



## THE MICE AND THE WEASELS

Close to the riverbank, there were mice living in their holes. They were doing very well: the river gave them enough water, their holes were deep enough to be safe and there was a nearby barley field they could eat in. The only thing disturbing their quiet little life was the buzzing of the flies.

However, after some time, the weasels also discovered this place. They liked it and they decided to live there, too. The weasels were big and strong, and they didn't respect the little mice at all. The place soon got too small for both the mice and the weasels, and so they started to fight for space.

Even though there were many more mice than weasels, they were small and weak, and so they lost every battle against the weasels. When there were already too many defeats, the mice realized they would lose the war and the weasels would push them out if nothing changed.

They called a council to think about what to do. There were many ideas about how to fight the weasels, but none were very successful. Until one wise, old mouse raised her paw and said:

“We need a leader. Nobody is leading us, which is why our fighting is very messy and disorganised. We need to elect some commanders.”

Murmuring took over the mouse hole because the mice needed to talk about

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this idea. In the end, they agreed to pick four mice who would become generals and lead the battles against the weasels.

And that is what happened. The elected mice made all the big decisions. To be visible, they got helmets with red plumes and they wore gold medals around their necks.

Soon, the generals started feeling very important. They didn't spend any time with the other mice, they only talked amongst themselves. They were always debating and having meetings. They didn't even exercise any more and they only lectured the other mice. They completely forgot about the skills they learned in previous battles because they were always sitting by a table coming up with plans to beat the weasels.

Time went by and the mouse generals decided that it was time for a big battle with the weasels. After long preparations and many important speeches, they set off into battle with the other mice. Despite all their plans, meetings, and speeches, they were crushed.

When it was clear that the mice had lost again, they started running away. The four generals also ran as fast as they could. But their helmets and medals made running very difficult, and they hadn't exercised in a long time. Not only did they reach the hole last, but they also couldn't even get in because their helmets were getting stuck. While the other mice were able to hide, the weasels caught all four generals. Once the battlefield cleared only the helmets with red plumes and gold medals were left behind.