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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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How Mrs. Mouse Fooled Kitty

Mrs. Mouse had just moved her little family into the attic of the house where she had been living because, on the first floor, Kitty had been watching her hole in a very unpleasant manner. So Mrs. Mouse told her husband that she thought the air would be better for all of them if they moved to the top of the house, and also that she felt sure they all would live much longer. "But she will find us, my dear," said Mr. Mouse. "Very likely she will watch so closely we will not have a chance to move."

"We could manage very well, I am sure; we could escape when Kitty is dozing, but the children are so young, I am afraid we will never be able to move until they are larger."

"If you wait for that, we may not have any children to move," replied his wife. "All I want is your consent to the plan, and I will take care of the moving and do it all with safety, too."

"Very well, my dear," replied her husband. "I will agree, only do let me have a look at the place, so I will know where to go when I come home some day and find you have left this home."

Mrs. Mouse told her children not to dare move or go near the hole in the wall until she returned, and then she took her husband to the attic of the house under the roof, where there was a big basket of corn.

"Why didn't you mention the corn, my dear?" asked Mr. Mouse. "I am sure the place is in every way quite satisfactory to me. Can I help you to move?"

His wife told him she did not need his help. All she wanted was his consent, and away she ran, but not home. She went to a closet where things were stored and where she had only the night before been fooled, but she did not mention it to her husband.

She had seen Mr. Mouse going in and out of a closet, and, going in there one day, she found nothing that, to her mind, was worth eating, and she was wondering what in the world he went into that dry closet for when suddenly she saw two bright eyes looking straight at her.

Mrs. Mouse felt her heart jump and then stand still. She thought of her children and she wondered what would become of them, all in a twinkling of an eye, but the eyes did not wink or blink, they kept staring straight at her.

After a minute, she felt sure it was not Kitty, or she would have pounced upon her before that.

Mrs. Mouse took another look, now that her eyes had become accustomed to the place, and she saw with surprise that this creature resembled her, only that its coat might be a little thicker.

"How do you do?" Mrs. Mouse ventured at last.

Then when the creature did not reply, she spoke again.

"I wonder if you know my husband. He runs in and out of here often."

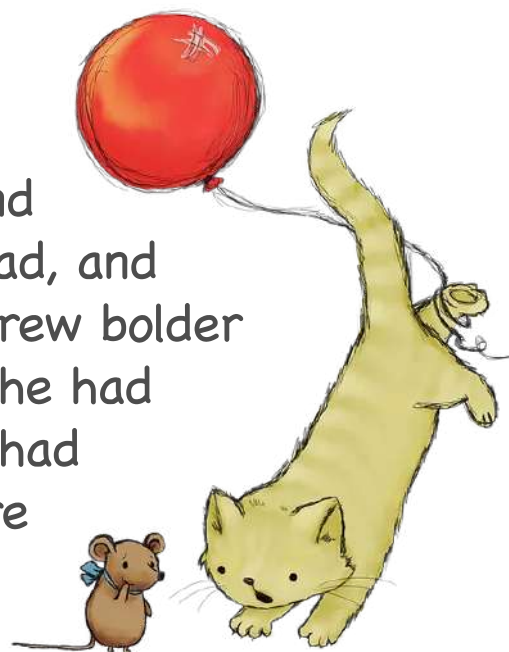
Still no reply and Mrs. Mouse was getting rather angry. She moved nearer, and to her surprise, she found the creature had no body, only a head, and that was rather large. Mrs. Mouse grew bolder and went closer, then she stopped; she had been talking to a stuffed head that had fallen off some of the furs that were hanging in the closet.

And this was where Mrs. Mouse ran when she left her husband, right to this closet, and brought the head with her when she came out.

She carried it home and crept cautiously to the hole in the wall, and then down to the floor, where there was another hole that entered the kitchen under the table. She waited and found that cat was asleep near this hole, then Mrs. Mouse put the fur head just where the tip end of the nose could be seen and where cat could not reach it and went back to her children.

There was another opening to this hole in the wall, and this was through the pantry, and on the other side of the pantry was a hole that would enable Mrs. Mouse to take her family to the attic to their new home if they could but cross the pantry in safety.

This was the reason she placed the fur head where Kitty was sleeping, so that when she awoke she would not leave that hole because she would be sure she saw the tip of the nose of a mouse.



"What in the world are you watching?" said the cook one day to Kitty. "You hardly leave long enough to eat your dinner."

"Me-ow, me-ow!" said Kitty, swinging her tail and looking into the hole again.

"Get away from there and let me see," said the cook.

With a fork, the cook poked into the hole, and in a minute, she drew out the fur head with the shiny eyes.

"Well, you are a silly cat, to be sure," she said, throwing the head on the floor. "You have been watching that hole for two days, and it was only a fur head off mistress's neckpiece."

Kitty gave one sniff at the head and then ran out of the house. "They fooled me," she said. "I believe the whole family has moved out while I was watching that old piece of fur."