

**DEAR MOUSE FRIENDS,
WELCOME TO THE**



STONE AGE!

WELCOME TO THE STONE AGE . . . AND THE WORLD OF THE CAVEMICE!

CAPITAL: OLD MOUSE CITY

POPULATION: WE'RE NOT SURE. (MATH DOESN'T EXIST YET!) BUT BESIDES CAVEMICE, THERE ARE PLENTY OF DINOSAURS, WAY TOO MANY SABER-TOOTHED TIGERS, AND FEROCIOUS CAVE BEARS — BUT NO MOUSE HAS EVER HAD THE COURAGE TO COUNT THEM!

TYPICAL FOOD: PETRIFIED CHEESE SOUP

NATIONAL HOLIDAY: **GREAT ZAP DAY**, WHICH CELEBRATES THE DISCOVERY OF FIRE. RODENTS EXCHANGE GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICHES ON THIS HOLIDAY.

NATIONAL DRINK: MAMMOTH MILKSHAKES

CLIMATE: **Unpredictable**, WITH FREQUENT METEOR SHOWERS



cheese
soup



milkshake

MONEY

SEASHELLS OF ALL SHAPES
AND SIZES



MEASUREMENT

THE BASIC UNIT OF MEASUREMENT IS BASED ON THE LENGTH OF THE TAIL OF THE LEADER OF THE VILLAGE. A UNIT CAN BE DIVIDED INTO A HALF TAIL OR QUARTER TAIL. THE LEADER IS ALWAYS READY TO PRESENT HIS TAIL WHEN THERE IS A DISPUTE.

THE CAVEMICE



Geronimo Stilton

CAVEMICE

THE SMELLY SEARCH



Scholastic Inc.

If you purchased this book without a cover, you should be aware that this book is stolen property. It was reported as “unsold and destroyed” to the publisher, and neither the author nor the publisher has received any payment for this “stripped book.”

Copyright © 2014 by Edizioni Piemme S.p.A., Palazzo Mondadori, Via Mondadori 1, 20090 Segrate, Italy. International Rights © Atlantyca S.p.A. English translation © 2017 by Atlantyca S.p.A.

The publisher does not have any control over and does not assume any responsibility for author or third-party websites or their content.

GERONIMO STILTON names, characters, and related indicia are copyright, trademark, and exclusive license of Atlantyca S.p.A. All rights reserved. The moral right of the author has been asserted. Based on an original idea by Elisabetta Dami. www.geronimostilton.com

Published by Scholastic Inc., *Publishers since 1920*, 557 Broadway, New York, NY 10012. SCHOLASTIC and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc.

Stilton is the name of a famous English cheese. It is a registered trademark of the Stilton Cheese Makers' Association. For more information, go to www.stiltoncheese.com.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission of the copyright holder. For information regarding permission, please contact: Atlantyca S.p.A., Via Leopardi 8, 20123 Milan, Italy; e-mail foreignrights@atlantyca.it, www.atlantyca.com.

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

ISBN 978-1-338-08863-2

Text by Geronimo Stilton

Original title *Per mille pietruzze . . . il gonfiosauro fa le puzze!*

Cover by Flavio Ferron

Illustrations by Giuseppe Facciotto (design) and Alessandro Costa (color)

Graphics by Chiara Cebraro with Paola Molteni

Special thanks to Shannon Penney

Translated by Lidia Morson Tramontozzi

Interior design by Becky James

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

17 18 19 20 21

Printed in the U.S.A.

40

First printing 2017

MANY AGES AGO, ON PREHISTORIC MOUSE ISLAND, THERE WAS A VILLAGE CALLED OLD MOUSE CITY. IT WAS INHABITED BY BRAVE *RODENT SAPIENS* KNOWN AS THE CAVEMICE.

DANGERS SURROUNDED THE MICE AT EVERY TURN: EARTHQUAKES, METEOR SHOWERS, FEROCIOUS DINOSAURS, AND FIERCE GANGS OF SABER-TOOTHED TIGERS. BUT THE BRAVE CAVEMICE FACED IT ALL WITH A SENSE OF HUMOR, AND WERE ALWAYS READY TO LEND A HAND TO OTHERS.

HOW DO I KNOW THIS? I DISCOVERED AN ANCIENT BOOK WRITTEN BY MY ANCESTOR, GERONIMO STILTONOOT! HE CARVED HIS STORIES INTO STONE TABLETS AND ILLUSTRATED THEM WITH HIS ETCHINGS.

I AM PROUD TO SHARE THESE STONE AGE STORIES WITH YOU. THE EXCITING ADVENTURES OF THE CAVEMICE WILL MAKE YOUR FUR STAND ON END, AND THE JOKES WILL TICKLE YOUR WHISKERS! HAPPY READING!

Geronimo Stilton



WARNING! DON'T IMITATE THE CAVEMICE.
WE'RE NOT IN THE STONE AGE ANYMORE!

MYSTERIOUS MAIL!

It was a warm autumn **morning** and I was feeling mousetastic! There were no **meteor** showers, no erupting volcanoes, and no earthquakes. **BONES AND STONES!** It was a fabumouse cavemouse day!

After a light breakfast of fourteen Jurassic cheeses, ten Paleozoic cheese balls, and eight cups of **frothy** mammoth milkshake, I nimbly skipped to my office. (Well, more or less — **BUUURP!**)

Oh, I forgot to introduce myself! My name is Stiltonoot, **GERONIMO STILTONOOT**, and I'm the publisher of *The Stone Gazette*,

the most famous newspaper
in the **STONE AGE** . . .
probably because it's the
only one!

I had just stuck my snout
out of my cave, when I
heard a flapping sound —
SWOOOOOSH! —
followed by a loud shriek:



"MAIL!"

Then . . .

BONK





A mail-a-dactyl dropped a stone slab on my head! Great rocky boulders — the slab was so heavy, it **flattened** me on the ground like a Jurassic cheddar pancake!

When I sat up again, I looked at the **mysterious** mega-slab and was shocked to see that it was from . . . **SALLY ROCKMOUSEN**. My archenemy Sally — the host of Gossip Radio, the rodent who spreads fake news all over Old Mouse City — actually wrote to me?! **IMPAWSSIBLE!**

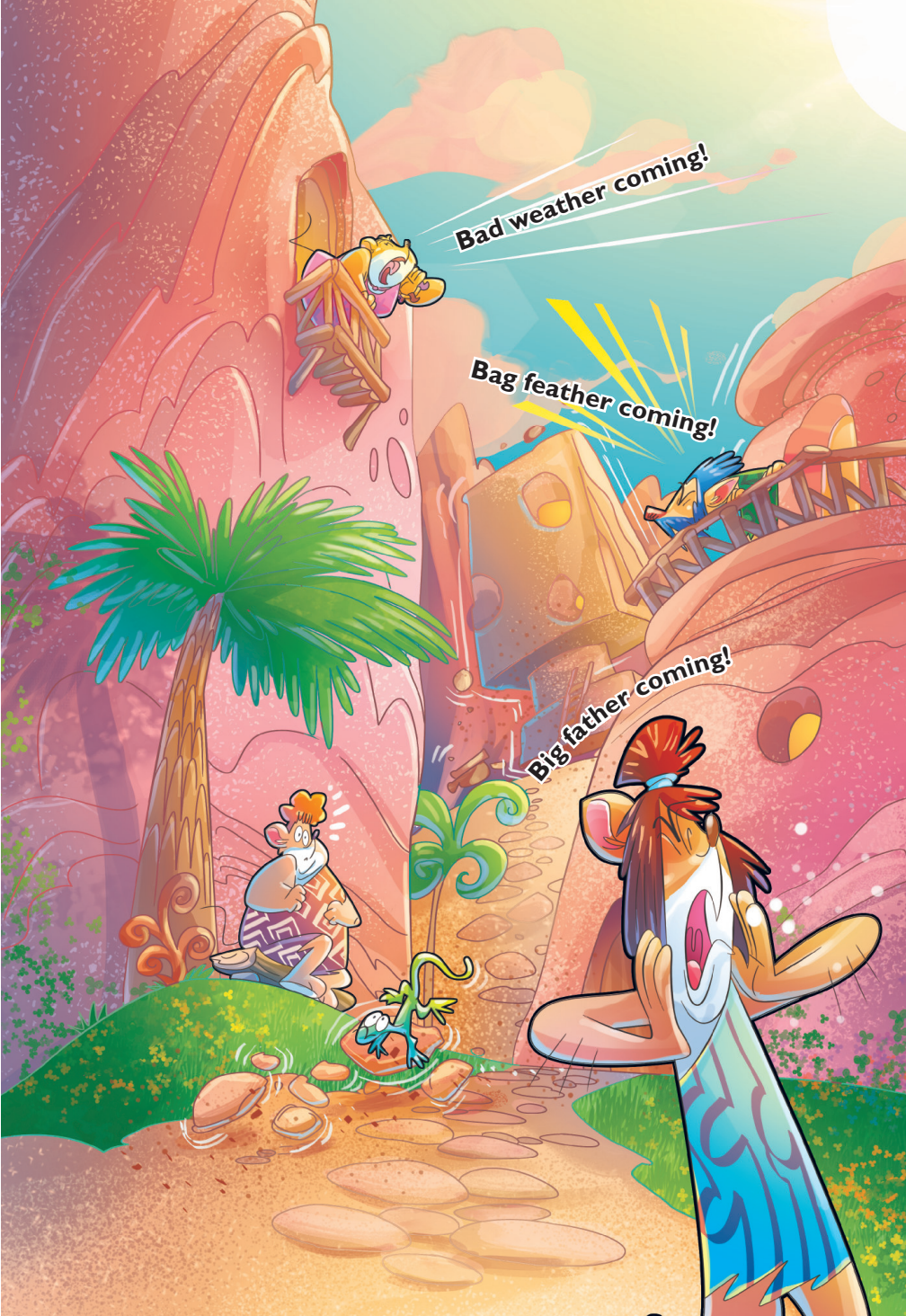
Gossip Radio is *The Stone Gazette's* biggest, most double-crossing competitor. Its headquarters are perched on top of a small hill. From there, Sally **screeches** the most inaccurate, dishonest, and just plain fake gossip in the Stone Age.

Sally's **news** is passed by word of mouth to other rodents and shriekers,

Bad weather coming!

Bag feather coming!

Big father coming!





who then screech it to others. By the time the news gets to the last mouse, it usually **DOESN'T EVEN MAKE ANY SENSE**. Sally's stories get mouserifically **WARPED!**

What kind of reporting is that? Sally is a pawssitive fraud! I didn't even read her note.

As soon as I got to the office that morning, I was greeted by my assistant, **WILEY UPSNOOT**.

"Everything okay, boss?"

"See for yourself," I grumbled, handing him **SALLY'S** note.

He read the message carefully. "Boss, it's an **invitation!** Sally is inviting you to a mousestastic





team **TREASURE HUNT!**”

For all the thorns on a cactus!

“**What?! Are you sure, Wiley?**”

I asked.

Wiley handed the note back to me. “Hold on to your cheese, boss — take a look!”

Dear GERONIMO,

you are OFFICIALLY INVITED to PARTICIPATE in a MEGA TEAM TREASURE HUNT ORGANIZED BY THE MOST DISTINGUISHED REPORTER in the STONE AGE — Me, SALLY ROCKMOUSEN! DO YOU ACCEPT? MARK THE BOX OF YOUR CHOICE:

I accept!

I can't refuse!

ABSOLUTELY!

Sure!



“**NEVER!**” I squeaked.

“Never say never, boss,” replied Wiley.

“I refuse to go!” I said, shaking my snout.

He shrugged. “Whatever you say, boss, but did you see this?”

PETRIFIED CHEESE!

The back of the slab had another message chiseled in very, very, very small print:

**IF YOU DON'T PARTICIPATE, GOSSIP RADIO WILL SQUEAK
TO EVERY RODENT IN THE STONE AGE THAT YOU'RE AFRAID
TO LOSE. OLD MOUSE CITY WILL FINALLY REALIZE THAT
YOU'RE A TOTAL SCAREDY-MOUSE! SEE YOU TOMORROW
MORNING IN SINGING ROCK SQUARE!**

Crusty cheese chunks! How could Sally Rockmousen accuse me of such a thing?





Okay, so maybe I'm not the bravest mouse in the **STONE AGE**, but I've always worked hard, and I've never turned my back on a **Challenge**.

"That really **toasts** my cheese!" I muttered. "I'll never go on Sally's treasure hunt — and I mean **NEVER!**"

**Sally
ROCKMOUSEN**

