

# Happy Birthday Surprise!

*by Stephen Krensky*

Abel was a very excited mouse. Today was his friend Daisy's birthday. And he was giving her a surprise party.

Abel started to clean his house. He wiped and cleaned and wiped again. A small cloud of dust followed him around.

"Achoooo!" sneezed Abel. "Achooo! Achooo!"

It was already past noon. "Oh, dear!" said Abel. He still had to bake the cake. He quickly mixed the eggs, flour, and sugar in a bowl.

"Sweet," said Abel, tasting the batter.

Once the cake was in the oven, he started wrapping Daisy's present. The paper went on easily. But the bow wouldn't stay tied.

Abel kept trying. His face got hot. His whiskers twitched.

"Hello? Is anyone home?"

Abel's friend Chester had arrived.

## Projectable 1

“What are you doing here so early?” asked Abel.

“I came to help you get ready.”

“What makes you think I need help?” asked Abel.

He felt a little embarrassed that he was so far behind.

Chester looked around. The house was still a mess.

“Just a wild guess,” he said. “What’s that burning smell?”

“Oh, no!” cried Abel.

He rushed into the kitchen. Smoke was pouring from the oven.

“This is terrible! The cake is ruined!”

“Don’t worry,” said Chester. “We still have time to make another. Why didn’t you ask me for help earlier?”

“I thought I could do everything myself.”

“Well,” said Chester, “I hope you know better now.”

Abel nodded. “From now on, I’ll always ask for help when I need it.”

“Surprise birthday parties are a lot of work,” said Chester.

Abel smiled. “And that was the real surprise for me!”