

The Gentleman in Grey

Hush, little May! Snuggle here by my side:
Do you see in that corner a door open wide?
That's the door of a house: if you watch it a minute,
The shy little owner will come and sit in it.

See! there he comes; in a grey velvet hat,
With his shining black eyes looking this way and that,
And his velvet-shod* feet: if you stir but a lash,
They'll twinkle and vanish as quick as a flash.

What do you fancy he does in the dark,
When the fire has gone down to the very last spark,
When the girls and the boys are in bed and asleep,
And there's never a cat on the carpet to creep?

Why, out of his doorway he walks at his ease,
And brings his relations and friends, if he please,
He picks up the crumbs of your candy and cake:
From the tiniest fragments a feast he can make.

He swings on the tassels, he climbs up the shelf;
He peeps in the mirror and winks at himself;
He drops from the table, and lands with a thump;
He slides down the sofa, and squeaks at the bump.

There, now he grows bolder; he's out on the floor;
He's eating an apple-seed there by the door;
He's under the table; he's — where did you say?
Oh, here he is! there he is! shoo! get away!

by Emily Huntington Miller

Glossary

velvet-shod — wearing velvet shoes