

Man And Mouse... At War!

It was a cold day in the Texas Panhandle when I went out to the airport office to do some paperwork. When I opened the office, the smell of "mouse" was very strong! When there is not much activity in the office the mice seem to enjoy the opportunity to "take over." It is sad, but it's the way it is.

Now, usually mice don't bother me all that much; but I do have my limits! An occasional mouse scurrying down the baseboard is no big thing. To a certain extent I believe in, "Live and let live." Know what I mean?

But THIS morning, "grrrr" when I went to make coffee, I found that a mouse had eaten through the plastic lid on my coffee can and had enjoyed a fun frolic in the nice, dry, aromatic abode. I said, I have my limits, and my limit (line) had been crossed. I thought, "When I go to lunch I will get some traps to set."

Well, I settled into my office work and, it was pretty quiet all alone there, and when I work, I sit pretty still. It was not long before, out of the corner of my eye, I spied a mouse running along the baseboard below the cabinet where he had done his dastardly deed the night before. I furrowed my brow as I observed his audacious trek across my floor. I noticed that he would stop every once in a while, look at me and kinda "grin" a little mousy grin, then scurry on out of sight.

I didn't have time to mess with him now. After all, my plan was to get some traps... Right?

He probably showed himself a half dozen times that morning before lunch. Each time he seemed less convinced that I was something about which to worry, so he just meandered along the baseboards thinking about... whatever it is mouseys think about.

When I went home for lunch, I was in a bit of a hurry because I had let the time slip away and had to be prompted by my sweet wife to come home RIGHT NOW if I wanted a HOT lunch. I promptly obeyed.

After lunch, someone wanted to send me a fax and well, I have to be in the office to punch the button to receive it, so returning to the office, I was once again, RUSHED! Guess what... Yep! I DIDN'T go get the traps. *sigh*

Well, I settled into my work again, and again the mouse "did his thing" so nonchalantly that had I not known better, I would have thought he had been hand raised somewhere in the hangar!

Late in the evening I remembered another time when a mouse traversed with indignance, and I shot him! (But that is another story.) But recalling the story from times past reminded me of the pistol up on top of the cabinet.

"I wonder if I have any rat shot?" I thought to myself.

I got up and checked and sure enough, I DID! And they were MAGs! (In case you don't know, mag rat shot has a little more powder and shot in it than the old regular rat shot... the better to hunt with.) **Laughing horrifically here**

I loaded the gun and prepared for battle. "I'm gonna get that varmint before the evening is over!

Not long after, out of the corner of my eye I saw him. "Ah ha!" He went behind the safe and refrigerator. I would get him when he came out either side!

I cocked the pistol and waited with the barrel pointed in the direction of his escape route. There was no way he was getting out of this!

I sat there for about... mmmmmmmmm... 5 minutes, I suppose, waiting to squeeze the

hair trigger on the hairy varmint just as soon as he showed his little beady-eyed face!

PHONE CALL!!! DRATS!!!

I answered the phone, and while I was talking I described the situation and said, "So, if ya hear a loud bang while we are talking, think nuthin' of it. Ok?" After the caller quit laughing, he said that he thought he could handle it.

A few minutes into the conversation, I turned my head just for an instant and FLASH... that dumb mouse scampered the two feet distance from the fridge to the bathroom door. I reflexed, but I was too slow! I let out a "barely Christian" expletive (which started the caller to start laughing again). "I get no respect!" I replied to his laugh. Then it crossed my mind to check in the bathroom to see if that mouse was in there where I could see him. With the phone in one hand, and the gun in the other I scoped out the bathroom. NUTTIN! DRATS! FOILED AGAIN!

I returned to my desk and finished the phone call. Then I returned to my paper work and kinda forgot about the mouse. UNTIL... he ran over my feet under the computer desk and behind the filing cabinet! "I GOT HIM NOW!" I thinks to myself. **Ain't no way he is getting outta THIS mess!**

I picked up the gun and held the barrel in position. Waiting... Waiting... Waiting for him to stick that nose out just one more time!

While I was waiting, I thought, "What if one of those little b-b's ricochets back at me and puts my eye out! That could ruin my whole Thanksgiving! I couldn't see with both eyes to eat. I'd get behind and Benny would get the punkin pie first! That would NOT BE GOOD!"

So I turned my head to the desk where my sunglasses were. I had just picked them up and was putting them on and turning back to my target when... THERE HE WAS! As I saw him, HE SAW ME! Back behind the filing cabinet he went! (Know'd it was him cause I seen the phone line wiggling!) But I still had him trapped!

While I was keeping a close eye on the front of the filing cabinet, I noticed out of the corner of my eye something which looked out of place at the BACK of the cabinet. It looked like a mouse head, but I couldn't tell for sure because it was dark back there and with my sunglasses on I couldn't really tell.

Now... you know the first rule of a hunter is to make sure you know what you are shooting at before you pull the trigger! So, I slowly raised my sunglasses and sure enough... it was a mouse head! My enemy!

Now... I had some contemplation to do. I thought, "If I kill that mousey right there, I'm gonna have to muscle that cabinet away from the wall and get him out; otherwise, this place is REALLY gonna stink in a couple of days!" I was still contemplating the situation when my nose started itching. Know what? Yep! You're right! I scratched my nose and the scamp scampered back behind the cabinet. Oh well... I still had him where I wanted him.

Now, trying to think like a mouse is not an easy thing for a smart Texan such as myself, but I thought, "He's gonna come out the front." So I re-concentrated my attention on the front of the cabinet.

Nose scratched and holding the gun with both hands I waited. While I waited, I practiced aiming. "Was it better with one eye open or both eyes open?"

I was still trying to figure this out... WHEN... all of a sudden, THERE HE WAS!

First I saw a nose, then a head... then... he stepped out into the open. The thought flashed through my mind, "You are a dead MOUSEEEEE!" And I squeezed the trigger.

CLICK! THE HAMMER FELL ON AN EMPTY CHAMBER!!!

My foe darted back behind the cabinet. "Whaaaaa!" This pistol had nine bullet

chambers and I had only put eight bullets in!!! HOW COULD I be so STUPID???

Well... you think I gave up? I THINK NOT!

(Are you wondering now when this story is going to end? Well, I'm getting close.)

I had to wait about another three or four minutes... (knowing the hammer of the pistol was aligned on a full chamber cause I'd loaded that empty one now too! I waited... aimed... Both Eyes Open... suffered through another "itching nose" spell... without scratching. And finally... HE SHOWED AGAIN!!! BANG!!!

THAT DEAD MOUSE ran BACK behind the cabinet! I had great hopes that he would be dead on the spot... but NOOOOOO! That dead mouse done got hisself BACK behind the cabinet! I knew I got him though! I HAD TO HAVE GOT HIM! I COULDN'T have missed with rat shot at that close range. In a second or two, I heard him fighting with those phone lines behind the cabinet. The fighting sounded like he was in "tragic" mode, which to the layman means he was strugglin'. (I know this is a gruesome part of the story but *shrug* it's just how it was.)

To make a shorter ending to this loooonnnng story, I went and found a broom with a handle and drug him out from behind the cabinet. He wasn't dead, but he didn't have much nose left either, and wasn't feelin' too good. He was having a rough time getting away from me too. I picked him up by the tail (knowing he couldn't bite me without no nose or mouth) and hauled him to the toilet. His demise was not "execution by pistol" but rather—
———— FLUUUSSSHHHHHHHHH!"

Well, in a way, it's a little lonesome around here without old mousey, but... well... he just shouldn't have gotten into my coffee! That's all I got to say! We ALL have our limits, doncha know? And besides, there may be another mouse... on another day... and I sure hope he stays outta my coffee can!

~Gaylon W. Stamps