

# Marty MOUSE



FIRST  
CLASS  
MISCHIEF



Claire Powell



LITTLE DITCH  
POST OFFICE

This Book Belongs To:

For Wirksworth,  
and the wonderful people  
(and energetic pheasants)  
I have met there.



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AIR



# Marty MOUSE



With Love,  
Claire Powell



WALKER  
BOOKS



Turn Your Book!

Welcome to  
**LITTLE DITCH**

THE ROCKIES

WHISKER  
WARRENS

FOGGY  
FOREST

MUDI  
POOL

THORNY THICKETT

DORCOTE  
MANOR

ROUND-  
THE-BEND

THE POST  
OFFICE

LITTLE  
EYE  
GEAR

MISTY  
OAK

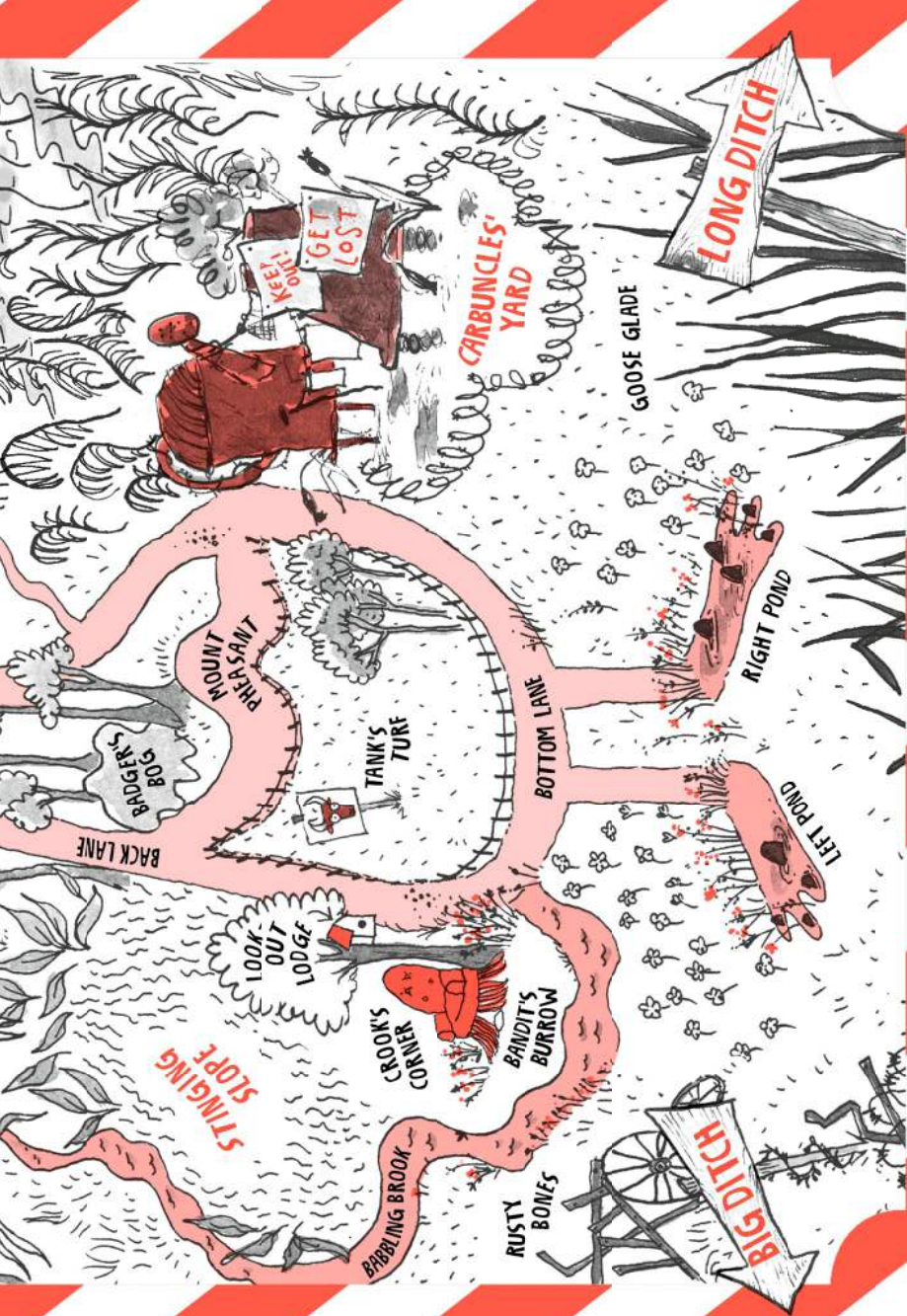
CREEPY  
WILLOW

TRAIL  
END

STUMPY  
HOLLOW

ROTTEN  
WID





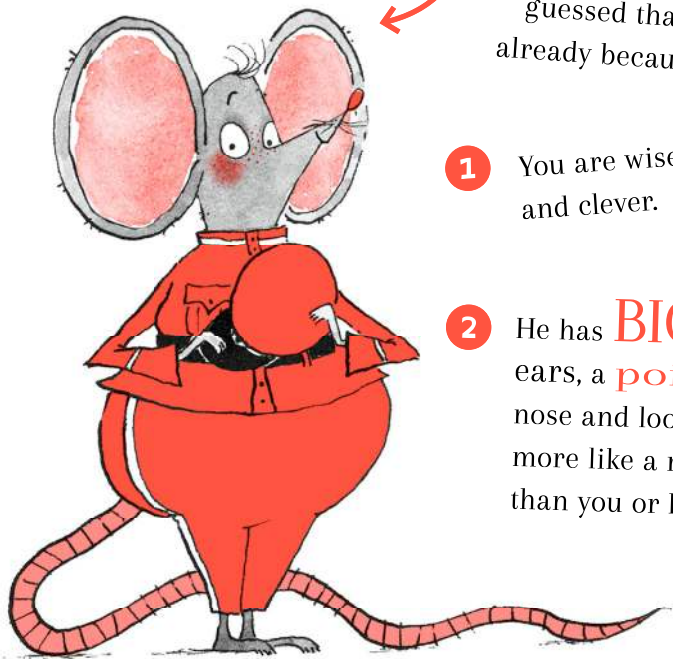
Marty Moose **ISN'T** a moose.

He is quite clearly a **mouse**.

But you probably  
guessed that  
already because:

1 You are wise  
and clever.

2 He has **BIG**  
ears, a **pointy**  
nose and looks no  
more like a moose  
than you or I do.





When Marty's name was  
being written on his

## BIRTH CERTIFICATE


an unfortunate blob of ink fell  
from the end of the clerk's pen  
and splodged - in a perfect circle -  
where the 'u' should have been.

This document was

**VERY IMPORTANT  
AND  
LEGALLY BINDING**

and it could not be changed.

So Marty has, from that day forth,  
been known not as Marty Mouse but as...



NAME: *Marty Mouse*



≡ PROLOGUE ≡

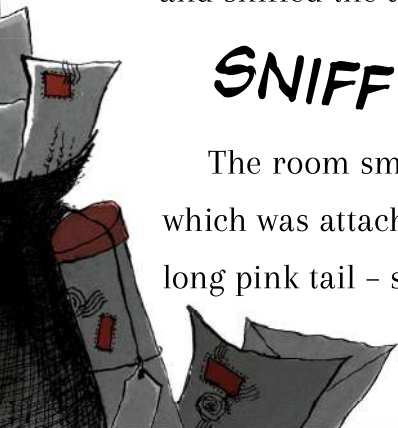



It was late in Little Ditch when a door in the post office opened, just a crack.

A long whiskery snout poked through and sniffed the air.

**SNIFF SNIFF**

The room smelled empty, so the snout – which was attached to a hairy body with a long pink tail – stepped inside.





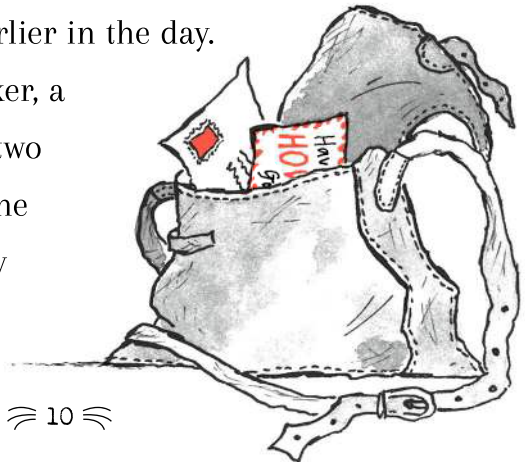
Two hairy feet  
with uncut claws **TIP**  
**TAPPED** across the  
wooden floor.

**TIP** **TAP** **TIP**  
**TAP**

The feet crept over to a postbag in  
the corner of the room. The bag was  
stuffed full of parcels and letters that  
had been sorted earlier in the day.

Quick as a whisker, a  
hairy paw dropped two  
more parcels into the  
bag. Then, the hairy  
feet

**TIP**





# TIP TAPPED

across the wooden floor, through the door, and disappeared into the night...

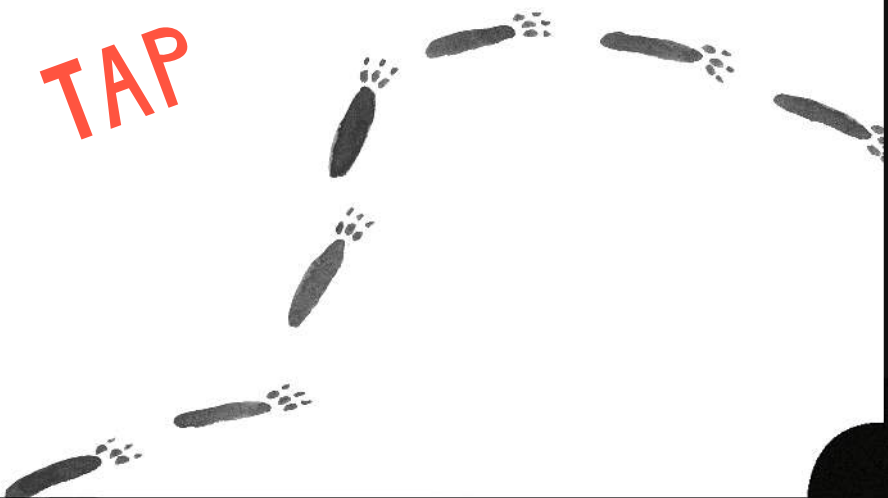
An act of first-class mailbag mischief had just been committed.

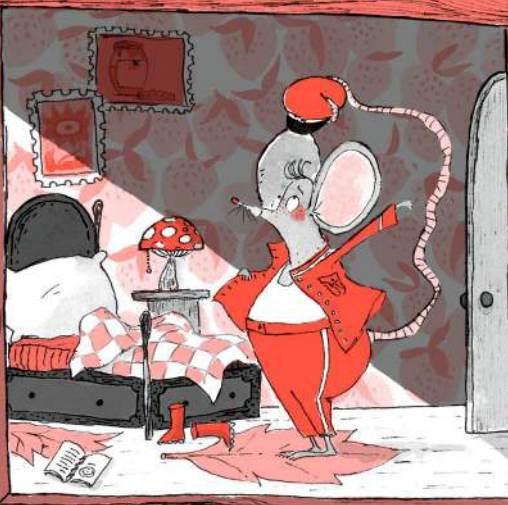
TIP


TAP

TIP

TAP







≡ CHAPTER ONE ≡



**DON'T LOSE  
A WHISKER**

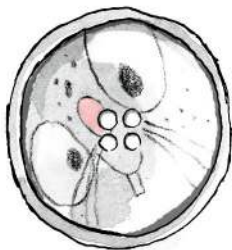
Marty's **BIG** day was finally here!

He was about to start his first ever job as Postmouse of Little Ditch. He had to report to the post office in Thorny Thickett at 8 a.m. sharp.

If you haven't been, Thorny Thickett is up over Mount Pheasant, past Badger's Bog, under Creepy Willow and right Round-the-Bend. If you end up in Foggy Forest, you've gone too far - and you'll want to get out **QUICK!**



Marty was prepared. He had practised his whistle, ironed his uniform and combed his whiskers. He had polished his buttons so well he could see his reflection in them.



Even so, his belly was filled with jitters.

Then, it rumbled. **Ravenous rascals!**

Marty thought. *I must be hungry!*

Marty scampered towards the kitchen but came to a stop in front of a portrait of his Great-Aunt Ada. She was known as the GREATEST POSTMOUSE WHO EVER LIVED after she was carried off by an owl on Christmas Eve, stuffed into a pie and almost cooked at 140 degrees for 90 minutes.

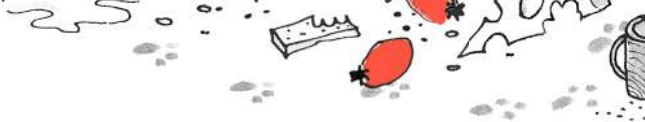
A well-timed power cut had allowed her to escape, and she'd still delivered her Christmas cards with time to spare for a mince pie.



Marty took a deep breath. “**Ooh, whimpering whistles!** I hope I’m as good as you were, Great-Aunt Ada.”

Marty had a small family (by mouse standards). 27 brothers, eleven sisters, nine aunts (some Great, some not so great), fourteen uncles (three others had unfortunately been swallowed whole by a cat named Wiggles), two grandmothers, three grandfathers,





approximately 142 cousins (exact number unknown), one mother and one father.

Only his Great-Aunt Ada had ever been a Postmouse, though. Until she'd hung up her postbag last year and retired to Snoring-on-Sea.

And today, it was Marty's turn.

To Marty,

I hear from your father that you're following in my paw prints and becoming a Postmouse. I'm sure you'll find it as exciting as I did. Every day was different! I confess I miss the thrill of the round and the smell of the stamps out here in Snoring-on-Sea!

A good Postmouse never leaves a parcel behind, Marty - always remember that!

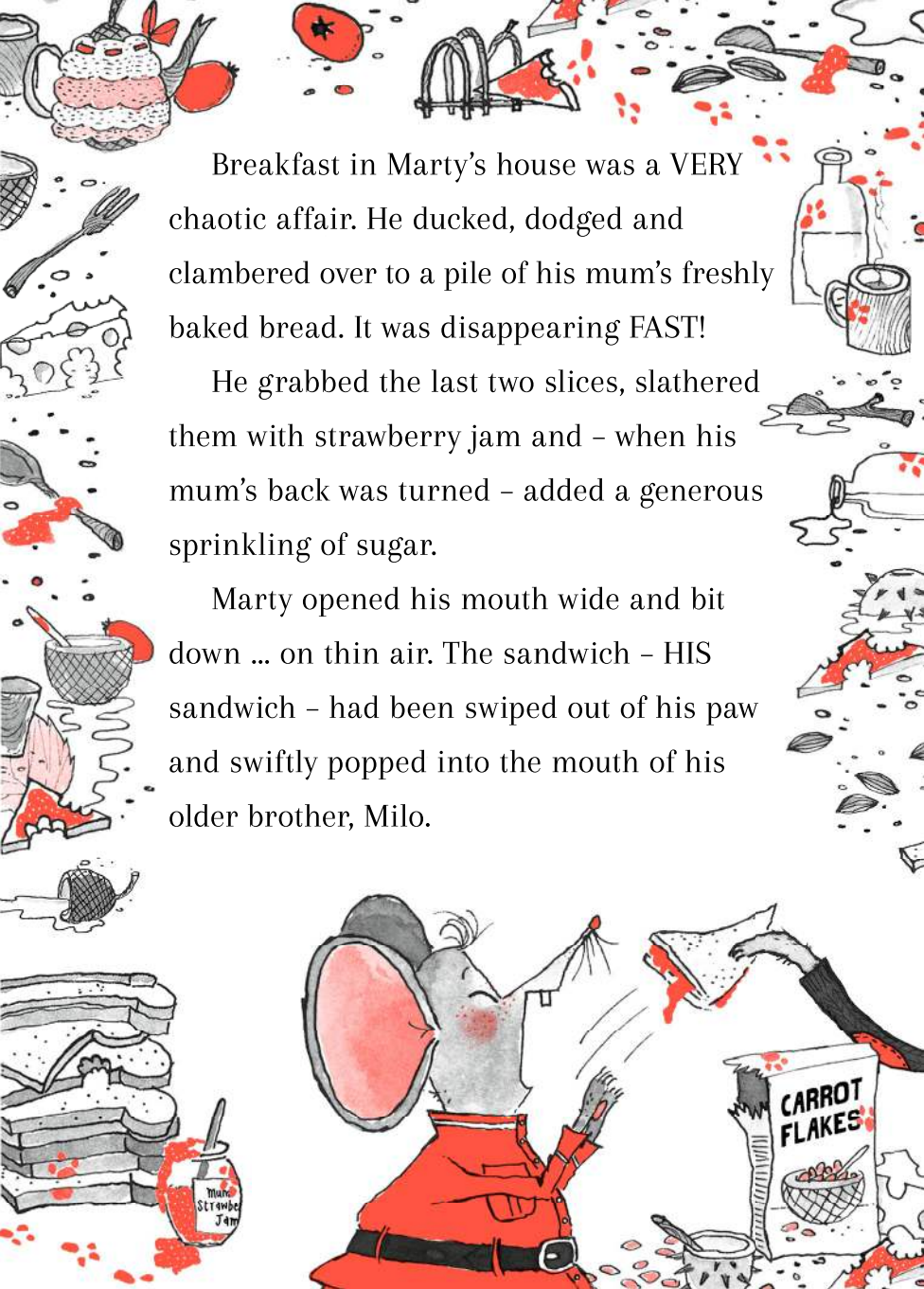
And just because you're small doesn't mean you can't be brave.

Good luck!

Great-Aunt Ada  
X



ty Moose  
e Cupboard,  
Thickett,  
Little Ditch.



Breakfast in Marty's house was a VERY chaotic affair. He ducked, dodged and clambered over to a pile of his mum's freshly baked bread. It was disappearing FAST!

He grabbed the last two slices, slathered them with strawberry jam and – when his mum's back was turned – added a generous sprinkling of sugar.

Marty opened his mouth wide and bit down ... on thin air. The sandwich – HIS sandwich – had been swiped out of his paw and swiftly popped into the mouth of his older brother, Milo.





“Oh, **FIDDLESTAMPS!**”

Marty exclaimed, as his brother walked out the back door, waving smugly.

“Marty! There you are!”

His dad was bounding through the mayhem, carrying a brown paper bag. Marty’s twin baby brothers were glued to each hip.

“I made you a packed lunch for your first day! Cheese sandwiches, cheese muffin and cheese crisps.”



**Creeping caterpillars!** Marty **HATED** cheese. It made his whiskers turn green. But so many mice living together in one house meant that his dad often muddled up who liked what.

# “MARTY’S OFF, EVERYONE!”

his dad hollered.

*Eeeeeek.* Marty had been hoping to slip out the back door without a fuss.

“Marty’s ALWAYS off,” his sister Muriel snarked. “He smells like rotten cheese.”

“That’s enough, Muriel!” Marty’s mum scolded.





Remember your whistle...

Avoid Tank's Turf...

Watch out for bandits ...  
and **Cats!**

Don't venture into Foggy Forest...

Careful of mouse traps...

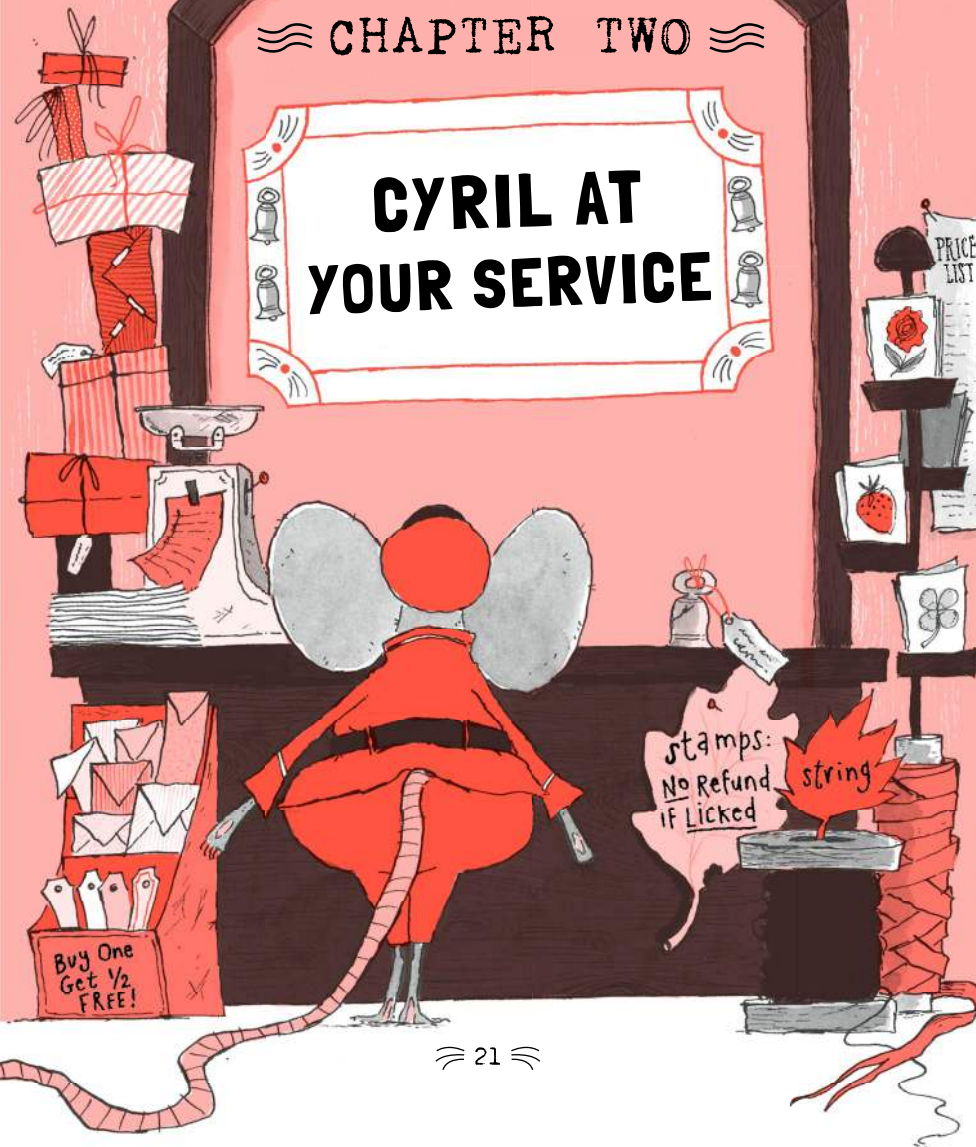
And whatever you do,  
**DON'T LOSE A WHISKER!**

**Baffling blackberries**, Marty  
thought. *I'm only delivering  
letters! How hard can it be?*

LITTLE DITCH POST OFFICE

≡ CHAPTER TWO ≡

**CYRIL AT  
YOUR SERVICE**



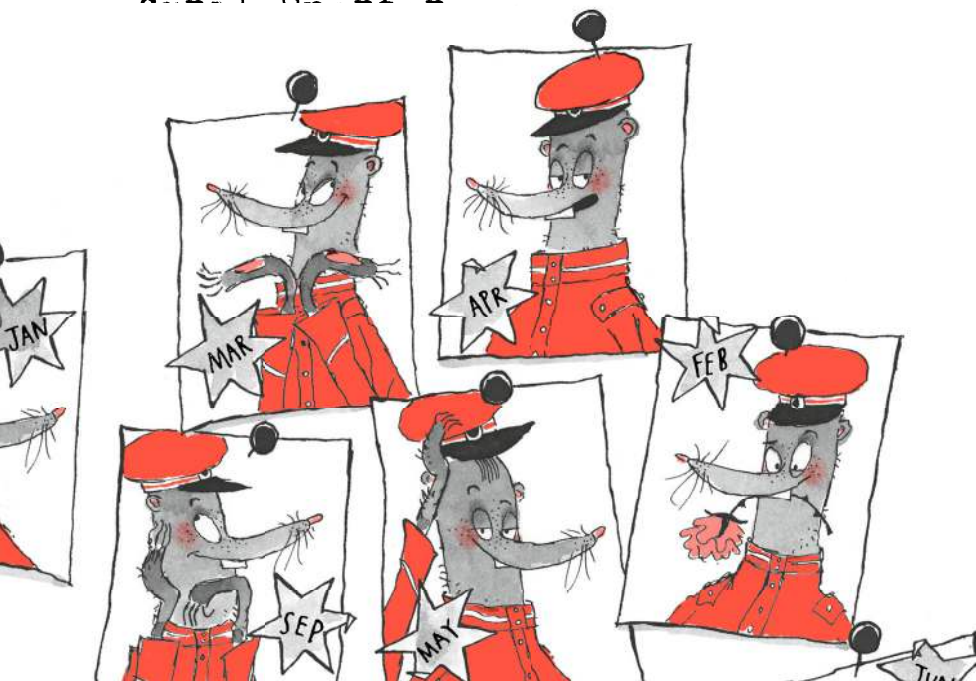
Where *was* everyone?

The desk at the Little Ditch Post Office was empty except for a rusty bell on the counter.

**DUNNNNG! DUNNNNG!**



While he waited, Marty couldn't help noticing an Employee of the Month board hanging on the wall. ALL the photographs pinned to it were of the same employee:



*I hope I'm half as good as he is!* Marty thought.

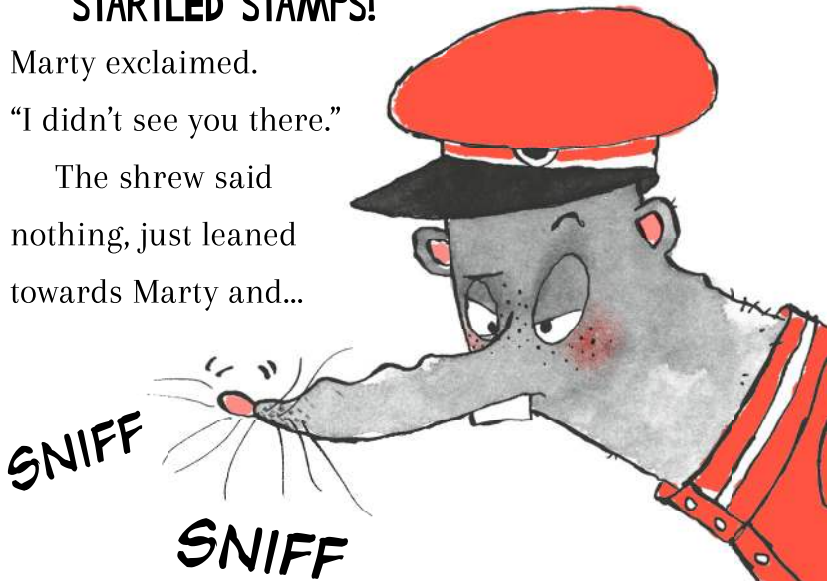
Just then, the *real* Cyril sprang, like a jack-in-the-box, from behind the counter.

**“STARTLED STAMPS!”**

Marty exclaimed.

“I didn't see you there.”

The shrew said nothing, just leaned towards Marty and...



*Should I sniff him back?* Marty wondered. He couldn't remember reading anything about this in *The Little Ditch Postal Handbook!*

A strange smile crept across Cyril's face and finally, he spoke. "Cyril Snorter, Employee of the Month 27 months in a row, at your service. You rang the bell. *MY* bell. *Twice*. Is it an emergency?"

"Emergency? Oh, no! No emergency. I'm... I'm Marty Moose. It's m-my first day as Postmouse." Marty's nerves were getting the better of him.



“A moose, you say. You don’t *look* like a moose to me.”

Marty started to explain about the ink splat on his birth certificate, but Cyril had already turned away. He marched down a corridor and pointed, in quick succession, at IMPORTANT THINGS MARTY MUST REMEMBER.

“Elastic bands go here ... not there. Don’t leave post there ... or here. Close that. Open this. Whistle cleaner is here, don’t leave the lid off. Notice the noticeboard. Read the rota. String. Don’t touch that. Don’t press this. Don’t sit there...”

Marty’s little legs struggled to keep up with Cyril’s long stride and he barely caught a word. He was glad when the corridor *finally* ended and they reached the sorting room.

But Cyril showed no signs of slowing –



oh, **whimpering woodlice!** – as they weaved their way through bags of unsorted mail, piles of letters and stacks of parcels.

“Pigeonhole for letters. Pigeonhole for postcards. Pigeonhole for pigeons.



Don't open that. He's Dave. That's Margery.  
She's Sheila. Miscellaneous post there.  
Missing post here. More string. Don't close  
this. Don't stand there..."



Marty barely had time to wave at the three other employees, but he did have time to notice they all seemed to wrinkle their snouts at Cyril as he passed by. *Probably just jealous of his Employee of the Month record*, Marty thought.



“This is yours,” Cyril said, handing Marty a bag stuffed full of post and an official Little Ditch Post Office map.

**Ooooh, exciting envelopes!**  
*My first bag of post to deliver.*

“Good luck, Marty Moose. Oh, and ... one piece of advice. Watch out for rotten blueberries,” Cyril said casually, before snorting with laughter.



Marty wasn't *quite* sure what that meant, but he was grateful for any advice from a pro like Cyril! *What a nice chap*, Marty thought as he swung the bulging postbag onto his shoulder.

He was ready to begin his first round as Postmouse of Little Ditch.



≡ CHAPTER THREE ≡

**ASSUME THE  
ROOSTER**

Marty started by going Round-the-Bend.

(see map!) ↗

He delivered his first letter, which had come all the way from Big Ditch, without a hitch. **Thrilling thistles!**

MARIA RATCHETT  
THE FLYING TOOLBOX  
ROUND-THE-BEND  
LITTLE DITCH

AIR