

Khale Suske (Auntie Cockroach) and Mr. Mouse

Folk Story

Once upon a time under the beautiful blue sky there lived a cockroach named Khale Suske. She had become tired of being alone and thought it would be nice to come out of her nest and see the world. She got up and made a pair of red shoes for herself out of garlic skin. She put on clothes made of onion skin. With a glance and a wink she left her nest. She walked and walked and walked until she arrived at the grocer's shop.

The grocer was sitting behind his scale. As soon he saw Khale Suske he asked,

“Khale Suske, where are you going?”

Khale suske replied,

“What is Khale Suske? I am better than a flower.”

“Who is Khale Suske? I have such delicate wings.”

Surprised the grocer said,

“Then what should I say?”

Khale Suske said,

“Say something nice. Say, ‘Khale Suske

Red Shoes, Onion Clothes

Where are you going?’”

So the grocer said,

“Khale Suske

Red Shoes, Onion Clothes

Where are you going?”

Khale Suske said,

“I am going to Hamedan,
I want to find a husband for Ramezan
I should eat wheat bread
And not be a bother to anyone.”

The grocer said,

“Khale Suske
Red Shoes
Will you become my wife?
Will you become my beautiful bride?”

Khale Suske said,

“If I become your wife,
If I become your companion,
When we argue, what will you hit me with?”

The grocer said,

“With this stone weight from my scale!”

Khale Suske said,

“No no no!
I will not become the grocer’s wife
If I do, I will be killed!”

She said this, tightened her scarf, and continued on her journey.

She walked and walked and walked until she arrived at the door of the quiltmaker. The quiltmaker was stirring cotton with a long wooden stick to bring out dirt and sand from the cotton, and with the clean, soft cotton he would make beautiful quilts. As soon as he saw Khale Suske he said,

“Khale Suske, where are you going?”

Khale suske replied,

“What is Khale Suske? I am better than a flower.”
“Who is Khale Suske? I have such delicate wings.”

The quiltmaker said,

“Then what should I say?”

Khale Suske said,

“Say something nice. Say, ‘Khale Suske
Red Shoes, Onion Clothes
Where are you going?’”

So the quiltmaker said,

“Khale Suske
Red Shoes, Onion Clothes
Where are you going?”

Khale Suske said,

“I am going to Hamedan,
I want to find a husband for Ramezan
I should eat wheat bread
And not be a bother to anyone.”

The quiltmaker said,

“Khale Suske
Red Shoes
Will you become my wife?
Will you become my beautiful bride?”

Khale Suske said,

“If I become your wife,
If I become your companion,
When we argue, what will you hit me with?”

The quiltmaker said,

“With my cotton stirring stick!”

Khale Suske said,

“No no no!
I will not become the quiltmaker’s wife
If I do, I will be killed!”

She said this, tightened her scarf and quickly hurried on her way.

She walked and walked and walked until she arrived at the palace where Mr. Mouse lived. He was a clean and tidy mouse that had a small but beautiful nest in the prince’s kitchen. Mr. Mouse’s little ears were white. His tiny eyes sparkled and he was wagging his soft, little tail. Mr. Mouse was in the middle of taking wheat to his nest so that he would be comfortable during the cold winter. As soon as he saw Khale Suske he politely moved closer, greeted her and said,

“My my my!
Red Shoes, Onion Clothes
Where are you going?”

Khale Suske was very pleased by the polite and sweet words of Mr. Mouse. She said coyly,

“I am going to Hamedan,
I want to find a husband for Ramezan
I should eat wheat bread
And not be a bother to anyone.”

Mr. Mouse said,

“Khale Qeizi
Miss Red Shoes
Will you become my wife?
Will you become my beautiful bride?”

Khale Suske said,

“Why shouldn’t I? However,
If I become your wife,
If I become your companion,
When we argue, what will you hit me with?”

Mr. Mouse said,

“But no! Why should we argue?
Why would we argue?
If you become my wife,
If you become my companion,
I will caress you with my soft little tail!”

Khale Suske, who was very impressed by the little mouse, smiled and said,

“Yes yes yes!
I will become your wife,
I will become your companion,
I will become the mother of your children,
I will become your loyal spouse!”

Khale Suske and Mr. Mouse threw a grand wedding party. They invited all the Cockroaches and Mice of the prince’s castle. Late at night, they all went to the kitchen. All brought delicious food and the mice found several walnut and pistachio shells to use as drums.

It was a splendid celebration! The mice played their instruments and the roaches opened their wings and danced. The party went on until sunrise. Afterwards, Mr. Mouse took Khale Suske to his nest and they started their lives together. In the morning, when the cooks came to the kitchen, none of them knew what had gone on the night before.

During the day, Mr. Mouse would go to the kitchen and pick-up the rice, beans, chick-peas, and other things that the cooks would drop, and he would bring them back to their nest with his teeth. Khale Suske would clean house, and prepare breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and they would always eat together.

One day, Khale Suske went to a riverbank near the palace so she could wash her clothes. Suddenly she slipped and fell into the water. She screamed and began to splash about so she wouldn't drown. At the same time, one of the prince's horsemen was passing by and stopped to give his horse water. As soon as Khale Suske's eyes fell upon him she yelled,

"Ahoy horseman!
Horseman!
Because you are going to the castle
Tell Mr. Mouse,

Khale Suske is in the water
Red Shoes is in the water
If you arrive late she will die!
Your heart will become sad!"

The horseman looked up, he didn't see anyone. He looked down, he didn't see anyone. He listened again and he heard a tiny and quiet voice say,

"Ahoy horseman!
Horseman!
Because you are going to the castle
Tell Mr. Mouse,

Khale Suske is in the water
Red Shoes is in the water
If you arrive late she will die!
Your heart will become sad!"

The rider quickly mounted his horse and rode away. He arrived out of breath at the kitchen and told the story to the others. Everyone laughed at him. Mr. Mouse was in a corner of the room and heard everything. He turned pale and dropped everything he had in his hands. His little tail was shaking like a willow tree. He threw his hands to his head and cried,

"Ay Vay! The water is taking away my Khale Suske!"

Upset, he ran and ran. He ran fast like the wind!

He ran and ran and ran until he arrived next to the stream. As soon as he saw Khale Suske his body shook even more. Very upset he said,

“Give your hand to me!
Come up out of the muck!”

Khale Suske replied,

“No no no!
My delicate crystal hand will break!”

Mr. Mouse said,

“Give your foot to me!
Come up out of the muck!”

Khale Suske replied,

“No no no!
My delicate crystal foot will break!”

Mr. Mouse said,

“Then what should I do?
What can I do?
It’s not possible for me to save you!”

Khale Suske told Mr. Mouse,

“Go to the green grocer. Get a carrot. Nibble it to make stairs. Then bring it here and put it in the water so that, step by step, I can up out of danger!”

Mr. Mouse ran to the green grocer and said,

“My Khale Suske is in the water!
My little Red Shoes is in the water!”

If I arrive late, she will die!
My heart will become sad!”

He then asked for a large carrot so that he could make a ladder. The green grocer was very distressed by Mr. Mouse’s story and right away he separated a long and straight carrot and gave it to the little mouse.

Mr. Mouse ran as fast as he could back towards the stream. He ran and ran and ran until he arrived next to the water. He quickly nibbled the carrot to make stairs. He then placed it in the water. Khale Suske struggled and very slowly she walked up the carrot ladder and then fell on the ground.

Poor Khale Suske was soaking wet. She was coughing non-stop and shivering. Mr. Mouse dried the water on Khale Suske’s body with his soft tail. Then he took her to his nest and placed her in a warm and soft bed. He covered her face and said,

“Now that you are not feeling well, I will prepare you a hot soup!”

As soon as Khale Suske fell asleep, Mr. Mouse left the nest. He ran and ran and ran until he arrived at the door of the grocer. Mr. Mouse told him what had happened and explained that he wanted to prepare hot soup for Khale Suske. The grocer gave him a spinach leaf, a leek stalk, and a bunch of parsley, a small spoon of olive oil, a spoonful of rice, four lentils, some peas, and a pinch of salt. Mr. Mouse thanked him and returned home.

He poured everything into a small pot. He then placed two rocks together to make an oven. He picked up a small, dry branch that had fallen on the ground and with his small, sharp teeth, chopped it and placed it between the rocks. He lit the wood and placed the pot of soup on the oven.

A short time had passed and he said to himself, “Now I must stir the pot”. He picked up a small branch to stir it, but as soon he put his head over the pot, he slipped and fell into the soup.

Khale Suske realized a long time had passed since she had heard from Mr. Mouse. With a trembling voice she said,

“Mr. Mouse, my dear
Come sit next to me”

Mr. Mouse didn't reply. Again she said,

“Mr. Mouse, my dear
Come sit next to me”

Again there was nothing. She became worried. She got up and slowly walked to the soup.

When Khale Suske saw Mr. Mouse splashing about she threw her hands to her head and cried,

“Vay! Look at my Mr. Mouse!
One head, two little ears! Look!
Don't let him die!
My heart would become sad!”

Then, she quickly poured a small dish of water that was next to the oven on the soup to cool it. Next, she went to the neighbor mice and cockroaches nests for help. The mice and cockroaches came and lifted the pot from the stove. Then, they pulled Mr. Mouse out of the soup.

The neighbors then ran and brought whatever food and remedies they had, and for several days they took care of Khale Suske and Mr. Mouse until they both were well. Mr. Mouse and Khale Suske knew what kind of great friends they had and they lived happily ever after.