started flowing from his eyes. He cried a whole bucketful of salty tears—two, actually! That meant a bucket of tears from each eye, can you imagine?

Merryphant was so sad that he stopped eating and sleeping. All he did was lie on the ground and stare off at nothing.

All the little elephants walked around with their heads hanging low. They could tell that the cheerful Merryphant actually had a very tender heart, and that a word that might seem harmless can actually do a lot of harm sometimes.

They couldn't figure out how to comfort their friend.

Firephant didn't feel like juggling torches anymore.

Hiphant didn't call out "Rise and shine!" every morning, but simply mumbled: "Morn'n."

Seaphant waded into the sea for a second, but then came right back out.

Sandyphant didn't want to play hide and seek, and merely lazed around.

Shyphant climbed into a fort made of palm leaves, and stayed there.

Even Terriphant secretly cried before she went to sleep at night. She was afraid Merryphant's feelings had gotten seriously hurt, and that it was her fault.

She had reason to worry, too. Merryphant kept getting thinner... and thinner... and thinner...

One morning, Terriphant woke up before all the other elephants, and quietly crept away. She got back late in the evening, when the sun was already setting.

Terriphant plodded over to Merryphant, who had gotten awfully scrawny and refused to speak. She got down on one knee and stretched out her trunk, handing him a big bunch of sweet, nice-smelling yellow bananas.

"Please forgive me, my dear Merryphant," she said, shamefaced. "I was in a bad mood, and that's why I insulted you. I promise I'll never do it again. Can we be friends again?"

All the little elephants were speechless. Who could have guessed that Terriphant would say something like that?!

Extract from *Seven Little Elephants* by Tia Navi. English translation by Adam Cullen.

Merriphant stared wide-eyed at Terriphant. Then, he looked down at the yummy-smelling ripe fruit. He stretched out his trunk, grabbed the bunch of bananas, and stuck the whole thing in his mouth at once.

"Mmmmmm..." he hummed in satisfaction. The sparkle came back to his eyes.

"Hey, have you heard this joke?" he began.

All the little elephants sighed in relief: puhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!

And with that, they started playing ball,

spraying each other,

and doing all kinds of other fun elephant-things once again.

And do you know what?

From that day onward, there hasn't been a Terriphant.

Where could she have gone?

Did they drive her away?

Did she run away all on her own?

Did she hide somewhere?

Oh, no!

Now, her name is GREATPHANT!