

## A CHEESY TALE



Clyde R. Countrymouse jumped out of bed as soon as he heard Rocky the Rooster crowing his cock-a-doodle doo. "Today's the day," he thought. "I'm finally going to visit my cousin, Carolyne Q. Citymouse.

Clyde had been planning his trip for weeks. He got a map from the auto club. He had his clothes cleaned and pressed. He even made an appointment at the barber shop to get his tail curled.

Most importantly, he had his friend Benny Beaver build him a special suitcase so he could bring his city cousin some delicious, hard orange cheese.

Clyde R. Countrymouse loved orange cheese. He believed a mouse needed a colorful cheese he could really sink his teeth into.

"Let me see," said Clyde. "Which cheese should I take? Should I take cheddar cheese or American cheese or colby cheese? Decisions, decisions, decisions. So many delicious orange cheeses and only a little space in my suitcase." He started humming "The Cheese Song" as he packed his luggage.

Meanwhile, in an attic apartment right in the middle of Monterey Jack city, Carolyne Q. Citymouse rolled over on her paint-stained pillow and opened one big brown eye. Carolyne was a struggling artist who painted portraits of Big Cheeses.

"Oh, my!" she thought. "The sun's out already. I guess I'd better get up and finish my painting."

Carolyne eased off her pillow and stretched her beautiful paws. "Let's see what else is on my calendar for today. My gosh! Today's the day my cousin Clyde's arriving and I'm not ready."

Carolyne continued, "I've a million things to do. Let's see. I have to finish my painting. Get the spare pillow ready. Go to the beauty parlor to get my tail curled. Then I'd better stop at the Cheese Mart and buy some delicious white cheeses."

Carolyne Q. Citymouse loved soft, beautiful, white cheeses. When she got to the grocery store, she walked up and down the aisles, thinking about white cheeses. She adored mozzarella cheese, string cheese, and cream cheese. Those white cheeses felt soft and smooth in her mouth.

Carolyne licked her ruby red mouse lips and started humming "The Cheese Song" as she filled up her grocery cart with white cheeses.

Carolyne rushed home and just finished putting the cheeses away when the doorbell chimed. She opened the door and there stood her cousin, Clyde R. Countrymouse.

The cousins squeaked with delight and started hugging each other. "Come on in and sit down," cried Carolyne.

"You must be starving after your long journey," said Carolyne. "Have a piece of my favorite white cheese—mozzarella."

"Oh," said Clyde, disappointedly. "I have a better idea. Let's have some of my nice orange cheddar cheese." He opened his suitcase and took out a piece.

"Orange cheese?" sniffed Carolyne. "I only eat white cheese." The cousins looked at each other and began sniffing as the aromas of the cheeses started to fill the air.

"Hmm. That white cheese smells pretty good," said Clyde as he moved over to the mozzarella. "Your cheddar cheese smells so good that my nose wants to giggle," said Carolyne as she sniffed a piece.

"Tell you what," said Clyde to his cousin. "My good friend Chef Combo says to always give new tastes a try. How about if I take a taste of your white cheese and you take a taste of my orange cheese?"

"It's a deal," said Carolyne. "On the count of three, let's take a bite. Ready? 1, 2, 3."

They each took a tiny bite. Then they took a second bite and a third bite. They looked at each other. And then, almost at the same time, they both said, "Yum, Yum, Yum. Your cheese is absolutely delicious."

The cousins laughed and hugged each other and started singing the song that Grandma Mouse sang to them when they were baby mice:

*Cheese, cheese, cheese!  
We love cheese.  
Please, please, please  
Give us cheese.  
We like white cheese,  
Oh, yes, we do.  
Orange cheeses taste  
wonderful too.  
Yellow cheese is for  
me and for you.  
Oh, give us cheese!*

Just then the doorbell rang. Guess who was there? Chef Combo!

"Clyde and Carolyne," said Chef Combo, "I'm so glad to see that you're being good food tasters and giving nutritious foods a try."

"Oh yes," said Carolyne. "It's fun to try new foods."

"I agree," said Clyde. "I'm always going to give new foods a try. You just never know how good a food is until you taste it."

Chef Combo just smiled.