

Welcome to *Easy Stories in English*, the podcast that will take your English from OK to Good, and from Good to Great.

I am Ariel Goodbody, your host for this show. This is an exclusive story for beginners. The name of the story is *The City Mouse and the Country Mouse*.

OK, I'll just explain some words that are in today's story.

When you **move house**, you change where you live. For example, if you are born in Bath and move to London, you start living in London. To be honest, I want to move to London! But it's very expensive. You can also move country.

A **hole** is an empty space in something. If you have some very old clothes, they will probably have holes in them. You can put your finger in the hole. Some people get very angry and hit their wall, and then they have a hole in their wall. Not a good idea.

When you are having a meal with someone, and you want them to take food themselves instead of waiting for you to give them food, you can say, '**Help yourself!**' It is less formal and more friendly when people help themselves. When you are at a formal meal, you cannot help yourself. You have to wait for someone to give you food.

Taste is how food feels in your mouth. Basically, it is whether it is good food or not. For example, I think McDonald's tastes good, but some people think it tastes bad. I think dark chocolate tastes better than milk chocolate, but you might think the opposite.

Drunk means you have drunk alcohol, like beer or wine, and you feel strange. Actually, most people like getting drunk. In the UK, beer and cider, which is made with apples, are popular types of alcohol to get drunk. British people mostly like getting drunk very much. Personally, I don't drink often, because I don't like how you feel afterwards.

Poison is a type of food or drink that kills the person who eats it. In the past, people often put poison in someone's food, so that when they ate it they would die. But now, the police can look for poison in someone's blood. So if you give someone poison, they will know. People still use poison to kill some animals, like mice and rats.

Hide, and the past tense is **hid**, is when you make it so people can't see something. For example, maybe you are eating chocolate, but you don't want other people to see it, because then they will want to eat the chocolate. So you hide the chocolate in the cupboard so that they won't see it. You can also hide yourself. Maybe you don't want your teacher to see you, because you forgot to do the homework, so you hide behind a door.

A **trap** is something you put down to catch an animal. For example, if you have mice in your home and you want to kill them, you put a mouse trap on the floor, with a piece of cheese on it. When the mouse sees the cheese, they go and eat it, but then the trap closes on them and they die.

When you want to grow a plant, you first need a **seed**. A seed is a small, brown thing that you put in the ground. You put water on a seed, and the sun shines on it, and slowly it grows into a plant. You can also eat seeds, and they're very good for you. Common types of seeds are sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds and sesame seeds.

OK, so listen and enjoy!

The City Mouse and the Country Mouse

Once, there were two mice. They grew up together in the country, and they were best friends. They played, ate and drank together, and they slept in the same room. But the older mouse always said, 'Dear friend, don't you want to leave this place?' The younger mouse did not understand. 'I love living here,' he said. 'Why would I want to leave?'

Then, years later, the older mouse did leave, and **moved** to the city. The younger mouse missed his friend, and he often thought about him. How was life in the big city? He thought it must be very exciting. He must live in a big house and have lots of food and lots of friends.

One day, the country mouse received a letter from his friend. He was very excited, and opened it quickly.

Dear friend,

I am so sorry I did not write before. Life in the city is very fast, as you know. I have met so many mice and done so many things. It really is a different world.

Come and visit me for a week. You will see how wonderful things are, and you will want to move here, too.

The country mouse said, 'Well, it is good to hear from him! But I do not think I'll want to move to the city. Still, it will be very nice to see him!'

So he packed his bag and travelled to the city. When he arrived at his friend's house, he could not believe it.

The apartment was very big, and had lots of nice furniture in it. Everything was soft and clean. When he looked out of the window, he could see all kinds of interesting buildings. The city mouse told him about the parks and the theatre and the parties that happened there.

'And the family is never here,' he said, 'so I have the whole apartment for myself.'

'The family?' said the country mouse.

'Oh, yes. People live here, you see. But when they are home, I just go into that **hole**.'

He pointed at a hole in the wall. Inside, there was a small room with a bed. It was a bit like the country mouse's house, but there was no light.

'Anyway, shall we have some dinner?'

And what a dinner they had! They ate chicken and ham and grapes and tomatoes...

'**Help yourself**, help yourself,' said the city mouse, so the country mouse ate a lot of food, and it all **tasted** so good. They also drank wine and got quite **drunk**. After that, they had something called 'chocolate', and the country mouse thought he had never tasted something so nice.

Then he saw a bottle by the wall, which said **POISON**. 'Ah, that looks interesting! I think I will help myself.'

'No!' cried the city mouse. 'You cannot drink poison!'

The country mouse was holding the bottle, and he stopped. 'Why? Do you think I am too drunk, friend?' He opened the bottle. 'Remember, I could always drink more than you.'

'If you drink that, you will die!' said the city mouse.

He ran and pushed the bottle on the floor. It fell and broke into many pieces.

'Oh no, oh no!' said the city mouse. 'The family will think I did it!'

'Is that such a problem?' said the country mouse. 'You can **hide** in the hole.'

'Sometimes they lay **traps**,' explained his friend. 'They put food on the table, but it has poison on it. Er, don't worry, I made sure our food didn't have poison on it.'

'How lovely...' said the country mouse. He was starting to think life in the city wasn't that nice.

'MEOW!'

'Oh no!' cried the city mouse. 'Quick, quick, hide!'

He jumped off the table and ran to the hole.

'What's happening?' said the country mouse.

Then he saw a horrible hairy thing running into the room. It was a cat!

The two mice ran into the hole, just before the cat caught them. The country mouse was so afraid, and so was his friend.

'Oh no, oh no, oh no!' said the country mouse.

'Shh!' said the city mouse. 'If we are quiet, she will leave.'

The cat tried to put its hand inside the hole and take them out, but the hole was too small. Finally, the cat left.

'Oh dear,' said the country mouse. 'I think I will leave tomorrow morning.'

'What are you saying?' said the city mouse. 'I invited you to stay for a week, and you're leaving after one day? Aren't we friends? I want to show you the parks and the theatre, and we haven't gone to any parties!'

'I'm sorry, dear friend. But if I stay here a week, I don't think I will live to go home! The city is not for me.'

The city mouse was sad, but he understood. 'It is hard to live in the city. I suppose you are not strong enough.'

'Yes, I suppose.'

So the next day, the country mouse came home. Now he saw everything in a different way. His house was so small. He had so little furniture, and it was so dirty. When he looked outside, there were no interesting buildings. There were no parks, no theatres and no parties. He ate **seeds** all day every day, and there was no chocolate.

But did he need a big house? There were big fields to walk and play in. Did he need all that furniture? The grass was soft and clean. When he looked outside, he saw lots of trees and beautiful blue skies, so he didn't need any buildings. And maybe there weren't parties, but his friends came to his house and they drank beer and laughed all night. Yes, seeds were boring, but also, there was no poison on them!

And most importantly, there weren't any horrible cats!

No, his life in the country was simple, but it was still a good life.

A few weeks later, a visitor arrived at the country mouse's door. It was his friend from the city.

'My dear friend, what happened to you?'

The mouse looked very bad. Some of his hair was gone, he had a big hole in his ear, and he looked very afraid.

'F-friend, I have decided to move back home. I thought the city was for me, but it is not. Please, can I stay with you for a bit?'

'Of course, friend. It will be like when we were young. Welcome home.'

And the older mouse was so happy that he started to cry.

THE END

Thank you for listening. If you enjoy the podcast and want to get more involved, why not join Ariel's Book Team?

Soon, I will be releasing books for *Easy Stories in English*. These will be collections of short stories and short novels for ESL students.

If you join Ariel's Book Team, I will send you the books before they are finished for FREE! You can read them before everyone else.

So why am I doing this?

One: I want to hear what you think of the books before I release them. Your comments and feedback will really help me make the best books ever.

Two: I would be very happy if you left reviews of the books on the websites where people can buy them, for example Amazon, Kobo, Google Play and Apple Books.

If you're interested in joining, go to EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/BookTeam. That's EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/BookTeam. Thank you!