







Peanut *the* **Mouse**





For Dougal and Zebedee, my first guinea pigs –J.C.



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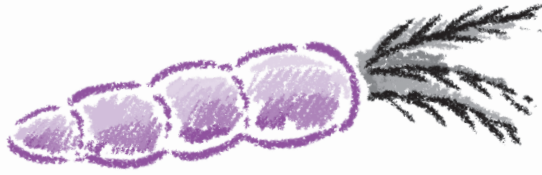
Peanut *the* **Mouse**

Jane Clarke

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Chapter One



Peanut watched proudly as Dr. KittyCat hung a framed certificate on the clinic wall. It said:



Later, all the little animals were coming to a pizza and pajama party to celebrate. They were going to make their own pizzas and have a sleepover in the vanbulance. Peanut couldn't wait!

But first, it was time for morning clinic. Peanut washed his paws and opened the door to the waiting room.

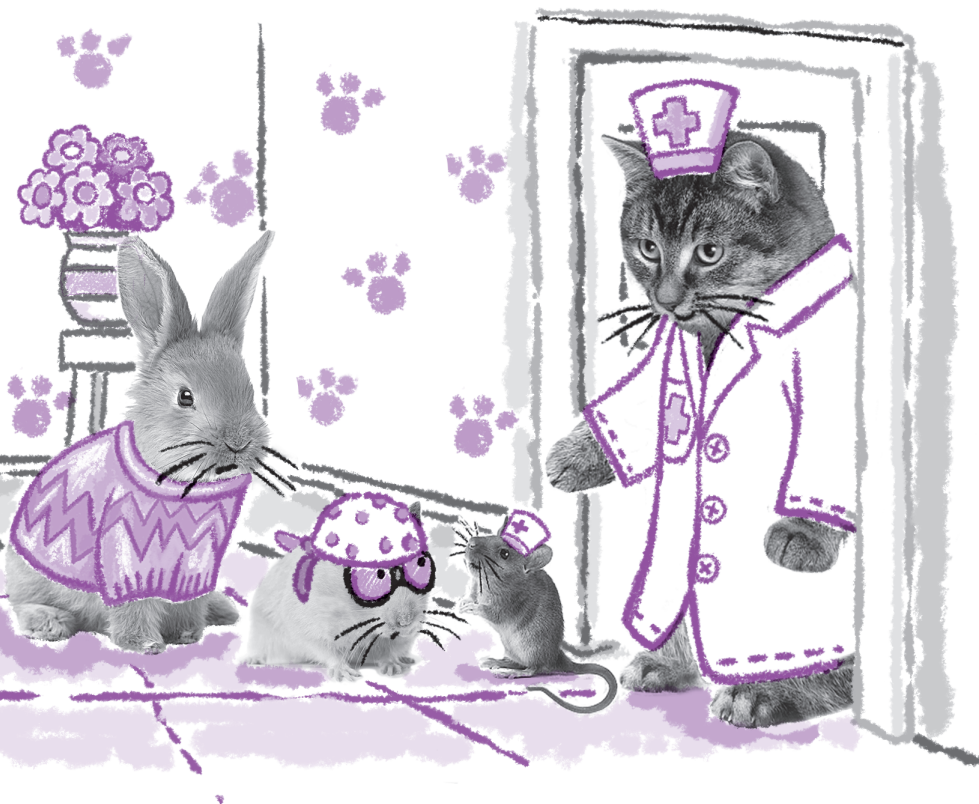


“Who’s first in line to see Dr. KittyCat today?” he squeaked.

A hamster wearing glasses and a bandanna scampered in.

“Hello, Pumpkin,” said Peanut.

“Mm-mm!” Pumpkin mumbled.
His face and neck looked very swollen.



Peanut glanced at him and then quickly leafed through the *Furry First-aid Book*.

“Dr. KittyCat!” he squeaked. “Swelling of the neck is a symptom of furry mumps. That’s a very nasty infectious disease!”

“Don’t panic, Peanut,” Dr. KittyCat murmured. “You’ll scare our patient. Almost everyone is vaccinated against furry mumps when they’re tiny, so it’s rare for anyone to catch it. Pumpkin’s eyes are nice and bright. He doesn’t look very sick to me.”

Pumpkin was trying to say something. “Goo-ck!” he spluttered.

Peanut caught a glimpse of something orange behind the hamster's two front teeth.

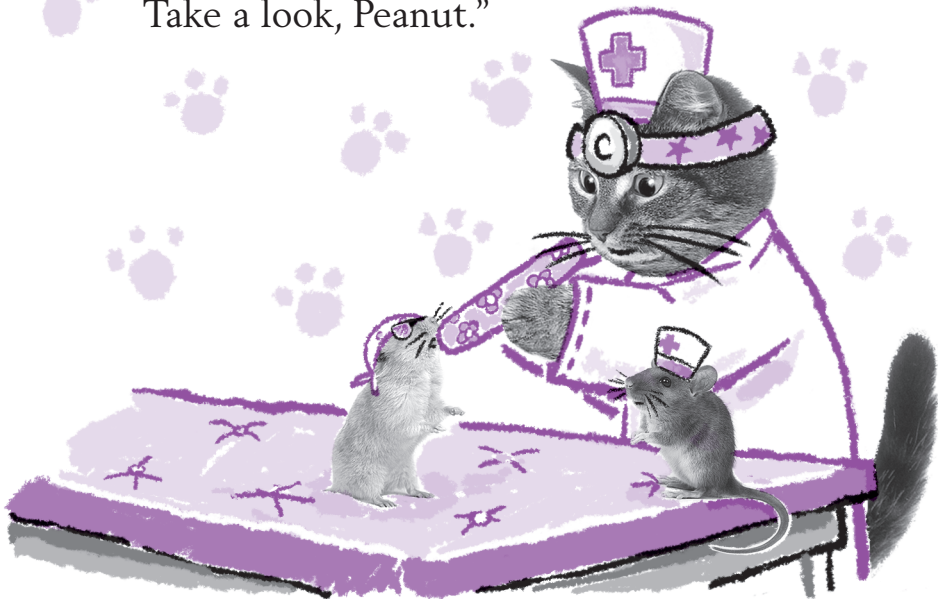
Dr. KittyCat soaped her paws and rinsed them carefully.



“You’re safe in our paws,” she reassured Pumpkin. “Let me take a look inside your mouth and find out what’s going on.”

Pumpkin opened his mouth as wide as he possibly could.

“I can see right away what the problem is,” Dr. KittyCat purred. “We’ll have you feeling better in no time at all. Take a look, Peanut.”



Peanut peeked into Pumpkin's mouth.

"There's a piece of carrot wedged inside!" Peanut could see it pushing out Pumpkin's cheek pouches. "That must be uncomfortable," Peanut squeaked.

"We need to get it out!"

"Mwrrgh!" Pumpkin nodded his head in agreement.

Peanut went to the closet where the dental supplies were kept and took out a special sort of long, thin tweezers, called forceps. He handed the forceps to Dr. KittyCat and watched as she gently extracted the piece of carrot. It took a bit of time to jiggle it out from behind Pumpkin's teeth.

“Thanks! That’s much better.”

Pumpkin breathed a sigh of relief. “I’ll be more careful with the size of the food I stuff in my pouches from now on.” He rubbed his empty cheeks with his paws. “May I have my piece of carrot back, please? I might want to nibble on it later.”

