Babette Puetz, "Entry on: The Town-Mouse and the Country-Mouse [Die Stadtmaus und die Landmaus] by Kathrin Schärer", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale and Lisa Maurice. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/354. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Kathrin Schärer

The Town-Mouse and the Country-Mouse [Die Stadtmaus und die Landmaus]

Germany

TAGS: Aesop Aesop's Fables Horace





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	The Town-Mouse and the Country-Mouse [Die Stadtmaus und die Landmaus]
Country of the First Edition	Germany
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	German
First Edition Details	Kathrin Schärer, *Die Stadtmaus und die Landmaus*. Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag and KG Sauerländer, 2008, 32 pp.
ISBN	ISBN 9783794152933 (ISBN 978794151790 – 2nd edition)
Genre	Didactic fiction, Fables, Picture books
Target Audience	Children (4–6 year old)
Author of the Entry	Babette Puetz, Victoria University of Wellington, babette.puetz@vuw.ac.nz
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University, lisa.maurice@biu.ac.il

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Creators



Kathrin Schärer , b. 1969
(Author)

Kathrin Schärer was born in Basel (Switzerland) in 1969. She studied to become a drawing / art and craft teacher at the Hochschule fuer Gestlatung (Art University) in Basel until 1995 and now works at a school for children with speech/language impairments. Since 2001, she has illustrated more than thirty children's picture and non-fiction books, a number of which she has also authored. Her books focus on animal figures. Her book *Wenn Fuchs und Hase sich Gute Nacht sagen* (*When Fox and Hare Wish Each Other Good Night*, 2004) was made into a play in 2010.

Among many other prizes, Kathrin Schärer's illustrations were selected for the Swiss contribution to the Biennale der Illustration (Biennial of Illustration) in Bratislava 2005 and 2007. 2010 Schärer was nominated for the Deutschen Jugendliteraturpreis (German Youth Literature Prize) for her book *Johanna im Zug* (*Joanna in the Train*). This book also won the Schweizer Kinder-und Jugendmedienpreis (Swiss Children's and Youth Media Prize) in 2011, and so did, in 2017, her book *Rigo und Rosa*. 2012 Schärer was nominated for the Christian Anderson Price and in 2014 for the Astrid Lindgren Award for her collected works. Over 50, 000 copies of her book *mutig, mutig* (*brave, brave*) have been sold. Her books are not only popular in German speaking countries, but also abroad. Over 64 000 copies of her book W*enn Fuchs und Hase sich Gute Nacht sagen* (*When Fox and Hare Wish Each Other Good Night*) have been sold in Japan. Her books have been translated into 14 languages: Japanese, Danish, French, Spanish, Catalan, Chinese, Dutch, Italian, English, Hebrew, Swedish, Thai, Arabic and Korean).

Source:

Official website (accessed: June 25, 2018).

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Additional information

Translation

Dutch: *Stadsmuis en Veldmuis*, trans. L. M. Niskos, Rotterdam: Lemniscaat 2009.

French: *À la ville et aux champs*, trans. Claire Teyras, Paris: Minedition 2014.

French: *Souris-des-villes et Rat-des-champs*, trans. Bernard Friot, [Paris]: Bayard presse 2009.

Italian: *Topo di campagna e topo di città*, trans. Andreina Speciale, Milan: Il Castoro, 2009, 2013.

Japanese: *Hiroaki Sekiguchi*, Tōkyō: Mitsumurakyōikutosho, 2011.

Spanish: *El ratón de la ciudad y el ratón del campo*, Bogotá: Grupo Editorial Norma, 2010.

Summary

The town-mouse visits the country-mouse. She is scared of the cows and the rooster, dislikes the smell of the pigs and the wheat field stubble hurts her paws, but she loves the stars of the night sky, the food and the sunrise. Then the country-mouse visits the town-mouse. She is scared by the speed of the city, overwhelmed by the business and smells of the supermarket and frightened by a dog. She also is not used to eating so much. So her friend takes her to quieter streets and shows her the lights of the city, which the country-mouse enjoys. Then the town-mouse introduces the country-mouse to her friends and they party until late at night. The country-mouse very much enjoys watching the freight ships early in the morning, but decides it is time to go home because she misses it. She says that both country and city are nice, but for each their own. They hug and plan to visit each other again soon. Then the country-mouse departs.

Analysis

The story is the retelling of Aesop's/Horace's fable (Horace *Sermones* 2.6) of the Town-Mouse and the Country-Mouse for 4–6 year old children, though set in modern times and with an updated moral (both mice agree that each likes best what they know, but both, country and city life, are equally good). At the end of the book, the ancient fable is

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printed in Latin and translated into German, with a brief explanation.

The ancient fable is retold (with beautiful illustrations), but set in modern times. What remains is the basic structure: the town-mouse visits the country-mouse, then the country-mouse visits the town-mouse and both experience the different food and life-styles of the other. The country-mouse feels overwhelmed by city-life and is scared when she sees a dog (who, in this version of the story, however, is on a lead and looks just as scared of the mice than the country-mouse is of him. The town- mouse is shown tickling his nose).

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Aesop Aesop's Fables Horace
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Animals Diversity Friendship Society

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