

## An Elephant in the Garden - The policeman

'A rather worried-looking policeman did come to the house later that same evening to question Mutti about the elephant we were keeping in our garden. But Mutti was expecting just such a visit from the authorities, and had thought of everything. She read him out a letter from the Herr Direcktor of the zoo, giving his permission, and declaring that the elephant was a young one, only four years old, recently orphaned and so needed special care and attention, that she was an unusually calm elephant, and quite safe to be left under the supervision of Mutti overnight; that he had inspected the garden himself, and there was no danger whatsoever to the public. The policeman wanted to read the letter himself, and even then he still wanted to check that the garden where Marlene was being kept was secure. So we took him out there to show him, Karli leading the way.

Marlene was sheltering in her shed. The policeman didn't want to get too close, I could see that. He walked across the garden and rattled the gate to satisfy himself that it was safely shut. But he said we should chain it up, just to be sure. When he turned around he found Marlene was right there in front of him. She had come to introduce herself. She did this by reaching out her trunk to touch his face. He looked very alarmed at this, but when a few moments later Marlene's trunk happened to knock off his cap, and we all laughed, he had to laugh too.

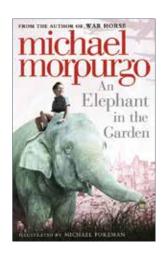
After that, he went away happy, leaving us happy too, and relieved that Marlene was now officially allowed to stay.' (An Elephant in the Garden, Part 2, Ring of Fire, Chapter 2, page 74)

Imagine that the policeman has now gone home for his supper and is telling his family about his visit to see the Elephant.

<i>I</i> rite an account of the visit as if you are the policeman. As well as the events, describe how you felt uring your visit.	







## An Elephant in the Garden - Memories

'Lizzie broke off from her story, and turned to look at us. "I'm so cross with myself. I meant to bring my photograph album with me," she said. "But I left it at home in my little apartment when they brought me here. I miss it so much. I used to look at it almost every day, you know. The things I could have shown you. There is a photo of us all down on the farm, when I was a small girl, and Karli was even smaller, just a baby in Papi's arms – in happier times. I love that photo. We are all outside that same hay-barn, and I am sitting up on Tomi, with Mutti holding him, and I have long plaits and a big gappy smile – my two front teeth are missing. Uncle Manfred must have taken the picture because he is not in it, and Aunt Lotti is looking very serious as usual. When I look at this photo I can see it all so clearly. I can almost breathe in the air of the countryside.

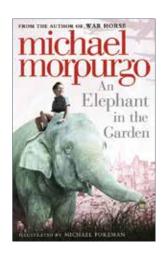
And I have a photo also of Marlene, only one, but mostly it is of her trunk because she was trying to eat the camera! It is enough though. Sometimes I worry that everything that happened might be some kind of a dream, or that maybe I have made the whole thing up. But I only have to look at those photographs to know I did not, that it really did happen. I wish I had brought them with me. I wish I could show you."

(An Elephant in the Garden, Part 3, Ring of Steel, Chapter 1, page 117-118)

Ask the children to bring to school a photograph from their childhood and write down their memory of the people and events that were happening when the photograph was taken.







## An Elephant in the Garden - Refugees

'Thankfully, by the first glimmer of every dawn Peter had usually managed to find somewhere for us to hide up for the day, somewhere we could at least be dry and warm, and even light a fire if we were lucky. It might be some remote barn, or shepherd's hut or forester's shack – it didn't matter. All the time we stayed away from any towns and villages, and kept as far as possible to the valleys and woods where we would be less likely to be seen. We soon discovered we were not the only ones tramping through the countryside on that long trek westwards, nor the only ones who had chosen to avoid the dangers of the roads.

So there were days, like it or not, when we would find ourselves having to share a barn or shed with other refugees, mostly families like us. But once or twice there were soldiers with us too, whole units of them. Those meetings were awkward at first. No one trusted anyone in those days, you see. You never could, not to begin with. It was having Marlene with us that helped break the ice, helped dispel suspicion. They would only have to see Marlene, and Mutti would only have to tell our story about the zoo, and how we had looked after Marlene at home in the garden, and soon they would be telling their own stories, of how they had escaped the bombing and the firestorm.'

(An Elephant in the Garden, Part 4, Ring of Bells, Chapter 1, page 165-166)

You are a refugee just like Mutti, Lizzie and Karli. You meet them one day when you are all sheltering in a hay-barn. Tell them your story of how you escaped Dresden.	1

