

The Tale of Despereaux

Kate DiCamillo

1. How did the little mouse come to be named Despereaux?
His mother named him Despereaux because it means “despair” in French. When he was born, he was the only one that survived.
2. What was unusual about Despereaux’s appearance?
He was small, had huge ears, and was born with his eyes open.
3. What are the names of the king and his daughter, the princess?
King Phillip and Princess Pea
4. What did the Mouse Council decide that Despereaux’s punishment would be because he mingled with humans?
He would be sent to the dungeon with the rats.
5. What was the significance of the red thread put around Despereaux’s neck?
It was called the “red thread of death”.
6. Who led Despereaux to the dungeon?
Two hooded mice; one was his brother Furlong.
7. After being thrown in the dungeon, Despereaux faints. Whose hand is he in when he wakes up?
Gregory, the jailer.
8. What did Gregory make Despereaux do to save him from the rats?
Gregory wanted Despereaux to tell him a story.
9. How did Roscuro, the dungeon rat, become fascinated with light?
When he was young, he nibbled on Gregory’s rope. Gregory caught him by the tail and lit a match right in his face. Gregory held the match so close that it burnt Roscuro’s whiskers but he remembered the light.
10. What did Roscuro steal from the new prisoner?
A red tablecloth
11. When Roscuro climbed up onto the chandelier to see all of the lights, what happened next?
Princess Pea saw him and he heard her call him a rat. Soon after that, he fell into the queen’s soup. She died right there after seeing a rat in her soup.

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12. After the queen died, what did the king outlaw?
Rats and soup, and all of the bowls and spoons used to eat soup
13. What is the girl's name with big ears that was riding on the wagon full of spoons?
Miggery Saw
14. What three things did Mig's father trade for her?
A handful of cigarettes, a red tablecloth, and a hen
15. Why did Mig have aching ears and a hearing loss?
Uncle hit her on the ears every day.
16. How did Mig get into the castle?
When soup, spoons, and kettles were outlawed because the queen died, a soldier took her from Uncle because slavery was not allowed in the kingdom, either.
17. Because Mig was not good at any job, what did they give her to do?
She served lunch to the jailer in the dungeon.
18. When Gregory, the jailer, was finished with his tray, what happened to Despereaux?
Gregory wrapped him in his napkin and "sent him to the light" – upstairs on the tray.
19. When Cook shook the napkin, Despereaux fell out. What did Cook tell Mig to do?
Kill him. Despereaux was so slippery that he got away, but Mig got his tail with a knife.
20. What did Roscuro, the rat, plan to do to the Princess with Mig's help?
Roscuro wanted to take the Princess to the dungeon forever. Mig didn't know she was doing something wrong – she just wanted to be a Princess, too.
21. What happened to Gregory after Roscuro chewed his rope?
He got lost in the dungeon tunnels and died of fright.
22. When Despereaux went looking for the king after he escaped from the cook, who did he meet?
Despereaux met his father and the Mouse Council. He forgave his father for sending him to the dungeon.
23. When Despereaux found the King, what did he tell the King and how did the King answer him?
Despereaux told the king he knew where the princess was, and the King called him a liar.

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24. Why did Despereaux go to see the Threadmaster, Hovis?

He went to Hovis to get all of the red thread to use to find the princess in the dungeon. Hovis gave him a needle to use as a sword on his quest.

25. As Despereaux pushed the thread to the dungeon, he needed to pass through the kitchen. What was Cook doing there?

Making soup which was against the law

26. Why didn't Cook kill Despereaux?

Cook knew the king wasn't in the castle to catch her making soup if a mouse was present.

27. Cook thought the soup was missing something. What did Despereaux tell her?

He said the soup was perfect. She smiled, wished him luck, and opened the door to the dungeon.

28. Who did Despereaux meet at the bottom of the dungeon stairs?

He met Botticelli, the one-eared rat, who smelled mouse blood.

29. How did Botticelli get Despereaux to trust him?

Botticelli told Despereaux that he knew where the princess was and that he would help Despereaux so that everyone would not hate rats anymore.

30. While Despereaux was searching for Princess Pea, what was going on with Mig, Roscuro, and the Princess?

Roscuro told Mig she would never become a princess. Mig and the Princess became friends. They both missed their dead mothers. Roscuro betrayed them and said that neither of them would ever leave the dungeon.

31. When Despereaux found the Princess and Mig, how did Mig try to save them all?

She aimed the kitchen knife at the rat to kill him but missed and cut off his tail instead.

32. What did the Princess promise Roscuro if he led them all out of the dungeon?

She promised him soup in the Banquet Hall.

33. How did they all live "happily ever after"?

They all got out of the dungeon. Roscuro got to come upstairs to the light. Mig found her father in the dungeon. Despereaux and the princess became friends, and they all had soup together.