

## The Space Mouse

A science fiction story.

When I was still at school I read a book called An Anthology of Science Fiction Stories and it was edited by someone called Sabatini. I eventually lost this book and searched for it again but without success.

I told the story of the space mouse to my grand children when they were still young and they enjoyed it. Perhaps you would like to tell your grand children this story?

After the second world war there were quite a number of German scientists who had been involved with rocket science. Some of them were induced to go and live in the United States and continue their work there.

One of them, let's call him the Professor, was given a home with a laboratory where he could experiment with rocket fuels. One day there was an explosion which fortunately did not harm the professor, but it did make some cracks in the walls.

Some time later the professor heard a squeak and looking around, saw a mouse that must have come through one of the cracks. He made a mouse trap, the kind that does not harm the mouse, and caught this mouse in it. He then constructed a wooden plank with a double metal strip around the edges, and applied an electric signal to it and placed the mouse on it, together with food and water.

The mouse soon learned to stay away from the metal strip because it gave him a mild shock and he lived happily on the plank. The professor now had company and while he worked, he talked for hours to the mouse, whom he called Mitkey, in English but with a heavy German accent.

Then the day arrived for the professor to test his rocket fuel and he constructed a rocket and decided that it should carry a passenger. He constructed a compartment in the rocket for Mitkey, complete

with food and water. And then the time came to launch the rocket. It went up without problems but the professor was surprised when it did not return to earth after a while. He did not know about a small planet that happened to be passing by, inhabited by tiny, very intelligent creatures who had painted their planet black so that it would be difficult to see by creatures on another planet that they had been having problems with.

These small creatures captured the rocket and landed it safely on their planet and with their advanced technology studied the rocket, saw Mitkey inside and studied his thoughts with their rays but all they heard was a jumble of English words with a heavy German accent.

They concluded that Mitkey was harmless and let him out. They then, with their advanced technology, made changes to Mitkey's brain so that he could talk to them, in English, with a heavy German accent. Mitkey told them about life on Earth, how mice were badly treated and they offered to give him knowledge so that he could go back and improve life for mice on Earth. But they warned him to be extremely careful about electricity because the slightest shock could upset the delicate balance of his brain.

And so eventually Mitkey returned to Earth in the rocket. In the meantime the professor had caught another mouse, a female, and called her Minny. She lived happily on the plank just as Mitkey had done.

So one day the professor heard a squeaky voice in English, with a heavy German accent saying: " Hello professor, it's me, Mitkey." He was of course surprised but Mitkey told him where he had been and about the little planet and that he had come back to see what he could do for mice on earth. His proposal was that he would make other mice intelligent like he was, that they would then sort out the rat problem, but in return they wanted Australia and they would call it Mousetrulia.

The professor was of course out of his depth with this diplomatic problem. And while he was still wondering what to do next, there was a squeak from the direction of the plank. Mitkey then looked

round, and saw the most beautiful female mouse he had ever seen and his instincts took over and he ran towards her, forgetting completely about the electricity danger.

Moments later he was on the plank, with his brain again filled with jumbled words in English with a heavy German accent and he and Minny lived happily ever after.