

Marcel Mouse

by Hilton Ayrey

Marcel was feeling increasingly anxious about his dad. The mouse family had just moved from a damp, draughty old shed and everything was perfect. They had a cosy warm nest under this new house, a great place for the cold winter months ahead. Marcel's dad, Pedro, had found some holes around the water pipes that went up into the kitchen so there was easy access to the inside. And the humans always left plenty of food scraps lying around so there was a feast every night.

The problem was that tonight Pedro had gone foraging on his own and he hadn't returned. Marcel was very aware of the dangers that lurked inside the house. His head was full of terrifying stories about the cats who tormented mice with their sharp claws and teeth, and the delicious cheese on the cunning traps that the humans set. But no matter how frightened he was, Marcel knew he had to do something. If his father was in danger he had to try and help.

He waited until his mother was busy and scurried away from the nest. It didn't take long to climb the up the water pipes, wiggled his way into the kitchen and soon he was peeking out from the space under the stove in the kitchen. The loud snoring noises coming from down the hallway told him that the humans had gone to bed a long time ago. It was very dark, cold and unfriendly in the kitchen. From under the table he heard a scuffle and then a noise that made his heart jump. It was a quiet mouse whimper. Marcel knew it was Pedro and he knew that he was in trouble.

Without hesitating, he dashed across the kitchen tiles and hid behind a large pot plant. Under the table he saw his father lying on the floor, and standing over him was a huge cat. It was patting and prodding Pedro with its paw, wanting to continue with its game. Marcel knew that his dad was playing dead, waiting for a moment of inattention that would give him the chance to escape. Marcel had to come up with a distraction to give his father that chance.

STORY STRUCTURE

(Use this with Stage 5A)

Setting: Where does the story take place?

Characters: Who are the characters in the story?

Problem: What is the problem in the story?

Feelings: How do the main characters feel about the problem?

Action: What action do the characters take?

Outcome: How did the story end?

Themes: Is there a lesson in the story?

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. Make up your own title for this story.
2. Fill in the flow chart for the story structure.
3. Write your own ending to the story.
4. Story Map - draw a map of the settings in this story showing where all the action happens.
5. Design a cat trap so that Marcel and his family won't be bothered by the cat anymore. Draw diagrams with labels to explain your great ideas.