

Mr Benn , the Zookeeper

It was just an ordinary day in Festive Road. The street was very quiet as all the children were busy at school. In number 52, Mr Benn was sat on his old, comfortable sofa watching an exciting programme about wild safari animals.

"I wish I could look after these animals!" whispered Mr Benn hopefully into the empty room. Suddenly he remembered the magical costume shop where he could always find an adventure. He put on his hat and his coat and happily set off for the shop.

As he walked along the street he heard a bird cheerfully chirping in its metal cage. Then he saw a brown rabbit thumping loudly in its wooden hutch. What a busy street this is!

In almost no time at all, Mr Benn strolled through the door of the little costume shop. As if by magic, the shopkeeper appeared. Ping!

"Good morning, sir. What would you like to try on today?" said the shopkeeper.

"Well, I would like to see how a zoo keeper costume feels" replied Mr Benn.

The shopkeeper smiled and gave Mr Benn a pair of baggy green trousers, a green shirt, a large green hat and heavy black boots.

"See if it fits, sir" said the shopkeeper, as he took Mr Benn into the changing room.

Mr Benn changed into the zoo keeper outfit. He looked at himself in the mirror, did a little spin and then skipped to the blue door that always led to an amazing adventure.

Mr Benn grinned happily as he stepped into a sunny courtyard surrounded by tropical trees and bright, colourful plants.

A low rumble startled him and he turned to see a tiny elephant stumble towards him. It had sad grey eyes and a droopy trunk that dragged along the dusty path. Mr Benn gently patted its rough, tough skin.

"What's the matter, little one?" he whispered. "You look hot and thirsty. Let's go to the water tank and get you a long refreshing drink. Come on."

He led the small creature to the far wall and peered into the large metal container. It was empty because a heavy log had fallen across the long winding hosepipe and cut off the water. Mr Benn wiped the sweat from his forehead, rolled up his sleeves and bent down to lift the log but it wouldn't budge a centimetre! 'I need help,' thought Mr Benn, so he made his way to the elephant house and asked politely for their assistance.

The ground shook as four huge elephants lumbered into the courtyard and took hold of the fallen log in their great trunks. With little effort, they hauled it aside causing a fountain of sparkling water to gush from the hosepipe. The little elephant trumpeted his thanks and rushed to the tank to take a long drink.