

Cyril and the Sewer

C.S. Ainsworth

In the middle of London in an old Georgian house,
Lived Nigel and Gertie and Cyril the mouse.
Their house was so big it had sixteen floors,
Thirty-two windows and a huge wooden door.

Inside the door stood a grandfather clock,
Which reported the time with a tick and a tock!
There was a ballroom, a kitchen and a couple of cooks,
A pantry and a library full of musty old books.

They had a butler and a maid to fulfil all their wishes,
Like cleaning their rooms and collecting their dishes.
This house was so big, if you played hide and seek,
There was a very grave risk you'd get lost for a week.

Five generations had lived in this house,
And that made our Cyril one very lucky mouse.
But still, in the holidays, when his friends weren't around,
He found he grew bored with the house, and its grounds.

"An adventure!" he thought, "Now that's what I need!"
Full of brave derring-do and some dangerous deeds!
An Adventure!" he thought, "Now that would be grand!
To discover new places, new people, new lands!"

So with that in mind he packed up some wares,
Some food for his supper and some money for his fares.
Then he pulled on his wellies and he slipped out the house,
Out into the world stepped that rash little mouse.

At first he didn't know what he should do.
To go left? To go right? He had not a clue.
So he found himself wandering the streets all alone,
"Not much fun, being one, just me, on my own."

But in time he came to the centre of town,
There were buses and cars and shops all around.
Finding a staircase he followed it down,
To a platform in a station, deep underground.

It was quite dark down there and with a drip and a drop,
Water fell from the ceiling with a plip and a plop.
Just then, out of the shadows, from the tunnel on the right,
Stepped quite the most curious and peculiar sight.

It was a mouse, just like Cyril, or so it appeared,
But yet, he could see, as this strange mouse drew near,
That his shoes were old fashioned and losing their soles,
Whilst his coat was quite literally covered in holes.

There was a patch on his knee and a tear in his britches,
And his shirt, what a sight! It was covered in stitches.
"Hello," said the stranger, "What brings you here?
This station's disused, it's been closed for a year."

"I'm on an adventure," said Cyril with pride,
Then he looked at his feet and adding, he sighed:
"But now that I'm here I'm lost and I'm scared.
I wish when I'd started I'd been better prepared.

Now I'm cold and I'm hungry and I'm all on my own.
I'm lost in this city and I'm so far from home!"
The strange mouse gave a smile like a beacon of light,
Then drew himself up - a full two inches of height.

“Don’t you fear, never worry, you’re not so alone,
For this city, this tunnel, this platform’s *my* home!
It’s late now and dark, all the people have left.
Which means, best of all, do you know? Can you guess?

I can show you around and together we’ll see,
The whole of the city and all of it free.
We can play in the park on the swings and the slide,
We can visit the fairground and try out the rides.

We can jump on a boat and travel the Thames,
Everything’s so much more fun with a friend!
This is great, just the best, can’t you see that it’s true?
I can show you the city, there’s so much we can do!

We’ll have fun, you and I, of this I am sure,
Who cares that you’re rich and I am quite poor?
Friendship is friendship, it matters not where you’re from,
You just need to find someone with whom you belong.

You and I are the same my new friend, little mouse,
Though I live in a sewer and you live in a house.
Who cares if you’re tall, if you’re short, thin or round,
We can meet in the middle and find common ground,

Everyone’s different on the outside I know,
But what matters is inside your heart and your soul.
My name is Jack,” said the mouse with a grin,
“Now come on, let’s go, let our story begin!”

So together, a pair, they set off to discover,
All the sights and the sounds that the city could offer.
By the end of the day they were the firmest of friends,
And Cyril knew that he’d never be lonely again.

You see it's true that it matters not one jot, not one score,
Friendship is friendship of that I am sure.
So whomever you are please remember this just:
Everything's better with a friend you can trust.

THE END