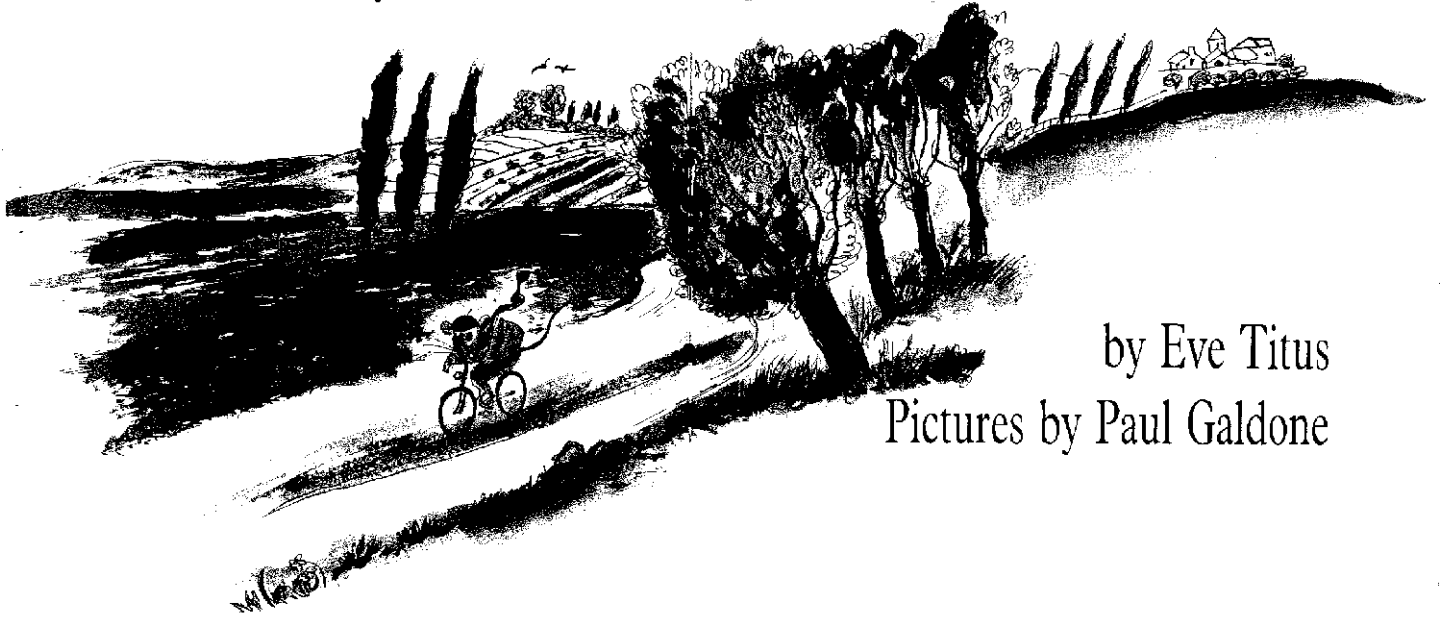
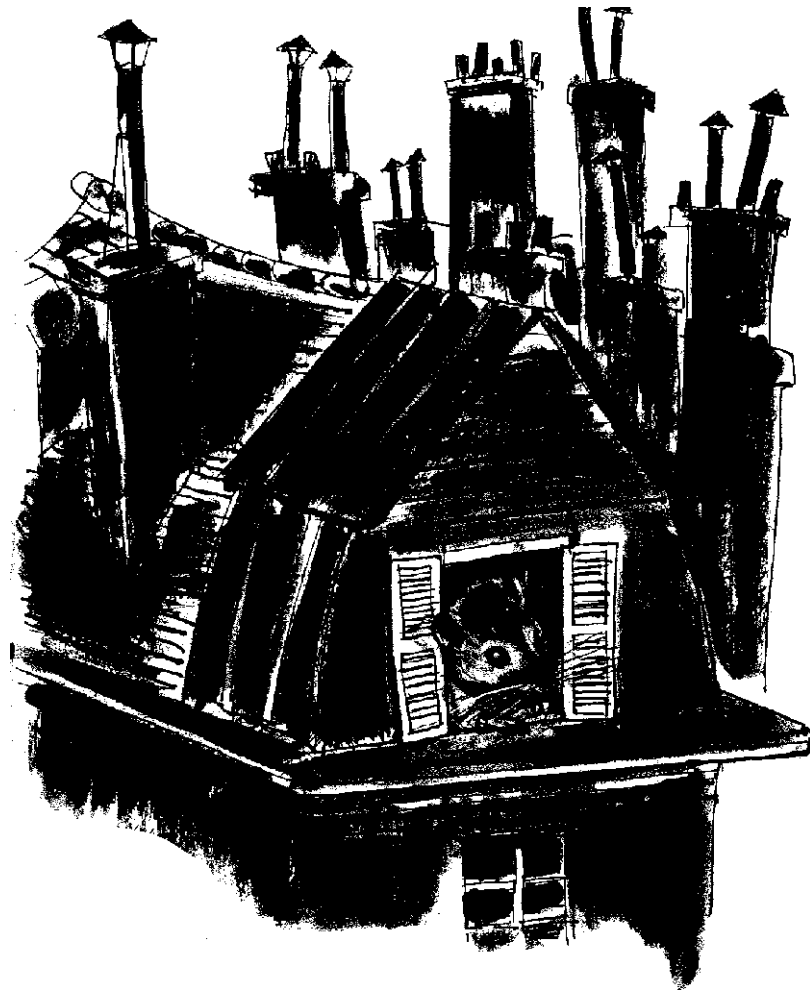


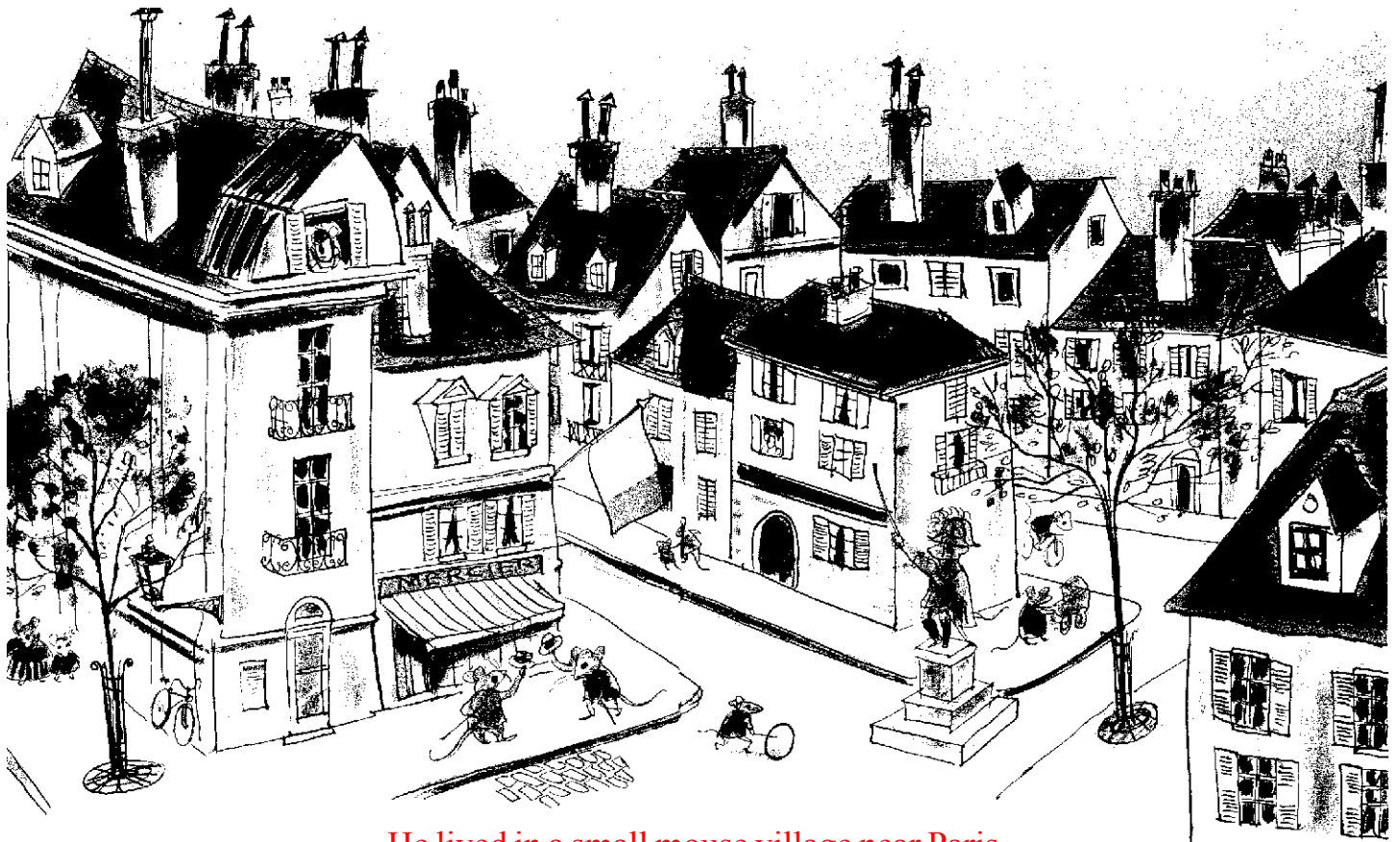
# ANATOLE



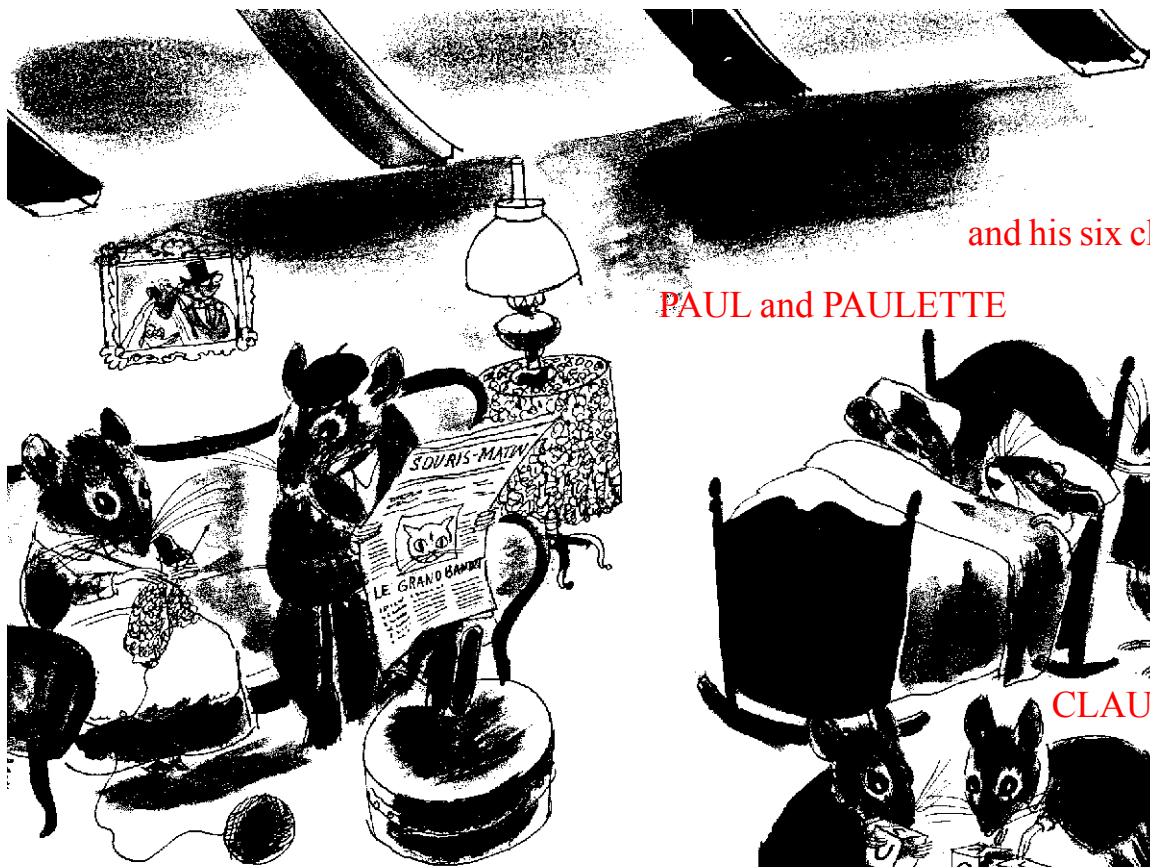
by Eve Titus  
Pictures by Paul Galdone



In all France  
there was no happier, more contented mouse than Anatole.



He lived in a small mouse village near Paris



and his six charming children

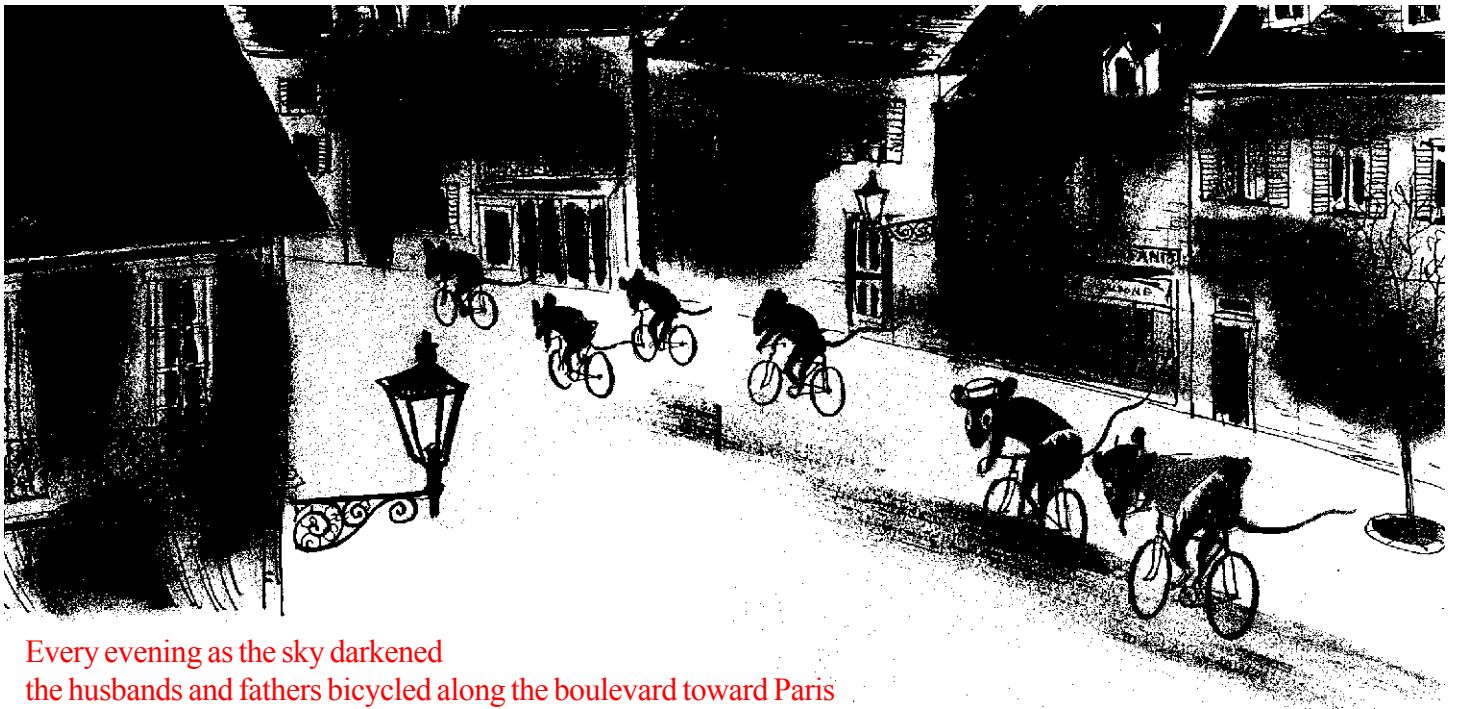
PAUL and PAULETTE

with his dear wife DOUCETTE



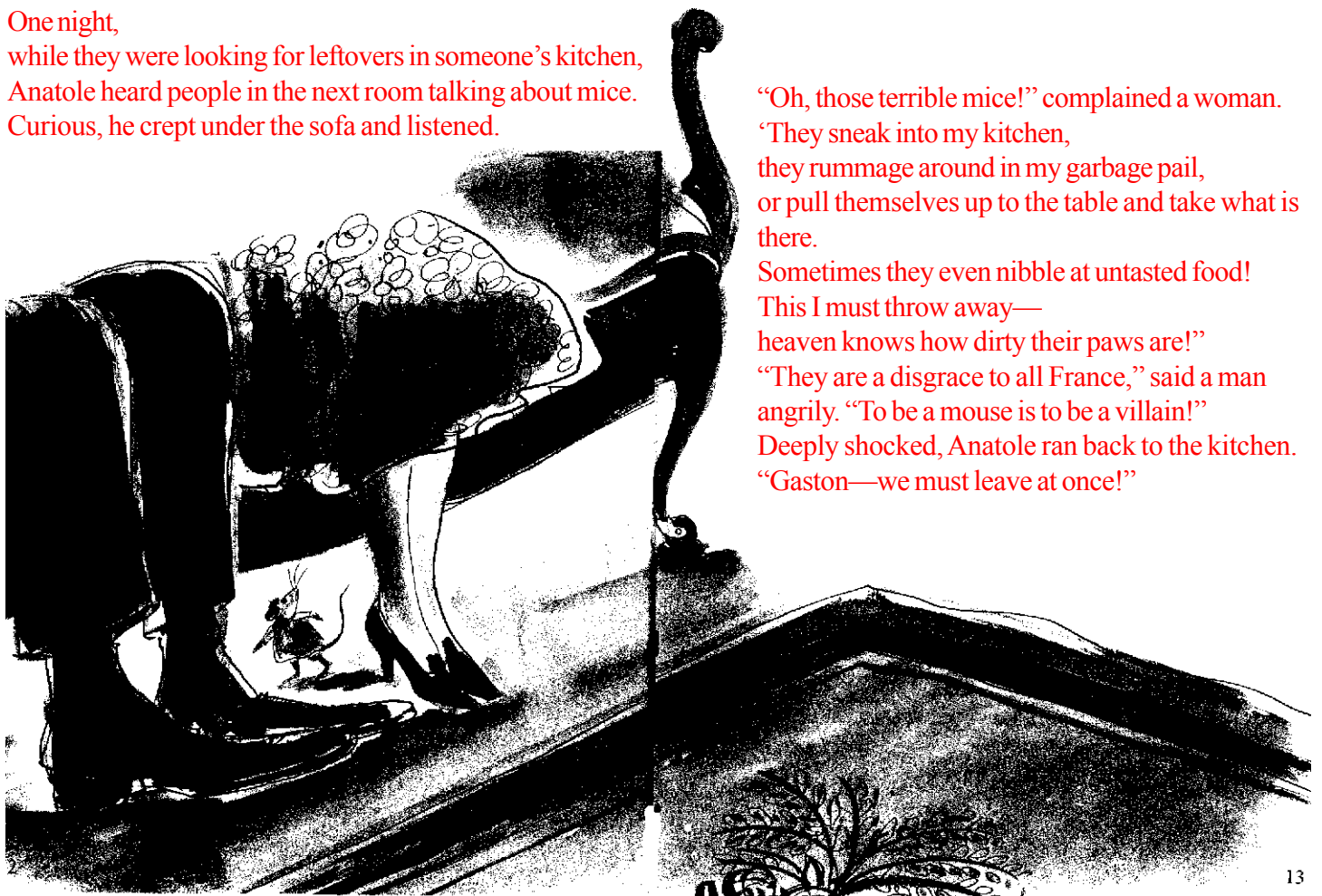
CLAUDE and CLAUDETTE

GEORGES and GEORGETTE.

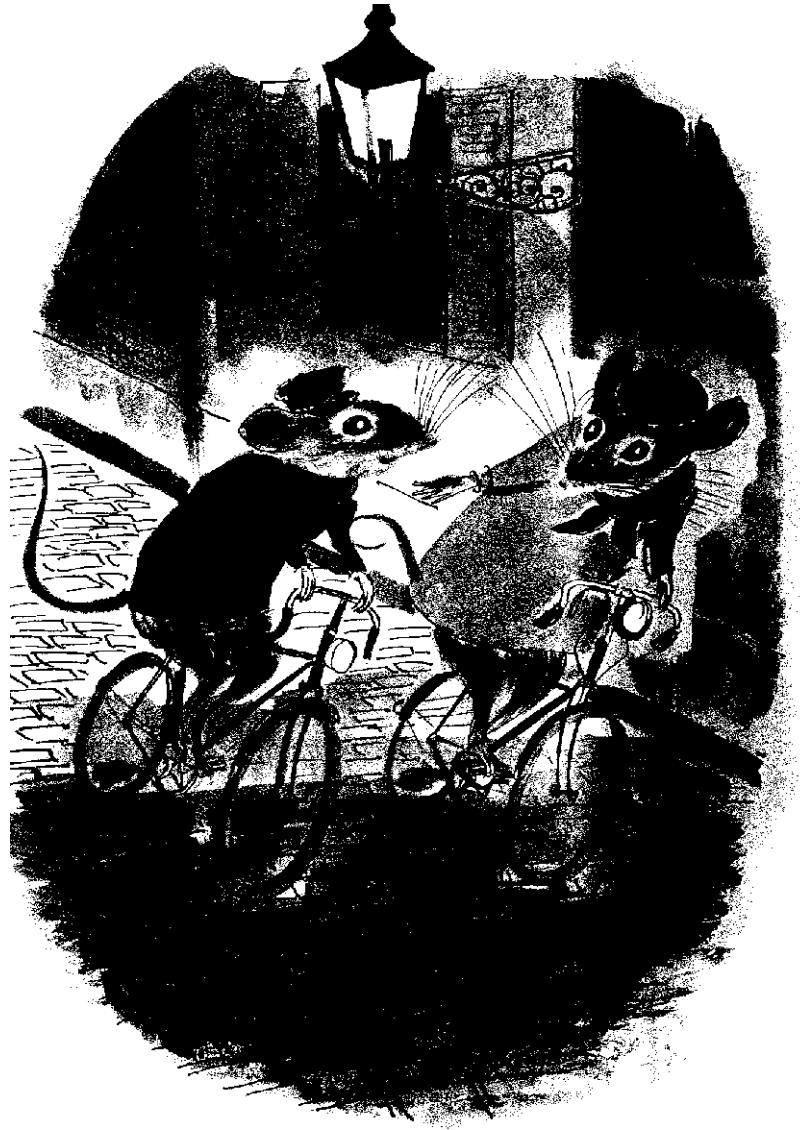


Every evening as the sky darkened the husbands and fathers bicycled along the boulevard toward Paris to find food for their families. Once arrived, they entered people's houses through secret passageways, known only to themselves. Anatole's partner was usually Gaston.

One night, while they were looking for leftovers in someone's kitchen, Anatole heard people in the next room talking about mice. Curious, he crept under the sofa and listened.



"Oh, those terrible mice!" complained a woman. "They sneak into my kitchen, they rummage around in my garbage pail, or pull themselves up to the table and take what is there. Sometimes they even nibble at untasted food! This I must throw away— heaven knows how dirty their paws are!" "They are a disgrace to all France," said a man angrily. "To be a mouse is to be a villain!" Deeply shocked, Anatole ran back to the kitchen. "Gaston—we must leave at once!"



On the way home, Anatole, greatly upset,  
told his friend what had happened.

“BAH! A mere trifle,” scoffed Gaston.  
“People are people, and mice are mice.  
Our loved ones must eat,  
and our only hunting-grounds are people’s homes.”

“But I never dreamed they regarded us this way,”  
cried the unhappy Anatole.  
“It is horrible to feel scorned and unwanted!  
Where is my self-respect? My pride? MY HONOR?”

Gaston shrugged his shoulders indifferently.  
“Resign yourself, Anatole. *C’est la vie!*”



He sat down at the typewriter  
and typed thirty or forty signs that said:  
EXTRA-SPECIALLY GOOD  
SPECIALLY GOOD

GOOD  
NOT SO GOOD  
NO GOOD



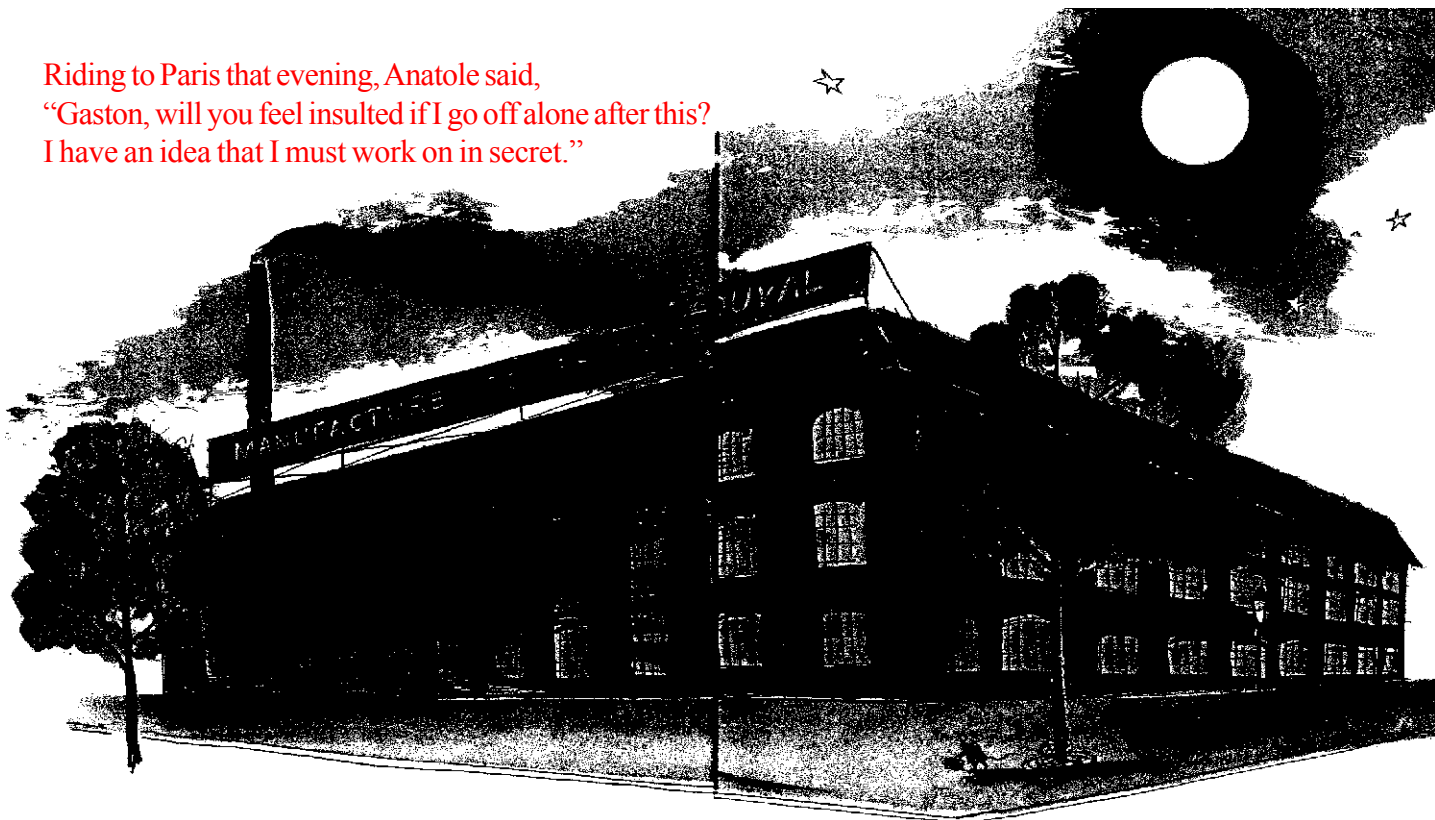
Doucette comforted him.  
“You are so right, Anatole,” she said sadly.  
“If only we could give people something in return—  
but alas, that is impossible!”

Anatole jumped up and danced Doucette around the room.  
“Impossible? Perhaps not, *ma petite!*  
You have given me a wonderful idea.”



Then he stuck a long pin through each sign  
and put them all away carefully in his briefcase.

Riding to Paris that evening, Anatole said,  
“Gaston, will you feel insulted if I go off alone after this?  
I have an idea that I must work on in secret.”

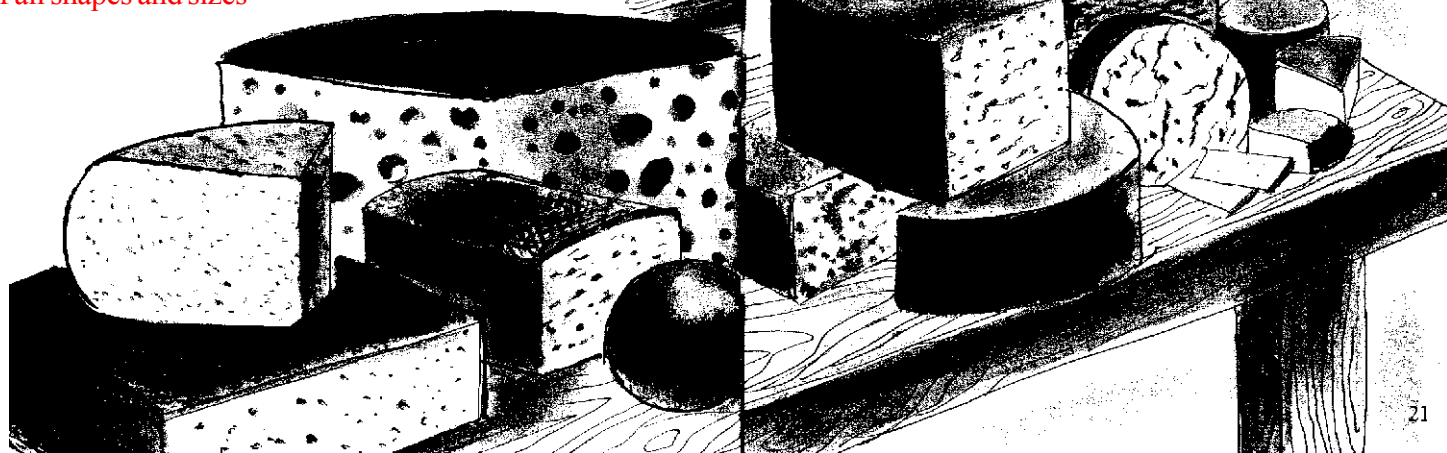


Gaston answered, “I am your friend, *n'est-ce-pas?*  
A friend is never insulted—a friend has faith. Good luck!”

When they reached Paris, Anatole left the others  
and headed towards the business part of town.  
He parked his bicycle in front of the Duval Cheese Factory.

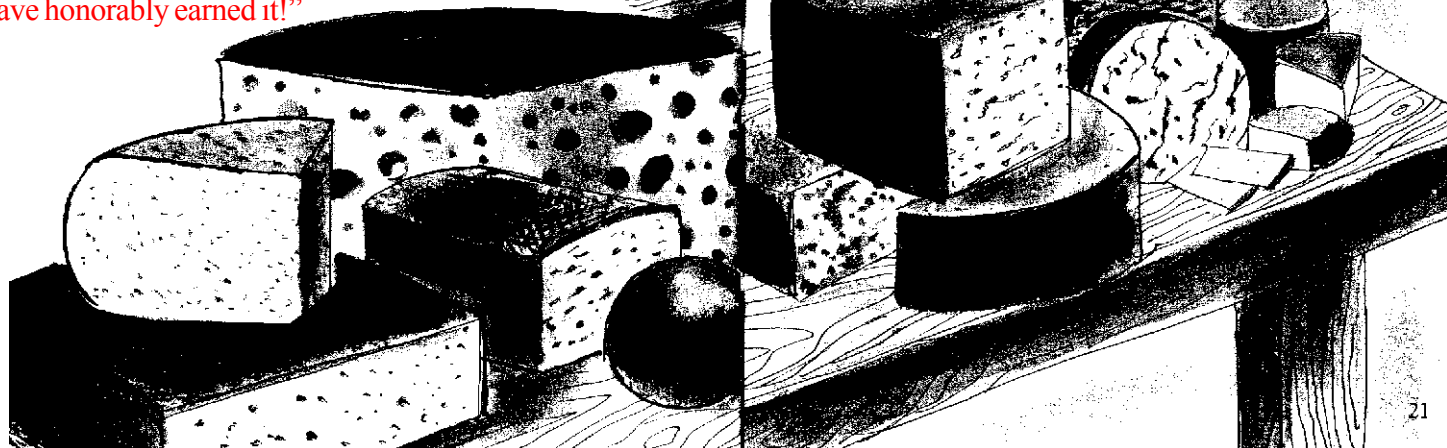
He squeezed his small mouse's body easily under the door, not forgetting his briefcase.  
How heavenly it smelled inside!  
His sensitive nose sniffed many delicious cheeses—  
CAMEMBERT, PORT SALUT, BLEU,  
ST. MARCELIN, ROQUEFORT, BRIE  
Well, thought Anatole—I mustn't stand here sniffing all night.  
There is work to be done!

He hurried down one dark passageway after another until he found what he was looking for—the Cheese-Tasting Room!  
It was dimly lit, filled with long, wooden tables.  
On them stood great mounds of cheese, of all shapes and sizes



Without further delay, Anatole climbed up on the nearest table.  
First he tasted a bit of Camembert.  
“Mmm! Couldn't be better!”  
He opened his briefcase, took out an EXTRA-SPECIALLY GOOD sign, and pinned it on the cheese.  
The next one tasted much too sharp.  
He used a NOT SO GOOD sign, and wrote something on it in pencil.  
Up and down the long rows of cheeses went Anatole, for hours and hours, sniffing and tasting and pinning on signs.

At last his work was finished.  
“Voilà! Now the Duval Factory will learn a thing or two.  
Mice are known everywhere as the World's Best Judges of Cheese!  
And as for myself, I shall bring some home proudly, for I have honorably earned it!”





Next morning at the factory there was great excitement.  
Everyone wondered who had written the strange little signs.  
In marched M'sieu Duval himself.  
"We'll soon see just how much this Anatole knows about cheese!"  
He tasted some Roquefort.  
"*Touche!* Anatole is right—this *does* need more orange peel!  
Now listen, all of you—business has been none too good lately.  
We'll try making cheese Anatole's way,  
and see what happens."

Every night Anatole left more of his little signs.  
And every day the cheese workers made more changes,

Soon business began to BOOM!  
The people of France demanded Duval cheese or no cheese at all!  
Orders poured in so fast that M'sieu Duval enlarged his factory  
and gave everybody a raise in salary.

But he couldn't discover who was leaving the signs.



“Why doesn’t Anatole appear?” M’sieu Duval asked his secretary.  
“He deserves to be rewarded—  
we owe all our good fortune to him!”

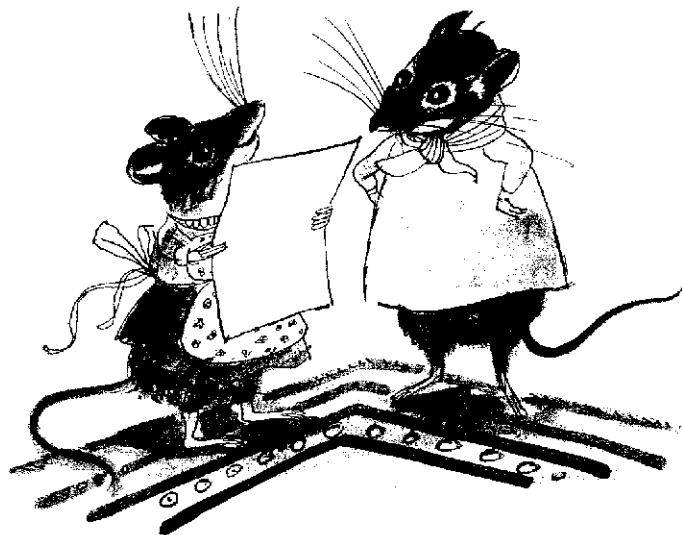
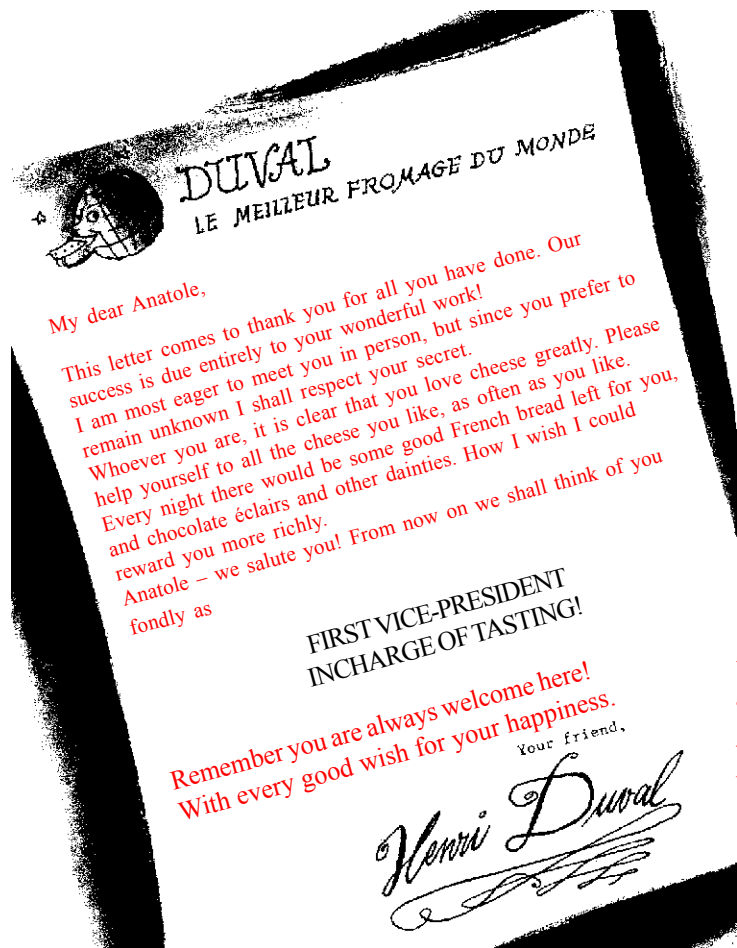
He wrote a little note, begging to meet Anatole.  
But Anatole wrote back that he preferred to remain unknown.

M’sieu Duval even had every employee named Anatole  
come to his office for questioning.  
But each one denied that he had left the signs.

It was no use—the secret remained a secret!

Then one afternoon M’sieu Duval rang for his secretary,  
and dictated a very long letter.



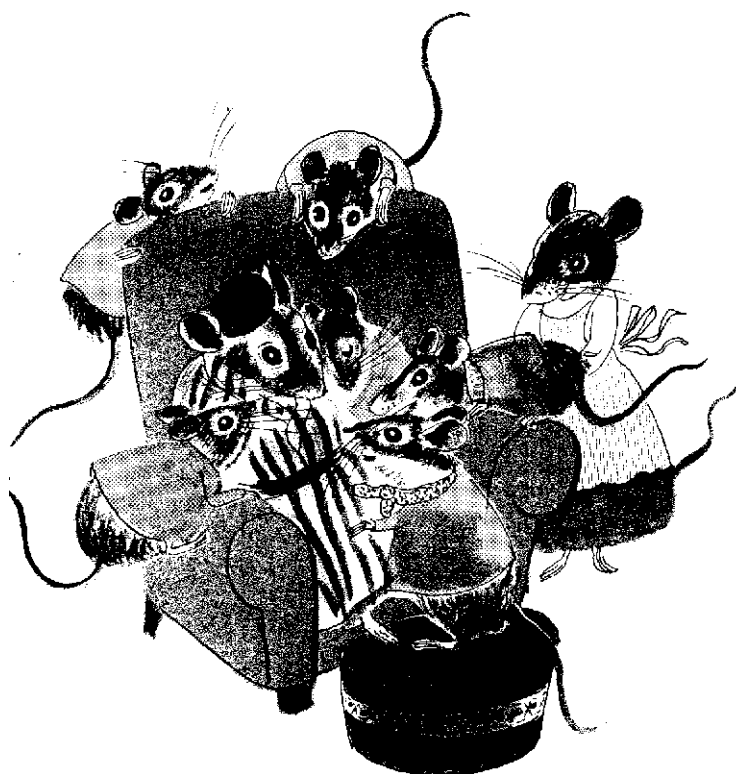


When Doucette saw the letter, she said,  
“No more snooping around in strange people’s houses for you—that’s finished forever!  
You are the smartest mouse in the world!”

Paul and Paulette,  
Claude and Claudette,  
and Georges and Georgette  
climbed up on his chair and hugged him.  
“We are so proud!  
Our beloved *Papa* is now a respectable business-mouse!”

The next day Anatole invited Gaston to be his helper.

The older mouse made a very deep bow.  
“Gladly will I join you!”  
Then he kissed his friend on both cheeks, and cried:  
“VIVE ANATOLE! Was he content  
to sit back and do *nothing* about our way of life?  
NON! NON!  
He is a mouse of action—a mouse of honor—  
A MOUSE MAGNIFIQUE!”



And so it came to pass.

Anatole and his partner worked at the factory,  
side by side in perfect harmony.

The secret stayed a secret, always.

So if you should ever meet a mouse looking for leftovers,  
you will know at once  
that it cannot possibly be Anatole,  
the happiest, most contented mouse  
in all France.



END