

The town mouse and the country mouse

(Time – 2:32)

Once upon a time a town mouse and a country mouse were friends. One day the country mouse invited the town mouse to come and visit him in his home out in the fields. They sat down to dinner. The country mouse served his friend a plate with an ear of wheat on it and a little carrot, fresh from the garden; the carrot still had tiny crumbs of soil on it. The town mouse nibbled the carrot and spat out the soil, nibbled the wheat ear and spat out the chaff. He wrinkled up his nose in disgust.

‘My poor dear friend. Is this the best you can do? You live no better than the ants. Now, you should see how well I live. My larder is stocked with the finest food. Come and visit me and you’ll nibble such tasty dainties as you’ve never dreamed of.’

So the country mouse went to visit the town mouse. The town mouse welcomed him with open arms. ‘Come with me and I’ll show you shelf upon shelf of wonders.’

He followed his friend under the larder door and gasped with amazement. There was fine white flour and oatmeal and figs and fruit and cheese and biscuits. ‘Help yourself.’

They climbed up onto a shelf and were just about to nibble at a big piece of yellow cheese when the larder door opened. ‘Quick!’ Someone was coming in: a human. They scuttled away as fast as their legs would carry them and crouched in a very uncomfortable crack in the wall. When the human was gone they crept out again.

‘Now, as I was saying,’ said the town mouse, ‘before we were so rudely interrupted: help yourself.’

The country mouse curled himself around a nice fat fig and was just about to sink his teeth into it when - ‘Quick! Another human! Hide!’ They ran again and hid in the same hole. The human reached for the figs. The country mouse could almost feel its hand against his whiskers.

When the human was outside and the door was closed, they heard it speaking: ‘I’m sure I heard a mouse in the larder. Let’s fetch old tabby. It’s a while since she earned her keep.’

The country mouse’s heart was pounding. He turned to his friend. ‘Goodbye. I’m off! My simple plate of food nibbled in peace tastes much sweeter than all your fancy dainties.’

And the country mouse ran all the way back to his home in the fields.