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# MOUSE GUARD

DAVID PETERSEN



All across the Mouse Territories its residents struggle to prosper amongst harsh weather conditions and predators. A group of selfless cloaked mice called the Mouse Guard patrol the open country between cities and towns allowing the common mice not just to survive, but thrive. It takes a mouse of great character to serve in this way, though they often come from humble beginnings...

# MOUSE GUARD: THE TALE OF THE WISE WEAVER

STORY & ART BY DAVID PETERSEN



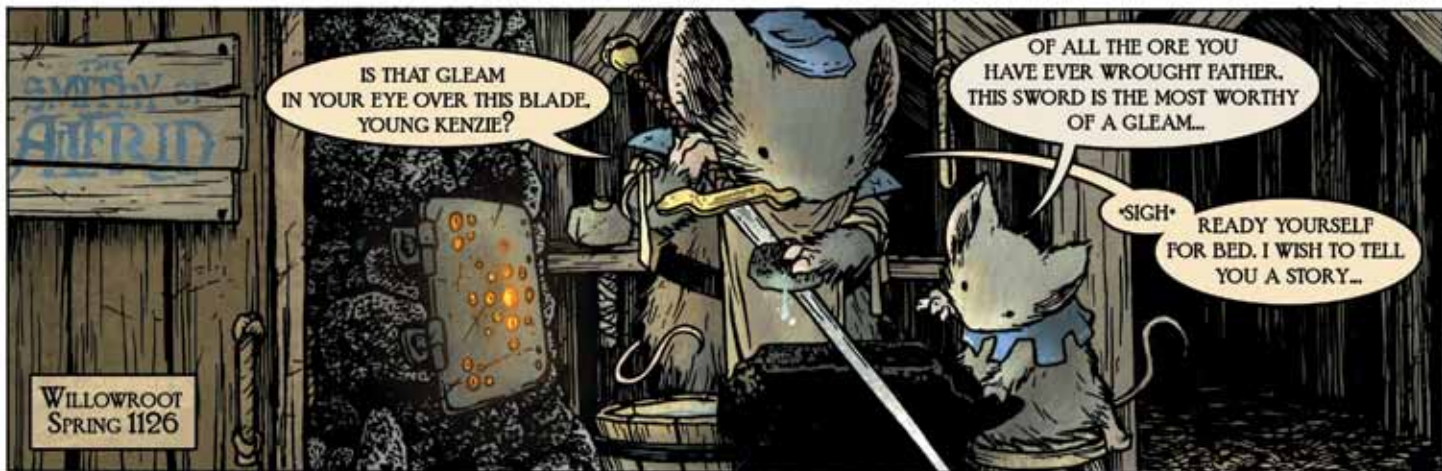
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IT WAS ONCE A MOUSE TOWN WHICH LAY IN PERIL. THREE PREDATORS HAD CLAIMED THE TERRITORY OUTSIDE ITS WALLS: A HAWK, A SNAKE, AND A CRAB. NOT EVEN A RIBBON OF LAND BETWEEN THEIR HUNTING GROUNDS EXISTED FOR A MOUSE TO ESCAPE THE SETTLEMENT.




THE TOWN FELT HOPLESS AS IT HAD SENT NEARLY EVERY ABLE-BODIED MOUSE TO RID THEM OF THE BEASTS, BUT NEVER DID ONE RETURN VICTORIOUS.


UNTIL, A WEAVER MOUSE, KNOWN FOR BEING CLEVER CAME FORWARD SAYING:

I'LL REMOVE THE THREATS!






HE WALKED OUT OF THE GATES AND INTO THE HAWK'S HUNTING GROUNDS. WHEN HE FOUND THE FEATHERED KILLER HE BOWED AND OFFERED HUMBLY:

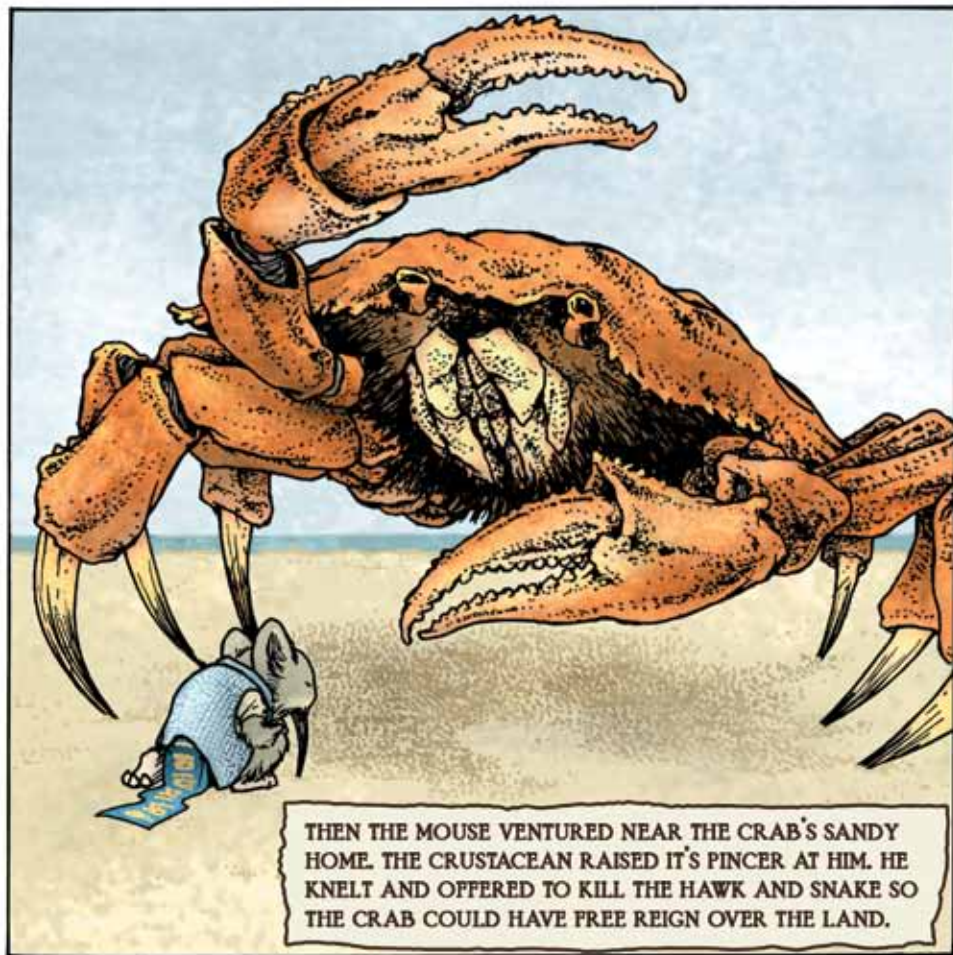


BEFORE YOU WOULD THINK TO SWALLOW ME HAWK, I OFFER MY SERVICES IN RIDDING US BOTH OF THE SNAKE AND THE CRAB OF OUR NEARBY LANDS.

WITH TWO-THIRDS OF OUR FOES REMOVED WE WILL BOTH SURVIVE EXTINCTION, WHICH WILL OFFER YOU HEARTY MEALS WITH NO COMPETITION.



THE HAWK RELISHED THE IDEA OF DESTROYING THE OTHER MOUSE-EATERS AND WITH GREAT PAIN REMOVED ONE OF HIS OWN TALONS FOR THE MOUSE TO USE AS A BLADE IN THE QUEST.



THEN THE MOUSE VENTURED NEAR THE CRAB'S SANDY HOME. THE CRUSTACEAN RAISED IT'S PINCER AT HIM. HE KNELT AND OFFERED TO KILL THE HAWK AND SNAKE SO THE CRAB COULD HAVE FREE REIGN OVER THE LAND.

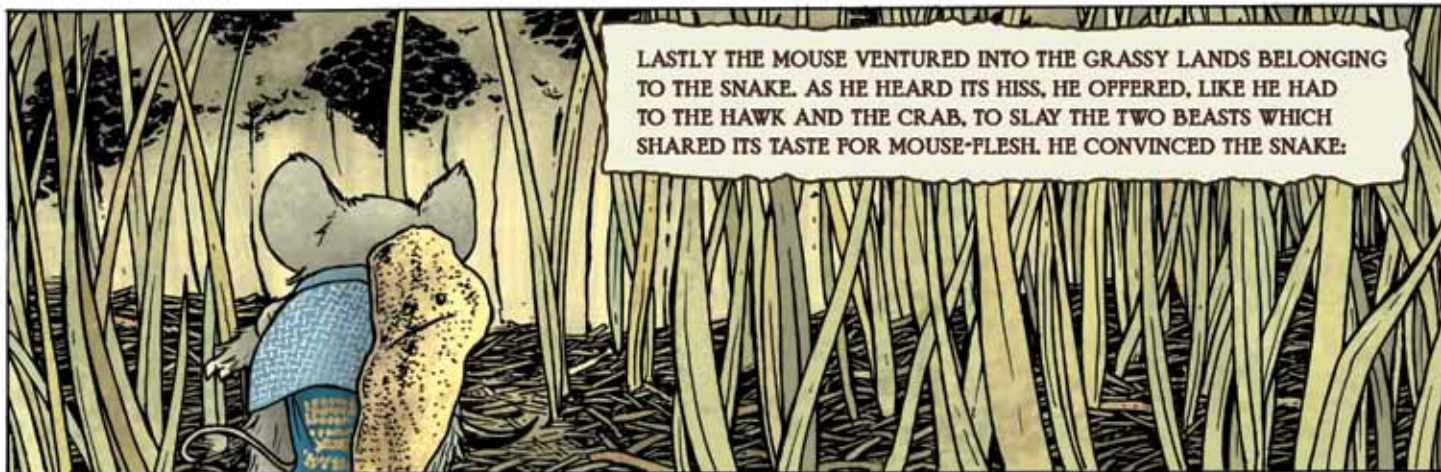


THE MOUSE ADMITTED THOUGH:

I OFFER TO DO IT ALONE, BUT A SMALL CREATURE LIKE ME WILL NEED TO BE BETTER EQUIPPED TO SURVIVE THE TASK.



THE CRAB'S SUFFERING WAS APPARENT AS IT STRIPPED OFF A PIECE OF ITS SHELL FOR THE MOUSE TO USE AS A SHIELD.



LASTLY THE MOUSE VENTURED INTO THE GRASSY LANDS BELONGING TO THE SNAKE. AS HE HEARD ITS HISS, HE OFFERED, LIKE HE HAD TO THE HAWK AND THE CRAB, TO SLAY THE TWO BEASTS WHICH SHARED ITS TASTE FOR MOUSE-FLESH. HE CONVINCED THE SNAKE:

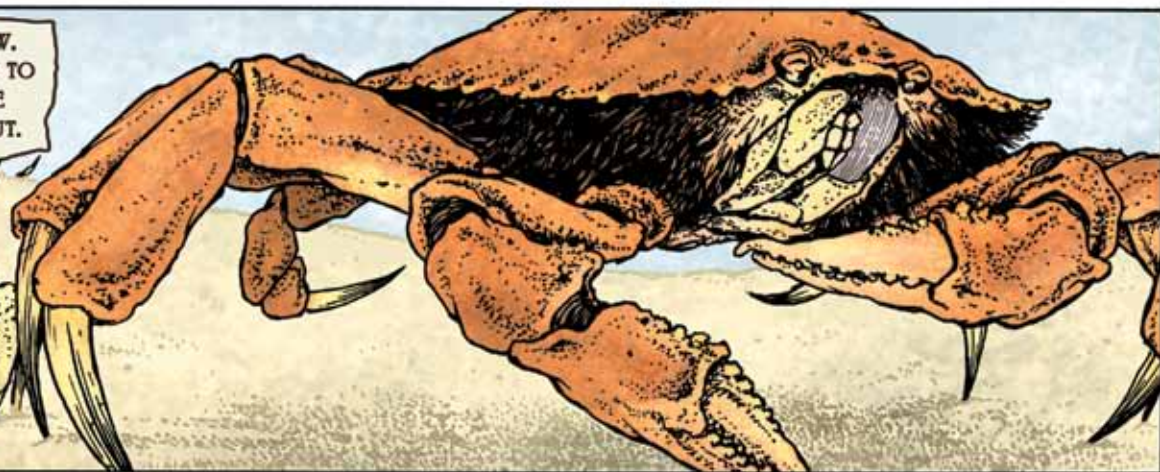


WITH FEWER KILLERS AND MORE OF MY KIND ALIVE, WE WILL BOTH BENEFIT.



THE SNAKE LOWERED ITS FACE AND DONATED ENOUGH VENOM TO KILL THEIR MUTUAL FOES.

WITH HIS TOOLS IN TOW,  
THE MOUSE RETURNED TO  
THE SHORE WHERE THE  
CRAB SCUTTLED ABOUT.



USING THE HAWK'S TALON HE  
STRUCK IT PRECISELY INTO  
THE SPOT WHERE THE CRAB  
HAD SURRENDERED ITS OWN  
SHELL AND WAS VULNERABLE.



THE CRAB PERISHED AND  
THE MOUSE TRAVELED ON.

WHEN HE RETURNED TO THE SNAKE, IT LOOKED SURPRISED TO SEE HIM BACK SO SOON. SUSPECTING TREACHERY, THE SNAKE ROSE UP TO STRIKE.



UNBUCKLING HIS CRAB-SHELL SHIELD JUST BEFORE THE SNAKE REACHED HIM...



THE MOUSE LODGED IT IN THE THROAT OF THE LONG SERPENT.



HARD AND SPIKY, THE PIECE OF SHELL CUT THE SNAKE INSIDE RESULTANTLY KILLING THE BEAST.

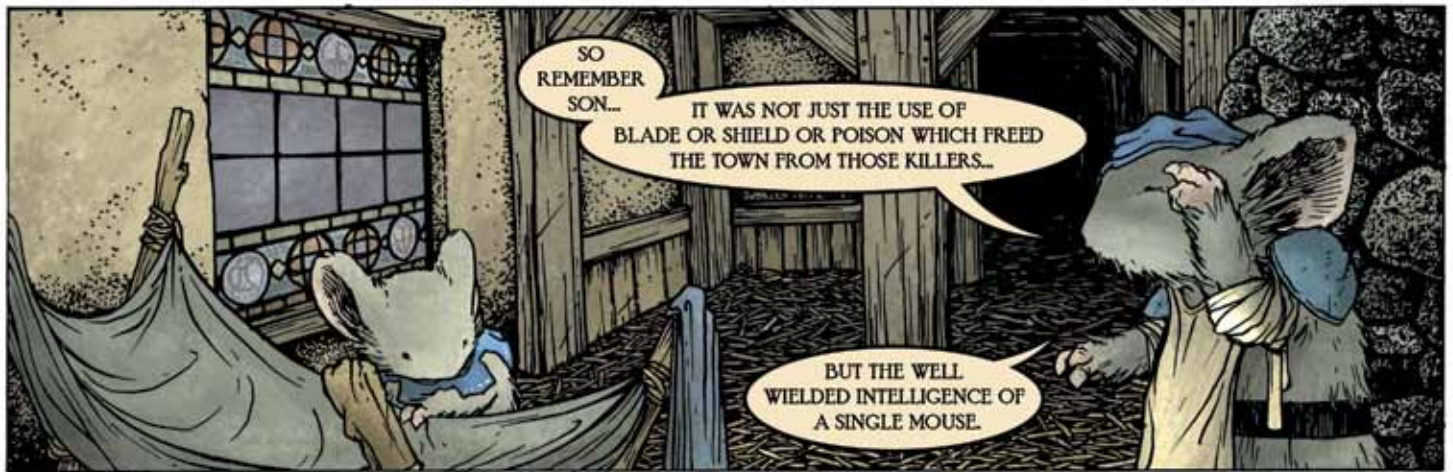


WITH TWO OF THE PREDATORS SLAIN, THE MOUSE TRAVELED BACK TO THE HAWK WITH HIS CLEVEREST PLAN YET. TAKING THE SNAKE'S VENOM HE OFFERED IT TO THE HAWK SAYING:

I HAVE DONE WHAT WE AGREED UPON, AND I OFFER THIS WINE AS A SYMBOL OF OUR NEW COVENANT.

THE HAWK SWALLOWED THE OFFERING IN A SINGLE GULP.

...AND EXPIRED QUICKLY AS A RESULT.



SO  
REMEMBER  
SON...

IT WAS NOT JUST THE USE OF  
BLADE OR SHIELD OR POISON WHICH FREED  
THE TOWN FROM THOSE KILLERS...

BUT THE WELL  
WIELDED INTELLIGENCE OF  
A SINGLE MOUSE.



DREAM OF  
GREATER THINGS FOR  
OUR KIND THAN MAKING  
BEASTS BLEED FOR  
OUR SURVIVAL.

IDEAS CAN  
CAUSE MORE DAMAGE THAN  
A BLADE?



GOOD NIGHT, KENZIE.

Jim Henson's

# The Dark Crystal



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