

The Story of the Elephant and the Giraffe

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In a small community just outside of the city of Artiodact, there was a family of giraffes. They had worked hard to build themselves a new house with all of their needs in mind: there were soaring ceilings and tall doorways, high windows with lots of light and narrow hallways that conserved space. It was such a wonderful house that it won the National Giraffe Home of the Year Award.

One day the head giraffe was working in his new basement woodshop when he looked out the window and saw someone familiar. It was an elephant that he had worked on the local Parent-Teacher Association committee with. Giraffe remembered that Elephant was a woodworker and an exciting thought occurred to him, "Maybe Elephant would like to work on some projects with me?" Giraffe stuck his head out the window and invited Elephant in.

The elephant was delighted; he had liked working with the giraffe and thought that this would be the perfect way to get to know him better. He walked up to the basement door and waited for Giraffe to open it.

Giraffe opened the door, greeted elephant but then the two animals were faced with a problem, Elephant could get his head through the door but he could go no further because the door was too narrow. Giraffe wasn't worried – he quickly explained to Elephant that the door was expandable in order to accommodate woodworking projects and equipment. With a pop of a bolt and a slip of a panel, Elephant was able to get through the door.

The two acquaintances were happily exchanging woodworking stories when the phone rang. Giraffe saw that it was his boss, and told Elephant he needed to take the call. He told elephant to make himself at home and went upstairs to his office, apologizing that it might take a few minutes

Elephant decided to take a look around the workroom, saw a half-finished project in the far corner and decided to take a look at it. As he walked through the doorway to get to the far side, he heard an ominous sound as his backend crunched up against the sides of doorframe. He backed out. He decided to join the giraffe upstairs but as he tried to walk up the stairs, the stairs began to crack. He jumped off and hit the wall and made a huge dent in the drywall. He sat there disheveled and dismayed until Giraffe came back down the stairs.

Giraffe was surprised and explained, "What on earth is going on?"

Elephant replied, looking slightly ashamed, "I was just trying to make myself at home".

Giraffe looked around at his workshop and then smiled. "I see what's going on here", he said. "The doorway is too narrow for your large backend. We need to make you smaller. There's an aerobics studio in our neighbourhood and if you take some classes, we could get you down to size".

Elephant looked like he wanted to shrink into the very wall that he had dented a few minutes earlier. He said, "Maybe..."

Giraffe continued, "And the stairs are obviously too weak to carry your weight so if you go to ballet classes at night, I am sure we can get you to a point where you are lighter on your feet. Can you do those things? It would be great if you could because it would be nice to work together".

"Perhaps", said the elephant, "but to tell you the truth, I'm not sure that a house designed for a giraffe would ever really work for an elephant, unless there were major changes".