

brian's ramblings /4/ of women and mice

When I **got to** Callie's house, her mother **was running** the **vacuum cleaner**. She seems to run it **every time I visit**. I rang the bell but nobody heard it **because of** the noise. I **looked around for** Callie's cat. "Squirrel," I said. **For** some reason, Callie named her cat Squirrel. I **put** my hands together **tight** and whistled.

Squirrel **came running** out of the garage. **That's where** he spends most of his time, actually. Callie's parents don't let him in the house **at all**. The vacuum cleaner stopped, and I rang the bell again. **This time** Callie came **right away**. "**Come on in,**" she said. She **gave** Squirrel a little **scratch** behind the ears before she closed the door **on** him.

"**He's been catching** mice and **leaving** them on the welcome mat." -- "**What** does he do that **for?**" -- "Catch them or **leave** them on the mat?" -- "I'd **expect him to** catch them **for food**." -- "He **gets** plenty **to eat**. I think he catches them **for fun**." -- "So why does he leave them on the mat?"

"Cats do **that kind of thing**. Presents, **I guess**. My parents don't like it. They are trying to **make him stay** in the garage **so they don't** step on a mouse **every time** they open the door."

We **took off** our shoes and **left** them on the landing, where my family leaves wet boots in winter. Callie's mother **was standing** in the kitchen **scrubbing** the **sink**. "Hello, Brian. How are you today?"

"Hello, Mrs. Clemson. I'm fine. How are you?" It sounds **pretty stupid written down**, but **that's the way** people talk.

"Do you kids want anything **to eat or drink?**"

"**No thanks,**" I said. Callie was **obviously in a hurry**.

"Well, **have a good time**." -- "We will," I said.