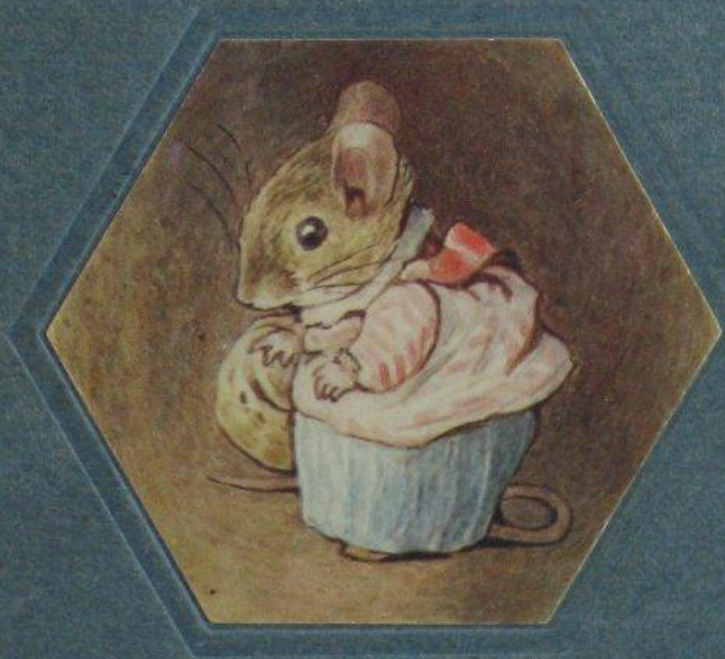


# THE TALE OF MRS. TITTMOUSE



BY  
BEATRIX POTTER

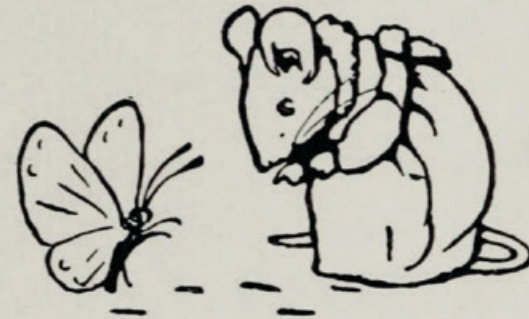
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# THE TALE OF MRS. TITTMOUSE

By

BEATRIX POTTER

Author of  
"The Tale of Peter Rabbit" etc.



FREDERICK WARNE & CO., INC.  
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ONCE upon a time there was a wood-mouse, and her name was Mrs. Tittlemouse.

She lived in a bank under a hedge.

SUCH a funny house !  
There were yards and  
yards of sandy passages,  
leading to storerooms and  
nut-cellars and seed-cellars,  
all amongst the roots of the  
hedge.







THERE was a kitchen, a parlour, a pantry, and a larder.

Also, there was Mrs. Tittlemouse's bedroom, where she slept in a little box bed !

MRS. TITTMOUSE was a most terribly tidy particular little mouse, always sweeping and dusting the soft sandy floors.

Sometimes a beetle lost its way in the passages.

“Shuh! shuh! little dirty feet!” said Mrs. Tittlemouse, clattering her dust-pan.







AND one day a little old woman ran up and down in a red spotty cloak.

“Your house is on fire, Mother Ladybird! Fly away home to your children!”

ANOTHER day, a big fat spider came in to shelter from the rain.

“Beg pardon, is this not Miss Muffet’s?”

“Go away, you bold bad spider! Leaving ends of cob-web all over my nice clean house!”







SHE bundled the spider out  
at a window.

He let himself down the  
hedge with a long thin bit of  
string.

MRS. TITTMOUSE  
went on her way to a  
distant storeroom, to fetch  
cherry-stones and thistle-down  
seed for dinner.

All along the passage she  
sniffed, and looked at the  
floor.

“ I smell a smell of honey ;  
is it the cowslips outside, in  
the hedge ? I am sure I can  
see the marks of little dirty  
feet.”







SUDDENLY round a corner, she met Babbitty Bumble —“ Zizz, Bizz, Bizzz ! ” said the bumble bee.

Mrs. Tittlemouse looked at her severely. She wished that she had a broom.

“ Good-day, Babbitty Bumble; I should be glad to buy some beeswax. But what are you doing down here ? Why do you always come in at a window, and say Zizz, Bizz, Bizzz ? ” Mrs. Tittlemouse began to get cross.



“**Z**IZZ, Wizz, Wizzz !”  
replied Babbitty Bumble  
in a peevish squeak. She  
sidled down a passage, and  
disappeared into a storeroom  
which had been used for  
acorns.

Mrs. Tittlemouse had eaten  
the acorns before Christmas ;  
the storeroom ought to have  
been empty.

But it was full of untidy  
dry moss.







MRS. TITTLEMOUSE began to pull out the moss. Three or four other bees put their heads out, and buzzed fiercely.

“I am not in the habit of letting lodgings ; this is an intrusion !” said Mrs. Tittlemouse. “I will have them turned out—” “Buzz ! Buzz ! Buzz !”—“I wonder who would help me ?” “Bizz, Wizz, Wizz !”

—“I will not have Mr. Jackson ; he never wipes his feet.”



MRS. TITTMOUSE  
decided to leave the  
bees till after dinner.

When she got back to the  
parlour, she heard some one  
coughing in a fat voice ; and  
there sat Mr. Jackson himself !

He was sitting all over a  
small rocking-chair, twiddling  
his thumbs and smiling, with  
his feet on the fender.

He lived in a drain below  
the hedge, in a very dirty wet  
ditch.







“HOW do you do, Mr. Jackson? Deary me, you have got very wet!”

“Thank you, thank you, thank you, Mrs. Tittlemouse! I’ll sit awhile and dry myself,” said Mr. Jackson.

He sat and smiled, and the water dripped off his coat tails. Mrs. Tittlemouse went round with a mop.

HE sat such a while that he had to be asked if he would take some dinner ?

First she offered him cherry-stones. "Thank you, thank you, Mrs. Tittlemouse ! No teeth, no teeth, no teeth !" said Mr. Jackson.

He opened his mouth most unnecessarily wide ; he certainly had not a tooth in his head.







THEN she offered him  
thistle - down seed —  
“Tiddly, widdly, widdly !  
Pouff, pouff, puff !” said Mr.  
Jackson. He blew the thistle-  
down all over the room.

“Thank you, thank you,  
thank you, Mrs. Tittlemouse !  
Now what I really—*really*  
should like—would be a little  
dish of honey !”

“I AM afraid I have not got any, Mr. Jackson ” said Mrs. Tittlemouse.

“ Tiddly, widdly, widdly, Mrs. Tittlemouse ! ” said the smiling Mr. Jackson, “ I can *smell* it ; that is why I came to call.”

Mr. Jackson rose ponderously from the table, and began to look into the cupboards.

Mrs. Tittlemouse followed him with a dish-cloth, to wipe his large wet footmarks off the parlour floor.







WHEN he had convinced himself that there was no honey in the cupboards, he began to walk down the passage.

“Indeed, indeed, you will stick fast, Mr. Jackson!”

“Tiddly, widdly, widdly, Mrs. Tittlemouse!”

FIRST he squeezed into the pantry.

“Tiddly, widdly, widdly? no honey? no honey, Mrs. Tittlemouse?”

There were three creepy-crawly people hiding in the plate-rack. Two of them got away; but the littlest one he caught.







THEN he squeezed into the larder. Miss Butterfly was tasting the sugar ; but she flew away out of the window.

“ Tiddly, widdly, widdly, Mrs. Tittlemouse ; you seem to have plenty of visitors ! ”

“ And without any invitation ! ” said Mrs. Thomasina Tittlemouse.

THEY went along the sandy passage—"Tiddly widdly—" "Buzz! Wizz! Wizz!"

He met Babbitty round a corner, and snapped her up, and put her down again.

"I do not like bumble bees. They are all over bristles," said Mr. Jackson, wiping his mouth with his coat-sleeve.

"Get out, you nasty old toad!" shrieked Babbitty Bumble.

"I shall go distracted!" scolded Mrs. Tittlemouse.







SHE shut herself up in the nut-cellar while Mr. Jackson pulled out the bees-nest. He seemed to have no objection to stings.

When Mrs. Tittlemouse ventured to come out—everybody had gone away.

But the untidiness was something dreadful—"Never did I see such a mess—smears of honey ; and moss, and thistledown—and marks of big and little dirty feet—all over my nice clean house ! "

SHE gathered up the moss  
and the remains of the  
beeswax.

Then she went out and  
fetched some twigs, to partly  
close up the front door.

“ I will make it too small  
for Mr. Jackson ! ”







SHE fetched soft soap, and flannel, and a new scrubbing brush from the storeroom. But she was too tired to do any more. First she fell asleep in her chair, and then she went to bed.

“Will it ever be tidy again?” said poor Mrs. Tittlemouse.

NEXT morning she got up very early and began a spring cleaning which lasted a fortnight.

She swept, and scrubbed, and dusted ; and she rubbed up the furniture with beeswax, and polished her little tin spoons.





WHEN it was all beautifully neat and clean, she gave a party to five other little mice, without Mr. Jackson.

He smelt the party and came up the bank, but he could not squeeze in at the door.





SO they handed him out acorn-cupfuls of honeydew through the window, and he was not at all offended.

He sat outside in the sun, and said—"Tiddly, widdly, widdly! Your very good health, Mrs. Tittlemouse!"

THE END