

# A SAFARI MYSTERY

## CHAPTER 1

### WHERE ARE ALL THE ELEPHANTS?

It was early afternoon at the Masai **Nature Reserve**, Kenya. Twenty-year-old Julie O’Neil was sitting in a tourist bus, looking at the **view** from the window. The zebras were moving very slowly in the hot African sun. The driver stopped the bus and the tourists took photos of the green and yellow savannah.

“Kenya is so beautiful,” Julie thought. This was her second day on safari and she was really enjoying it.

Suddenly, one of the zebras stopped moving and looked towards the trees. Something was wrong, and the zebra felt it. Other zebras stopped and looked in the same direction. Julie knew something was going to happen, but she didn’t know what. Then, a big cat appeared from the **bushes** and all the zebras began to run in panic.

“That’s a cheetah,” the driver explained. “It’s the fastest animal in the world. It runs at a speed of over 100 km an hour!”

The tourists watched nervously. The cheetah **was chasing** a young zebra. The zebra was running as fast as it could on its thin legs. But the cheetah was close behind it, and getting nearer all the time. The young zebra did not stop running. Julie was afraid for the zebra. The chase lasted only 15 or 20 seconds, but it seemed a long time to the tourists.

Finally, the cheetah stopped running and the zebra escaped into the savannah. The chase was over. The cheetah lay down in the tall grass, tired from running after the zebra. The driver began to drive the bus slowly down the dirt road.

“Cheetahs are very fast but they get tired quickly,” the driver explained to the tourists, and then he added, “You’re very lucky. Not many tourists see a chase.”

Julie was happy the young zebra was safe, but she wasn’t here to see zebras – she was here for the elephants. Julie loved



*The cheetah was chasing a young zebra.*

elephants and was doing a science project on them at her university in Dublin, Ireland. This safari trip was her parents’ birthday present to her. When they **offered** their daughter a holiday anywhere in the world, Julie chose a safari in the Masai Nature Reserve – ‘The Land of the Elephants’. Julie’s parents wanted to go with her but it was too expensive for the whole family to go. Julie promised them that she was happy to go alone, and finally they agreed.

Julie turned to Andrew, a friendly American tourist sitting next to her. “I haven’t seen any elephants yet,” she said. “Where are they all hiding?”

“Maybe they’re at the waterhole. I saw some elephants there a few days ago,” Andrew said. He pointed to a faraway group of trees to his left. “The elephants love the waterhole,” he said. “It’s cool under the trees and they can drink from the water there.”