

Geronimo Stilton

THE CHEESE EXPERIMENT



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ISBN 978-0-545-87252-2

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Original title *Lo strano caso dei brufoli blu*

Cover by Iacopo Bruno, Roberto Ronchi, Christian Aliprandi, and Andrea Cavallini

Illustrations by Andrea De Negri and Valentina Grassini

Graphics by Marta Lorini

Special thanks to Shannon Penney

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Interior design by Kay Petronio

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 19 20 21 22 23

Printed in the U.S.A. 40

This edition first printing 2019



A SUPER-SPECIAL DAY

One cool and peaceful Monday in late **SEPTEMBER**, I woke up early, stretched my paws over my head, and got ready for a **SUPER-SPECIAL** day . . .





OOPS, I'm sorry — I forgot to introduce myself! My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I'm the editor of *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous newspaper on Mouse Island.

My job keeps me busy, but that morning I was headed to my nephew Benjamin's school for the opening of their new **science labs**. I was supposed to give a speech! I wanted to look sophisticated for **FOUR REASONS**:



I COMBED MY FUR WITH
SLEEKFUR . . .



I PUT ON MY FRESHLY
PRESSED SUIT . . .



- 1) To make my little nephew proud.
- 2) Because the school principal is a good **friend** of mine.
- 3) Because I **knew** that Dr. Margo Bitmouse — otherwise known as **Doc** — would be there. She’s a marvemously smart and beautiful rodent!
- 4) Because my grandfather had called and hollered, “**GRANDSON!** Did you comb your whiskers? Did you write a good speech? Don’t be a **cheesebrain**. The reputation of



I PUT ON A RED SILK TIE.
VERY FANCY!



I SPRAYED MYSELF WITH A
HINT OF PARMESAN COLOGNE.



The Rodent's Gazette is at stake!”

So I took a little longer than usual to make sure I looked *mouserific*. Finally, I checked myself in the **mirror** one last time and grinned. Not bad!

I hailed a **TAXI** and headed to Benjamin's school. On the ride, I went over the speech in my head — but the closer we got to the school, the more my tail *trembled* and my

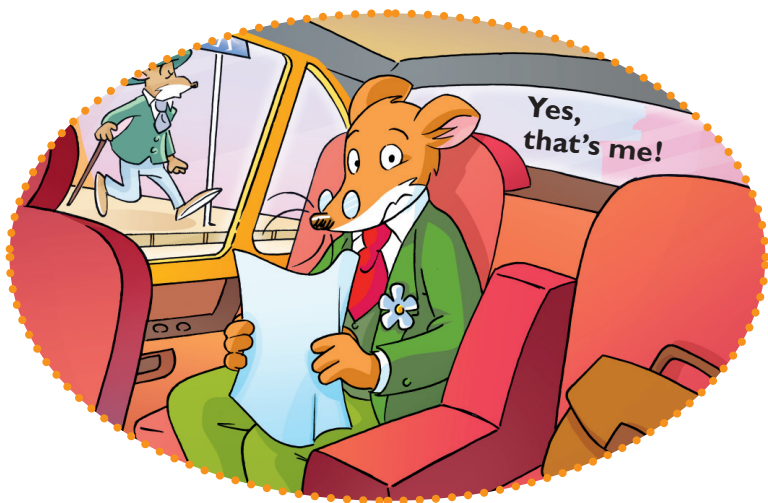




whiskers **wobbled!** Holy cheese, I was a **WRECK!**

The taxi driver was a rodent around Grandfather William's age. He was large and had a thick gray handlebar **MUSTACHE.** He kept glancing at me in the rearview mirror.

At a **RED LIGHT**, he turned to face me. "Aren't you Geronimo Stilton? The





publisher of *The Rodent's Gazette*?"

I nodded. "Yes, that's me!"

"Mr. Stilton, your snout is as white as a slice of **MOZZARELLA** cheese!" he said, looking worried. "Are you feeling okay? Are you getting **carsick**? There's a special **SICKNESS BAG** under the seat — I always keep a few handy for weak-stomached rodents like you."

I held up a paw and tried to reassure him. "Oh, it's not car sickness. I promise. I'm just **nervous**! When I get to the school, I have to:

- 1) walk a red carpet in front of hundreds of rodents (without tripping!),
- 2) give a **SPEECH** in front of hundreds of rodents and TV reporters (without forgetting what to say!), and
- 3) cut the inaugural **ribbon** for the new science labs (without snipping my paw!)."



The cabdriver raised an eyebrow and muttered, “Mr. Stilton, I assumed you were a brilliant, carefree mouse, like your grandfather **WILLIAM SHORTPAWS!** I had the pleasure of driving him around in my cab quite often in the old days.”

Cheese and crackers! I tried to *justify* myself.

“Well, usually . . . I mean, sometimes . . .





actually . . . I'm more or less an **easygoing** mouse. But today I have to give a speech, and I'm so worried about it that my **fur** is standing on end! Excuse me . . ."

I buried my snout in the **pages** of my speech.

"**Humph**, they don't make journalists the way they used to," the cabdriver grumbled. "Your grandfather William was a real journalist — not a **cheddarhead** like you!"

By now we had arrived at New Mouse City's elementary school, the same school I went to as a mouseling. As I climbed out of the taxi, I noticed something weird. There were little **BLUE CLOUDS** hovering in the air outside the school, and it **stunk** of garlic!

Cheese niblets,

HOW STRANGE!