

(SAMPLE)

TOWN MOUSE AND COUNTRY MOUSE

CAST LIST

Town Mouse

Country Mouse

2 Rabbits (*could be more*)

3 Squirrels (*could be more*)

Mrs Hedgehog

Ginger Cat

Black Cat

2 Rats (*could be more*)

4 Spiders (*could be more*)

Dog

Minimum 17 speaking parts.

TOWN MOUSE AND COUNTRY MOUSE

SCENE 1

The play starts in the country, which can be suggested by either scenery depicting the countryside, a back-projected countryside scene, or some foliage on the stage. In the centre of the stage is The Country Mouse's house, which is represented by a table and two chairs, two little beds on the floor (sleeping bags or fold-up beds) and a table with various props on. (See Production Notes).

The front of the stage is meant to represent outside the house. When the play starts, there are two rabbits nibbling grass at the front of the stage. The Country Mouse comes in carrying an armful of ears of wheat and berries. (See Diagrams at end of play.)

COUNTRY MOUSE

Hello rabbits! Isn't it a lovely day?

RABBIT 1

Yes. It's a very nice day and you seem to be very cheerful. Why is that?

COUNTRY MOUSE

Oh I'm preparing for a visit from my cousin. He's a town mouse, you know. He's never visited the country before and he's coming to stay for a week.

RABBIT 2

A whole week!

COUNTRY MOUSE

Yes. A whole week. We'll have such fun. I know we will.

RABBIT 1

I hope you're right. When my relatives come to visit from the farm, they do nothing but complain.

COUNTRY MOUSE

Why do they complain?

RABBIT 1

Oh, nothing is to their liking. They miss their home. You know what it's like. Animals always prefer their own surroundings.

RABBIT 2

Yes. Aunty Blackberry always says our warren is too cold. And Uncle Hawthorn always complains about the quality of the grass we eat. We're always glad when they go home, aren't we?

RABBIT 1

We certainly are.

COUNTRY MOUSE

Well it won't be like that with my cousin. He's really looking forward to his visit. I got a letter by magpie post this morning. He'll be here today and I've lots to get done.

(Some squirrels run on and begin playing tag around Country Mouse)

SQUIRREL 1

Isn't it a lovely day?

RABBIT 2

It certainly is. Mouse's cousin is coming to visit.

SQUIRREL 2

Is he? Where does he live then?

COUNTRY MOUSE

In the big town.

SQUIRREL 3

Oh. I bet he'll find it really quiet here, then.

RABBIT 1

I bet he will.

COUNTRY MOUSE

I'm sure he'll enjoy the peace and quiet.

SQUIRREL 1

Who says it's quiet? *(Grabbing Squirrel 2)* Got you! You're it!

SQUIRREL 2

You'd better run fast or I'm going to catch you!

(All the squirrels run off laughing and shouting)

COUNTRY MOUSE

No, it's certainly not quiet when the squirrels are around. Well, I must get on with my work.

Goodbye, rabbits.

(The rabbits hop off and the Country Mouse busies himself putting away the food and tidying up)

COUNTRY MOUSE

Now, let's see. I've got the spare bed made up. I've got extra food in the larder. Now I must sweep the floor.

(He gets a broom and begins sweeping. Town Mouse comes on stage, looking very harassed and carrying a heavy bag. He has bits of twigs sticking out of his clothing and he is puffing a lot.)

COUNTRY MOUSE

Cousin! I wasn't expecting you until later! What a pleasant surprise!

TOWN MOUSE

Thank God I've found you! I've been looking for your house in every hedgerow between here and the main road. Everything looks the same in the country.

COUNTRY MOUSE

You do look a bit messy!

TOWN MOUSE

Yes. I fell into a ditch at some point and I went through a bramble patch by mistake.

COUNTRY MOUSE

You poor thing! I didn't think my house was that difficult to find! Let me take your bag. *(He takes the bag and almost drops it)* My goodness your bag is heavy! Whatever have you got in it?

TOWN MOUSE

On just changes of clothes – for when we go out, you know.

COUNTRY MOUSE

Go out?

TOWN MOUSE

Yes. To see the sights, visit friends, go to the theatre – that sort of thing.

COUNTRY MOUSE

Oh. Well I think you saw the sights on your way here. We may visit some friends but not after dark and we have no theatre.

TOWN MOUSE

Oh. Why don't you go out after dark?

COUNTRY MOUSE

Too dangerous. We might get eaten by an owl or a fox.

TOWN MOUSE

How dreadful. We wouldn't want to do that then, would we?

COUNTRY MOUSE

Anyway, you're here now. Sit down and take off your muddy shoes and I'll brew a nice pot of acorn coffee.

TOWN MOUSE

Sounds lovely.

(Town Mouse sits down at the table and takes off his shoes. Country Mouse puts a coffee pot on the table and two cups. Then he puts a plate of nuts on the table. He pours two cups of coffee and sits down opposite his cousin.)

TOWN MOUSE

(Drinking the coffee and pulling a face) This is...er...unusual. What did you say it was?

COUNTRY MOUSE

Acorn coffee. I roast the acorns myself.

TOWN MOUSE

Amazing.

COUNTRY MOUSE

Have a nut.

TOWN MOUSE

I don't suppose you have any biscuits, do you?

COUNTRY MOUSE

Biscuits?

TOWN MOUSE

Yes, you know. Digestive biscuits, ginger nuts, custard creams – that sort of thing?

COUNTRY MOUSE

No, sorry. I don't have any biscuits. What are they made of?

TOWN MOUSE

Oh flour, butter, sugar and whatever else you have to hand.

COUNTRY MOUSE

I'm afraid we don't have any butter or sugar here in the hedgerow. The farm mice sometimes get their paws on such things. But they are three fields away and it's a rather dangerous journey.

TOWN MOUSE

Right. I'll have a nut then.

VOICE OFFSTAGE

Cooooe! Is anyone there?

COUNTRY MOUSE

(Jumping up and looking happy) It's Mrs Hedgehog! Do come in Mrs Hedgehog.

(Mrs Hedgehog comes in, carrying a basket)

MRS HEDGEHOG

I hope you don't mind me coming round but I heard about your cousin's visit and I thought you might like some fresh elderberry juice.

COUNTRY MOUSE

Oh most welcome, most welcome. May I introduce my cousin. Mrs Hedgehog – Town Mouse.

(Mrs Hedgehog and Town Mouse shake hands)

MRS HEDGEHOG

Charmed I'm sure.

COUNTRY MOUSE

Do sit down and have a cup of coffee,

MRS HEDGEHOG

Oh most kind. I'd love to.

TOWN MOUSE

Perhaps I might have some of that elderberry juice, rather than coffee?

MRS HEDGEHOG

(Very pleased and getting a bottle of purple juice out of her basket)

Of course. I made it yesterday, so it's nice and fresh.

(Country mouse fetches a cup and Mrs Hedgehog pours some juice.

Town mouse drinks it quickly and then pulls a terrible face)

MRS HEDGEHOG

Oh dear! Is there something wrong Mr Town Mouse?

TOWN MOUSE

(Barely able to speak) It's just very very sour, Mrs Hedgehog.

MRS HEDGEHOG

Oh yes. That's the way we like it .

COUNTRY MOUSE

I think the problem is that my cousin is used to food and drink with lots of sugar in.

MRS HEDGEHOG

Oh dear. Sugar. No we don't have any sugar here.

TOWN MOUSE

I do apologise for being so rude. The juice just took me by surprise, that's all. It's lovely juice.

MRS HEDGEHOG

Thankyou. I brought some cakes too.

TOWN MOUSE

Cakes!