



This Book Belongs To:

For Wirksworth,
and the wonderful people
(and energetic pheasants)
I have met there.

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First published 2025 by
Walker Books Ltd
87 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HJ
2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

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EU Authorized Representative: HackettFlynn Ltd, 36 Cloch Choirneal,
Balrothery, Co. Dublin, K32 C942, Ireland. EU@walkerpublishinggroup.com

This book has been typeset in Arapey, Chisel Mark, Londrina Solid,
Kingthings Typewriter and Hand Drawn Shapes

Printed in China

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data: a catalogue
record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-5295-2403-1

www.walker.co.uk

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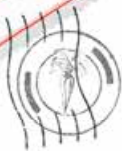


Marty MOUSE



FIRST
CLASS
MISCHIEF

With Love,
Claire Powell



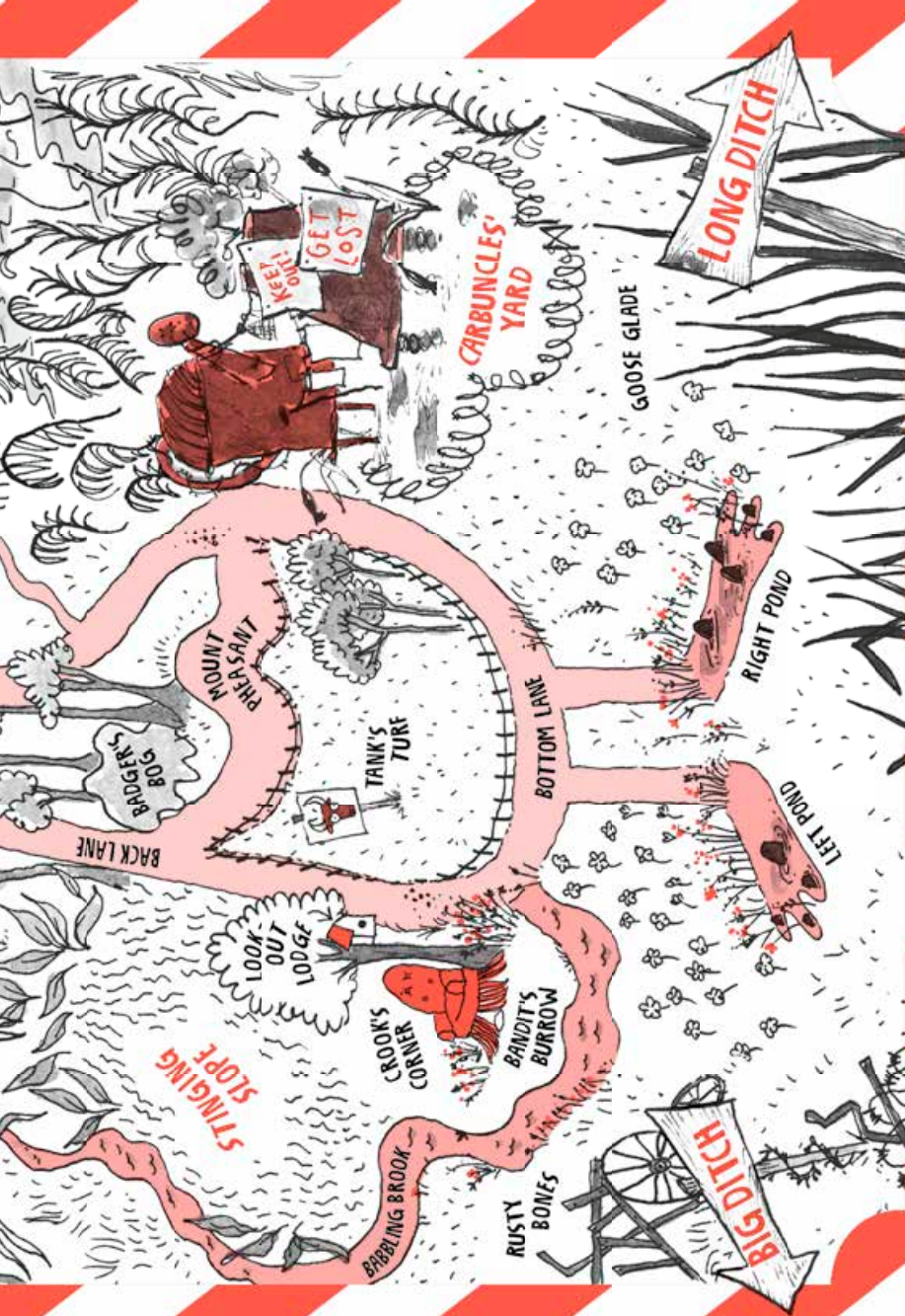
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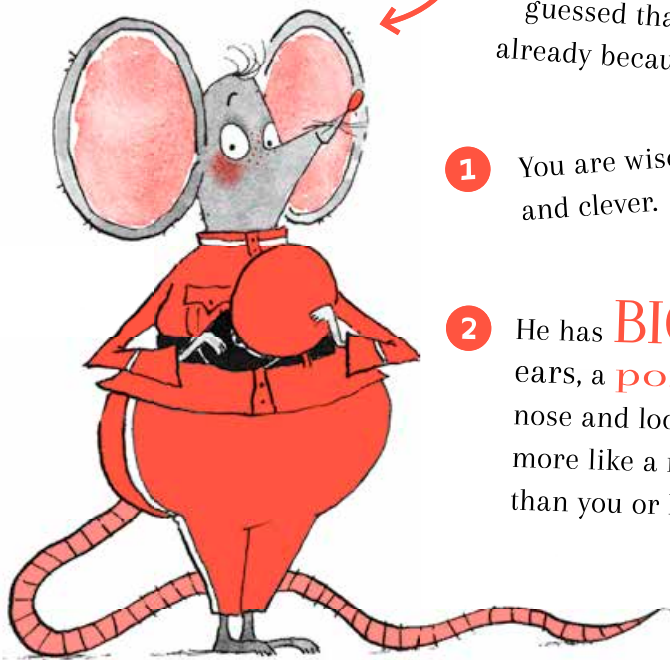
WELCOME TO LITTLE DITCH





Marty Moose **ISN'T** a moose.
He is quite clearly a **mouse**.

But you probably
guessed that
already because:



1 You are wise
and clever.

2 He has **BIG**
ears, a **pointy**
nose and looks no
more like a moose
than you or I do.



When Marty's name was
being written on his

BIRTH CERTIFICATE

an unfortunate blob of ink fell
from the end of the clerk's pen
and splodged - in a perfect circle -
where the 'u' should have been.

This document was

**VERY IMPORTANT
AND
LEGALLY BINDING**

and it could not be changed.

So Marty has, from that day forth,
been known not as Marty Mouse but as...

NAME: *Marty Mouse*





≡ PROLOGUE ≡



It was late in Little Ditch when a door in the post office opened, just a crack.

A long whiskery snout poked through and sniffed the air.

SNIFF SNIFF

The room smelled empty, so the snout – which was attached to a hairy body with a long pink tail – stepped inside.



Two hairy feet
with uncut claws **TIP**
TAPPED across the
wooden floor.

TIP **TAP** **TIP**
TAP

The feet crept over to a postbag in
the corner of the room. The bag was
stuffed full of parcels and letters that
had been sorted earlier in the day.

Quick as a whisker, a
hairy paw dropped two
more parcels into the
bag. Then, the hairy
feet

TIP





TAP TAPPED

TIP

across the wooden floor, through the door, and disappeared into the night...

TAP

An act of first-class mailbag mischief had just been committed.

TIP

TAP







≡ CHAPTER ONE ≡



DON'T LOSE A WHISKER

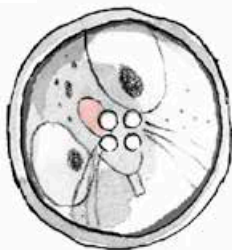
Marty's **BIG** day was finally here!

He was about to start his first ever job as Postmouse of Little Ditch. He had to report to the post office in Thorny Thickett at 8 a.m. sharp.

If you haven't been, Thorny Thickett is up over Mount Pheasant, past Badger's Bog, under Creepy Willow and right Round-the-Bend. If you end up in Foggy Forest, you've gone too far – and you'll want to get out **QUICK!**



Marty was prepared. He had practised his whistle, ironed his uniform and combed his whiskers. He had polished his buttons so well he could see his reflection in them.



Even so, his belly was filled with jitters.

Then, it rumbled. **Ravenous rascals!**

Marty thought. *I must be hungry!*



Marty scampered towards the kitchen but came to a stop in front of a portrait of his Great-Aunt Ada. She was known as the GREATEST POSTMOUSE WHO EVER LIVED after she was carried off by an owl on Christmas Eve, stuffed into a pie and almost cooked at 140 degrees for 90 minutes.

A well-timed power cut had allowed her to escape, and she'd still delivered her Christmas cards with time to spare for a mince pie.



Marty took a deep breath. “**Ooh, whimpering whistles!** I hope I’m as good as you were, Great-Aunt Ada.”

Marty had a small family (by mouse standards). 27 brothers, eleven sisters, nine aunts (some Great, some not so great), fourteen uncles (three others had unfortunately been swallowed whole by a cat named Wiggles), two grandmothers, three grandfathers,





approximately 142 cousins (exact number unknown), one mother and one father.

Only his Great-Aunt Ada had ever been a Postmouse, though. Until she'd hung up her postbag last year and retired to Snoring-on-Sea.

And today, it was Marty's turn.

To Marty,

I hear from your father that you're following in my paw prints and becoming a Postmouse. I'm sure you'll find it as exciting as I did. Every day was different! I confess I miss the thrill of the round and the smell of the stamps out here in Snoring-on-Sea!

A good Postmouse never leaves a parcel behind, Marty - always remember that!

And just because you're small doesn't mean you can't be brave.

Good luck!

Great-Aunt Ada
X



ty Moose
e Cupboard,
Thickett,
Little Ditch.

Breakfast in Marty's house was a VERY chaotic affair. He ducked, dodged and clambered over to a pile of his mum's freshly baked bread. It was disappearing FAST!

He grabbed the last two slices, slathered them with strawberry jam and – when his mum's back was turned – added a generous sprinkling of sugar.

Marty opened his mouth wide and bit down ... on thin air. The sandwich – HIS sandwich – had been swiped out of his paw and swiftly popped into the mouth of his older brother, Milo.

He grabbed the last two slices, slathered them with strawberry jam and – when his mum’s back was turned – added a generous sprinkling of sugar.

Marty opened his mouth wide and bit down ... on thin air. The sandwich – HIS sandwich – had been swiped out of his paw and swiftly popped into the mouth of his older brother, Milo.





“Oh, **FIDDLESTAMPS!**”

Marty exclaimed, as his brother walked out the back door, waving smugly.

“Marty! There you are!”

His dad was bounding through the mayhem, carrying a brown paper bag. Marty’s twin baby brothers were glued to each hip.

“I made you a packed lunch for your first day! Cheese sandwiches, cheese muffin and cheese crisps.”



Creeping caterpillars! Marty **HATED** cheese. It made his whiskers turn green. But so many mice living together in one house meant that his dad often muddled up who liked what.

“MARTY’S OFF, EVERYONE!”

his dad hollered.

Eeeeeek. Marty had been hoping to slip out the back door without a fuss.

“Marty’s ALWAYS off,” his sister Muriel snarked. “He smells like rotten cheese.”

“That’s enough, Muriel!” Marty’s mum scolded.





Remember your whistle...

Avoid Tank's Turf...

Watch out for bandits ...
and ***Cats!***

Don't venture into Foggy Forest...

Careful of mouse traps...

And whatever you do,
DON'T LOSE A WHISKER!

Baffling blackberries, Marty
thought. *I'm only delivering
letters! How hard can it be?*

LITTLE DITCH POST OFFICE

≡ CHAPTER TWO ≡

**CYRIL AT
YOUR SERVICE**

