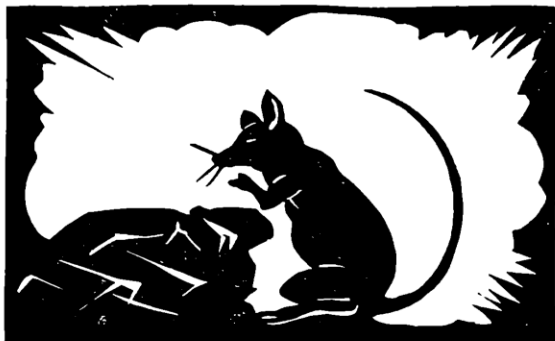


BUYING

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In the days of olden time
There lived in a sullen clime
A lonely little mouse
In a broken little house.

Little Mouse in a dark room
Sat all day long in deep gloom.
He was feeling very bad.
He was feeling very sad.

One day, he said to his mother,
"O mother, what fine weather!
I'll go on a journey long
To buy me a soft, sweet song."

"A sweet song to me is dear,
And I'm sure you'd like to hear
A song from the other lands,
So make me some sweet garlands."

The mother made some sweet pop-corn
For the mouse who was forlorn,
And made them into garlands,
For the trip to the far lands.

So early on the morn,
With heart that felt great sorrow.
The mouse went on his journey,
To buy a new, sweet melody.

He entwined around his neck
The corn garlands and gave a peck
To his old and loving mother
Whom he loved above any other.

"Mother," said he, "I must go
But I must be home with you
Ere the evening wind begins to sigh.
I bid you now good-bye."

He went on his lonely way
To the far lands of the gay,
To buy a strange, sweet melody
For him to sing right merrily.

He did not have very far to go
Before he met a big black crow . . .
. . . very inky . . . very black . . .
Inky and black as a night so dark.



"Where are you going, little Mouse?
If you please come to my house
I'll pay for those pretties that you have
If you come to my nest above."

"Please sing a song if you care.
I'll buy a song that is fair . . .
Fairer than the song of the dove,
For 'tis that I long for and love."

"I will sing a song for you.
If you like it, tell me so.
Then give me what you bring
For the song that I will sing."

"Yes, sing it nicely to me
And so quickly I'll agree
To what you say. And I'll tell
You if 'tis sung sweet and well."

A SONG

“Wak—Children call me wak-wak.
Wak—For I am very black . . .
Wak—As black as black can be . . .
Wak . . wak . . wak . . wak . .” sang he.

“Mother isn’t so black as you.
I can’t buy your song, you know.
Take one cracker with you along;
And I thank you for your song.”

He went until he met Wise Owl;
The bird that fills the air with howl.
Wise Owl had feathers thick and brown.
His eyes were stern and his face was round.



“Little Mouse,” in a loud voice,
“Will you let me have a choice
I will give you what you want
If you tell me what you hunt.”

“Garlands of crackers have I,
With them a sweet song will I buy
If you sing with a nice voice
I will let you have your choice.”

“Well, then hear me as I sing.
Sing the wonders of every thing.
See if the song which I love
Matches the song of a dove.

“Kang! Kang! Kang! I’m called Ukang.¹
But my songs are nightly sung
If you come to me tonight
I will give you much delight.”



“Yours is not the song I want.
Yours is not the song I hunt,
If your singing is nightly done.”
And away the mouse was gone.

Then he came to a tall crane
Traveling o’er the wide, wide plain
Who asked what the mouse did bring.
He’d like to eat such a tiny thing.

“I bring corn cracker garlands
With them I came to distant lands
To seek and buy a fine sweet song.
Is a wish I’ve had for long.”

“I will sing a song today,
Listen gladly then I pray;
'Tis like music in the air.
'Tis a song so sweet and fair.

“Tingao buk-buk. Tingao buk-buk.¹
I rove and rove. O’er hills and plains.
Picking up seeds the whole long day.
I am tingao . . . so children say.”

(To be continued)

¹The *U* is pronounced as in fur.

²The *U* in this word is pronounced like the *U* in fur.