

"Belling the Cat"

ACT ONE

Scene 1

AT RISE: Lights brighten on the inside of a cozy mouse den with little chairs and stools. OLD MOUSE and YOUNG MOUSE were there as well as a smattering of other mice, all chattering over each other. An off-stage NARRATOR is also there.

OLD MOUSE: Order! Order! We have come together today to figure out how to protect ourselves from ...The Cat!

All the mice start to boo.

OLD MOUSE: We must find some way to know when she is coming, so we will have time to run away.

NARRATOR: The mice sat and thought about it. Many plans were discussed but none of them was thought good enough. Something had to be done since the mice lived in constant fear of her claws and they barely left their dens during the day or at night.

OLD MOUSE: That's it? No one has any other plans?

YOUNG MOUSE: Excuse me? Excuse me?

OLD MOUSE: Yes, Young Mouse. Do you have a plan?

YOUNG MOUSE: Yes I do. I have a plan that seems very simple but I know it will be successful. All we have to do is hang a bell around the Cat's neck. When we hear the bell ringing, we will know immediately that our enemy is coming.

NARRATOR: All of the mice were surprised that they had not thought of such a plan before. But while the crowd of mice were rejoicing over their good fortune, Old Mouse had a concerned look on their face.

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OLD MOUSE: (*shouting*) Attention! Attention! We have a problem.

The room went silent.

OLD MOUSE: I will say that the plan of Young Mouse is very good. But let me ask the question: Who will put a bell on the Cat?

NARRATOR: The room was filled with disappointing sighs. After all, it is one thing to say that something should be done, but quite a different matter to do it.