

## The Cat and The Mouse

From the book, "Children's Classics in Dramatic Form" by Augusta Stevenson  
Suggested by Grimm's The Cat and the Mouse

*Time: Perhaps this minute*

*Place: Perhaps your own garret*

*Characters:*

*Mother Mouse*

*Miss Mouse (Mother Mouse' daughter)*

*The Cat*

*(Mother Mouse and Miss Mouse are in their spare room because Mother Mouse is getting ready for a journey. Miss Mouse helps her. The Cat is outside, peeping now and then through the window, but so slyly that the mice do not see her.)*

MOTHER MOUSE: *(Going.)* Now mind you keep one eye on our grease-pot, child.

MISS MOUSE: That I will, dear mother!

MOTHER MOUSE: Let no one in—no one! No one!

MISS MOUSE: No one, dear mother!

MOTHER MOUSE: I'll not be long away. Goodbye, my child. *(Starting out; stopping.)* Mind you show no one the grease-pot, child—no one! No one!

MISS MOUSE: No one, dear mother!

*(Mother Mouse goes out of the front door.)*

CAT: *(Calling through window.)* Oh, Miss Mouse! Oh, Miss Mouse!

MISS MOUSE: *(Showing alarm.)* Who calls?

CAT: *(Very sweetly.)* Only I! Will you please let me in?

MISS MOUSE: *(Shaking head.)* Mother said—

CAT: *(Interrupting quickly.)* 'T is a matter of business!

MISS MOUSE: *(Shaking head.)* But Mother said—

CAT: *(Interrupting.)* 'T is most important!

MISS MOUSE: *(As before.)* But Mother said—

CAT: *(Interrupting.)* I wish your advice—you are so clever!

MISS MOUSE: *(Showing she is pleased; starting to window.)* Oh, do you truly think so?

CAT: *(Nodding.)* Everyone thinks so!

MISS MOUSE: *(Showing she is more pleased; going to the window.)* Oh, do they, truly?

CAT: Oh, truly they do!

MISS MOUSE: *(Showing she is most pleased; opening window.)* What else nice say they?

CAT: *(Jumping in.)* That I'll tell you by and by. *(Sniffing about.)* There must be a grease-pot about! Am I not right?

MISS MOUSE: Mother said—

CAT: *(Interrupting.)* Only tell me if I be right! 'T will do no harm!

MISS MOUSE: *(Hesitating.)* Well—then—yes. But 't is put away for our winter stores.

CAT: *(Nodding.)* Just so! Now, I can't decide where to keep my grease-pot when I have bought one. Won't you give me your advice? You are so wise.

MISS MOUSE: Do you truly think I'm wise?

CAT: *(Nodding.)* Aye, and if you will tell me where to keep my grease-pot when I have bought it, I'll tell you something more.

MISS MOUSE: *(Greatly pleased.)* About me?

CAT: *(Nodding.)* Yes, —what everyone says about your being so beautiful. But first I must know where to keep my grease-pot.

MISS MOUSE: Then listen—you must keep it, when you have bought it, in the northwest corner.

*(The Cat runs quickly to the northwest corner.)*

MISS MOUSE: *(In alarm.)* Come away! Come away!

CAT: Why, here is your grease-pot!

MISS MOUSE: *(As before.)* Come away, I say!

CAT: *(Looking into the pot.)* Truly, the fat is kept hard and cool here.

MISS MOUSE: I pray you come away! Mother does not so much as let me look into it. 'T is not yet time, she says.

CAT: *(Looking again into pot.)* Exactly! *(She leaves the pot and joins Miss Mouse.)* 'T is just what I'll tell my kittens about my grease-pot when I have bought it.

MISS MOUSE: Ah, then you have kittens at home?

CAT: *(Nodding.)* Such beautiful kittens! The eldest is white, with brown marks.

MISS MOUSE: He must be charming!

CAT: I've a mind to tell you his name. First, though, run out to see if your dear mother is not coming.

*(Miss Mouse nods and runs out. The Cat quickly creeps to the grease-pot and licks the top off. She crosses to the window just as Miss Mouse returns.)*

MISS MOUSE: Mother is nowhere to be seen. Now what did you name your eldest child?

CAT: Top-off.

MISS MOUSE: Top-off? Why, that is a curious name! Is it common in your family?

CAT: Oh, no! My second child has a white ring around his neck.

MISS MOUSE: Remarkable!

CAT: Very!

MISS MOUSE: What did you name him?

CAT: I gave him an unusual name. I will tell you what it is. First, though, run out to see if your dear mother is coming.

*(Miss Mouse nods and runs out. The Cat creeps to the grease-pot and eats half the fat; then crosses to the window. Miss Mouse returns.)*

MISS MOUSE: Mother is nowhere to be seen. Now what did you name your second child?

CAT: Half-out.

MISS MOUSE: Half-out? I never heard such a name! 'T is not in the calendar, I'm sure.

CAT: What does that matter, if it pleases me? Now the last child is really a wonder. He is quite black and has little white claws, but not a single white hair on his body.

MISS MOUSE: What have you named him?

CAT: I'm afraid that will please you no better than the others, but still I will tell you. First, though, run to see if your dear mother is not coming.

*(Miss Mouse nods and runs out. The Cat creeps to the pot and eats all the fat. She then crosses to the window.)*

CAT: What one begins one must needs finish.

*(Miss Mouse returns.)*

MISS MOUSE: Mother is nowhere to be seen. Now tell me what you named your youngest child.

CAT: All-out.

MISS MOUSE: All-out? Why, that is more curious than the others. I have never seen it in print.

CAT: *(Glaring at Miss Mouse.)* You never will!

MISS MOUSE: *(Frightened.)* What do you mean?

CAT: *(Preparing to spring.)* I mean to put you down with the fat!

MISS MOUSE: Help! Help!

*(Enter Mother Mouse just as the Cat clutches her daughter and jumps out of the window with her. Mother Mouse crosses and looks into the empty grease-pot.)*

MOTHER MOUSE: *(Sighing sadly.)* 'T was ever thus! Show your grease-pot, and you'll go with it!