

Mister Radio



The Mouse and the Wizard Transcript

Music: (ULULATION)

Marshall: You're listening to Mister Radio, and I'm your host Marshall.

Narrator: "The Mouse and the Wizard", a Hindu fable retold by Lucia Turnbull from "Fairy Tales of India", Criterion Books Incorporated New York 1960 by permission of the publishers.

Music: (Mystic Vibes)

Narrator: A timid mouse fearing that every shadow was the cat dared not venture out of his hole. He grew thin with hunger and worry. A friend coming to visit him was shocked to see the state the poor little creature was reduced to.

Old Mouse: How is this?

Narrator: He wanted to know.

Old Mouse: The harvest moon is up, the corn gathered in and every prudent mouse has been a gleaning to lay up food for the winter.

Timid Mouse: I know, I know.

Narrator: Replied the timid one.

Timid Mouse: And I would have gone a gleaning to, but if I so much just put my whiskers outside the demon of a cat will have me, and what good would even a bushel of green be to me then?

Old Mouse: You are unlucky!

Narrator: Declared the friend.

Old Mouse: I am an old mouse now, and as you see, no cat has ever caught me, nor so far as I know any member of my family, which seems even more numerous than usual. Come pull yourself together. Take a bit of a risk and when you are frisking out in a cornfield, you will forget all about the cat.

Timid Mouse: But he won't forget about me!

Narrator: Persisted the other.

Timid Mouse: For it is my fate, so long as I remain a mouse sooner or later to be caught by a cat! I cannot not escape my doom. There is no way out!

Old Mouse: Unless you are changed into a cat.

Narrator: Said the friend thoughtfully.

Old Mouse: Cats don't eat cats, I imagine.

Timid Mouse: But how could a mouse become a cat?

Narrator: Asked the timid one in surprise.

Old Mouse: I admit it might be a difficult operation.

Narrator: Said the friend.

Old Mouse: And only possible if performed under the spell of a wizard. As you know, we have such a person nearby. It might be worth your while to consult him at any rate and see if he has enough magic by him to do the job.

Timid Mouse: But how am I to get there before I'm caught by the cat?

Narrator: Asked the timid one, his whiskers, twitching, in trepidation.

Old Mouse: That you must find out for yourself.

Narrator: Replied, the friend taking a hasty leave, he was getting tired of this miserable fellow.

Timid Mouse: Oh, but wait!

Narrator: Begged the timid one.

Timid Mouse: Where does the wizard live?

Old Mouse: In a cave, deep in the forest.

Narrator: Said the friend.

Old Mouse: Oh, and by the way, he won't transform you free. You'll have to pay him you now.

Timid Mouse: But how can I pay him? I have nothing left except a little paw full of last year's rice.

Narrator: And timid one began to sniff and snuffle with self pity as he thought of his luckless state.

Sound Effect: (sniff and snuffle)

Old Mouse: Take him that! Take him that! Say you'll bring him something more when you've got it.

Narrator: Advised the friend and scuttled off...

Sound Effect: (scuttling off)

Narrator: ...for, he felt the neighborhood was not very cheerful.

Music: (soft music)

Narrator: The timid mouse did as he was told, when all was dark as pitch, he slipped out of his hole and made his way under the grass and bushes into the depths of the forest.

Sound Effect: (mouse walking/forest sounds)

Narrator: He had gone a long way when he saw a light shining. Then he heard a curious low humming sound much like that, of a top spinning at full speed.

Sound Effect: (top spinning at full speed)

Timid Mouse: That must be the wizard at his charming?

Narrator: He thought. Running up to the door of the cave, he gave a squeak just outside it.

Timid Mouse: Squeak.

Wizard: Who's, there?

Narrator: Rumbled, the wizard who was busy with charms and things, he hated to be disturbed in the middle of his work.

Timid Mouse: It is I, a frightened little mouse.

Narrator: Was the reply.

Wizard: Well come in and hang your fright behind the door.

Narrator: Said the wizard.

Wizard: But mind you, don't make a sound or you'll put me out of step with this charm I'm practicing!

Sound Effect: (top spinning at full speed)

Narrator: And he began to hum like a top again. When the mouse began to feel he was forgotten, he gave just

a tiny squeak.

Timid Mouse: Squeak.

Narrator: The wizard promptly threw a shoe at him.

Sound Effect: (shoe thrown)

Wizard: Botheration!

Narrator: He exclaimed angrily.

Wizard: Who are you to spoil a good charm?

Timid Mouse: Sorry sir.

Narrator: Apologized the mouse.

Timid Mouse: But I thought you had forgotten me.

Wizard: Of course I had forgotten you!

Narrator: Replied the wizard testily.

Wizard: Who are you to remember anyway? But since you are here, you better tell me what you've come for.

Timid Mouse: To ask your advice, wonderful sir.

Narrator: Said the mouse humbly.

Wizard: What about?

Narrator: Inquired the wizard.

Timid Mouse: I wish to be turned into a cat.

Narrator: Began the mouse, but the wizard silenced him with a roar of laughter.

Wizard: Ha! Ha! Ha!

Narrator: He chuckled.

Wizard: That's good. That's very good! But I thought mice detested cats? Oh but I see a reason you want to turn cannibal. You little villain and devour as many mice as you can catch.

Narrator: The mouse grew almost angry.

Timid Mouse: That's not my reason at all. I want to live a little longer, which I certainly shall not do if I stay as I am.

Wizard: Why?

Narrator: Asked the wizard.

Timid Mouse: The cat will catch me.

Narrator: was the doleful reply.

Wizard: Come here.

Narrator: Said the wizard, and he picked up a whippy little wand.

Sound Effect: (whippy little wand)

Narrator: The mouse shrank back at the sight of it, but the wizard assured him he wasn't going to beat him, only turn him into a cat.

Wizard: You must keep perfectly still while I'm doing it.

Narrator: Said the old man.

Wizard: And you'll have to learn to purr and growl. Your present squeak won't do at all for a cat.

Timid Mouse: Couldn't you put my noises into the spell?

Narrator: Asked the mouse.

Wizard: I could.

Narrator: Agreed the wizard.

Wizard: But it would add to the expense. This wand of mine is very powerful, but I can't of course use it on you free.

Timid Mouse: Are cats expensive?

Narrator: The mouse thought about his little horde of rice as he spoke.

Wizard: Well, not very as charges go.

Narrator: Replied the wizard.

Wizard: I have a price list beside the cauldron, let me see.

Sound Effect: (cauldron)

Narrator: He put on an immense pair of spectacles and as the mouse crept up to his side, began to read out loud.

Sound Effect: (paper shuffling)

Wizard: Mice to cats 14 annas. Black Cats with long whiskers and sharp claws one rupee. Cats to dogs...

Narrator: He broke off and looked at the mouse over the top of his spectacles.

Wizard: How would you like to be a dog mousey?

Narrator: He asked.

Timid Mouse: I don't like dogs much.

Narrator: Began the mouse. But the wizard was consulting his price list again.

Wizard: Let me see.

Narrator: He muttered.

Wizard: Cats to dogs. No, you don't want that. Monkeys to children, children to donkeys. Now, how would you like to be a donkey? It's a cheap charm unless you want a double bray.

Timid Mouse: What else have you got?

Narrator: Asked the mouse. He was excited at the thought of what he might soon become.

Wizard: Jackals to Hyenas, Hyenas to panthers, panthers to tigers.

Narrator: Reeled off the wizard when suddenly the mouse gave a loud squeak and leapt high.

Sound Effect: (loud squeak)

Timid Mouse: I'll be a tiger, a big bengal tiger!

Narrator: He declared.

Timid Mouse: And please make me many stripes and very broad. Oh, and I shall want a lot of long, sharp teeth!

Wizard: Stripes and teeth are the most expensive extras I've got! Tigers are dear in any case and a good roar costs a little fortune.

Narrator: Said the wizard.

Wizard: What are you prepared to pay?

Narrator: He added firmly. The mouse shrank back.

Timid Mouse: At present, just a few grains of rice.

Narrator: He said very humbly.

Timid Mouse: But when I'm a tiger, I expect my fortune

will improve.

Wizard: It should.

Narrator: Said the wizard.

Wizard: Well, I'll take the risk, change you from a mouse slap bang into a tiger. Relying on your promise to settle your bill as soon as you have settled into your new skin.

Timid Mouse: And that's very fair.

Narrator: Agreed the mouse. But he thought to himself

Timid Mouse: (thinking) When I'm a tiger, I will pay when I choose, even a wizard will have to be careful of me then.

Narrator: The wizard picked up his wand. The mouse got into position under it and although he quaked when he heard the swish and felt the wind, the magic stick set up, he kept as still as he could. The wizard began his loudest hum.

Sound Effect: (hum)

Wizard: Oh mouse be a tiger!

Narrator: He chanted. Only that not another word, but so strong was the charm that the wizard himself seemed nervous at sight of the ferocious looking tiger he had made.

Sound Effect: (tiger roaring)

Narrator: There the beast stood just in front of him. His broad stripes shining like ebony on the lighter fur with strong teeth bared and a threatening snarl the tiger who had been a mouse menaced him.

Sound Effect: (tiger roaring)

Narrator: Holding his wand the wizard climbed up quickly onto the very top of a cupboard, flapping the tails of his long coat at the tiger, he quavered.

Music: (menacing)

Wizard: Now don't start being noisy and naughty, if you please.

Narrator: A roar was the only reply.

Sound Effect: (tiger roaring)

Wizard: Be off!

Narrator: Shouted, the wizard brandishing his wand.

Wizard: Or I'll un-tiger you!

Narrator: The tiger took the hint and went bounding out of the cave.

Sound Effect: (sounds of jungle)

Narrator: Then he crashed through the jungle and came out onto the high road. With yells of terror every man, woman, and child upon it went fleeing. Even the bullocks, pulling empty country carts took fright and

dragged their loads into the ditch.

Sound Effect: (people screaming)

Tiger: How splendid!

Narrator: Purred the tiger.

Tiger: Everyone is afraid of me. I shall have things all my own way for a change!

Narrator: And for a time he did. Living comfortably on his kill. Then something happened, which made the mouse's heart inside the tiger quake with fear. He overheard two wood cutters talking and making fun of...

First Woodcutter: The big Bengal tiger.

Narrator: They said he was nothing of the sort, only a timid little mouse whose shape had been changed by the wizard's magic wand.

First Woodcutter: And I tell you.

Narrator: Said one of the men.

First Woodcutter: If that tiger sees a cat, he will bolt into a hole!

Second Woodcutter: Or if you mewed.

Narrator: Laughed the other.

Second Woodcutter: He'd be off to who knows where!

Narrator: When the tiger heard all this, he was simply furious. So his secret was out. The old fraud of a wizard must have been boasting.

Tiger: He's a cheat.

Music: (menacing)

Narrator: Thought the tiger.

Tiger: But I'll be even with him. With one blow of my paw, I'll knock the humming old scoundrel down, and he won't get up again either to spread tales about me and my family history all over the place! How dare he!

Narrator: So he set off to the wizard's cave and gave a loud double roar just to show he was coming.

Sound Effect: (tiger roaring)

Wizard: I can't see you now.

Narrator: Called out the wizard.

Wizard: I'm busy with charms and things.

Tiger: See you I must!

Narrator: Growled the tiger.

Wizard: What about?

Narrator: Asked the wizard.

Tiger: Your bill.

Narrator: Replied the tiger.

Wizard: Have you come to pay it?

Tiger: Yes, in full!

Narrator: Was the answer. The wizard wiped his hands free of spell and stuff, pulled down his sleeves and picked up his wand.

Wizard: Come in! Come in!

Narrator: He cried. The tiger stalked into the cave. Glaring at the wizard, he snarled out.

Tiger: I'm going to eat you!

Wizard: You'll find me tough.

Narrator: Replied the wizard gently and he gripped his wand more securely.

Tiger: I know, said the tiger, but your account has to be settled.

Wizard: Why so it has.

Narrator: Agreed the wizard, waving his wand with grace and vigor.

Wizard: Oh tiger be a mouse.

Narrator: He said.

Sound Effect: (whippy little wand)

Narrator: And a little mouse went scuttling out of the cave.

Sound Effect: (scuttling off)

Music: (Mystic Vibes fades out)

Narrator: You've been listening to "Mister Radio", and I'm your host Marshall. This program was written and produced by Marshall, our theme music was played by ULULATION. Special thanks to Ann Sandhorst, Director of Rights and Permissions at Scholastic Inc., Sonia Lynaugh, Director of Human Resources at Penguin Random House, Dr. Annemarie Roscello, Information Literacy Facilitator and her staff at the Sidney Silverman Library, Bergen Community College. And a shout out to my mentors, Jim Tanaka, Marcel Jovine, Alex and Sarah Jane.

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