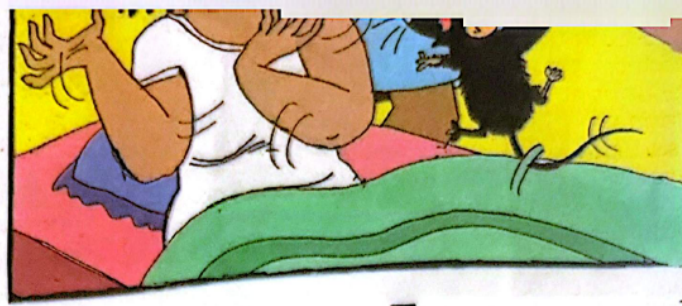




Sheenah and the rat surprise

BY ARNOLD MUGABE

On the first day of the first term holiday, Sheenah had one mission, which was to keep their house spotless. It was a declaration of war against house pests. She was dead serious, and before long the entire house sparkled day and night, until all pests began migrating.

The Rats: Rats love houses with food, warmth, and a lot of dark corners. To piss them off, Sheenah made sure every room was brightly lit with powerful 100-watt bulbs and all cereals in the kitchen were sealed in hard containers that even the sharpest-toothed rat could not chew through them.

The rats suffered until they left!

The Cockroaches: Using ChatGPT, Sheenah discovered a scary truth, that roaches eat 'everything'. They love eating bathing soap, glue, bread crumbs, paper, wood, leather, clothes and children's homework books.

But they had one weakness. Water! If roaches don't drink water for maximum one week, they collapse and die from dehydration and constipation. And that was all the information Sheenah needed because it changed everything.

Sheenah became obsessed with dry surfaces. She walked with a towel on her shoulder ready to wipe any drop of water in the house. She then blocked all openings leading to the septic tank. Within a week the roaches packed their bags.

The ants: The poor ants didn't even try to fight back. It was pointless! The moment they realised Sheenah's evil plans, they left to avoid death by starvation. By the fifth day of the holiday, not a single ant was in sight.

Sheenah was proud of herself, but her mother was even happier.

"Look at this," her mother said one evening. "I forgot and left half a loaf of bread on the dining table overnight, but no pest touched it. A few months ago, ants and cockroaches would have spent the whole night feasting on it."

Then she sighed.

"You've raised the cleanliness standard too

high. I wonder if the house will remain this clean once school resumes."

"No worries, Mum," Sheenah replied confidently. "I am not stopping. No pest will ever live in this house again. Not under my watch."

Two days later, Sheenah's mother secretly organized a small farewell surprise before second term began. She bought a cake and invited Sheenah's best friend, Sisi, to help surprise her in bed early in the morning.

When Sisi arrived, the two quietly carried the cake to Sheenah's bedroom. They knocked, pushed the door open, and shouted together: "SURPRIIIIISE!"

But before Sheenah could even react, the cake exploded. An army of black-haired sewage rats suddenly burst out from inside the cake, tearing through the icing and launching themselves in every direction.

Chaos erupted instantly. What nobody knew was that when rats choose your house, they never leave your house no matter what. When you chase them, they only relocate. Some hide in the ceiling, others move into the sewage tank, while the rest dig tunnels beneath the flower beds outside and hide and until the storm clears.

Meanwhile every night they secretly spy on you through the ventilators, waiting patiently.

The rats at Sheenah's knew that if Sheenah and her mother believed the pests were gone forever, sooner or later they would become careless again and start leaving food all over the dining.

And the opportunity finally came. The night before the surprise, Sheenah's mother had left the cake uncovered on the dining table. The rats quietly sneaked into the house and chewed a tiny hole into the side of the cake. The hole was so tiny that it was almost impossible to notice.

One by one, they crawled inside the cake through the tiny hole and ate the cake from the inside while carefully leaving the outer icing untouched. Then, they stayed hiding silently, inside the cake, waiting to become part of the surprise for their greatest enemy, Sheenah.