

THE MOUSE CHRISTMAS
by Frank Ramirez

This short play is written for a children's choir and is designed to be performed simply, with or without memorization. It is about a woman whose nativity set was ruined by a flood. All that is left is the stable and the empty manger along with some old scraps of cloth. She leaves the nativity pieces out in sadness and walks away. The mice arrive and decide to help out by taking the parts of the characters we associate with the nativity set. Although the woman is frightened at first when she returns, she accepts the gift of the living nativity set from the mice and rewards them with a bag of seed corn.

The children will dress as mice, probably suggested by whiskers and gray felt caps with ears. They will each don in turn a costume that transforms them into one of the characters of the nativity set.

Although some songs are indicated, the children can sing whatever songs they have already learned. Make sure that each person stands in front of a microphone and is heard clearly.

[Enter Grandmother with ruined things.]

GRANDMOTHER

O what a season. My basement was flooded.
My boxes were ruined when all things were muddied.
All of my boxes for Christmas were wrecked!
What will my visiting family expect?
The tree decorations, the ivy and holly,
The garlands are ruined. Things won't be too jolly.
The pieces were ruined. All I've got is the manger,
And part of the stable. Will Christmas be stranger
Because I don't have a nativity set?
O woe, how much sadder can all of this get?

[Grandmother exits, leaving behind the manger, stable, and scraps of cloth.]

[Enter Outdoor and Indoor Mice]

OUTDOOR MICE

We are the mice who live out in the barn
But come to the house for some string and some yarn.
The winter is here so we stretch and we yawn,
But now we discover her set is all gone!
What on earth can we do, what in heaven's name say,
So Christmas can come to this woman today?

INDOOR MICE

We are the mice who live left of the basement,
And freezing we huddle by bushes and casement.
Christmas means cold, but it also means Savior!
Animals celebrate by their behavior!
Let's make the manger. See what we find!
We can make costumes from scraps left behind.

[Each mouse in turn takes up some scraps and dons them as a costume and recites his or her lines into the microphone.]

MOUSE KING

I have a present and follow the star
To seek where the hope of the world is, or are.
My grammar's uncertain, but I read the skies
And know from antiquity wherefore and whys.
A king has been born, one to save the whole world!
I bring a great present that here is unfurled.

[Children sing a stanza of "We Three Kings."]

MOUSE JOSEPH

Joseph's a carpenter. I love the wood
That gathers in shavings. It sure does taste good.
I make a nest for the mouselings to nestle,
So they can stay warm and grow up strong to wrestle
With all that the world throws against a poor mouse.
I'll be the carpenter. I'll build the house!

MOUSE COW

Moo! I say Moo! You say Brown Cow, How Now!
We'll start conversation 'twixt me and the sow.
My straw fills the manger, and it is my dinner,
But I can share supper. I won't be much thinner.
This baby is hungry, like all of his ilk.
The least I can do is provide him some milk.

MOUSE PIG

I am the pig. No offense here is taken.
But I am left out. I'm not here, ham or bacon.
When you put a manger set here on your shelf,
There's a menagerie, but not myself!
That's why I'm here. It's sort of exclusive.
Jesus saves all, he is very inclusive.

MOUSE ANGEL

Once a cold evening, Love journeyed on wings.
Two thousand years and this angel still sings.
I'll share peace on earth and God's grace to all people
Who seek for God's will. Let it ring from the steeple.
Gloria glory excelsis in Deo.
Let's look for a sandwich, I hope without mayo.

[*Children sing a stanza of "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear."*]

MOUSE SHEPHERD

Maybe the folks would enjoy a fast leopard.
I am content with just being a shepherd.
I watch the sheep, and they mostly say, "Baa."
They don't give me lip or say things like "Yo Ma!"
When I heard the angels sing, I came a running!
The sheep will take care of themselves, and no funning.
It's not very often you're there when a Savior
Is born. You don't worry about your behavior.
You run! Run as fast as your little legs can!
I may be a mouse, but for angels I ran!

[*Children sing a stanza of "Angels We Have Heard on High."*]

MOUSE MARY

I traveled longest through wind and through snows.
I will be Mary in ribbons and bows.
God asks us all in our time "yes?" or "no?"
A burden to carry, a cross we might show.
It may be an honor to be the Lord's chosen,
But not when you're so far from home and you're frozen.

I'll hold the baby and keep him so warm
And just like a mother protect him from harm.
From now in the present to days from of old,
So many children have suffered from cold.
Hope comes in packages small but still able.
Let's protect babies, and start in this stable.

MOUSE BABY

I am the smallest, no if, but, or maybe,
And that's why I'm chosen, and I'll be the baby.
Jesus was given that long ago morn
To save us from sin, and so when he was born
The power of evil was conquered, so here
We mice have assembled and we feel no fear!

[Children sing a stanza of “What Child Is This?”]

[Enter Grandmother with a bag of corn. The mice stay in place. She takes up a broom but will stop before she strikes the mice!]

GRANDMOTHER

EEK! I see mice. Let me get out the broom
And sweep all the creatures right out of the room.
But wait—I see shepherds and angels and maybe
A king here and there and, of course, here’s the baby!
You’ve helped me to celebrate! Jesus is born!
Please take to your homes this gift of sweet corn.

ALL THE MICE

Hooray! Hallelujah! We mice love your present!
This corn will make cold days seem awfully pleasant.
And we in our turn will stay out of your house
The rest of this winter. We’re that kind of mouse.
Merry Christmas to all, may the Christ light shine bright,
And help everybody remember this sight.

[All sing a stanza of “Joy to the World.”]

Other possible songs:

“The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy”; “O Little Town of Bethlehem”; “Silent Night”

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