

The little mouse that had to stay in his house

By Beth Williams - March 2020

This story has been written for use with young children (suggested ages 3-7 years) who are required to stay home during the current C-19 pandemic. Stories can help navigate the emotions that come with different kinds of loss and challenging situations. By allowing rather than resisting the truth, and by dressing it with the fabric of the imagination, stories can help the process of weaving the truth into everyday life, especially with young children.

This story is written with a 'mirroring' structure - the story simply reflects the situation and expands upon it with images that help share a message that is too strong to state directly with little children. I have not promised any timeline because that would be irresponsible as no one knows it at this stage. The story's aim is to encourage acceptance of the current 'social distancing' situation, and to help motivate the children to find and enjoy activities that they can do within the home.

The little mouse that had to stay in his house



Little mouse was confused, he couldn't understand why he had to stay home? He was an explorer, an adventurer; being inside all day was not his idea of fun. Didn't everyone know how little mouse loved nothing more than to spend his day going off as far as the eye could stray?

Having to stay home meant he couldn't go to school, he couldn't play with his friends in the field, and his friends couldn't visit him.

Little mouse was stuck in his little house at the base of the great oak tree.

At least he could look out of his door beyond his garden and as far as his eye could stray. He was surprised that there was so much to see - ants were scurrying by, ladybugs were climbing up and down the fallen leaves and floppy eared rabbits were hopping in and out of their burrows.

But even with all these things to watch, little mouse was growing impatient, he was desperate to go exploring outside. Why did little mouse have to stay in his house? It didn't make sense to little mouse, who loved nothing more than to spend his day going off as far as the eye could stray?



Then Wise Old Owl, from the tree up high, hooted to him:

'Things are not as they used to be - but trust me - soon you will be free - trust me, trust me.'



Little mouse, from inside his house, knew in his heart that he could always trust Wise Old Owl.

Wise Old Owl was always right, he saw the world from up above! Wise Old Owl knew all about everything. The birds and the wind were her friends and messengers. They visited her every day sharing the news of the big wide world. Little mouse could hear when the birds came by. He could hear them singing high up in the branches of Wise Old Owl's tree.

Little mouse could see when the wind was visiting. He could see the branches of Wise Old Owl's tree swaying this way and that. He sometimes had to close his window to keep out the leaves and dust stirred up by this busy friend's tree!

Everyday Wise Old Owl continued to whisper to him:

'Things are not as they used to be - but trust me - soon you will be free - trust me, trust me.'

So little mouse had to trust and little mouse had to wait. Soon he knew he would be free again to leave his home amongst the grass and flowers. Soon he knew he would be free to spend his day going off as far as the eye could stray. While he waited, he was surprised how many things he could find to do in his cosy little house for a little mouse.

Little mouse can dance
Little mouse can sing
Little mouse can paint and draw
And do somersaults across the floor.

Little mouse can dance
Little mouse can sing
Little mouse can clean and cook
And curl up with a picture book.

Little mouse can dance
Little mouse can sing
Little mouse can bake a cake
And clear grass cuttings with a garden rake.

Little mouse can dance
Little mouse can sing
Little mouse can vacuum.
And even clean his little bedroom!

Little mouse can dance
Little mouse can sing
Little mouse can play a game.
And do plenty of exercise for his brain.