



**"The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse"** is one of Aesop's Fables. It is number 352 in the Perry Index and type 112 in Aarne-Thompson's folk tale index. Like several other elements in Aesop's fables, 'town mouse and country mouse' has become an English idiom.

In the original tale, a proud town mouse visits his cousin in the country. The country mouse offers the city mouse a meal of simple country cuisine, at which the visitor scoffs and invites the country mouse back to the city for a taste of the "fine life" and the two cousins dine like emperors. But their rich and delicious metropolitan feast is interrupted by a couple of dogs which force the rodent cousins to abandon their meal and scurry to safety. After this, the country mouse decides to return home, preferring security to opulence or, as the 13th-century preacher Odo of Cheriton phrased it, *"I'd rather gnaw a bean than be gnawed by continual fear"*.<sup>[</sup>

A similar story appears among the fables of [Bidpai](#) as "The Lean Cat and the Fat Cat". It is related that "There was once a poor, lean old woman, who lived in a tiny, tumbled-down house, with a cat as poor and as lean as herself. This cat had never tasted a bit of bread, and had come no nearer a mouse than to find its tracks in the dust.' A sleek, plump cat boasts to her of how it feasts at the king's table and invites her to come and join in next day. The poor woman advises her pet to be content with its lot. Unheeding, the lean cat sets off for the palace. Owing to its infestation by cats, however, the king had ordered that any caught there were to be put to death. The lean cat dies, regretting that it had not listened to the old woman's wise advice.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Town\\_Mouse\\_and\\_the\\_Country\\_Mouse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Town_Mouse_and_the_Country_Mouse)