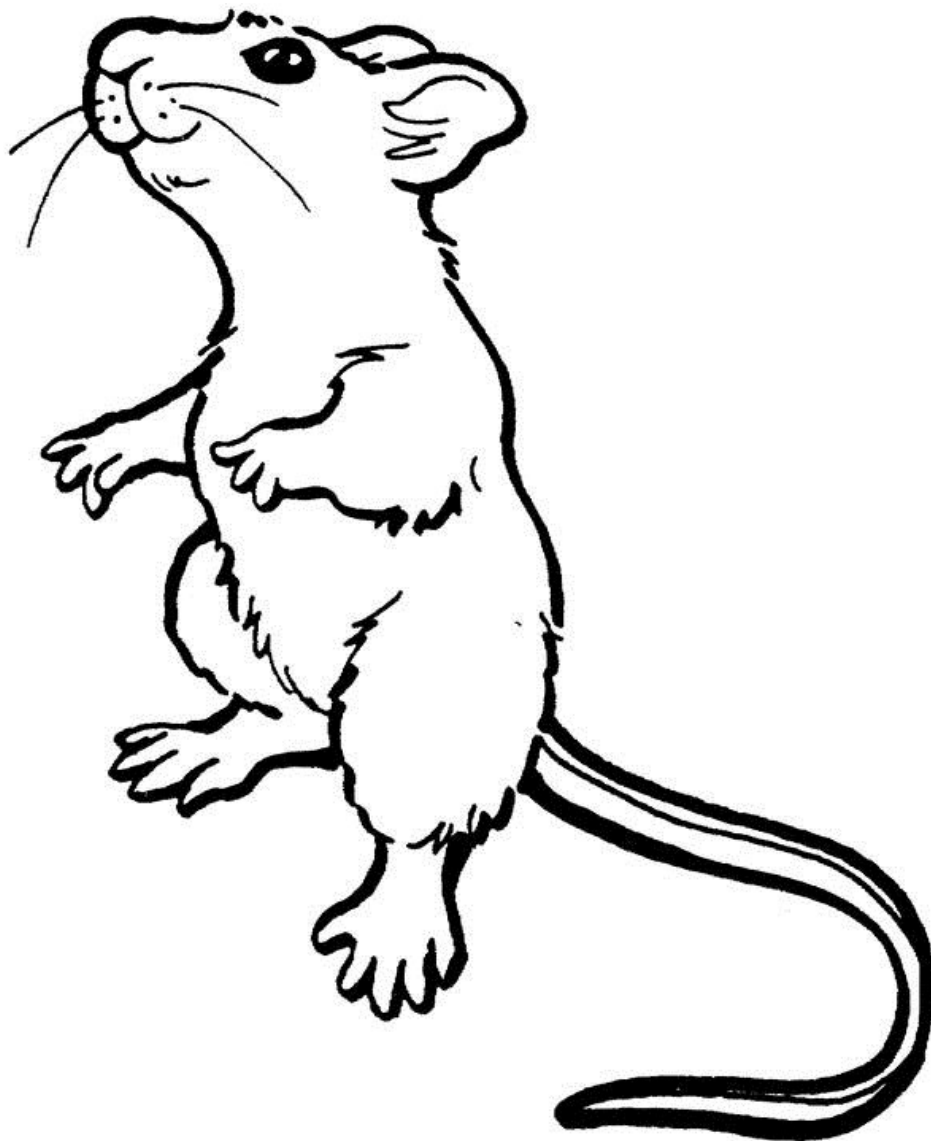


# *The Tale of Despereaux*

## *Copywork Quotes*



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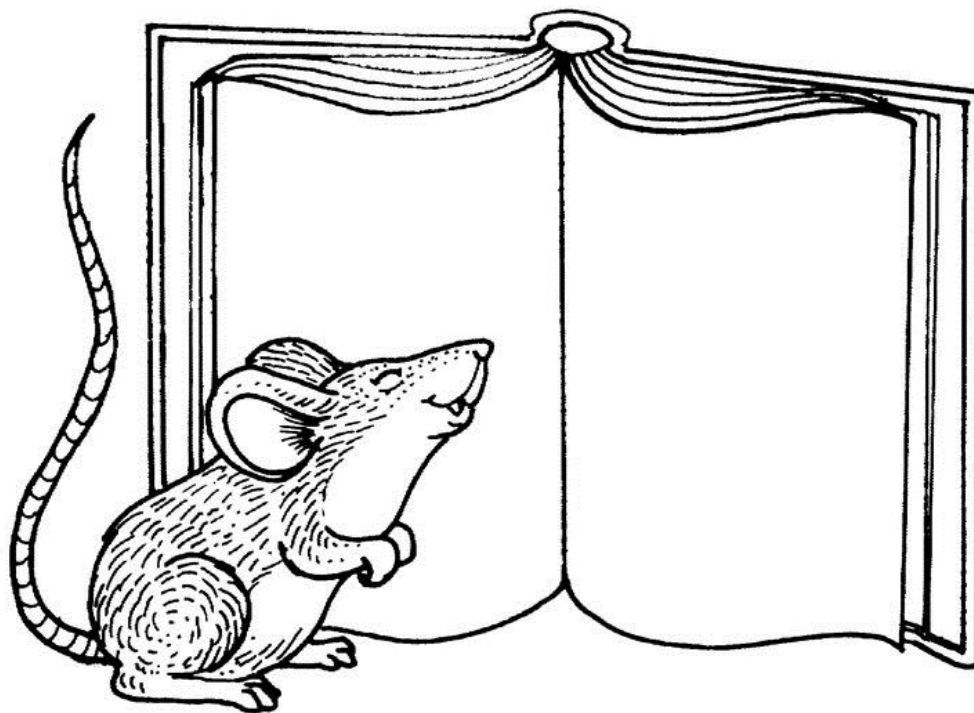
The shapes arranged themselves into words, and the words spelled out a delicious and wonderful phrase: *Once upon a time.*

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Stories are light. Light is precious in a world so dark. Begin at the beginning. Tell Gregory a story. Make some light.

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He forgot about not being a disappointment. He felt himself heading into another faint. But his mother, who had an excellent sense of dramatic timing, beat him to it; she executed a beautiful, flawless swoon, landing right at Despereaux's feet.

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Reader, you must know that an interesting fate (sometimes involving rats, sometimes not) awaits almost everyone, mouse or man, who does not conform.

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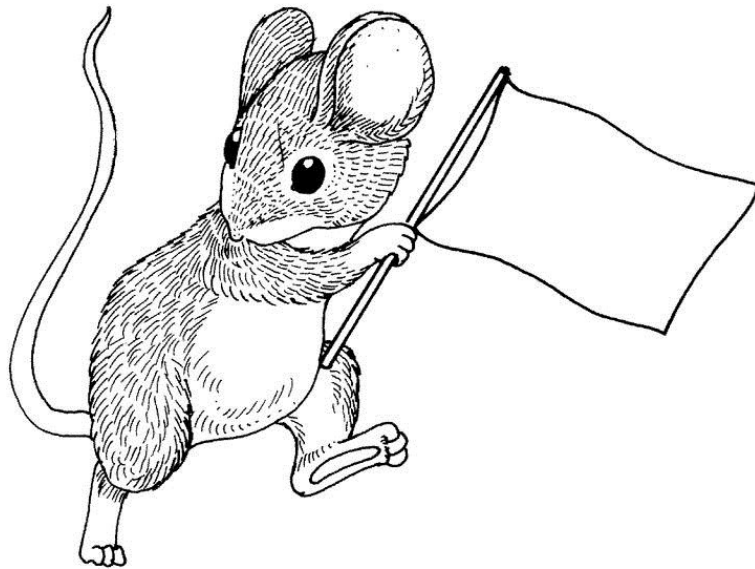
Say the word "quest" out loud. It is an extraordinary word, isn't it? So small and yet so full of wonder, so full of hope.

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Rats have a sense of humor. Rats, in fact, think that life is very funny. And they are right, dear reader. They are right.

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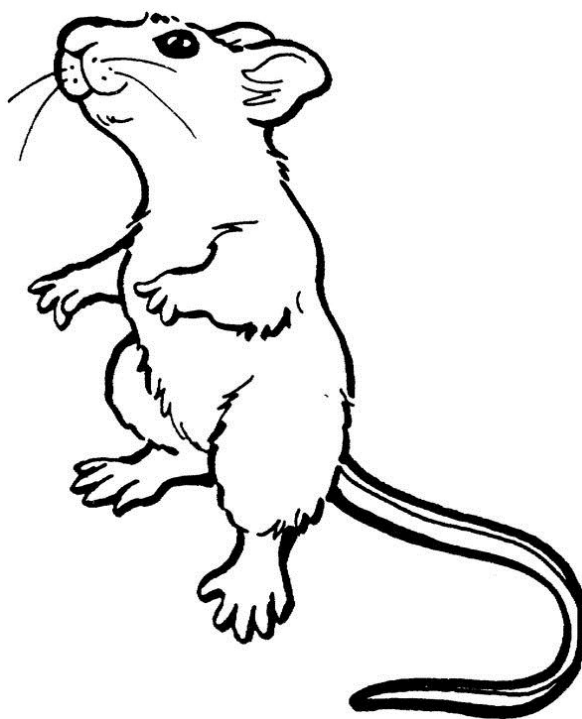


And he discovered, finally, the source of the honey-sweet sound. The sound was music.

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He let the light from the upstairs world enter him and fill him. He gasped aloud with the wonder of it.

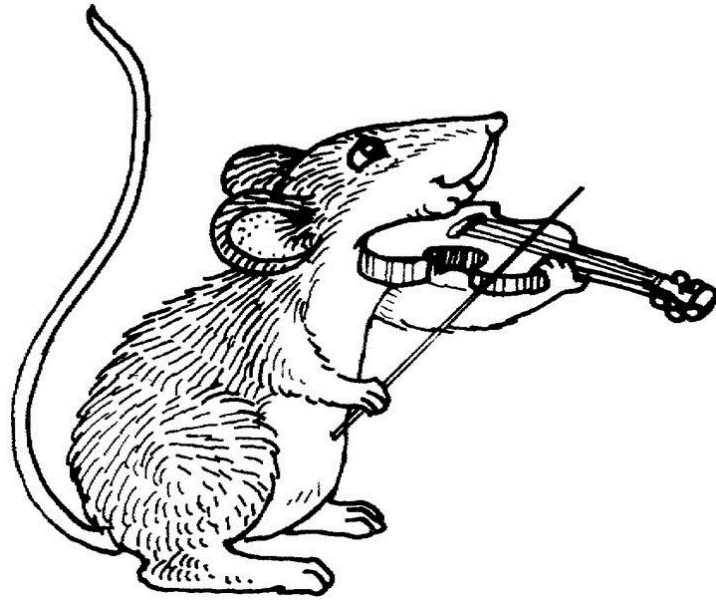
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Hidden in a hole in the wall of the princess's bedroom, the mouse listened with all his heart. The sound of the king's music made Despereaux's soul grow large and light inside of him. "Oh," he said, "it sounds like heaven. It smells like honey."

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Despereaux marveled at his own bravery.

He admired his own defiance.

And then, reader, he fainted.

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Forgiveness, reader, is, I think, something very much like

hope and love—a powerful, wonderful thing.

And a ridiculous thing, too.

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Reader, nothing is sweeter in this sad world than the sound  
of someone you love calling your name. Nothing.

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