

GRANDPA AND THE MOUSE

(The original version)

The scene was sweet simplicity,
And tranquil domesticity.
The place was dear Aunt Virtue's house,
The characters: a little mouse,
Aunt Virtue, and her pots, and lids,
And also six delightful kids;
And grandpa in his easy chair,
Reading the paper, and dozing there.

Aunt Virtue was busy stirring batter,
While around her with a constant chatter
Were three little boys with spoons held so
To swipe quick dips of the sweet cake dough.
They knew that they could not annoy,
This Robert, John, and little Roy,
Aunt Virtue's nature was just too sweet
To ever whack a deserving seat.

Emma was sweeping the living room,
While Clella was playing a merry tune.
Wealthy had found a secluded nook,
Curled up in a chair, and was reading a book.

All at once Emma, her broom in mid air,
Saw a small mouse run under a chair.
She let out a shriek, and then gave chase,
And soon there were kids all over the place.
All except Wealthy; oh do not look please,
She had her dress pulled up to her knees,
And perching just as high as she could,
Did a reconnaissance job that was good.

"Roy," she shouted, "go get the cat!"
Bob took a swing at the mouse with a bat.
This turned the mouse towards the dumb waiter,
John scored a near-miss with a hand-grenade tater.
In all the excitement Aunt Virtue dropped an egg
Which turned the scared mouse right toward Grandpa's leg.
In the meantime dear Grandpa had stood up to see
What in the world the commotion could be.

He didn't know that the mouse, helter skelter,
Had run up his pant leg for refuge and shelter.

All that he saw were six kids standing around
Just looking at him, not making a sound.
He adjusted his glasses, our dear old Grandpa,
Then picked up his paper and muttered, "Pshaw, Pshaw!"

When he started to sit each kid held his breath
'cause he knew at a glance that it meant sudden death
For the poor little mouse held secure in his pants
By the peculiar angle of Gramps' sitting stance.
By this time Gramps was aware of the mouse;
He let out a yell that rattled the house.
But alas; the poor man couldn't hang in mid air--
Then the kids heard a crunch on the seat of the chair!

When Grandfather sprang again to his feet,
That lump that had been held secure on his seat
Fell down his pant leg and onto the floor
Where it lay in a gathering puddle of gore.

Who'd ever think that the back of Gramp's lap
Would ever turn out to be a mouse trap?
But; you just have to hand it to dear old Grandpa,
He just settled back and muttered "Pshaw, Pshaw."

A.F. Dalley, Jr.
("Gramps" was John E. Dalley)