

Up a very steep hill,
In a mysterious house,
Live Soft Touch the dove
And Houdini the mouse.

Oops, I beg your pardon,
Not a mouse, but a rat,
Black, white and whiskered,
And terrifically fat!

My mistake, Houdini,
Not fat so much as sleek.
Do you dare to hear more?
Come along and take a peek...

Wondrous Mack the Magus,
For aptly he is named,
Wields a wand with mastery;
For this he is quite famed!

This story's not about him, though;
(Sorry 'bout that, Mack),
But of his prized familiars
Who share his magic knack.

Houdini and his pal Soft Touch
Know tricks hard to believe.
For only the rat and only the dove
Have ventured up Mack's dark sleeve.

Now it's true that those of the avian kind
Might be nervous and highly strung.
So it is with Soft Touch;
Her worries are far-flung!

When Mack steps out it happens;
That's when she starts to pace;
That's when her head starts bobbing;
Feathers flying all over the place.

Lucky for her that Houdini
Who's named for you know who,
Might instead be called, "Doctor Sigmund Freud";
The rat's got head-shrinking daring-do!

When Soft Touch starts to panic,
Houdini knows what's best.
It's not yoga or visualization,
Not even things gotten off of her chest.

Soft Touch craves competition;
Houdini must egg her on.
He lures her into battle,
And soon her fears are gone.

He squints in her direction,
Looks down his pointy nose,
Cleverly waits for what comes next,
For this is how it goes...

"Houdini, Houdini, come quickly, my friend.
Masters flown the coup! The world will soon end!
The sky will soon crumble! Heed Chicken Little's warning!
The sky will rain in pieces! Oh, it's a dread morning!"

"Soft Touch, Soft Touch, for goodness sake!
Master's not flown the coup, you little flake!
He's zipped out on an errand! Made a mad dash!
Tempus fugit, my friend! He'll be back in a flash!"

"Tempus won't fugit for me when he's gone;
Time becomes long, like the neck of a swan.
How can you just lie there, in your ratty old nest?
My nest is unfeathered! I'm unable to rest!"

"Soft Touch, Soft Touch, your birdbrain is showing.
How weird that for you our master keeps crowing!
Perhaps it is true he's gone soft in the head?
How will he keep earning our butter and bread!"

"What do you mean, you nasty old vermin?
Your sharp little tongue should really stop squirmin'.
For very good reason, I'm master's pet.
I'm a sensation! You can just bet!"

Soft Touch the dove flaps and she flies.
She flies to the rafters in the blink of an eye.
Then down she drops to the baby grand
Where she pecks out some notes of "Promised Land."

She slips under the lid
Where she strums on the strings,
Like the voice of an angel
The strings start to ring!

You'd think she was done, but she's more in store.
Clever Houdini pretends to snore.
He nestles down in his comfy bed.
Soft Touch the dove pecks on his head.

"Remember the trick of the vanishing vase?"
She demands, most fiercely, getting into his face.
"The one where I squeeze inside of an urn?
Around it a circle of fire starts to burn!

"The flames grow higher!
Wizardry flashes!
I rise, most triumphant,
A Phoenix from the ashes!"

Houdini yawns. "Your bragging's too loud.
Just by showing my mug, I can vanish a crowd!
I scare off their pants! I make them run!
I make them squeal! It's terribly fun!"

Houdini rubs his paws, in villainous fashion,
He winks at the dove, displaying his passion.
He tweaks his whiskers. He twirls his tail.
He drums his claws. Soft Touch turns pale.

Her feathers are ruffled; she's more than aghast
(Though she's heard it before; her memory's not vast).
"Oh, yeah?" Soft Touch cries. "You evil rodent!
Let's see you match this!" And she starts to lament.

Houdini's moved. Her singing's sad!
Still he eggs her on, in rhetoric bad.
"Your singing's off key; I've heard magpies sing better!
You're wet behind the ears; not even a seagull is wetter!"

Soft Touch is offended; she's more than peeved.
She's starting to burn; she's fiercely aggrieved.
"Oh, yeah?" Soft Touch cries. "You furry jerk!
Let's see you match this!" And she starts to twerk.

Houdini's floored. Her dancing's gold!
Still he eggs her on, in rhetoric bold.
"Remember the time I turned into a cube?
I made that Rubik look like a boob!"

Soft Touch is so angry, her feathers turn pink.
She's been cruelly pushed to the very brink.
"Oh, yeah?" Soft Touch cries. "You think you're so hot!
You think you're the tops, but you're full of snot!"

She shoves her beak pointedly into his mug.
"You are a pest! You are a slug!
You little freak! I am a dove!
I AM A DOVE, AND A DOVE MEANS LOVE!"

At that precise moment, a sound manifests.
The dove's eyes shoot about; she thrusts out her breast.
The blood drains from her feathers; she turns back to pale.
She starts to quake; she starts to quale.

She ruffles her feathers. She sighs a soft coo.
She mourns very deeply, "Boo-hoo... Boo-hoo...
Houdini, Houdini, what a terrible shame.
Master's returned; that's the end of our game!"