

## Fairy Tale – The Timid Church Mouse

Once upon a time there was a very happy little mouse name Gigi who lived with her parents and her uncle. They all loved her very much and she believed that she was very special. Because of Daddy mouse's job the family moved very often. When Gigi was 4 years old they had moved to their third home. Her Uncle did not live with them anymore but there was a very nice woman named Rosie who paid a lot of attention to Gigi when she came to help with the housework. Gigi was still very happy and felt very special although she wished her Daddy didn't have to work so hard. She didn't get to play with him very much anymore.

Then one day, when Gigi was five years old, Mommy mouse brought a baby brother mouse home. He was very, very little and Gigi loved him very much. Even though Mommy spent most of her time with the baby Gigi was still happy because Rosie took care of her and let her sit on her lap and hugged her a lot. Gigi really loved those soft hugs, especially since Mommy and Daddy didn't pay much attention to her any more. Gigi does remember one very special day. She and her Daddy went to a big stadium when it was still dark. They sang songs and listened to a man talk and watched the sun rise. Her Daddy explained that we were celebrating because a long time ago a special man named Jesus had gone to heaven that day.

One Sunday morning Gigi and her little brother were staying with another family while Mommy and Daddy played golf. Suddenly a very scary thing happened. Gigi wasn't sure what it was but she could tell that the parents and the older kids of the family seemed very upset. They all sat quietly in the living room listening to the radio and put all the little kids out on the porch and closed the door. One of the other mice poked Gigi with a pair of scissors. Gigi cried because the hole by her tail hurt a lot and the blood frightened her. Nobody paid attention to her. Even when Mommy and Daddy came home they were more interested in whatever the radio was saying than the blood on her fur. Whatever had happened was called Pearl Harbor. Gigi wanted to know what that was but her mother told her that she was too young to understand.

After that Gigi's whole life changed. Gigi felt very lonely because no one played with her anymore and Rosie wasn't there to give her hugs anymore. One day Gigi saw Rosie down the street. She was so excited that she ran to Rosie and tried to wrap her arms around Rosie's legs. Gigi never did understand why Rosie pushed her away and didn't seem happy to see her.

The family moved three times in the next few years. Mommy's tummy was getting fat again so Gigi had to watch her little brother much of the time. Once she got in trouble just because she took little brother down to the pond to see the frogs. In one of the places they lived Daddy had to live out in the desert and hardly ever came home. Gigi was very lonely but she looked forward to Sunday mornings when her mother sent her to a nearby church. Gigi felt happy and peaceful and quiet there. The people there were very nice and even gave her a Bible for an Easter present.

Then they moved back to the place where her little brother had been born, only this time they lived in a very big house across the street from the golf course. The only time Gigi remembers being with her Daddy was when he drove her to school on his way to work. One day Mommy had gone to the hospital during the night so Daddy had to fix her hair before they drove to school. He must not have done a very good job because all the kids teased her and laughed at her. It was strange to Mommy gone. Even though Mommy rarely played with them she prepared very good food and knew just how to make their beds comfortable and provided everything anybody needed.

Just six weeks after Mommy brought the new baby sister mouse home from the hospital they had to move again. Daddy drove them to a new place but then he left. Gigi really didn't understand why he

had to leave just because some people on the other side of the world were mad at each other. Before her Daddy left he told Gigi that she had to be a big girl and help Mommy take care of the babies. Since Daddy was the most important one Mommy spent time a lot of time worrying about him and listening to the radio and talking to Gigi's friend's Mommies. Everybody's Daddy was gone.

Gigi had lots of friends to play with but she was happiest when she could go out into the woods and to the creek by herself. Sitting on a rock in the middle of the creek with her feet dangling in the water was very peaceful. She was afraid Mommy would get mad if she wasn't with her friends so Gigi never told her about the woods and the creek. Gigi liked school pretty much but she liked Vacation Bible School and Girl Scout camp the best.

While Daddy was gone there were some bad men that lived under the sidewalk who wanted to know where Daddy was so they could kill him. Gigi wouldn't pay any attention to them and just stomped on the cracks in the sidewalk so they couldn't get out. After Daddy came home and the family moved again one of the bad ugly men tried to get in through the window in the middle of the night and Gigi screamed. Daddy came running in and scared him away and he never came back.

The mouse family moved a couple more times before they moved into another great big house across from another golf course. Gigi never go to see her Daddy because he was always at work or playing golf. Other kid's families went on picnics and stuff on weekends but Gigi had to stay home and take care of the kids while her parents were playing golf. Sometimes Gigi felt like an orphan.

Since her parents didn't play golf until the afternoon on Sundays Gigi was allowed to go to Sunday school. Sometimes she cheated and went to church instead. It felt so peaceful and happy there that Gigi wished that she could move in and be a church mouse. She could just live there forever and never have to worry about making new friends or leaving friends again.

After a couple of quick moves the family went to Peru, where Gig went to high school. She taught Sunday school in the Church of England there but they insisted on baptizing her before she could have any contact with the little kids. Gigi's Mommy had baptized her in the hospital when she was born but the stern lady said that didn't count. By this time Gigi was so used to just doing what she was supposed to do that she got baptized even though her Mommy said that the first baptism counted.

Gigi liked Peru a lot. She had lots of friends and they were all part of a group of the only 36 kids in the country who were from English speaking countries. There were lots and lots of fun things to do and as long as there were a bunch of kids together the parents let them do whatever they wanted to do. And, since the younger mice were older, Gigi didn't have to miss out on things just to baby sit.

The family moved again before Gigi finished high school so they left Gigi in the boarding school until she graduated. When Gigi finally got to go home there didn't seem to be any room for her in the house and all the family did was watch TV, even while they were eating. Gigi had never see TV before and she thought it would be much nicer to eat at the table and talk. Gigi didn't complain because she would soon be leaving for college and she would never have to live at home again. Besides, complaining was something she was not supposed to do.

Gigi went away to college and then to physical therapy school. She got married and after being a therapist for awhile, had two wonderful boys. Gigi expected her husband to be the leader of the household but she also expected him to spend time doing fun things with her after the kids went to bed. Instead, he wanted to watch TV all the time. Gigi didn't complain and even watched football with him, or at least pretended to. Once when the boys were still pre-schoolers, she did get courage enough to mention that the marriage could be better and that perhaps they should see a counselor. The husband

said there was no problem, he was happy. So Gigi focused all her attention on her sons and their activities and looked forward to the day when her husband would retire from the service.

In spite of Gigi's feelings of loneliness she and her husband were good friends and never fought. They both were very active in the boy's lives and participated together in scouts, soccer, swim team, etc. They even belonged to a Special church and rarely missed a Sunday service. Gigi had never actually belongs to a church before. Even though Gigi loved the intellectual sermons, she never did find the peacefulness there that she had experienced a few times as a child.

Retirement came when the boys were in high school. They moved to a big city where her husband joined the medical school faculty and built a special research unit. He was so busy that they never did anything together and Gigi began to realize that she didn't even like him very much anymore. When Gigi finally decided that she would rather live by herself she had a hard time convincing him that she was that unhappy but he finally agreed to move out.

Gigi felt free for the first time in her life. She went back to school and could do whatever she wanted to do whatever she wanted to do whenever she wanted to do it. She and her boys coached a soccer team. During a tournament on a cold Festival weekend, a father of one of the team members brought hot lemonade so the team could warm up. Soon he began to help with strategy for the soccer team and since he was professor, he could even help Gigi with her homework. Eventually, Gigi fell madly in love. Time spent with him seemed to make Gigi feel so happy and peaceful as she had felt long ago when she had wanted to be a church mouse. When Gigi told her boys that she was going to get married the said, "You mean that bratty kid is going to be my brother?" That "bratty kid" had been badly hurt and needed a lot of loving. The boys accepted him and soon the three of them thought of themselves as brothers.

The "bratty kid" had three siblings who lived with their mother. He missed them a lot and truly mourned for them, and his mother. The funny thing is that he would pick fights with them when they came to visit. Years later, when the bratty kid was in college, his mother decided that she did not want to live any more. Then, Gigi became the responsible sep-mother for the rest of the kids. She loved all six of her kids and she loved being their Mom.

She also loved being married to husband #2. Even though he worked long hours and he traveled a lot they did many fun things together. Frequently, Gigi could travel with him and they went all over the world. They loved the theatre and symphony and went to either Broadway and/or London's West End every year to spend a long weekend seeing the new shows. He used to tell her that he would always be there for her.

By the time all the kids had gone off to college he had become the head of the large Business office of his large multi-national firm. They made Gigi the "Boss's Wife" and she loved having more "kids" to watch out for. Many were in awe of her at first but they soon realized that she was very easy to get along with and often shared parts of their lives with her.

As he became responsible for more and more things in the firm he was home less and less. He was the most important thing in her life so even though Gigi was lonely some of the time she kept herself busy and did not complain. When her parents began to have "old age" problems Gigi would often go to visit them.

Then one day the world exploded. He wanted a divorce. He preferred to spend time with his assistant than with Gigi. Gigi had lots of experience with moving so managing the move from one City to another was easy. In a way Gigi even looked forward to being near her two beautiful grandchildren.

But she was empty inside. There was no one to “be there for her,” to share the children’s lives with, to take her to shows and concerts, to just spend a quiet evening with. She had to help with three of the kid’s weddings without him. Even spending time with grandchildren sometimes felt meaningless. Fortunately, with God’s guidance, Gigi found another Special Church. If she hadn’t who knows where she would be today?

To make matters worse, Gigi’s father died a year after her last move. He had been the one person who had never, ever stopped being there for her. Now, she knows that Jesus will be there for her always, but even though she has been through This Special Self Assessment she feels like she is useless and that the future looks bleak.

Most of the time, though, she manages to keep putting one foot in front of the other and to keep herself busy doing things with and for others. It is doing things for and with herself that seems to be impossible. That awful emptiness and loneliness just keeps coming back.

It is time for the timid little mouse to become Gigi, the timid church mouse.  
Timid = easily alarmed, not bold, shy