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opening extract from

The Church Mouse

written by

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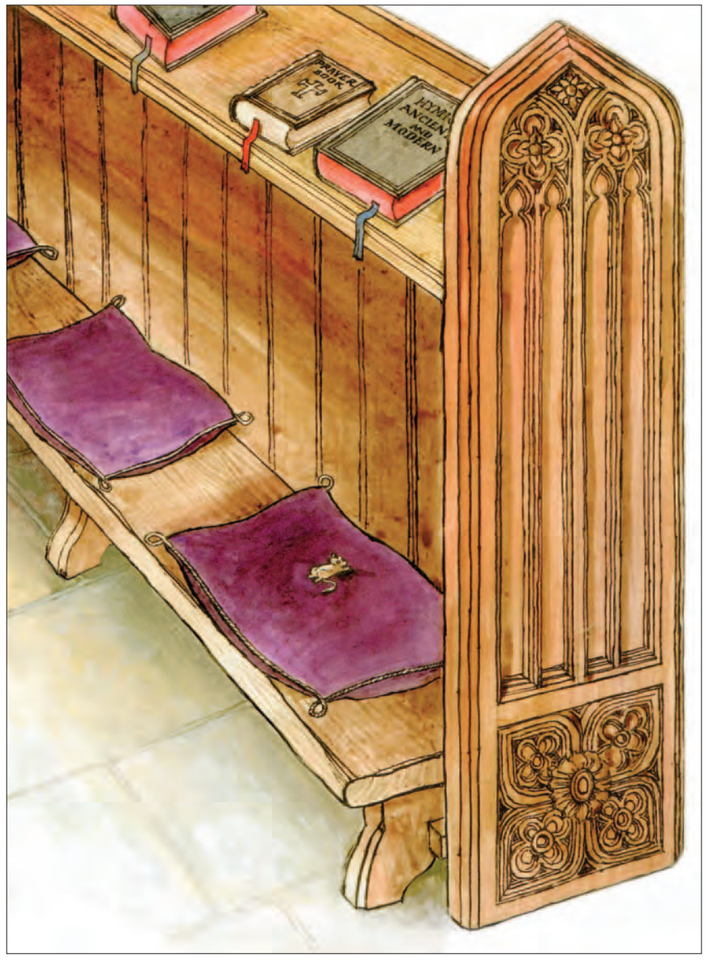
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IN A BUSY little town, not very far away, there is a church...



...and in the church
there lived a mouse
whose name was Arthur.

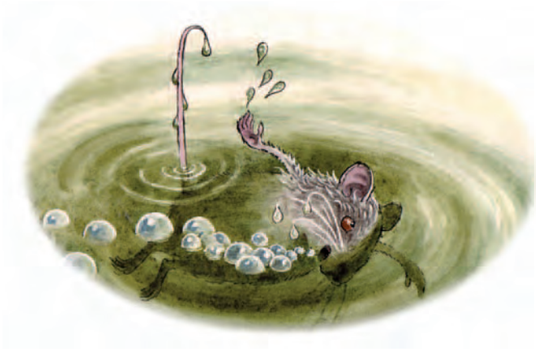


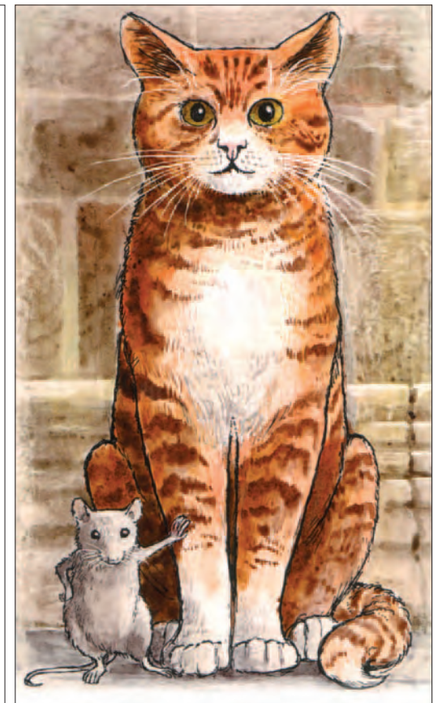
Arthur liked living in a church.
For one thing, he was very fond of music,
particularly if it was loud.



Also, if the verger had filled the font,
he could go and mess about in his boat,

or practise the crawl, if the weather was warm enough.





But he liked it best because it was safe.

Sampson, the church cat, had listened to so
many sermons about the meek being blessed
and everybody really being brothers that
he had grown quite meek himself
and treated Arthur just like a brother.

But sometimes Arthur got a bit depressed.





One reason for this was his diet. All he ever had to eat were sweets the boys dropped during choir practice. You might say that it wouldn't make you depressed, but you are not a mouse. It made Arthur fat and bilious and it didn't do his teeth any good either.



But worst of all, he was lonely, for in the whole of that church there was not one other mouse,

and when he felt like having a chat,
Sampson always seemed to be having one of his little day-long naps.



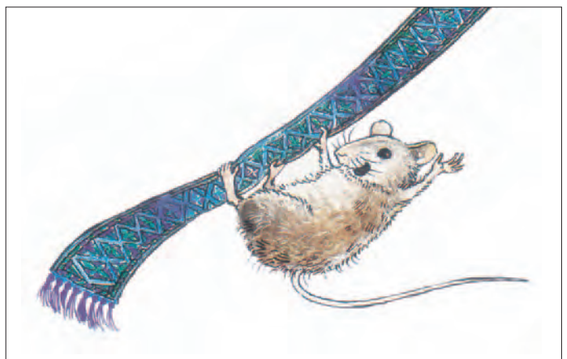
Then one afternoon, when he was reading, an idea popped into Arthur's head and...



as the parson was at that very moment passing by,
Arthur told him all about it.

The parson rather liked the idea,
at least he said he was willing to give it a try.

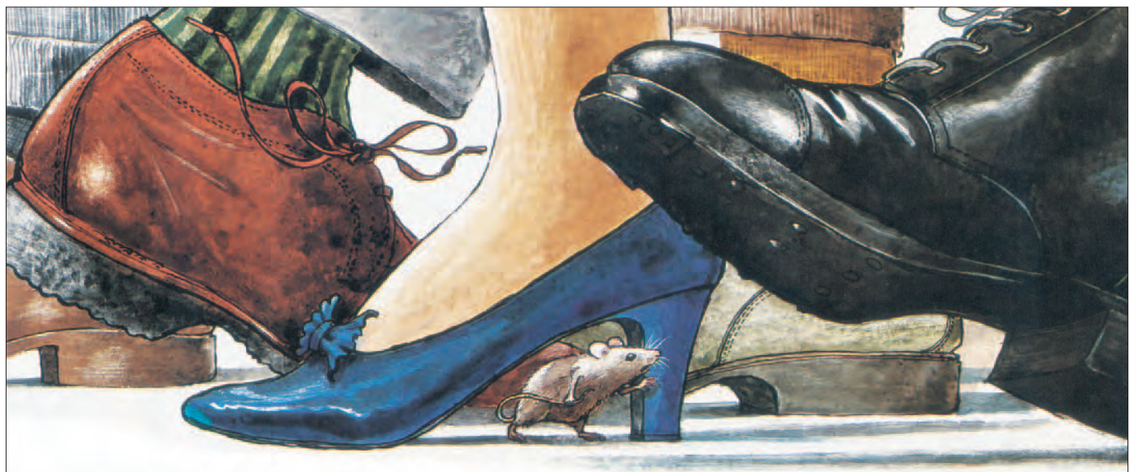




For a moment Arthur was quite carried away.
Then,



not being a mouse to let the grass grow under his feet,
he rushed out of the church and into the town
to put his idea into practice.



And what an awful place the town was, much worse than he had imagined.
He almost gave up his idea, but then he thought, "If it's always as nasty as this,
everybody is bound to agree to my plan."





So he hurried on...