

The Tale of Two Bad Mice

by Beatrix Potter adapted by EveryReader

Adapted to Lexile Level 300





Once there was a very pretty dollhouse.
It was red brick with white windows.
It had real cloth curtains, a front door, and a
chimney.



It belonged to two dolls named Lucinda and Jane.

It mostly belonged to Lucinda.

Jane was the cook.

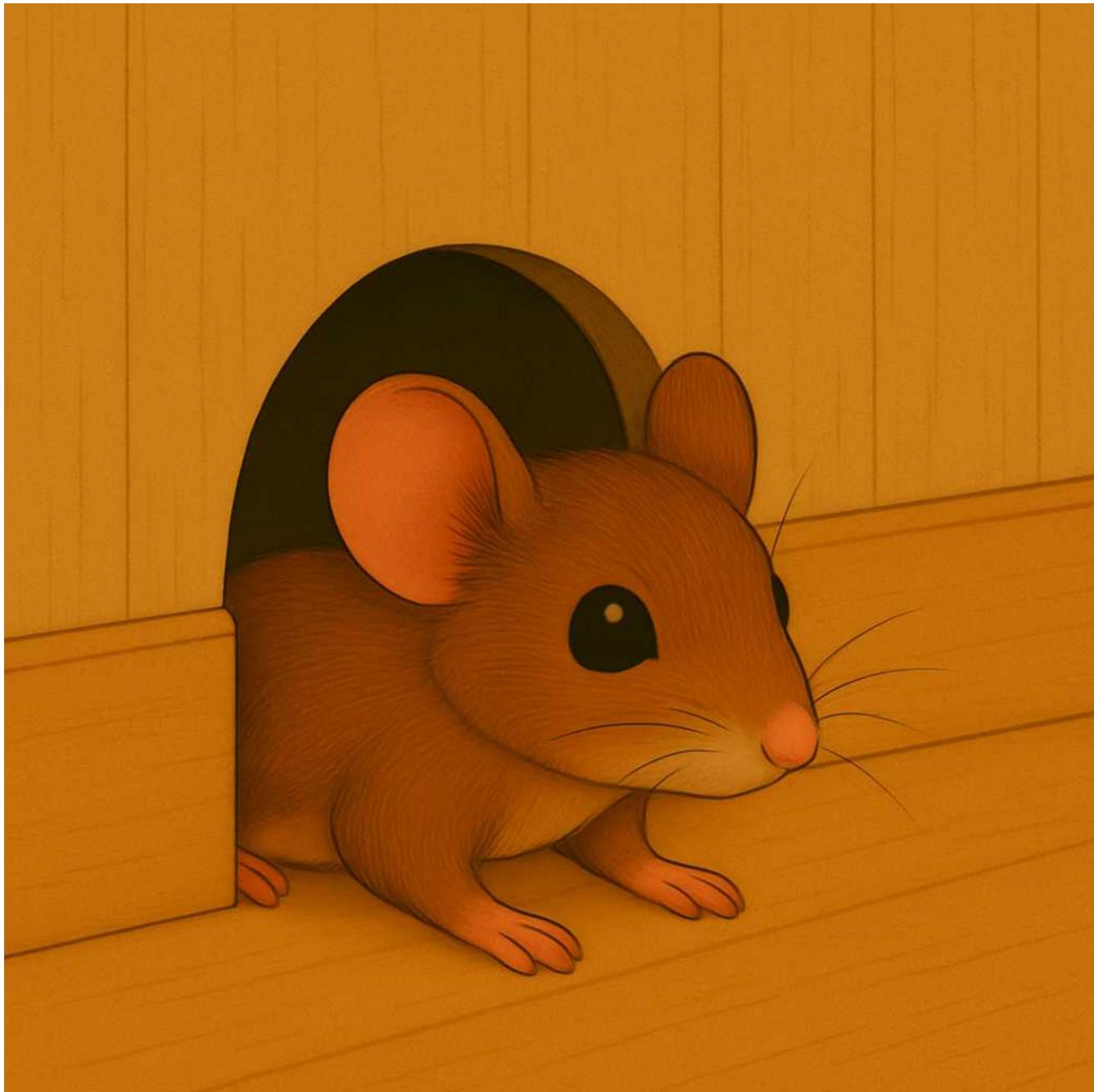
But she never cooked, because the dinner was ready-made in a box.



There were two red lobsters, a ham, a fish, a
pudding, and some pears and oranges.
The food would not come off the plates.
But it looked very nice.



One morning, Lucinda and Jane went for a ride in the doll stroller.
No one was in the playroom.
It was very quiet.



A tiny mouse named Tom Thumb peeked out
of a hole by the wall.

Then he popped back in.

Tom Thumb was a mouse.



A minute later, his wife, Hunca Munca, looked out too.

She saw the room was empty.

She ran onto the floor by the coal box.



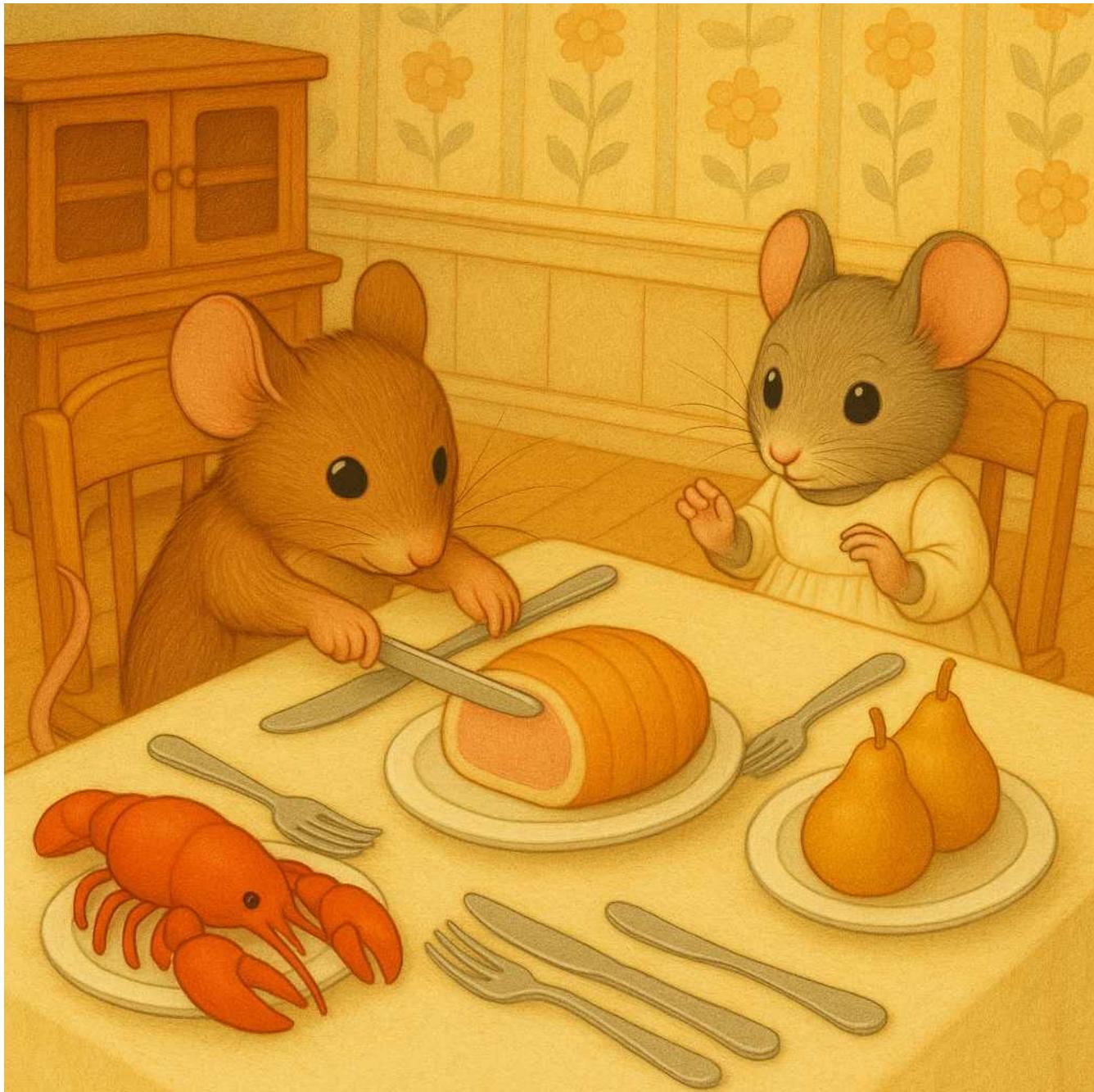
The dollhouse stood by the fire.
Tom Thumb and Hunca Munca went across
the rug.
They pushed the front door.
It was not locked.



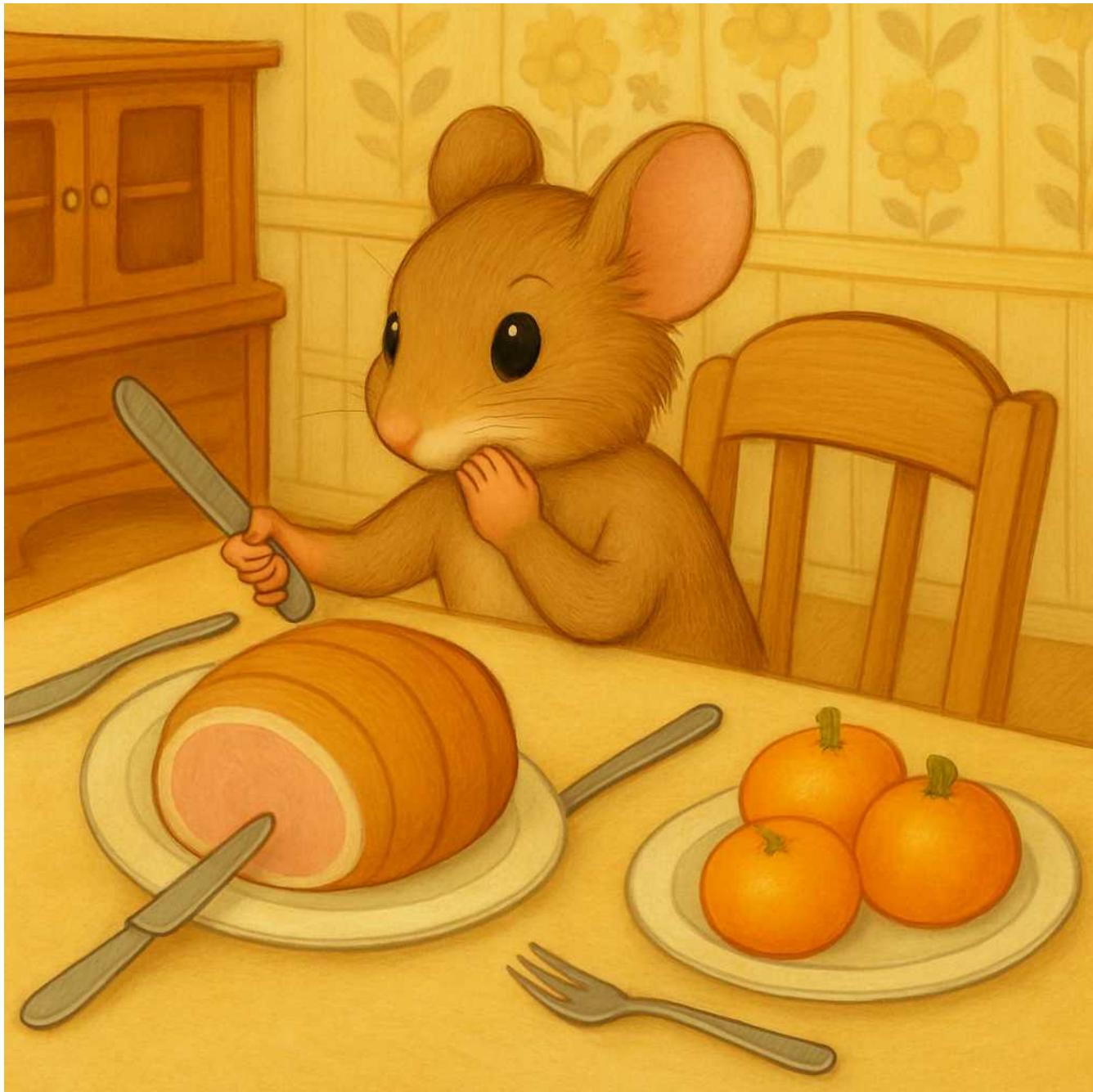
They went upstairs and looked into the dining room.

They squeaked with joy.

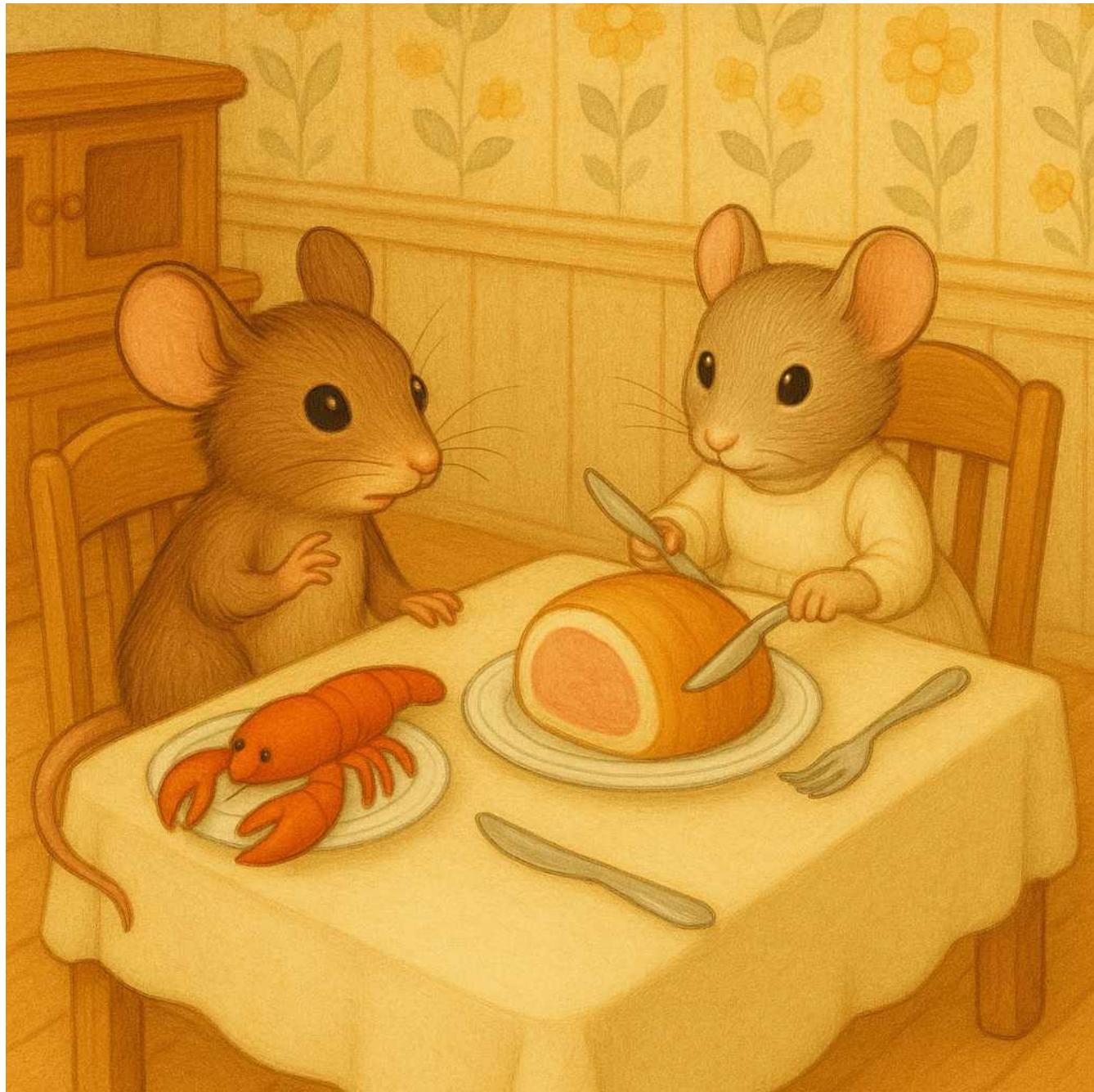
A lovely dinner was on the table.



There were metal spoons, knives, forks, and
two doll chairs.
It all looked so easy to use.



Tom tried to cut the ham.
It was shiny red and brown.
The knife bent and hurt his finger.
He put his finger in his mouth.



"It is not cooked."

"It is hard," he said.

"You try, Hunca Munca."



Hunca Munca stood on her chair.
She chopped at the ham with another knife.
"It is as hard as the hams at the shop," she
said.



The ham jerked, fell off the plate, and rolled under the table.

"Leave it," said Tom.

"Give me some fish."



Hunca Munca tried every spoon.
The fish was stuck to the dish.



Then Tom got angry.
He put the ham in the middle of the floor.
He hit it with the tongs and the shovel.



Bang, bang.
Smash, smash.



The ham broke into pieces.
Under the shiny paint, it was only hard stuff.



Tom Thumb and Hunca Munca felt very upset. They broke the pudding, the lobsters, the pears, and the oranges.



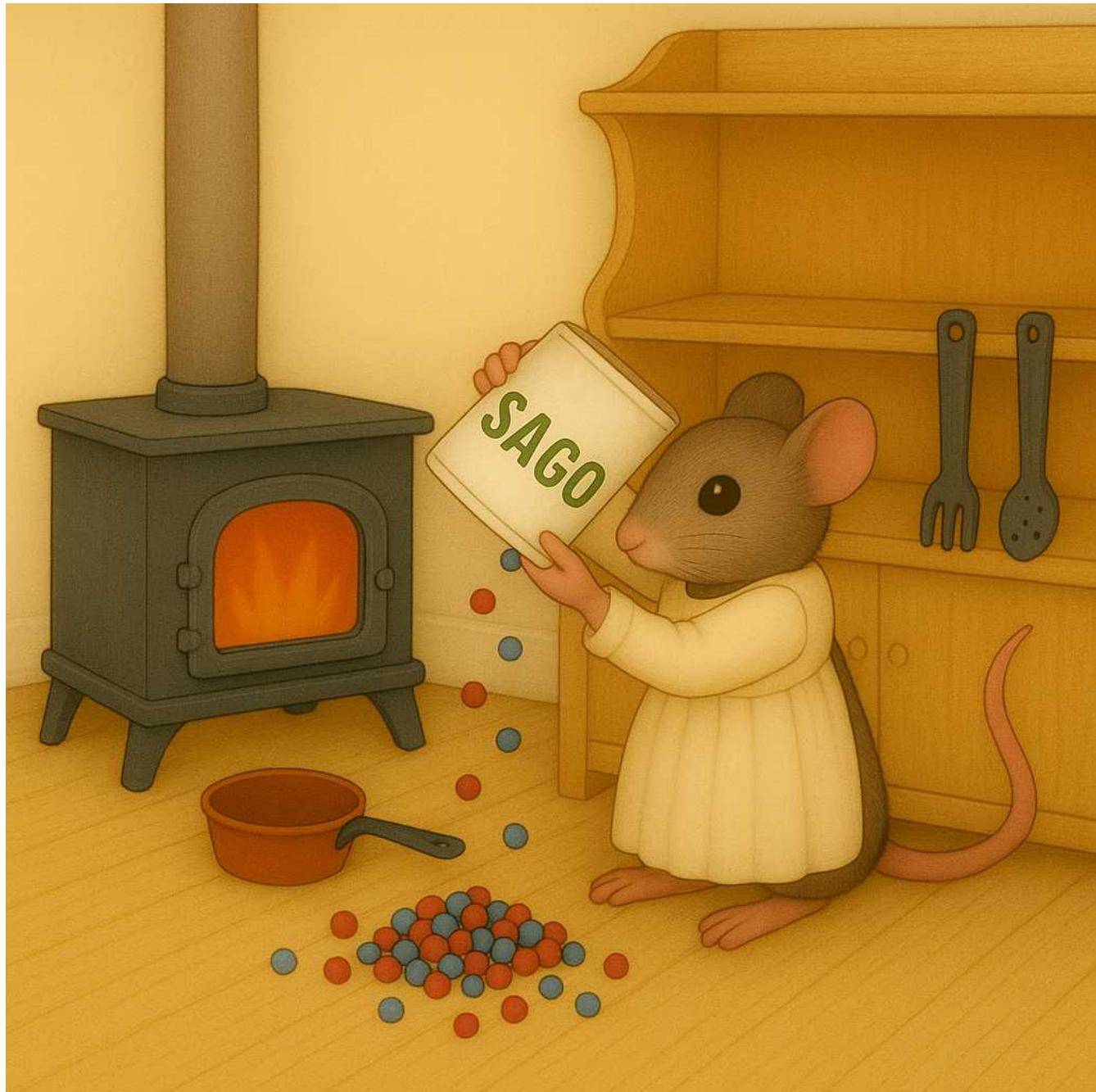
The fish would not come off the plate.
They put the plate in the red paper fire in
the kitchen.
It would not burn.



Tom went up the kitchen chimney and looked out at the top.
There was no soot.



While Tom was in the chimney, Hunca Munca
had another surprise.
She found tiny tins on the shelf.
They were marked Rice, Coffee, and Sago.



She turned them over.
Only red and blue beads came out.



Then the mice made a big mess.
Tom took Jane's clothes from the drawer.
He threw them out of the top window.



Hunca Munca liked to save things.
She pulled feathers from Lucinda's pillow.
She wanted a feather bed.



With Tom's help, she carried the pillow
downstairs and across the rug.
It was hard to push it into the mouse hole,
but they did it.



Then Hunca Munca went back.
She brought a chair, a shelf, a bird cage, and
some small things.
The shelf and the bird cage would not fit in
the mouse hole.



Hunca Munca left them by the coal box and went to get a baby bed.



She was coming back with another chair when
they heard talking in the hall.
The mice ran to their hole.
The dolls came into the playroom.



What a sight!

Lucinda sat on the tipped kitchen stove and stared.

Jane leaned on the shelf and smiled.
They said nothing.



The little girl who owned the dollhouse said,
"I will get a doll dressed like a policeman."
The nurse said, "I will set a mouse trap."



That is the tale of the two bad mice.
They were not so very bad after all.
Tom paid for all he broke.



He found a crooked sixpence under the rug.
On Christmas Eve, he and Hunca Munca put it
into one of the stockings of Lucinda and
Jane.



Very early each morning, before anyone is awake, Hunca Munca comes with her dustpan and broom.

She sweeps the dollhouse.

The End