

Member Short Stories: Elephobia

George Wright

My wife loves an Apple. I like apples too, but I like eating mine. My computer is Android. Hers backs-up automatically, several times a day. I've pointed out that backing-up to a drive in the same computer is not safe. She disagrees. Mine backs-up to a hard drive in a docking station on top of the console on my desktop.

We both use the same printer and that's also on my desk, along with a telephone and modem, various trays for papers, bins for paperclips and pins, a sticky tape dispenser, a hole punch and stapler and a locked tin of lollies. I like the console on my desk because I can use magnets to display handy notes reminding me to do essential tasks like swapping disks on certain dates with Jack.

Every morning I rotate the backup disk with a spare locked in the house-safe so there's always a digital image available for retrieval, even if the computer catches fire or we get robbed. And twice a year I swap a hard disk with my mate Jack to ensure that if mayhem does shatter either of our lives we have access to a backup. You never know when a stray elephant may charge through your house.

Her life is orderly. She jogs every morning before churning out reports, week after week. In contrast, I spend a much of my time trying out new programs I find on the net or fine-tuning my operating system to increase my output which I admit is limited and spasmodic. And there's always somebody offering me money to solve business problems, such as advising on external automatic backups. Fancy slavery? I'd rather do interesting things.

As she likes to point out, we've never had an elephant in our house, her computer has always saved her stuff and she likes her desk clean and tidy.

Ah well...let her live her life and let me live mine. Despite our differences, we seem to get along. But it took an animated discussion about elephants before she'd let me include a back-up of her data on the disks I swap with Jack. Apparently, David Attenborough has never said that house demolition is normal elephant behaviour. Nevertheless, she postulates that I do have the capacity to incite bedlam if any stray elephant wants to share our habitat, an industrial area close to a coffee-shop in Fitzroy.