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Opening extract from

The Church Mouse at Christmas

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Published by

Templar Publishing

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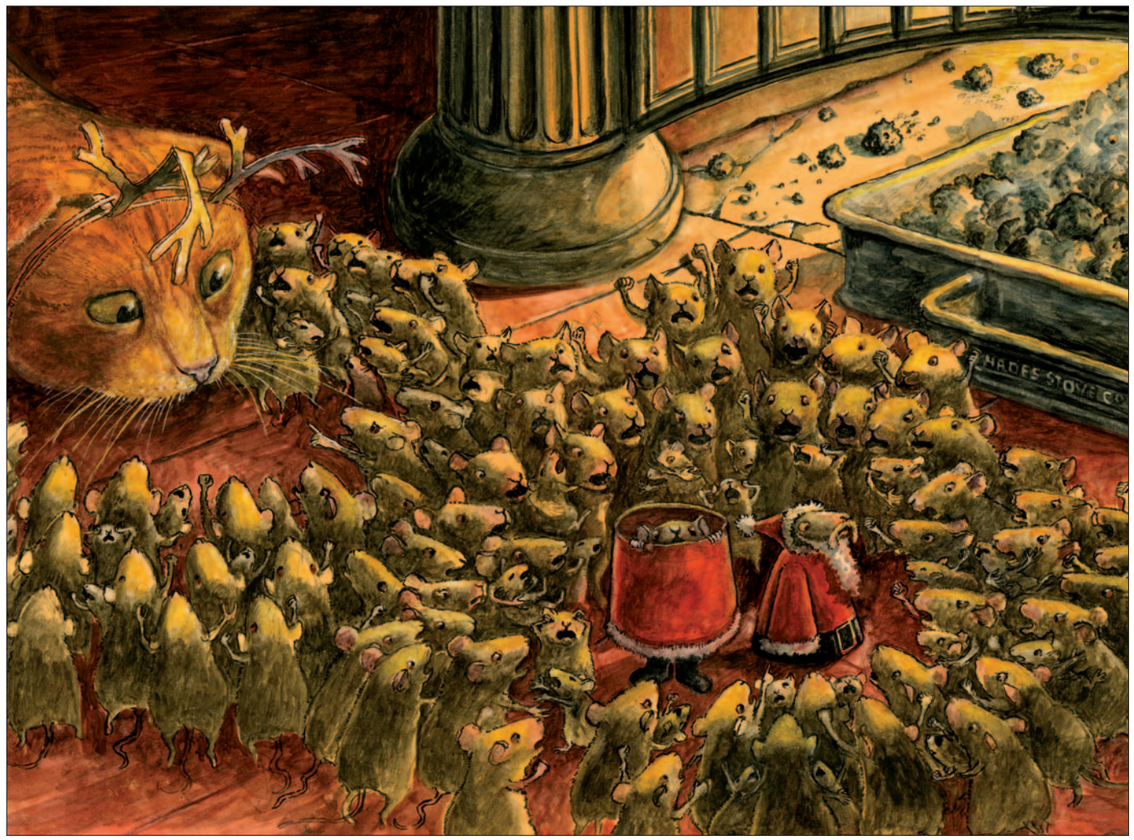




On the way back to the vestry, a most wonderful thing happened to them. Even Humphrey was speechless for two seconds. Then he said, "Good evening, Father Christmas sir. I am Humphrey, and what I want for Christmas is a record player, a quartz watch, twenty bags of jelly babies, a pair of two-tone football boots, a—"

"And what I would like..." began Arthur.

"—radio," continued Humphrey, "a dozen walnut whips...



so their return to the vestry was anything but the very pleasant surprise that Arthur had promised...



though they made up for it by telling the mice about their meeting with Father Christmas
and explaining that he would be coming to the vestry at nine o'clock. Everyone started to get ready at once.