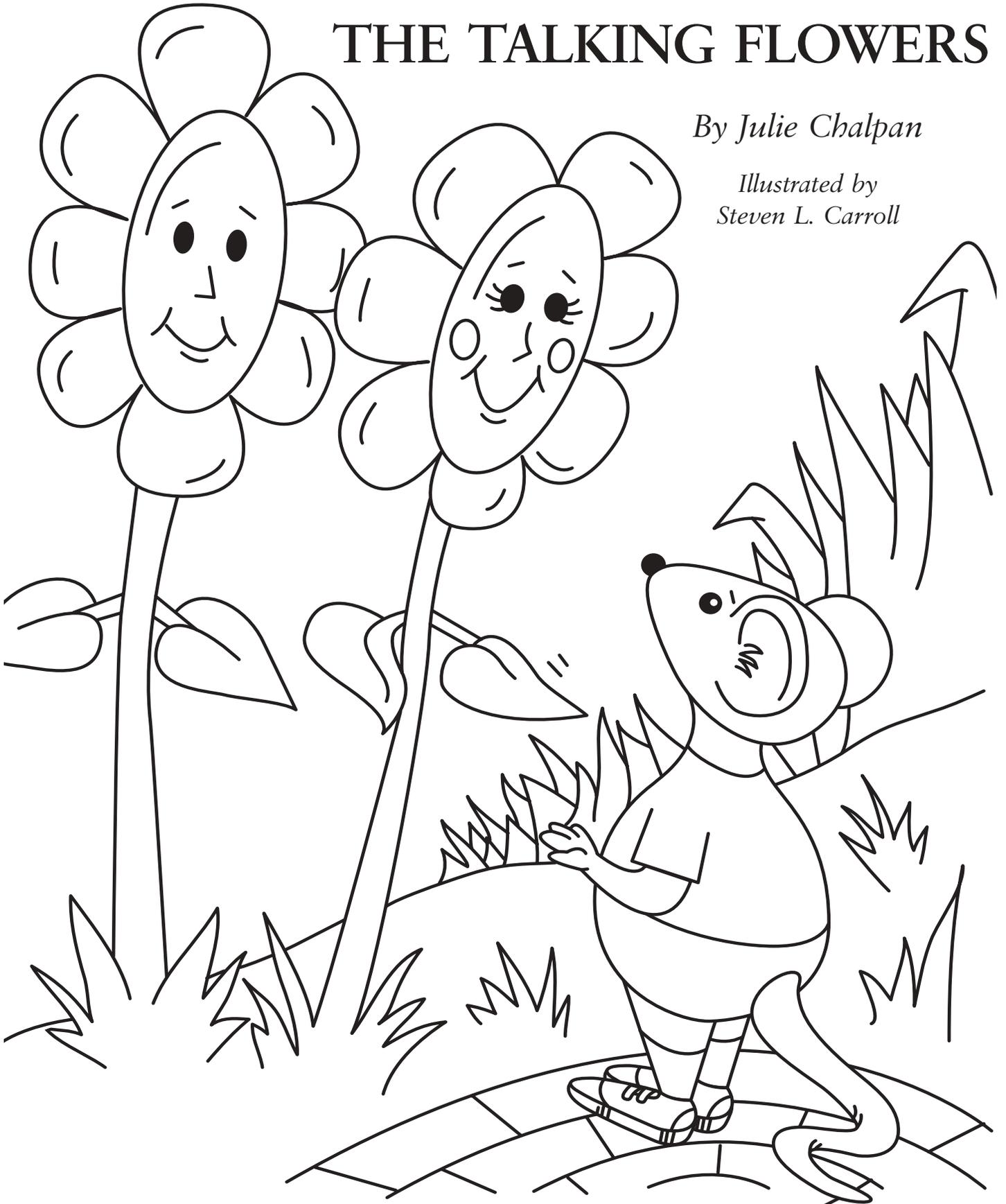


THE ADVENTURES OF LITTLE FAT RAT:
**LITTLE FAT RAT MEETS
THE TALKING FLOWERS**

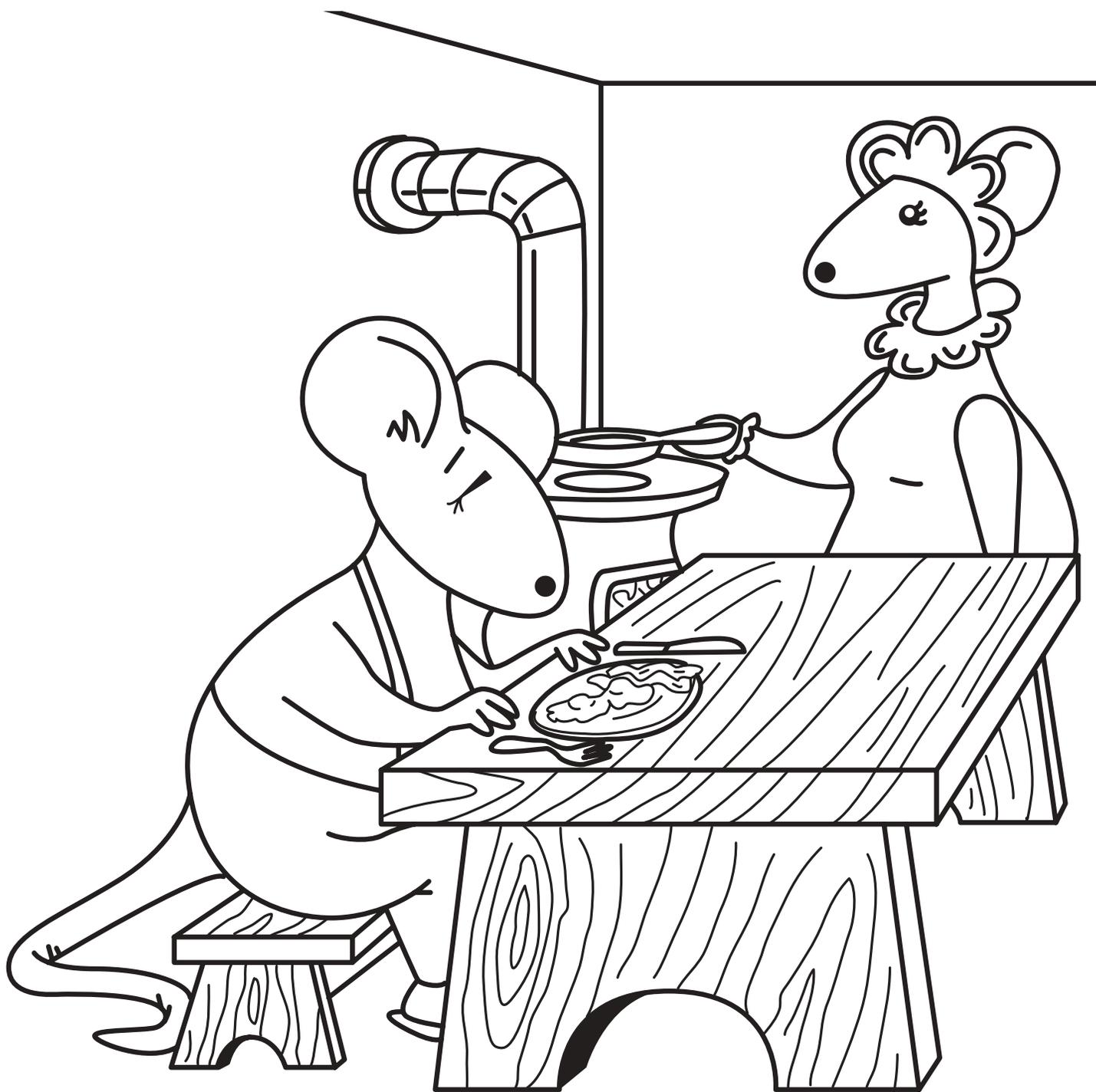
By Julie Chalpan

*Illustrated by
Steven L. Carroll*





Little Fat Rat woke up one morning to hear the birds chirping, see the sun shining and the smell of something wonderful. Breakfast! He jumped out of bed, put on his robe and house slippers and ran to the kitchen.

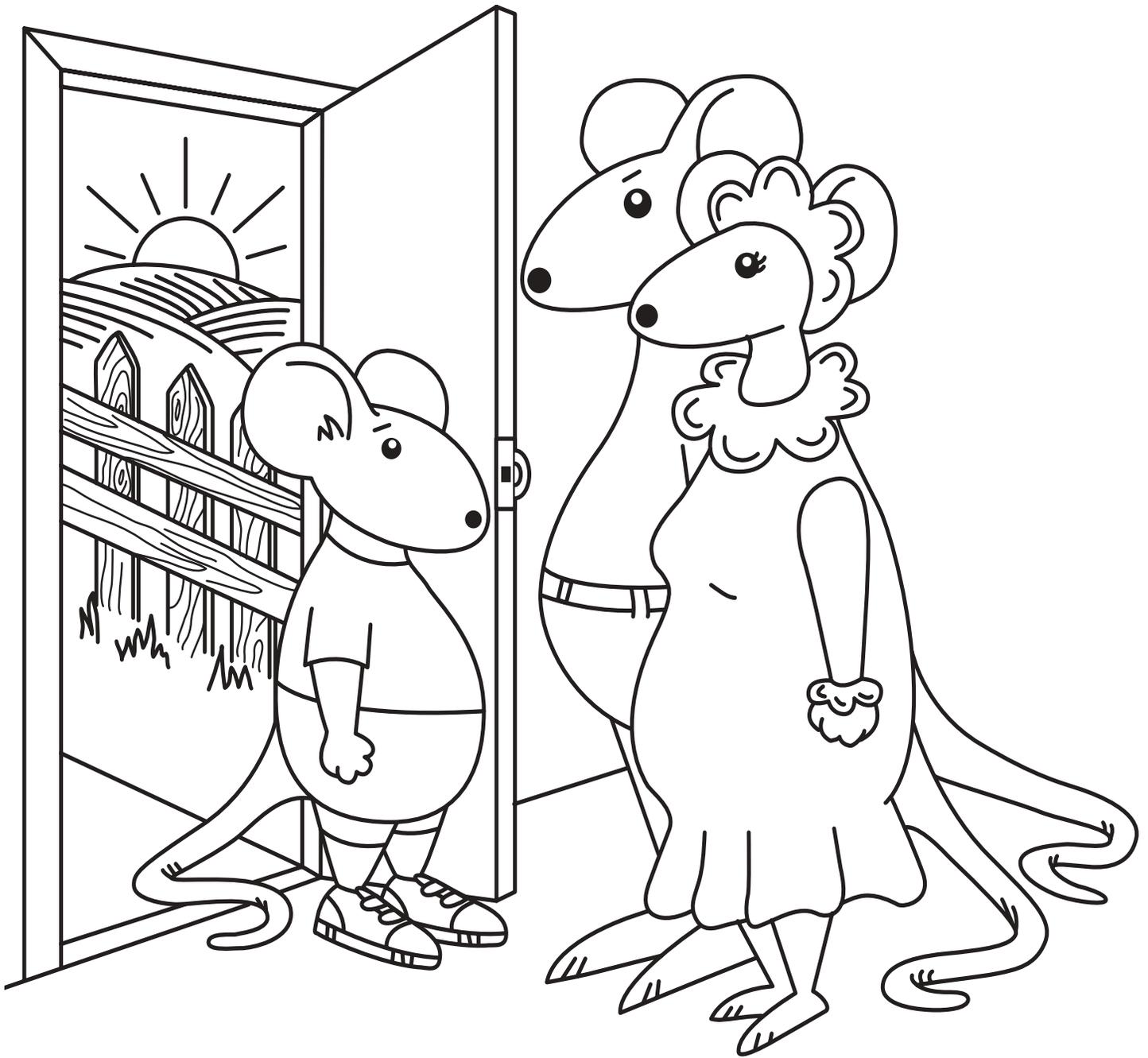


“What’s for breakfast?” asked Little Fat Rat.

“Your favorite. Bacon and eggs,” said his mom.

“Thank you, mom,” said Little Fat Rat as he ate his breakfast quickly. “I knew this was going to be a great day the minute I woke up!”

For today, Little Fat Rat was going on an adventure. His mom and dad had decided he was now old enough to go out into the world to see what he could see and maybe even make a new friend.



After cleaning up his breakfast dishes, he went into his bedroom to get dressed for the day. It was a warm spring day so he put on his shorts, a shirt and his tennis shoes. Now he was ready for his adventure!

“Are you going already?” asked his mom.

“Yes. I’ll be back in time for dinner,” said Little Fat Rat.

“Come in the kitchen and give me a kiss before you go,” said his mom.

He kissed his mom and dad good-bye and NOW he was ready for his adventure!



He started down a path which his older brother had told him led to a lake. There was a cool breeze as he skipped down the brick trail. He got to the lake and it was so beautiful. There were some ducks swimming in the lake. Little Fat Rat was a lot smaller than the ducks so he stayed away.

“Hello there!” said one of the ducks.

“Hello!” called Little Fat Rat. He didn’t want to be rude by not answering the duck.

“How are you today?” asked another duck.

“Fine. Thank you. How are you?” asked Little Fat Rat politely.

“Great. It’s a good day for swimming! Want to join us?” asked the first duck.

“Oh, no thank you,” said Little Fat Rat. Little Fat Rat did not know how to swim.

“Okay then. Enjoy your day!” the ducks said as they splashed around in the lake.



Little Fat Rat continued his journey down the path until he came to a garden. The garden was a bit overgrown and an old farm house sat up on a hill off the trail. There were weeds taller than Little Fat Rat, so he was very careful walking through the garden. He came to an area that was clear and saw two beautiful sunflowers.



He walked over to the sunflowers and stared up at them, admiring their beauty.

“What are you looking at, may I ask?” the voice seemed to come from one of the sunflowers.

“What? Who’s there?” asked Little Fat Rat.

“I’m Sunny, the sunflower,” said the same flower. “This is my friend, Sammy.” The sunflower pointed to the flower beside it. “What’s your name?”

“My name is Little Fat Rat. I didn’t mean to be rude by staring at you. You are both so beautiful, I could not help myself. Besides, I did not know flowers could talk,” said Little Fat Rat.

“Sure we can talk. All of God’s creatures can talk. You just have to listen,” said Sammy.



“I’m on an adventure today,” said Little Fat Rat. “Do you want to come with me?”

“Oh, Little Fat Rat, we wish we could, but we can’t leave this garden,” said Sunny.

“Why not?” asked Little Fat Rat.

“We have no legs and no feet so we cannot walk,” said Sammy. “We stay here at the old farmer’s house to keep him company. He lives alone in his old house up on the hill. He used to keep up with this whole farm and he grew a lot of fruits and vegetables. He is old now and can only keep up with this area, where he planted us.”

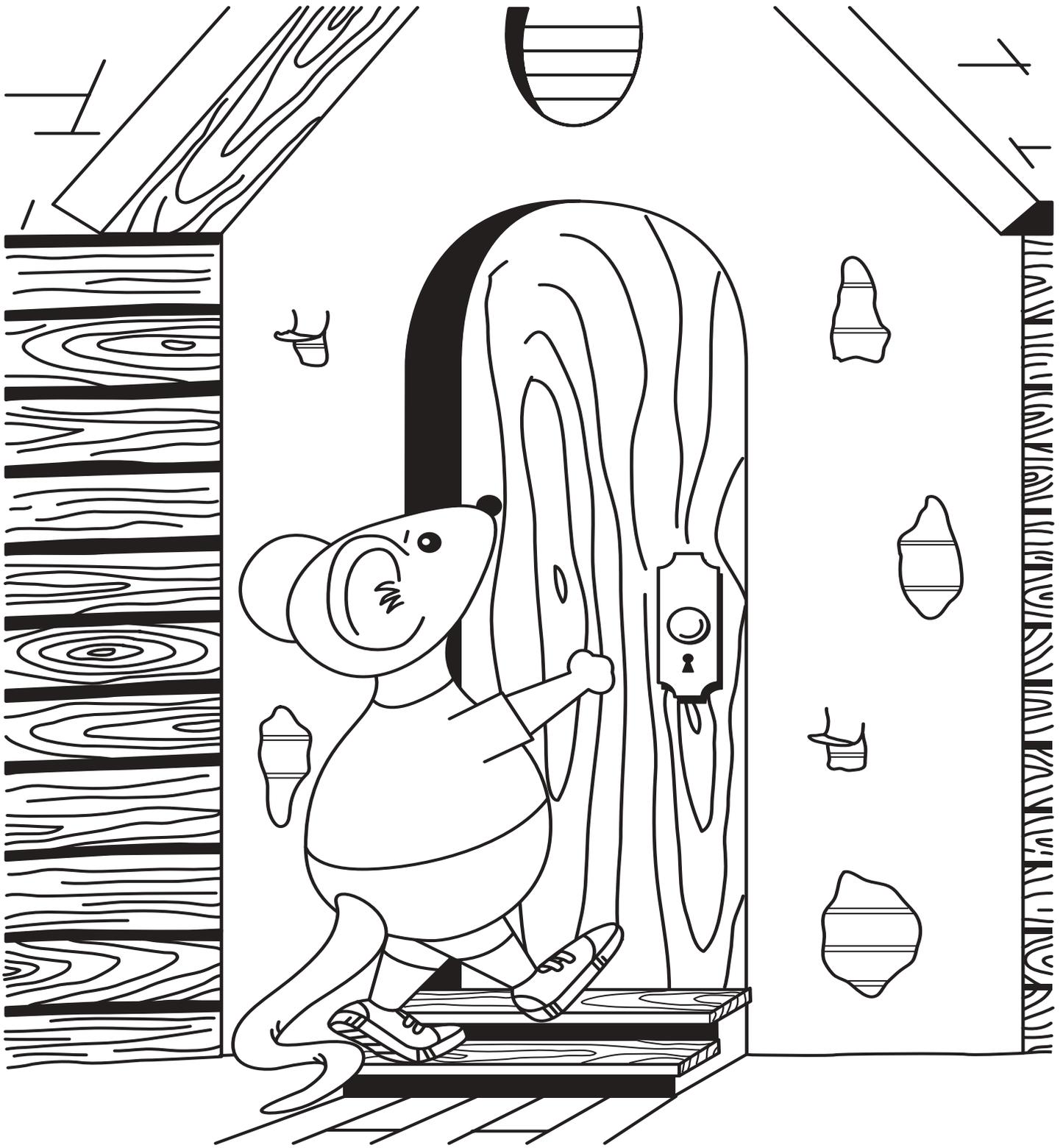


Little Fat Rat looked up at the house on top of the hill. It looked like an old house, with its paint fading from many years of bright sun. He suddenly felt sorry for the old man that lives in the house.

The flowers noticed Little Fat Rat looking up at the house. “Why don’t you go up and say hello?” asked Sunny.

“Oh, I don’t know,” said Little Fat Rat. Now he was less sorry and more scared of the farmer in the old house.

“He is a nice old man,” said Sammy. “We call him Farmer Sam since he gave me his name. While you are up there please ask him to come down and bring us some water. It’s been awfully warm today for this time of year.”

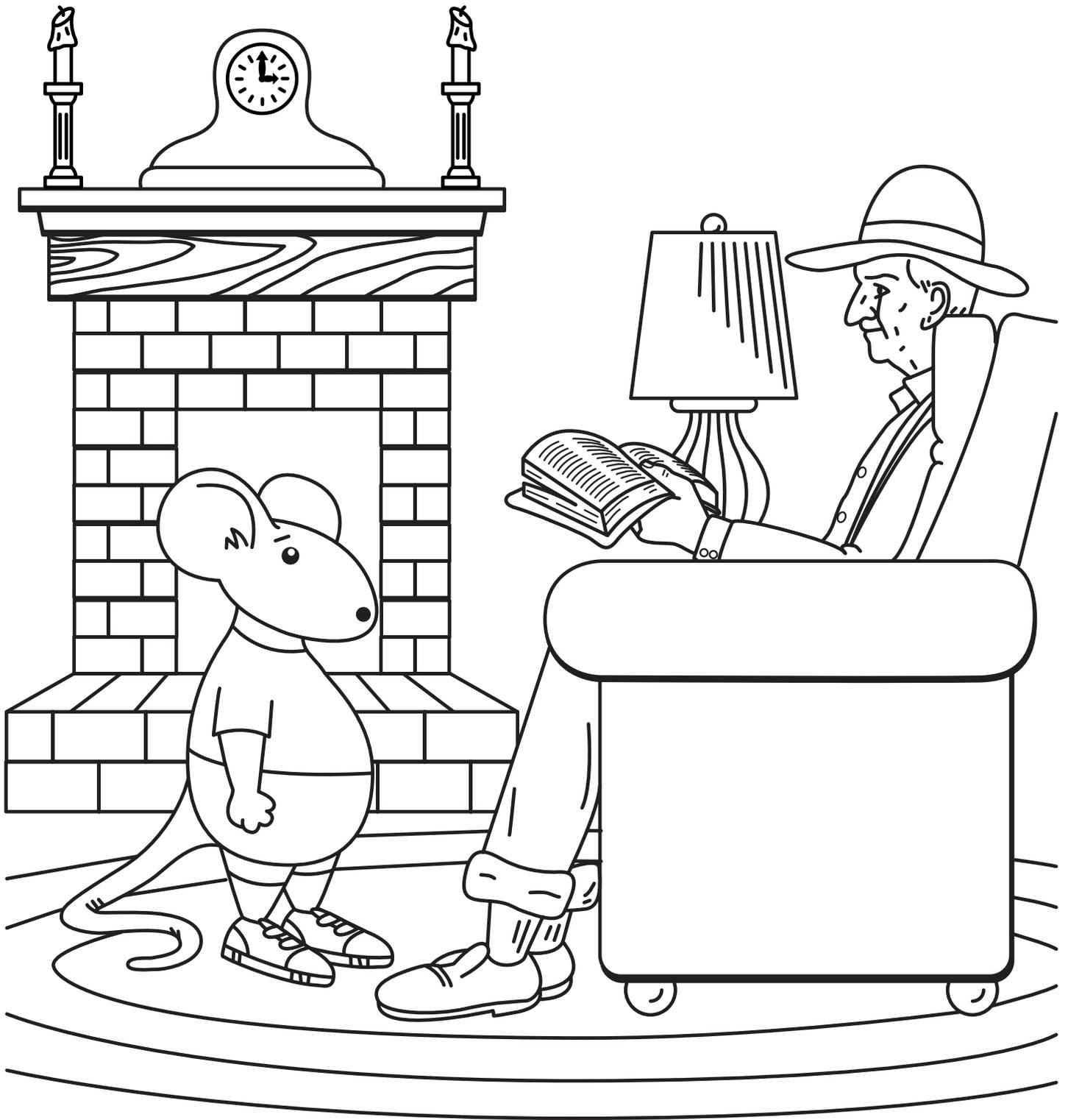


“Okay then, I’ll go,” said Little Fat Rat as he started up the hill. As he got closer to the house he could see the shutters were starting to come loose and as he walked up the front porch he could hear a squeaking in the steps. He knocked quietly on the door.

“Who’s there?” called out a soft voice.

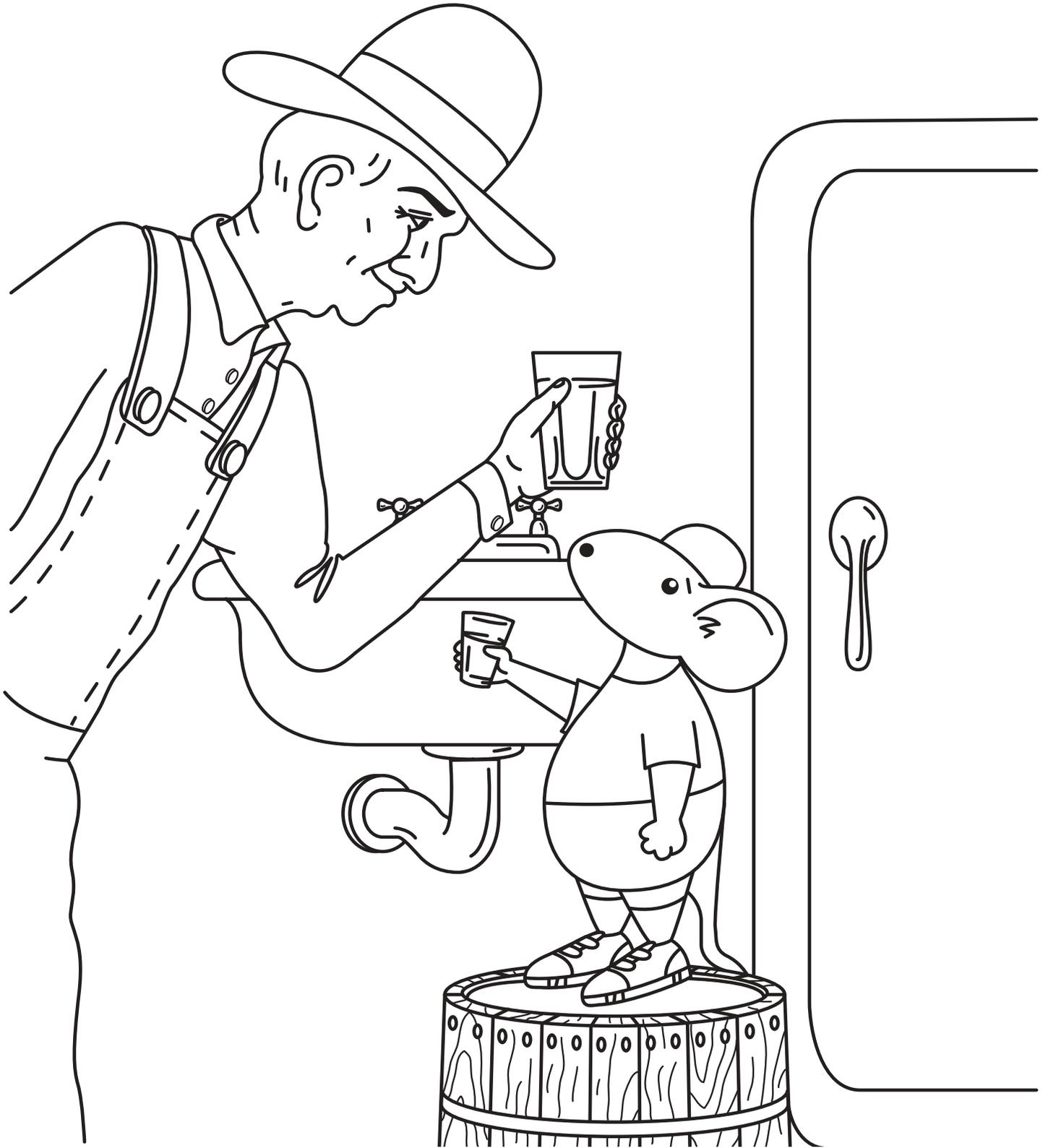
“It’s Little Fat Rat. I have a message from Sunny and Sammy for you,” he said.

“Come in Mr. Rat,” said Farmer Sam.



Little Fat Rat opened the door and stepped inside. The old man was in the living room reading a book. "Hello, Mr. Rat," he said. "Can I get you something cold to drink on this beautiful spring day?"

"Actually that's why I'm here," Little Fat Rat said shyly. "I'm here to get something to drink for Sunny and Sammy. It's really quite warm outside."



“Sure, sure. We’ll walk down together and give them a good, long drink of water,” he said with a smile. “How about you? Are you thirsty?”

“I could use a glass of water, thank you,” said Little Fat Rat.

Farmer Sam walked into the kitchen and poured a glass of water for his guest, and one for himself. “I haven’t seen you around here. What brings you to my farm?” he asked.



“I am on my very first adventure today,” said Little Fat Rat. “I went to the lake and saw some ducks, then I spotted your beautiful sunflowers and stopped to talk with them.”

“They are beautiful, aren’t they? I named Sunny after my wife and Sammy after me,” the farmer said. “They are good company, too.”

Little Fat Rat agreed and he wished he could have beautiful flowers at his house.

“Let’s walk down to the flowers and give them some water now,” said the farmer. Little Fat Rat followed the old man from his house. He carried a watering can that seemed quite heavy.



“Hi, Farmer Sam. We see you’ve met our new friend, Little Fat Rat,” Sunny called up the hill.

“Yes. He let me know you two needed a drink of water and we both had one, too,” said the farmer.

The farmer gave the flowers a long drink of water and after that they seemed to stand up even straighter.

“Thank you,” said Sunny and Sammy.



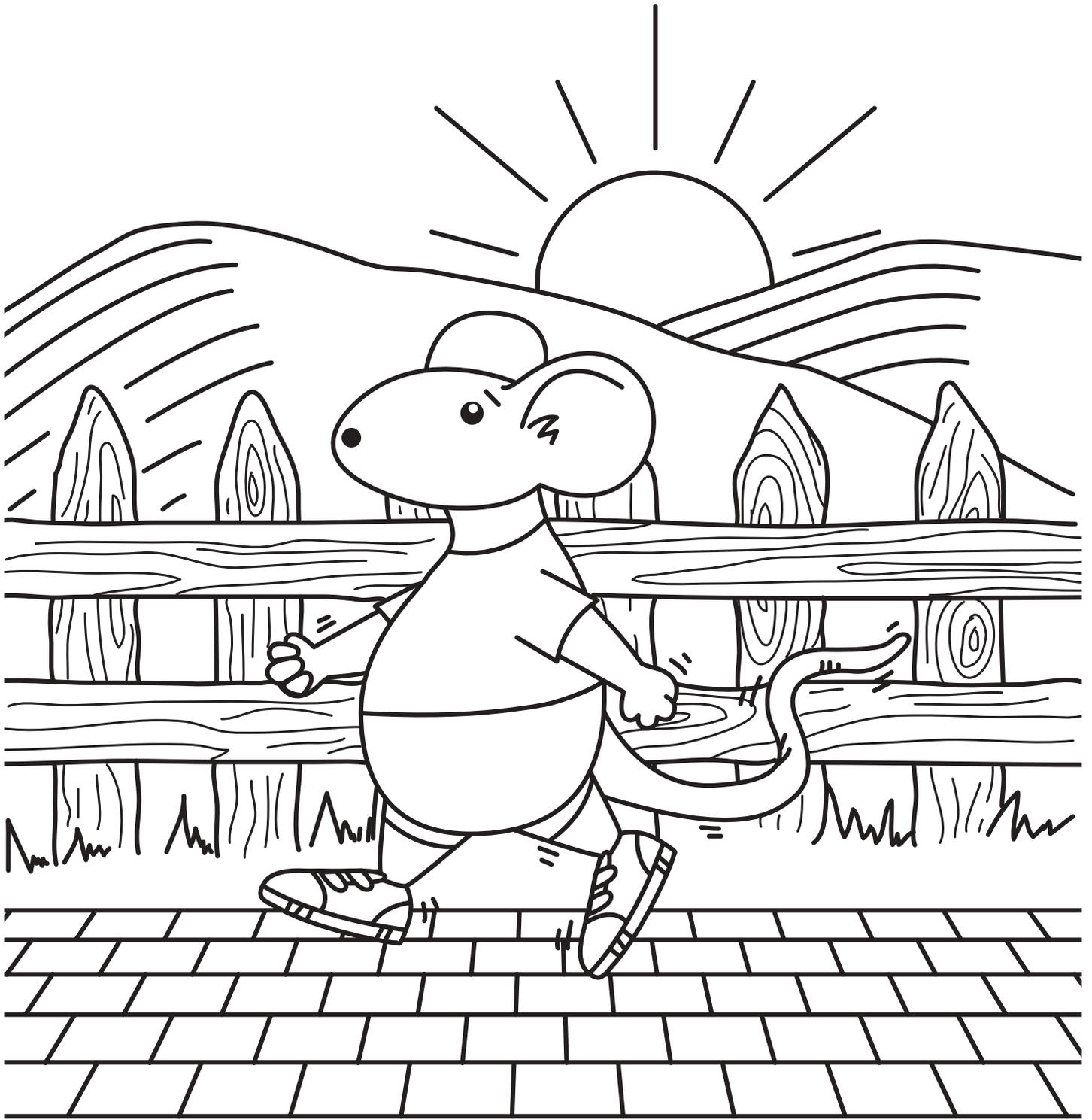
“Well, I better get back to the house and eat my dinner,” said Farmer Sam. “Mr. Rat, you’re welcome to come along if you would like.”

“No, thank you,” said Little Fat Rat. “It’s starting to get dark and I promised my mom and dad I’d be back from my adventure in time for dinner.”

“Good-bye then,” said the farmer. “It was nice to meet you. Come back and visit anytime.”

“Good-bye, Farmer Sam,” he said. He turned to the flowers and said, “I’ll come back and visit you real soon. I hope someday I can have beautiful flowers at my house, too.”

“Thank you, Little Fat Rat. We’ll see you soon,” said the flowers.



Little Fat Rat didn't want to leave the flowers but he knew he had to get home in time for dinner. He even missed his family a little. After all, this was his first adventure and his first time away from his family. He walked a little faster on his way home.



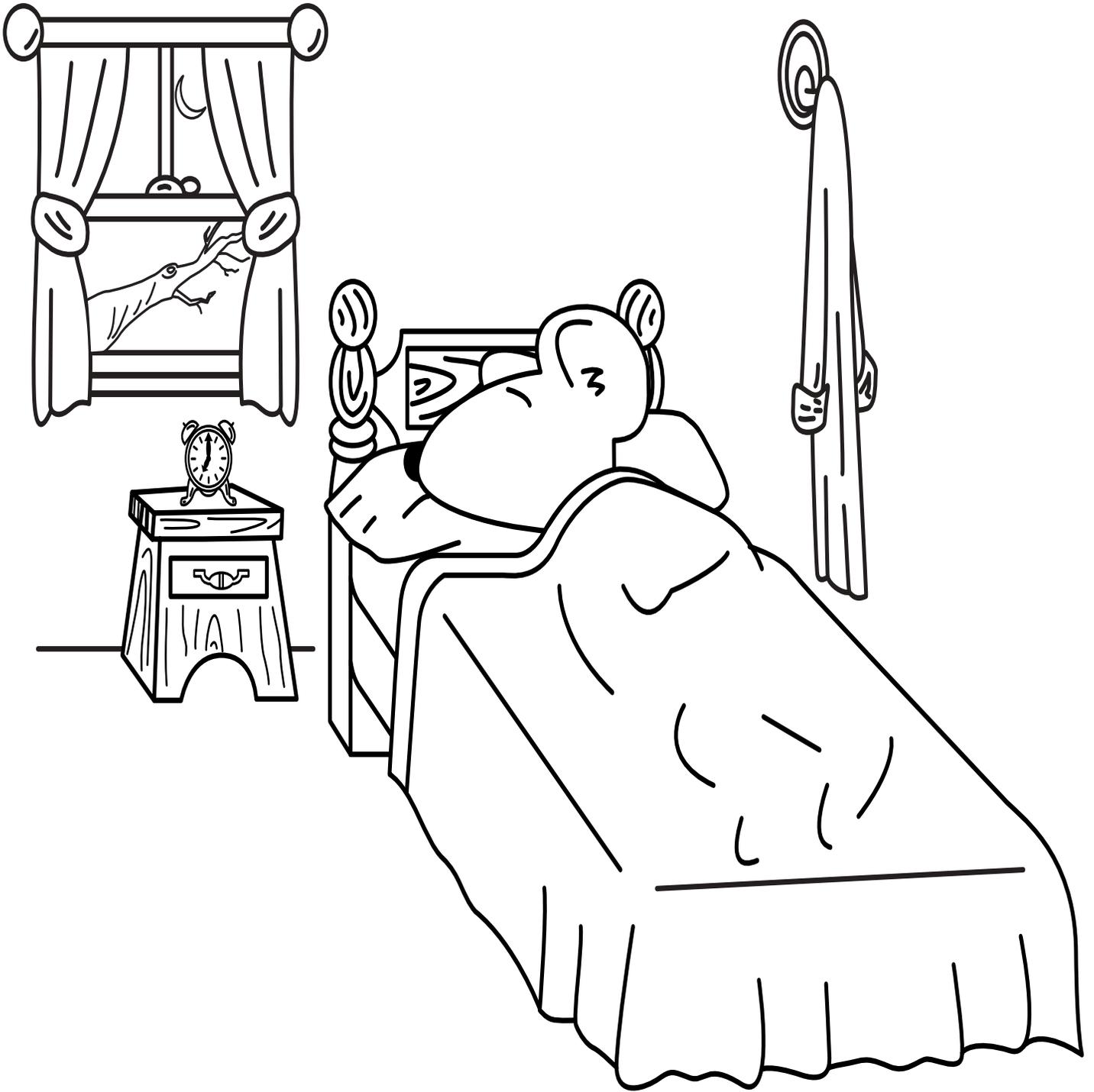
“Hi mom, hi dad!” said Little Fat Rat as he came in the front door. “I’m home!”

“Oh, Little Fat Rat, how was your day?” asked his mom, happy to see him.

“It was a grand day! I met some ducks and I made three new friends, Sunny, Sammy and Farmer Sam. Sunny and Sammy are flowers, mom. They are talking flowers,” he said.

“Talking flowers? How nice,” said his mom. “Who is Farmer Sam?”

“He’s the farmer who lives in a big old house on top of the hill who takes care of the flowers. And the flowers take care of him,” he said.



“That’s great. Are you ready for dinner?” asked his mom.

“I’m very hungry! I am sleepy, too,” said Little Fat Rat.

After his adventure he was tired indeed. He ate his dinner and told his family about his day and went to sleep to dream of his next adventure.