

# **THE MICE OF THE KINGSWAY**

**Gareth A. Blake**

Life in the capital is ever changing and moving forward and when one makes a decision, it generally does affect all those around them. So when a group of men in their dark suits high above the city surface, decided to close the Kingsway Subway, the family of mice who lived within the walls of the long and dark tunnel, had a very serious problem.

Not only had the decrease in humans caused a lack of food but construction and destruction around the Subway had also meant that their home had become more dangerous. Papa, the broad and strong but caring father of the family, decided that if they were to survive, they had to leave and a new series of tunnels called the Underground that linked the whole city together seemed to be the perfect solution. His son Jacob was extremely excited about being able to explore so much of London. However his younger sister Beatrice didn't want to leave and Emma her mother only managed to convince Beatrice by the thought of having lots of new friends when they arrive.

Their journey started by traveling up hill, towards the most dangerous part of the subway; with all of the food and belongings they could carry. It seemed days before they finally reached the small hole, with an elegant beam of dazzling white light shooting through it, although it had only been several grueling hours. The children were sent through first but the ground began to shake with an almighty force and rubble crashed down all around them! The children screamed in horror, but the falling rocks had sealed the hole completely. Emma and Papa who was slightly injured, did not hesitate to drop everything and ran as fast as they could to the next exit. They scrambled upwards and as they rapidly rose to the surface, they were both struck by something moving very fast. The children jumped on top of their parents at first sight, safe, but very dusty!

Having dropped all of their food, the mice couldn't believe their sight. They had arrived beside an alleyway filled with leftovers from the neighboring supermarket.

Everyone ran in excitement, as subway life had never seen a feast like this before! However since their arrival in the alleyway, there had been something sinister lying in the shadows and as the mice were so in awe of the food, they had utterly ignored it. A large black cat was lying on its belly and was ready to pounce. In fact, the only reason it was waiting was because all of the leftovers would fatten the mice up very nicely indeed! The mice eventually grew full and as soon as they lay down to rest; the cat pounced! But just before his paws reached Emma, a dog, which the cat had failed to see because he was so in awe of the mice, came bounding towards it, barking loudly with fangs protruding from its slobbering mouth! However before the dog could reach the cat that was now frozen with fear, the large lady who owned the dog came running after him. "Sit!" she cried and the dog was forced to sulkily obey, as the cat scampered away while it could. The mice knew not what to make of this situation until the lady realised they were there and then screamed at the top of her voice. The mice took this as their cue and duly ran away as well!

They knew it wouldn't take long for the cats to know there were mice about, so they traveled as quickly as they could, although their bellies tried very hard to slow them down. But then finally, they saw the sign, a red circle, with a horizontal line running through it's middle that protruded over the edges just slightly that had once meant home, but now meant they had reached their destination. They could see plenty of small crevices that led to a whole new world below, however it lay on the other side of a very busy road full of cars and buses whizzing past them. They decided that as the metal boxes would clearly not wait for them, they would wait for some humans to cross the road and then flee across at the same time. As they crouched out of sight, a large group of humans had gathered and when they did eventually cross, quickly followed by the mice, they found out that even though the cars wouldn't notice them, the humans certainly did, accompanied by shrieks, screams and many jumps in the air!

Descending downwards, they finally touched down in a tunnel not too dissimilar to the old subway. But their arrival sparked a strange noise. They all looked around in fear until they heard another noise from the opposite side of the tunnel and then yet another. "Cats!" said Beatrice in a scared voice. The group gathered in a huddle and moved closer to each other as suddenly they started to see shadows and

silhouettes appearing all around them and moving inwards. One shadow then came so close that its appearance was clear to them all, it was another mouse and suddenly more mice surrounded them than any of them had ever seen "We've made it!" exclaimed Jacob, which began great celebrations!

That evening Beatrice was still sad that the Subway would now grow old and die, but Papa said to her, "Everything in time is linked together by tiny little by threads. The journey we made and that fact that we can now stand here in this new home is proof that the Subway is still very much alive, as it wouldn't have been possible without everything we learnt and experienced within it. And even when our memories fade away, the Subway will surely still live on, still building new pathways and journeys for all those to come."