

My Pet Mouse



Little Beggar

When I was eight years old, my dad was struggling with tuberculosis. There was a period of time when he was bed-ridden at home in an upstairs bedroom of our house at 610 North Kanawha St., Beckley, West Virginia. During that time, the entire family usually gathered together in that bedroom, keeping dad company, playing games, telling stories or discussing the events of the day.

One evening, we were sitting in sort of a circle a few feet away from dad's bed when a mouse came into the room, stopped right in the middle of the circle and looked up at us. We were munching on snacks of vegetables and apples and the mouse seemed to be asking for something to eat. Mom had just finished eating an apple, so leaned over and put the core on the floor. The mouse went right to work, eating as much of what was left of the apple as he could. Then he cut the core in two, carried half away, out of the room, then returned to

retrieve the other half. As I recall, this event was repeated for another evening or two.

A day or so later, I discovered the mouse dead, in a trap. Mom had set a trap for him. I was extremely upset with her and let her know it in no uncertain terms. She explained in detail why we couldn't have mice about in the house but it still took quite a while for me to get over it.

Later on, we acquired a cat who was very adept at keeping the house mouse free. I was able to rationalize the cat/mouse thing so it didn't bother me. The cat was the first of several over the next nine years.

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