



## Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story

By Mark Kelly

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**A heartwarming picture book tale of the power of the small, from bestselling author and retired NASA astronaut Commander Mark Kelly.**

Astronaut Mark Kelly flew with “mice-tronauts” on his first spaceflight aboard space shuttle *Endeavour* in 2001. *Mousetronaut* tells the story of a small mouse that wants nothing more than to travel to outer space. The little mouse works as hard as the bigger mice to show readiness for the mission . . . and is chosen for the flight! While in space, the astronauts are busy with their mission when disaster strikes—and only the smallest member of the crew can save the day. With lively illustrations by award-winning artist C. F. Payne, *Mousetronaut* is a charming tale of perseverance, courage, and the importance of the small!

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## **Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story By Mark Kelly Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

From School Library Journal

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Unknown

Diminutive size proves to be an advantage on a shuttle mission.

Meteor the mouse would dearly love to join the shuttle crew, but all the other mice know he's too small. The human shuttle commander's had his eye on Meteor, though, and seeing his motivation, chooses him for one of the six mouse spots. Meteor is such a "natural" in zero gravity, he's allowed out of the cage, aka the Mouse Hotel. The human astronauts are busy on spacewalks and conducting experiments, but there's not much for Meteor to do. When the key to the control panel becomes stuck in a tight spot, the commander says, "This isn't good." Human fingers are too thick, but Meteor saves the day. Kelly, a retired astronaut, puts his expertise to work, naturally sliding the tiniest details of life on a shuttle into his story. Even in space, astronauts answer email; it goes without saying that at least one of the astronauts is a woman; and who knew you needed keys on a space shuttle? (Probably appropriately, the exact role of the mice on the mission is never explored.) Payne has a good time with his illustrations, investing little Meteor with a suitably outsized personality and making his multicultural human shuttle crew look normal as normal can be—like Meteor, maybe child readers can become astronauts, too.

This little mouse may well inspire some big dreams. (afterword, further reading) (Picture book. 3-6)

*Kirkus*, September 15, 2012 (Kirkus)

In this picture book based on the space shuttle Endeavor, mice are being trained alongside human astronauts and selected to accompany the 2001 mission. Meteor is one of the smallest mice, but the most hardworking. After the suspenseful liftoff, an irreplaceable key gets stuck between control panels, and he hurls into action to save the mission. The concise, energetic writing works in tandem with the highly detailed and expressive, softly crosshatched cartoon art. The tone of the story is celebratory, but also gives an authentic glimpse into daily life on a space shuttle. Close-ups of characters reveal humorous surprise or just pure glee. The astronauts dub Meteor with the title "Mousetronaut" due to his bravery and service. Librarians will want to share the inspiration for this tale included in the afterword, an informative essay on man's quest to overcome gravity and fly. Apparently, during the duration of the flight, only one of the 18 mice onboard the Endeavor playfully and contentedly floated in zero gravity. The rest clung to the cage. The values of being small, useful, solving problems, and working hard—as opposed to being big and strong—will inspire young readers.

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In an afterword, former astronaut Kelly (who is also the husband of Gabrielle Giffords) recalls that on his first Endeavor flight, the research mice on board would have nothing to do with weightlessness and clung to the mesh of their cage for the entire mission—except one, “smaller than the rest, [who] seemed to enjoy the experience and effortlessly floated around the cage.” Inspired by this real-life mouse, Kelly’s first children’s book tells the story of Meteor, a lightly anthropomorphized rodent who turns his tininess into an advantage when an important key gets stuck in a crack between two monitors. The understated, quietly intense prose (“ ‘This isn’t good,’ says the commander. ‘We need that key back’ ”) is just right for the particular breed of hero that is the American astronaut, and the narrative stakes are just high enough for the younger end of the target audience. Payne (Hide-and-Squeak) contributes muscular, handsomely textured images and vivid portraits that make it absolutely clear that space travel is a larger-than-life adventure. Ages 4–8. (Publishers Weekly)

Here the mouse is headed in the opposite direction. This first children’s book by Kelly, a retired astronaut and husband of former Representative Gabrielle Giffords, builds on his experience with real mice aboard the space shuttle Endeavour. Eighteen of them. In this winning story there are six, and as the smallest one, Meteor gets to perform his own special mission. After helping the astronauts out of a potential Apollo 13 calamity, Meteor is declared a hero—sure to please many fellow pipsqueaks back on Earth. (The New York Times Book Review )

Kelly, Mark

**Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story**

illus. by C. F. Payne. Wiseman/Simon, 2012 34p Trade ed. ISBN 978-1-4424-5824-6 \$16.99 E-book ed. ISBN 978-1-4424-5832-1 \$12.99 Ad 5-8 yrs Smaller than the other experimental mice chosen to accompany a group of astronauts on a space shuttle mission, little Meteor is nonetheless confident and excited to be going on such a journey. While the other mice “cling to their cage in terror” in space, Meteor enjoys the sensation of being weightless and is thrilled when he is able to help the astronauts with a small, but difficult, task: retrieving a control panel key that has become wedged in a tiny crack behind a monitor onboard. Author and astronaut Mark Kelly explains in a note afterwards that this fictional story has a tiny kernel of truth: among a group of experimental mice that once accompanied Kelly on a space mission, there was one who “seemed to enjoy the experience and effortlessly floated around the cage.” Kelly also provides a brief history of space flight, of the NASA shuttle program, and of space-traveling animals, as well as a bibliography and list of internet resources. The plot is pretty minimal, and there’s an uneasy combination of anthropomorphism and utilitarianism in the treatment of the space-borne mice. Still, the idea of a tiny mouse astronaut will appeal to many kids, especially fans of White’s *Stuart Little*, and Payne’s mixed media art excels at both providing a detailed look at the shuttle’s interior and the astronauts while capitalizing on the cute factor of Meteor as fuzzy little space traveler. The slightly caricatured humans and mice match the real-but-not-real tone of the story, and the bold compositions will make this visually successful with groups as well. (BCCB)

? Real-life astronaut Mark Kelly has written a fun story about a small mouse who becomes a big hero on a space shuttle mission. Meteor is smaller than the other mice, but the Shuttle Commander notices how hard he works, so he is chosen to go on the next mission. Meteor loves the feeling of weightlessness while the other mice seem scared. When the astronauts drop a key in an unreachable place, this smallest member of the crew helps out. A lengthy afterword by the author explains how a mouse on his first-ever shuttle flight served as an inspiration for Meteor. He also provides additional information about flight and space travel, and a bibliography and list of Internet resources for those who wish to learn more. Mixed media illustrations

complement the story; a spread with the astronauts on a space walk is particularly stunning. Young readers will be delighted by little Meteor's big space adventure! **Laura D'Amato, Library Media Specialist, Berea, Ohio** [Editor's Note: Available in e-book format.]

**Recommended** (Laura D'Amato Library Media Conention)

#### Review

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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Herman Nelson:**

This Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story book is absolutely not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is usually information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get details which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. This kind of Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story without we comprehend teach the one who reading it become critical in contemplating and analyzing. Don't become worry Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story can bring whenever you are and not make your tote space or bookshelves' turn out to be full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even phone. This Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story having good arrangement in word in addition to layout, so you will not experience uninterested in reading.

#### **Lillie Moreland:**

Do you one among people who can't read gratifying if the sentence chained inside straightway, hold on guys that aren't like that. This Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story book is readable by simply you who hate the straight word style. You will find the data here are arrange for enjoyable looking at experience without leaving even decrease the knowledge that want to offer to you. The writer regarding Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story content conveys objective easily to understand by many people. The printed and e-book are not different in the content but it just different available as it. So , do you nevertheless thinking Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story is not loveable to be your top record reading book?

#### **Donald Murphy:**

The ability that you get from Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story is a more deep you excavating the information that hide within the words the more you get interested in reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to understand but Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story giving you thrill feeling of reading. The author conveys their point in a number of way that can be understood by anyone who read the idea because the author of this reserve is well-known enough. This specific book also makes your personal vocabulary increase well. So it is easy to understand then can go with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We suggest you for having this specific Mousetronaut: Based on a (Partially) True Story instantly.

**Wesley Binns:**

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