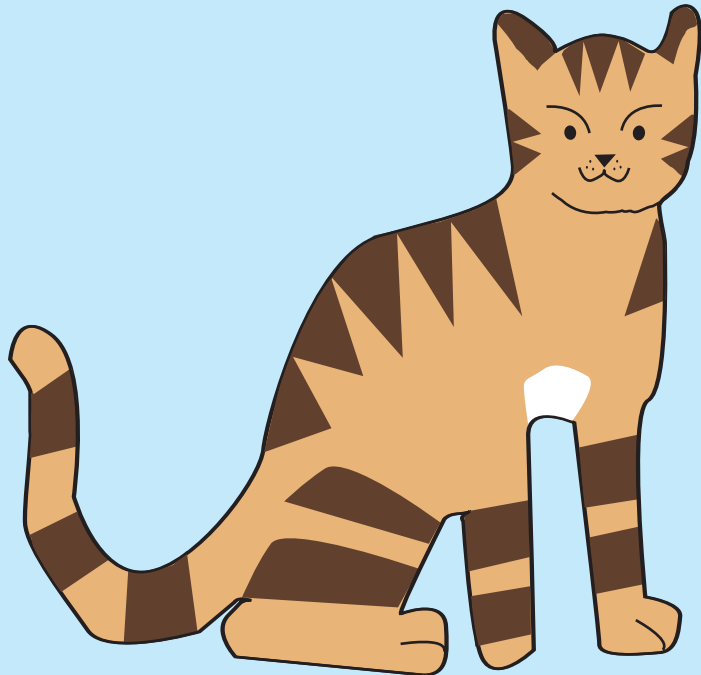


The Conference

of  mice



A Fairy Tale
illustrated by Sara Klapheke

Once upon a time...

there was a large tabby cat which,
from the minute she arrived at the farm,



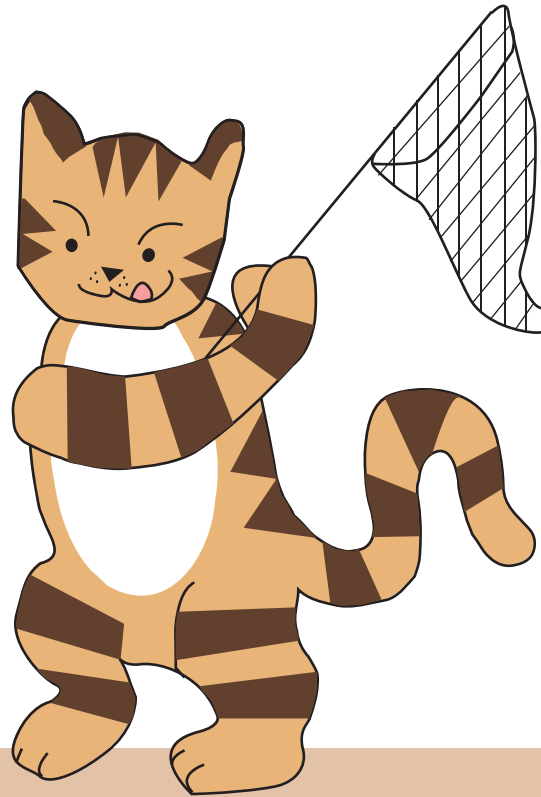
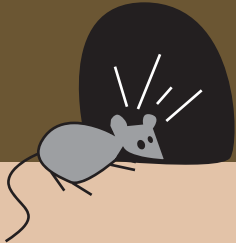
spread terror among the mice
that lived in the cellar.

N

obody dared to go outside

for fear of falling into the clutches of the awful cat.

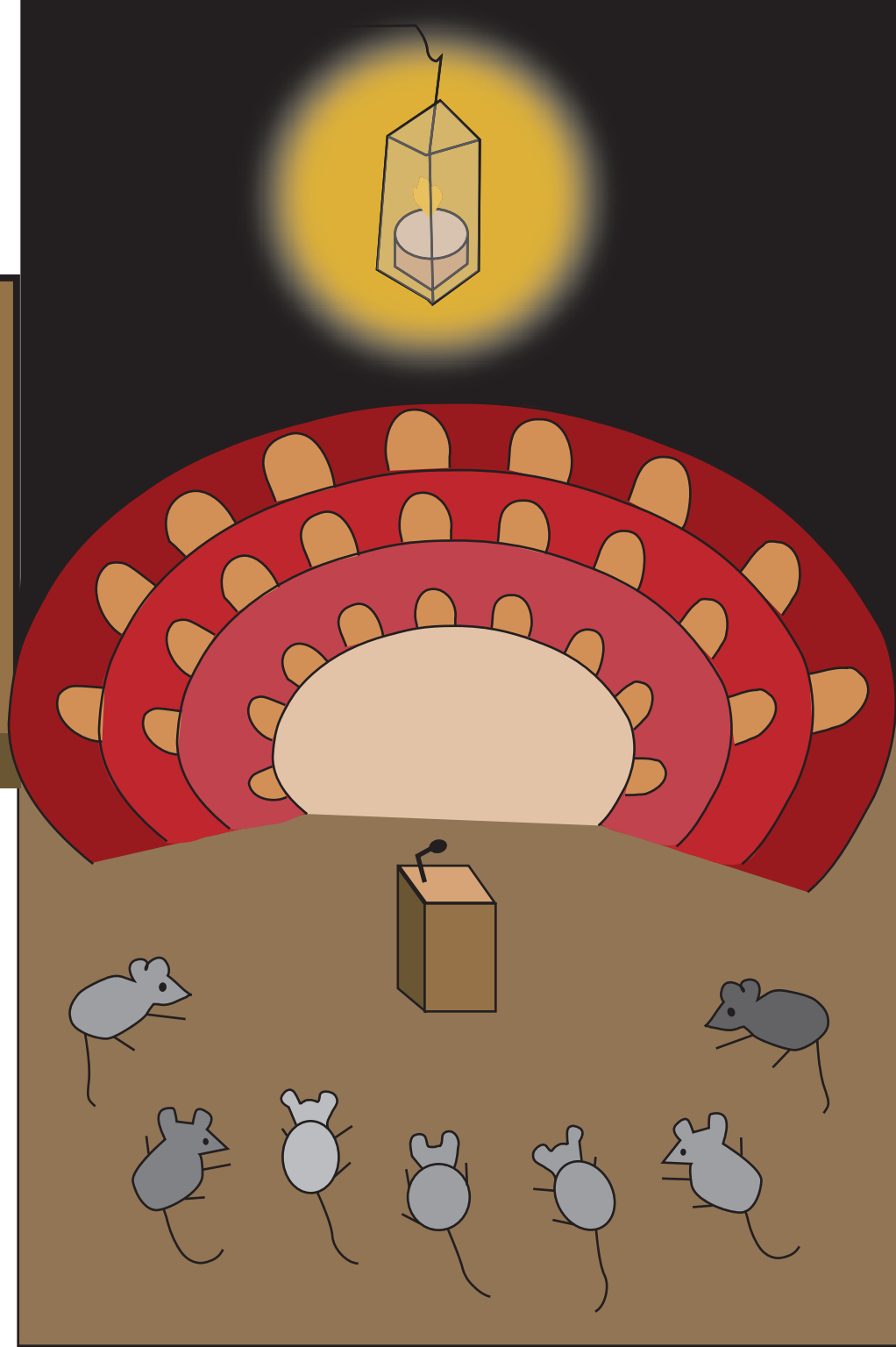
katz
keep
out!

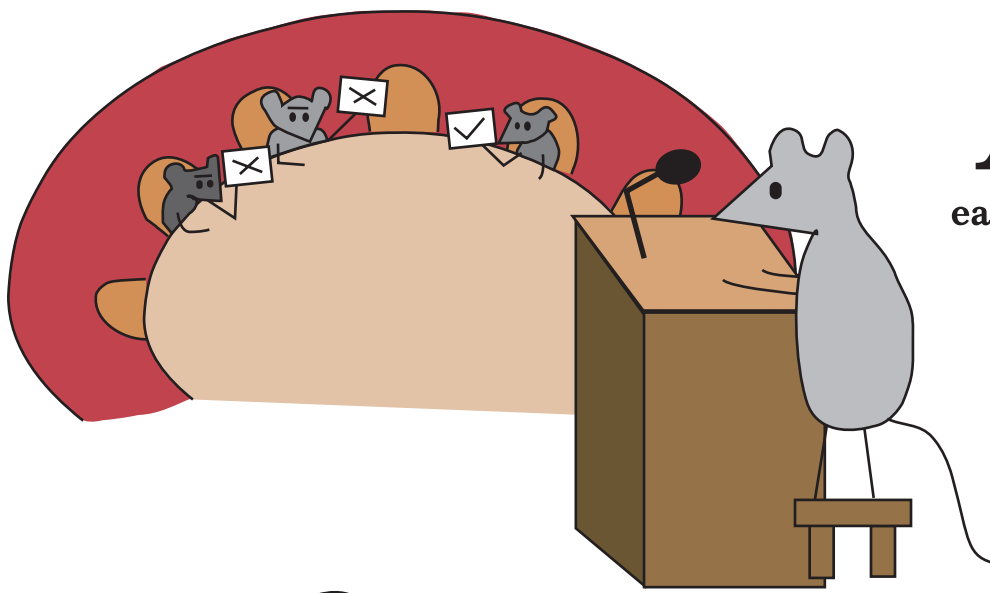


The fast-shrinking mouse colony decided to hold a conference to seek a way of stopping themselves from becoming extinct.



Taking advantage of the cat's absence one day, mice of all ages streamed into the conference room.

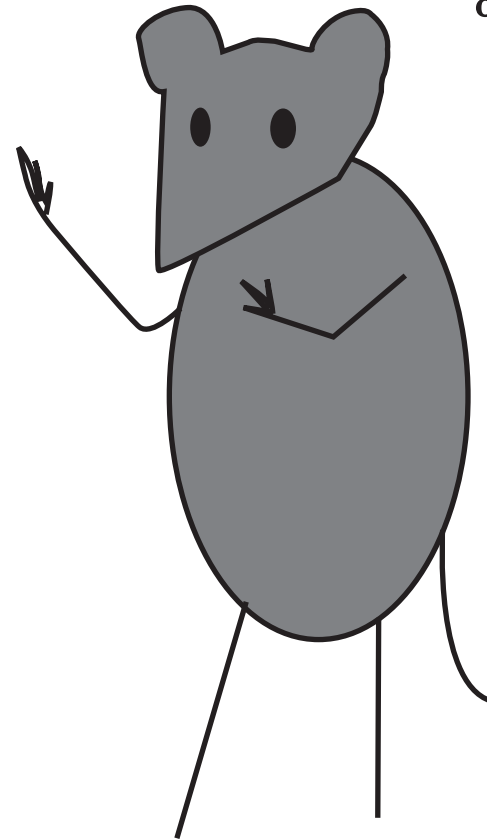




And certain they could solve the matter,
each one put forward a suggestion,
but none of the ideas were really practical.

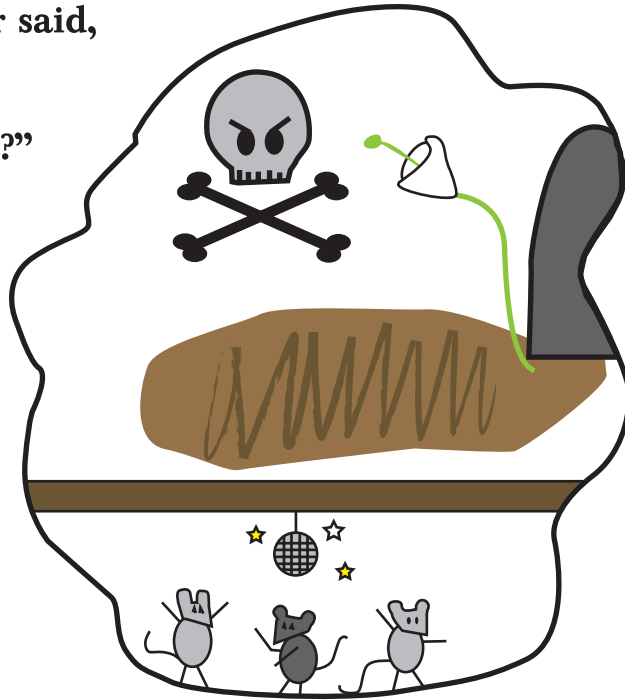
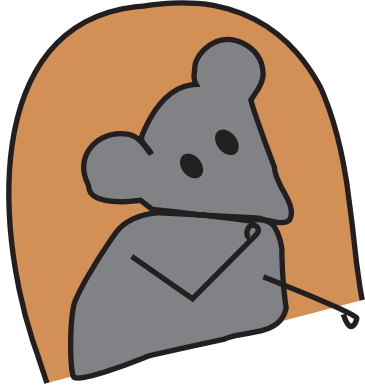


“Let’s build an outsize trap,”
one suggested.

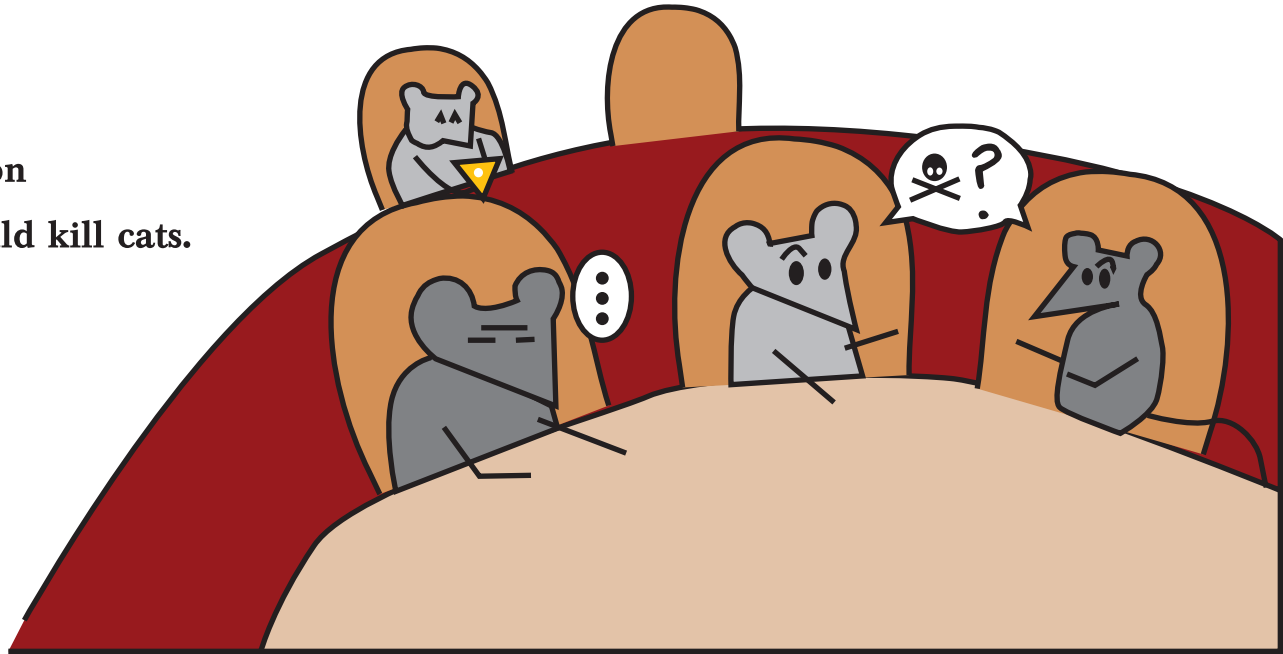


When this idea was turned down, another said,

“What about poisoning her?”



But nobody knew of a poison
that would kill cats.

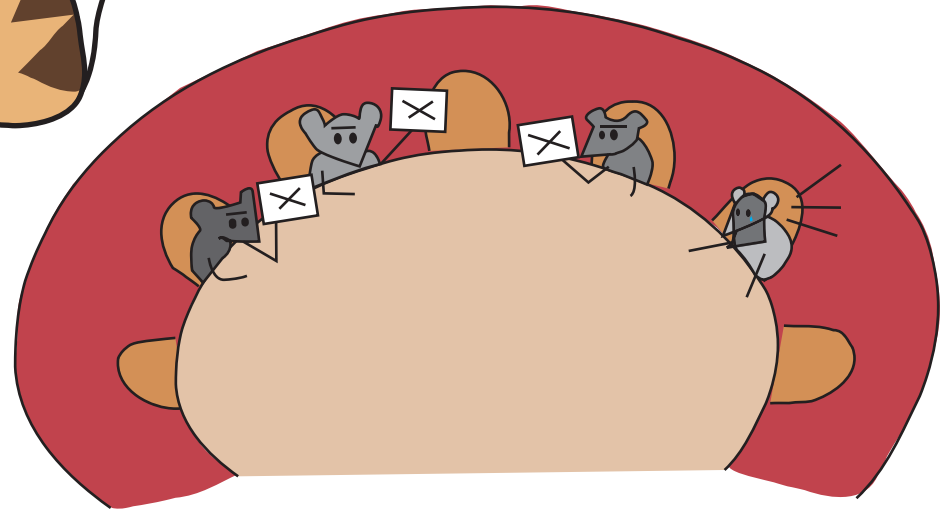


One young widow, whose husband had fallen prey to the ferocious cat, angrily proposed:

“Let’s cut her claws and teeth, so she can do no more harm.”

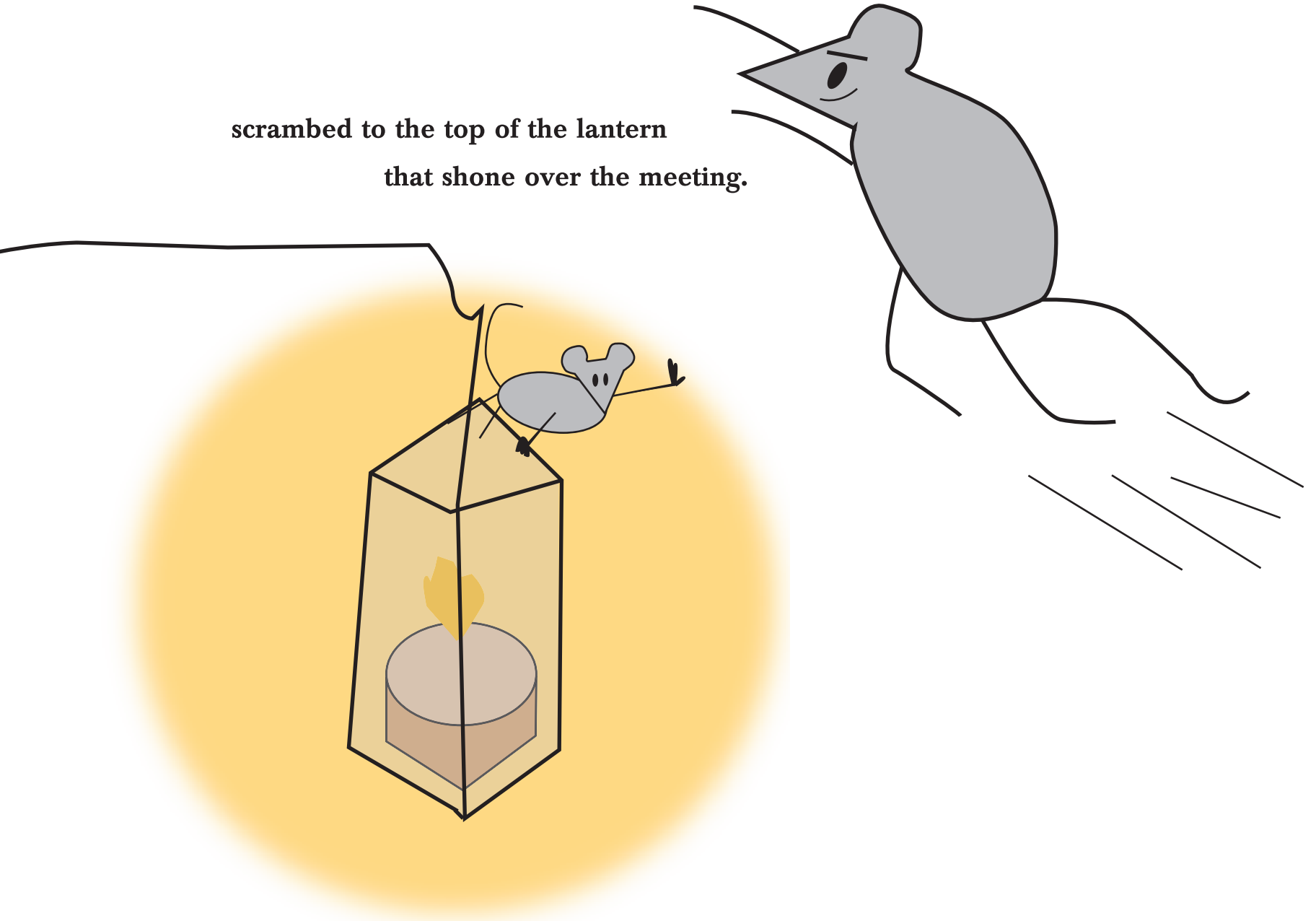


But the conference did not approve of the widow’s idea.

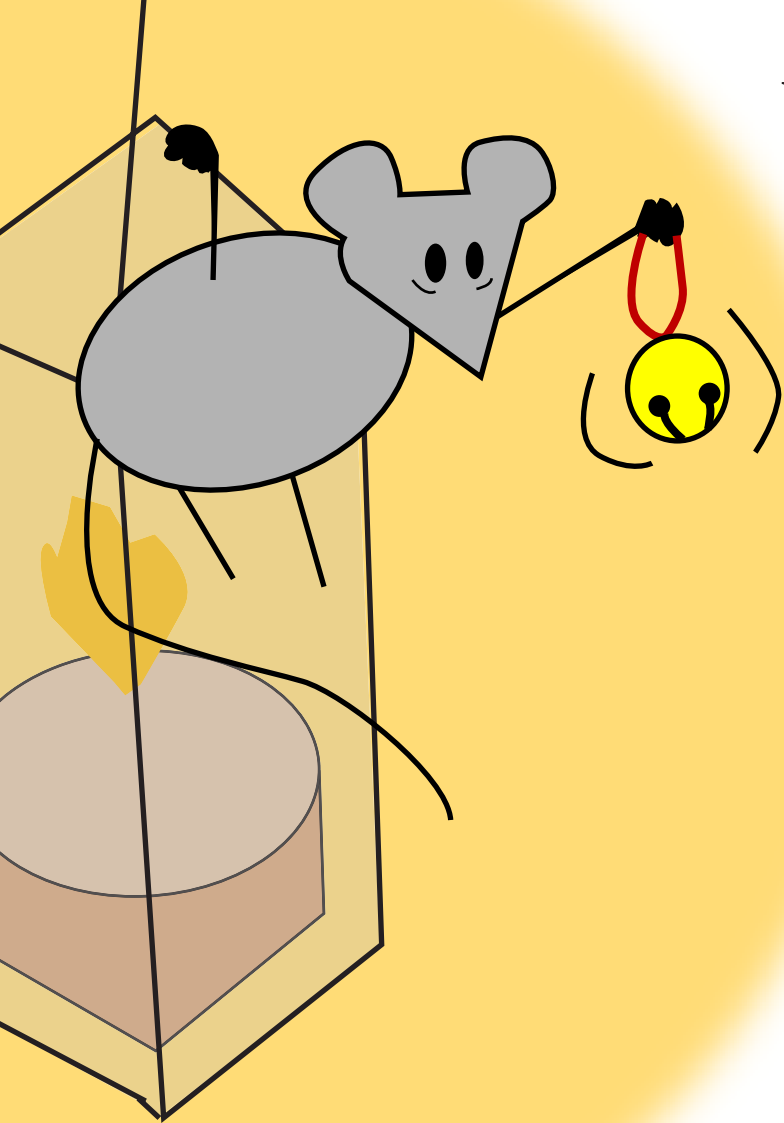


At last,
one of the mice, wiser than the rest,

scrambled to the top of the lantern
that shone over the meeting.

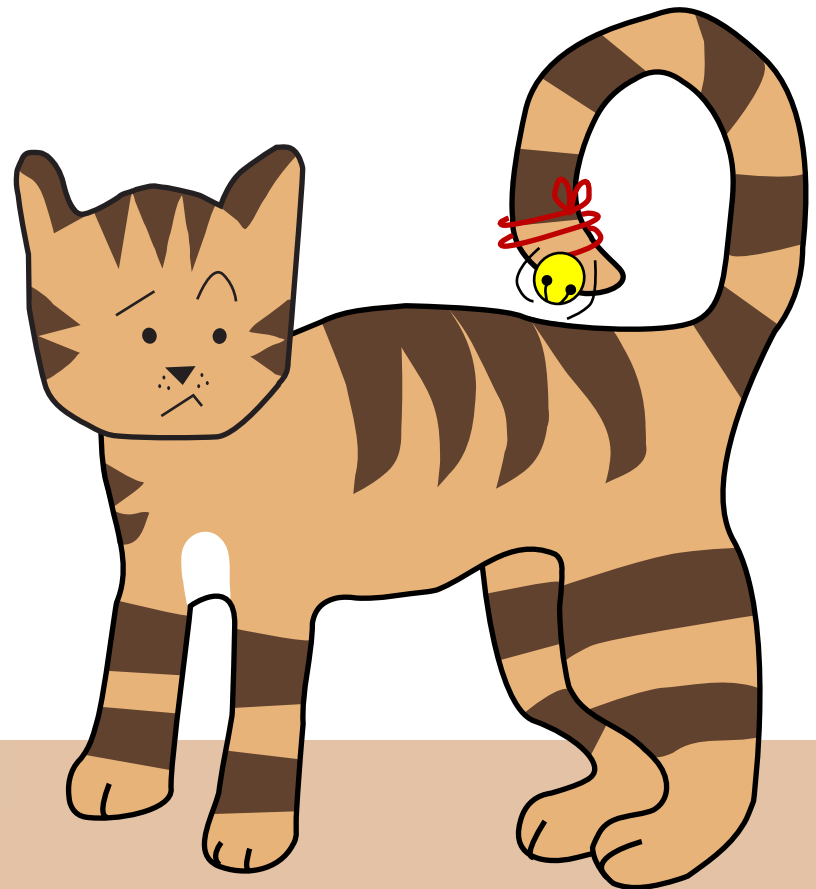


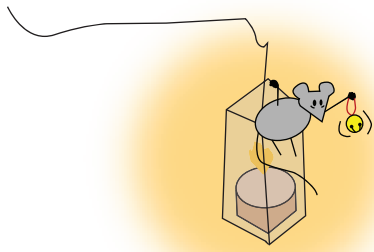
Waving a bell, he called for silence:



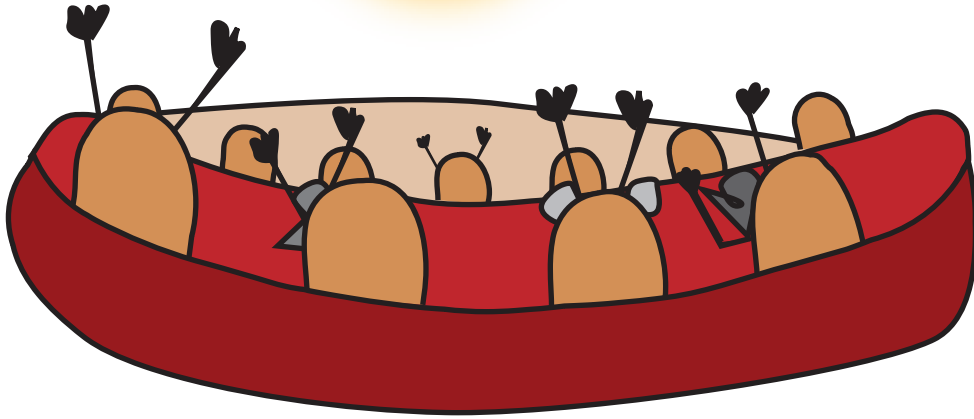
“We’ll tie this bell to the cat’s tail,
so we’ll always know where she is!

We’ll have time to escape, and the slow and
weaker mice will hear her coming and be
able to hide!”

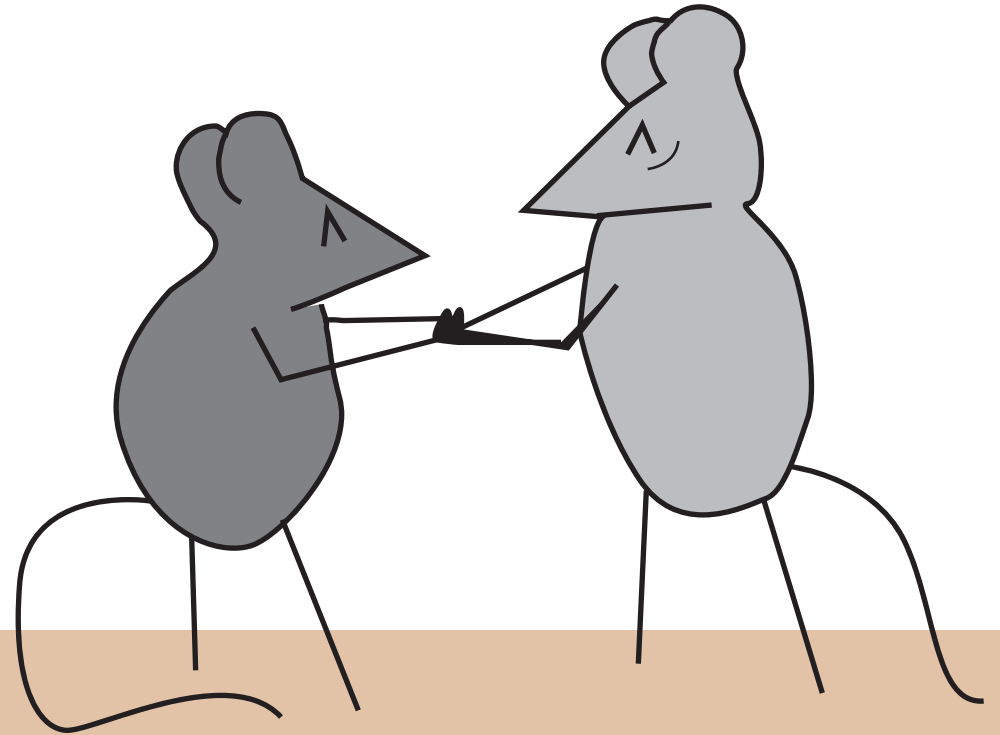


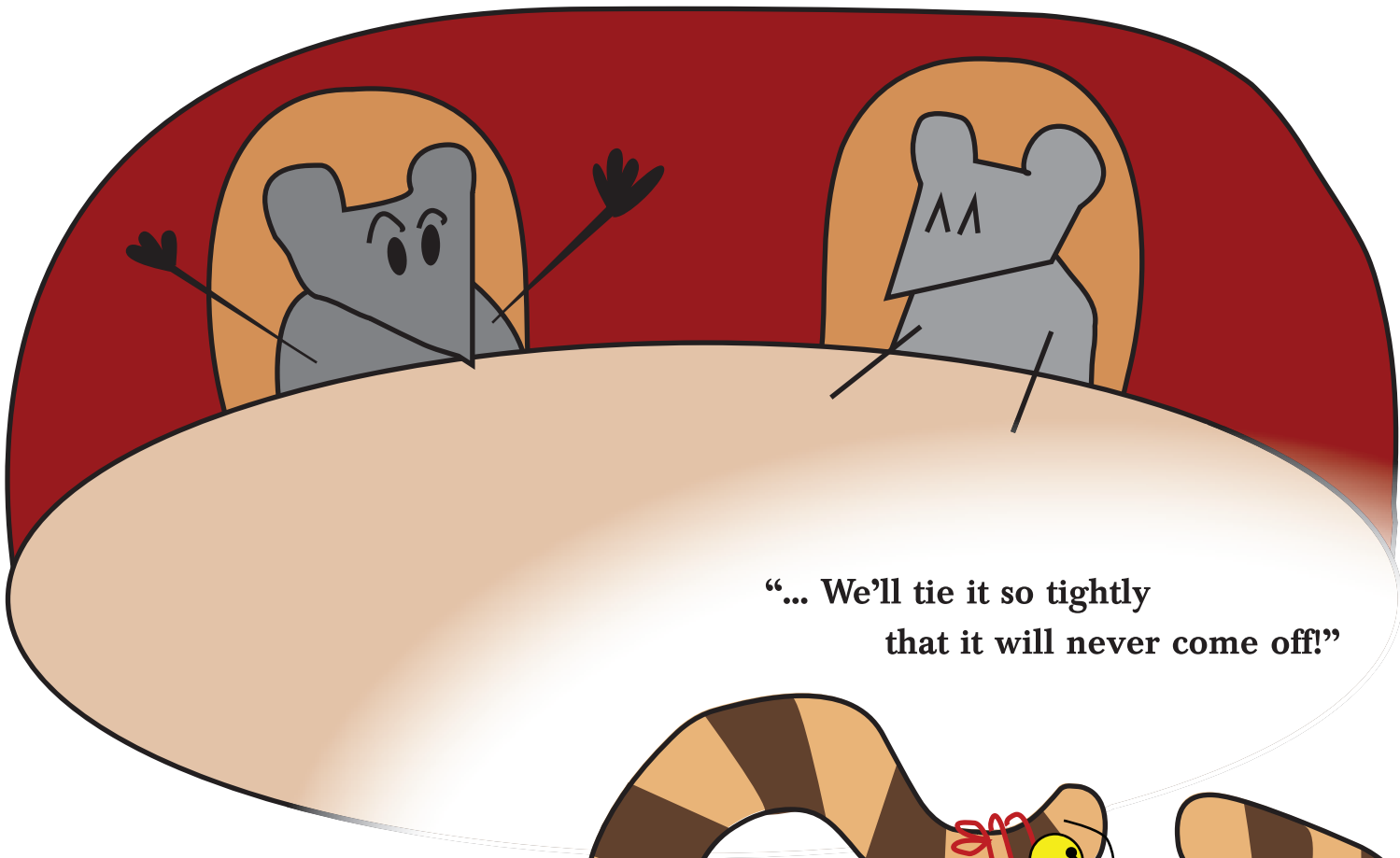


A round of hearty applause
met the wise mouse's words,

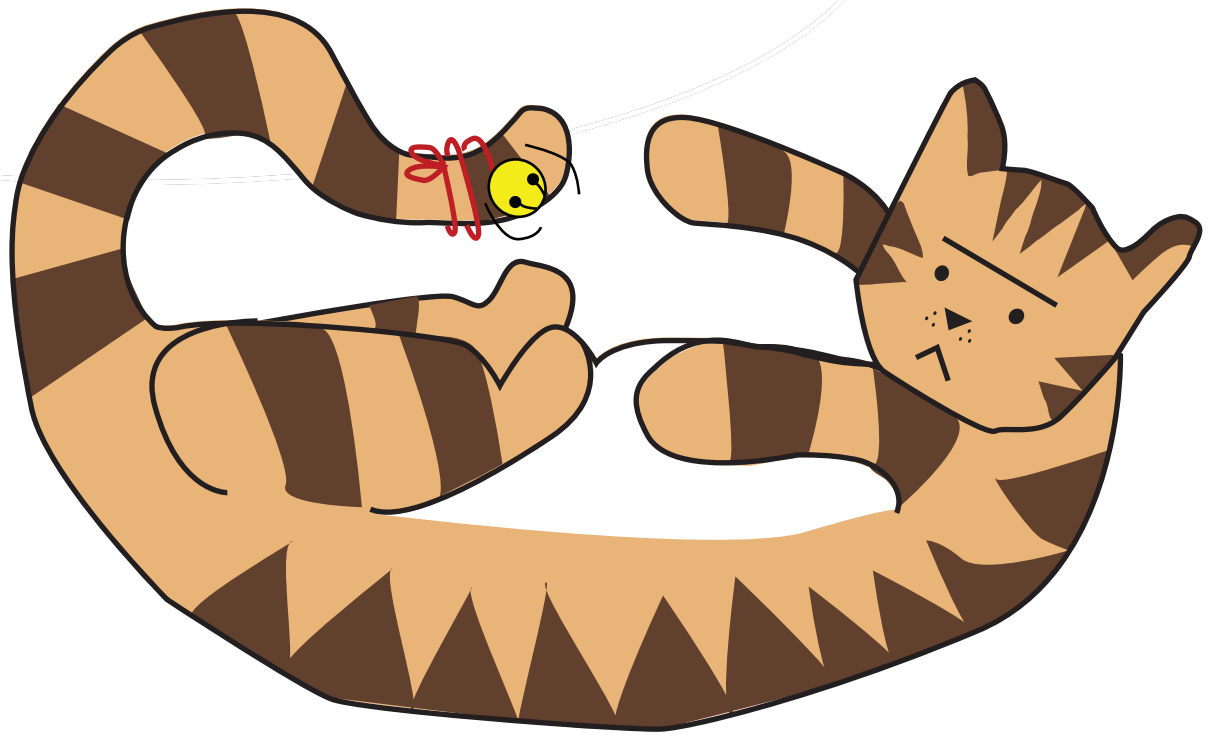


and everyone congratulated him
on his original idea.



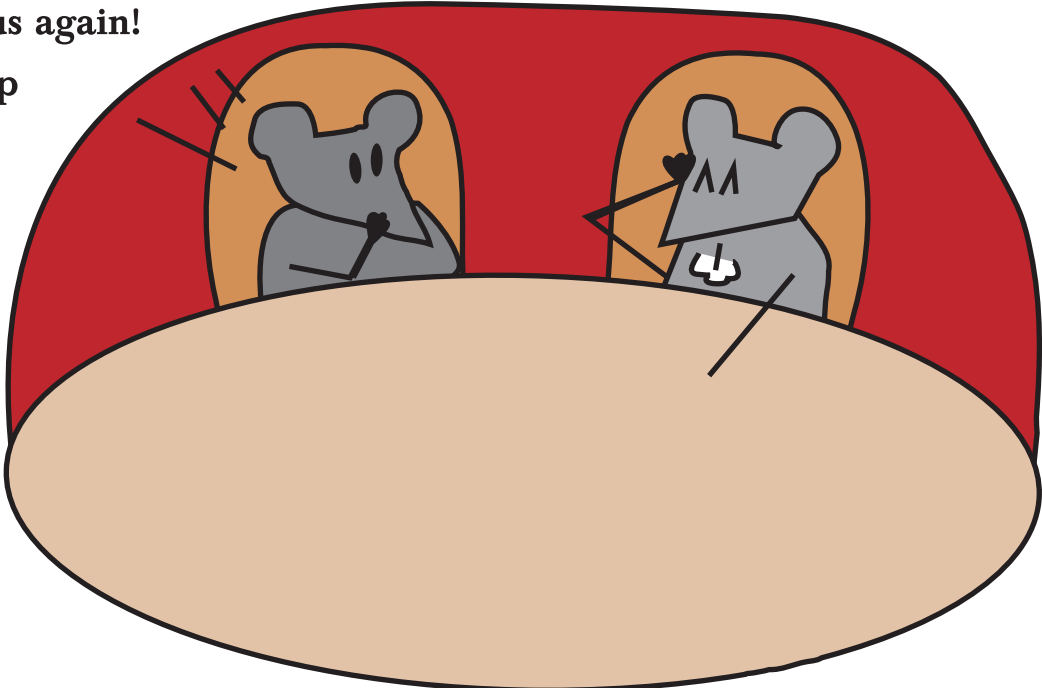


“... We’ll tie it so tightly
that it will never come off!”

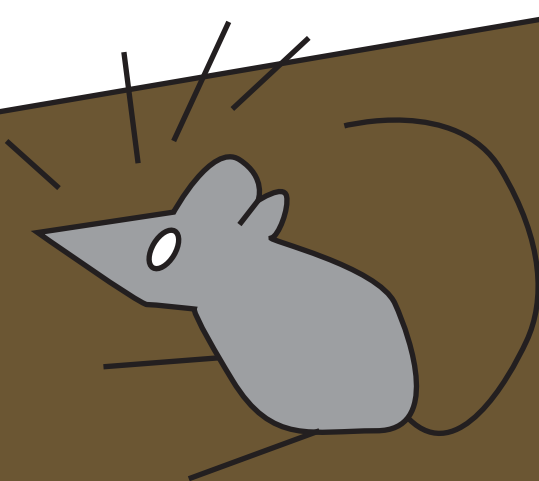


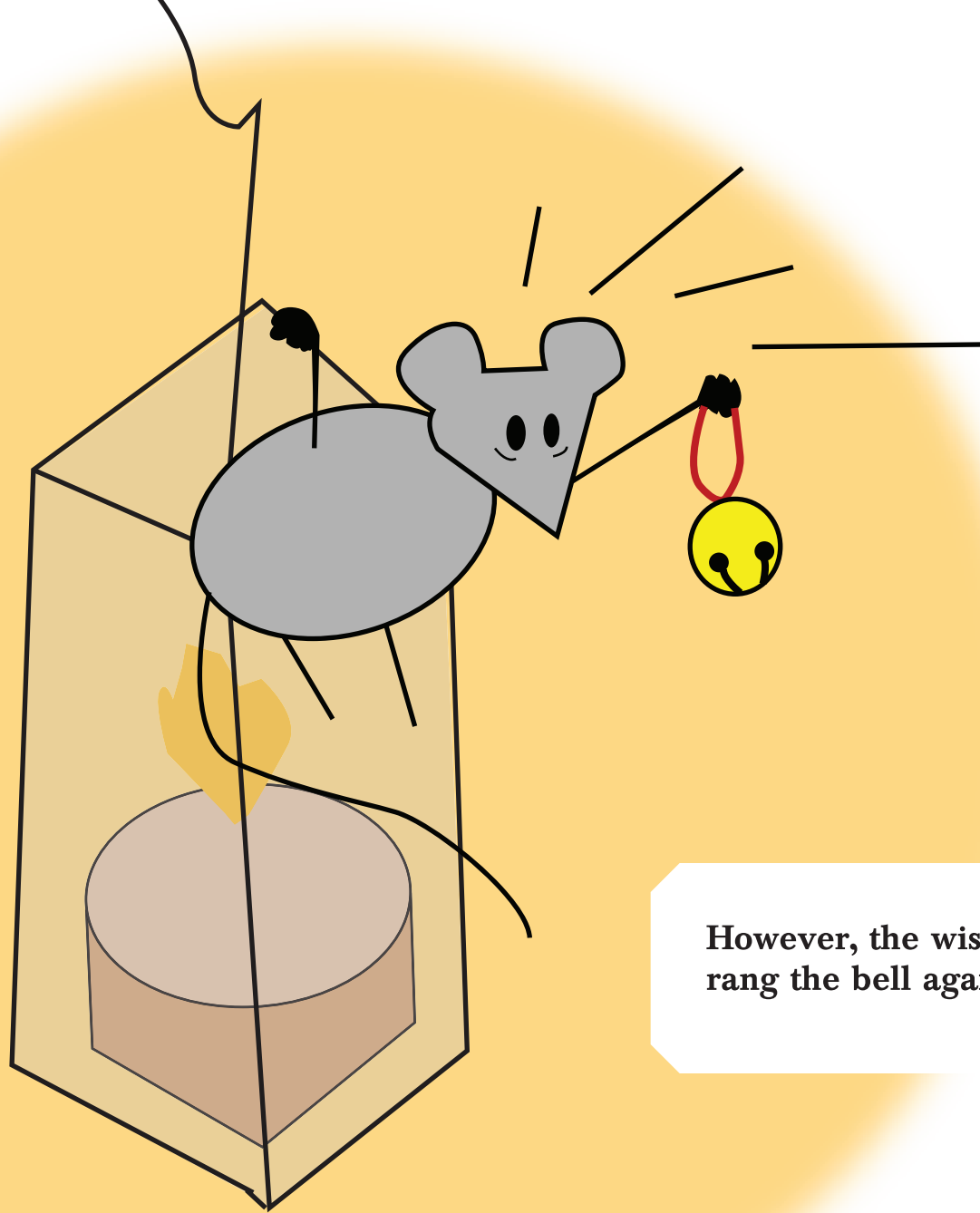
“She’ll never be able to sneak quietly up on us again!

Why, the other day, she suddenly loomed up
right in front of me!



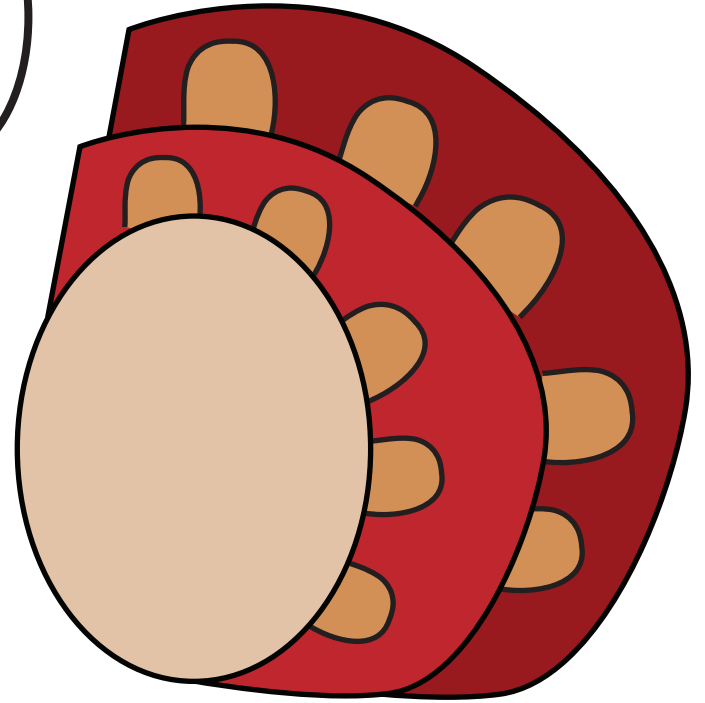
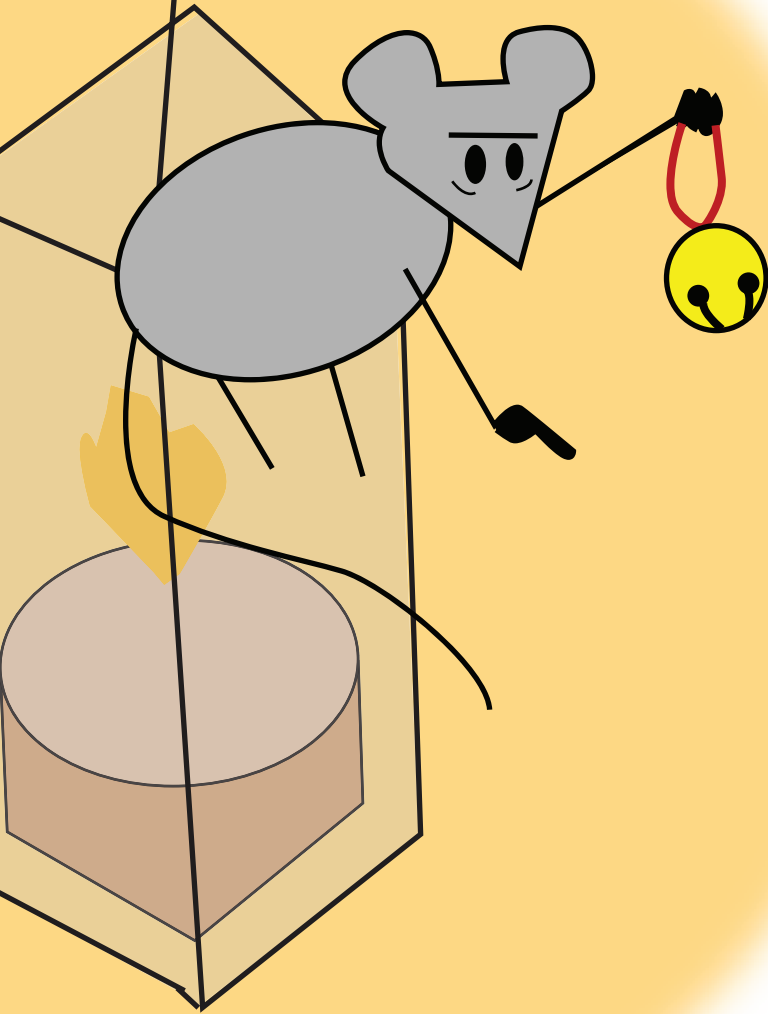
Just imagine...”



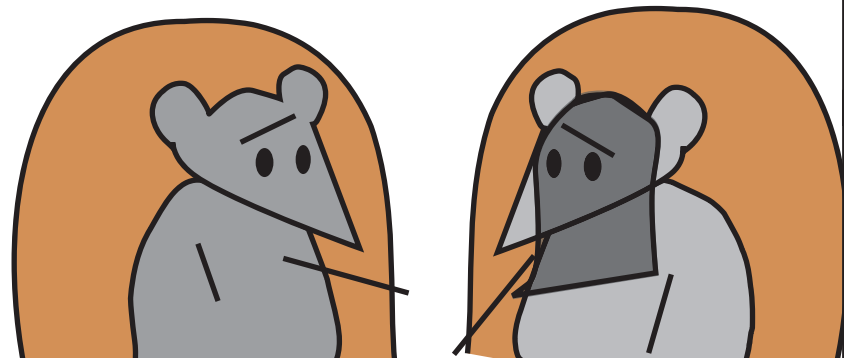


However, the wise mouse rang the bell again for silence.

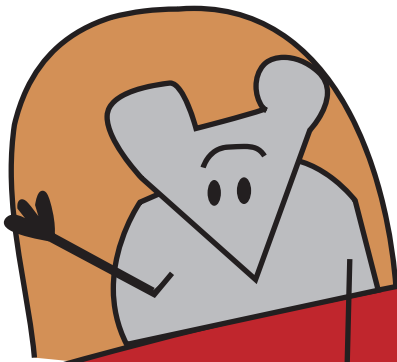
“We must decide who is going to tie the bell on the cat’s tail,” he said.



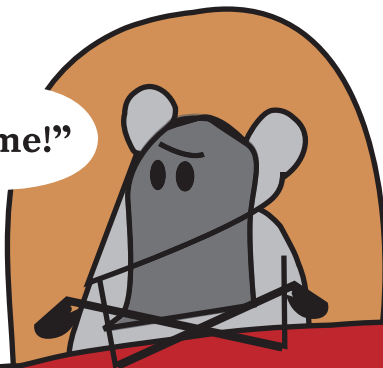
There was not a sound in the room except for a faint murmur:



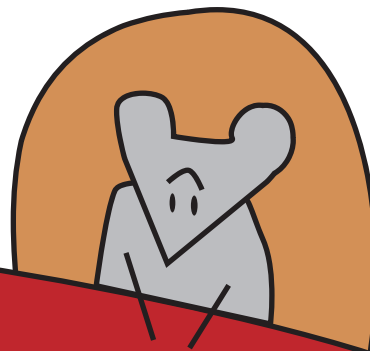
“I can’t, because...”



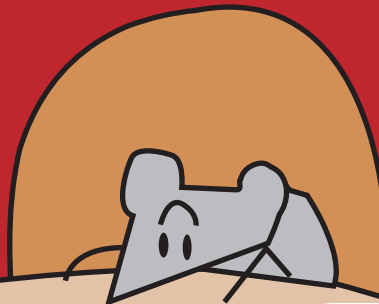
“Not me!”



**“I’d do it willingly,
but...”**



“Not me!”

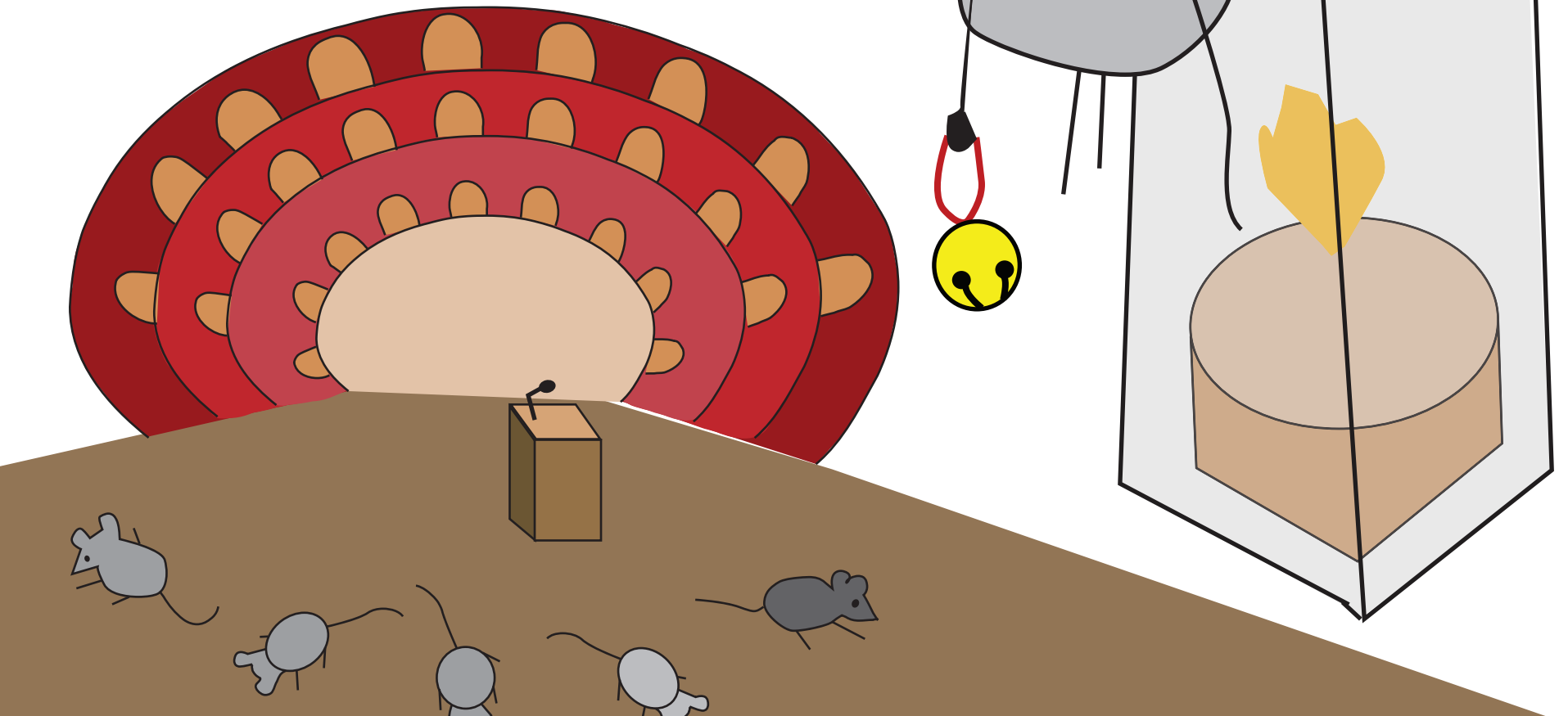


“Neither can I...”



Nobody was brave enough to come forward
to put the plan into action,

and the conference of the mice
ended without any decision made.



**It's often easy to have very bright ideas,
but putting them into practice is a more difficult matter..**

The End

