The Last Little Clunk

A little elephant takes one small step

Ages 3–5



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Clunk! Little Elephant's trunk tapped a bump beneath his blanket. Under the baobab, he had made a rope circle for his afternoon resting spot. His basket waited beside it. But five smooth pebbles sat right where his belly wanted to go. “I want a soft spot. A really, really soft spot.” He lifted one corner of the blanket. A pebble tapped his foot. Tock. Little Elephant tapped it back with his trunk. “No clunks in my cozy spot!”



First, he swept all five pebbles toward the edge of the rope circle. Scrrrape! They made a little pile. He spread his blanket over the sand and lowered one foot. That felt lovely. He lowered his other foot. Bump. The pile was still inside his resting spot. “My feet fit. My belly doesn't!” Little Elephant lifted the blanket again. The pile had moved, but the pebbles had not left. Five pebbles. One very uncozy doorstep.



So he folded the blanket twice and laid the thickest part over the pile. Swish. The pebbles disappeared underneath. “There. A pillow!” He pressed it gently with his trunk. Bump, bump, bump. His pillow felt like a pancake full of marbles. He pulled the blanket away. The pebbles rolled apart with a soft clatter. They were all still there. “Hiding the bumps doesn't make them leave.”



Little Elephant sat beside his empty basket. This time, he did not sweep or cover anything. He curled his trunk around just one pebble and lowered it into the basket. Tock. Then he touched the place where it had been. Smooth sand. “One little move. One little check.” He pressed that smooth spot again. No bump. The small move had made a real space. Little Elephant's ears gave a pleased little flap. “That part feels cozy already.”



He tried the same small plan again. Another pebble went into the basket. Tock. Another smooth spot waited on the sand. He tried once more. Tock. Now three pebbles rested together in the basket, and two stayed inside the rope circle. “One little move. One little check.” His trunk traveled slowly over the sand. It found a bump. Instead of covering it, he stopped right there. He knew what his next little move would be.



He lifted the fourth pebble. Tock. Four in the basket. Little Elephant spread his blanket, ready for a rest. But he paused before lying down. His trunk checked the whole circle, including the edge. Right beside the rope, one last pebble made a tiny clunk. “Nearly cozy isn't all cozy.” He folded the blanket back and reached for that last little bump. It was small, but his belly would have found it.



The last pebble settled in the basket. Tock. Little Elephant swept his trunk gently across the sand. Around the edge. Across the middle. No bumps. He waited for another clunk. None came. “Nothing left in my resting spot. Zero pebbles!” All five pebbles were safe in the basket. They had not vanished. They had a new place, and Little Elephant had his soft spot. “One little move. One little check.”



He spread his blanket and lowered his belly. Soft. He stretched his feet. Soft. He tucked his trunk beside his cheek and let out a long, happy sigh. The baobab leaves whispered overhead. Beside the rope circle, five pebbles rested in their basket. Inside the rope circle, Little Elephant rested too. Then a tiny sound broke the quiet. It wasn't a pebble. It was one small, cozy elephant snore. When a big job feels tricky, try one small step and check what changed.


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