

Geronimo Stilton

Thea Stilton **AND THE VENICE MASQUERADE**



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A PLACE OF DREAMS

There are certain cities in the world that are **LEGENDARY**. Every rodent has heard about these cities — and dreamed of visiting them.

We've all seen pictures of these places. We've heard stories about them. But there's nothing like being there **in the fur** for the first time.

That's how it was for the Thea Sisters — best friends Colette, Nicky, Pam, Paulina, and Violet — when their train pulled into the magical city of **Venice**, Italy!

The view before them was incredible. Outside the train station was a wide, open piazza overlooking a canal. The sparkling

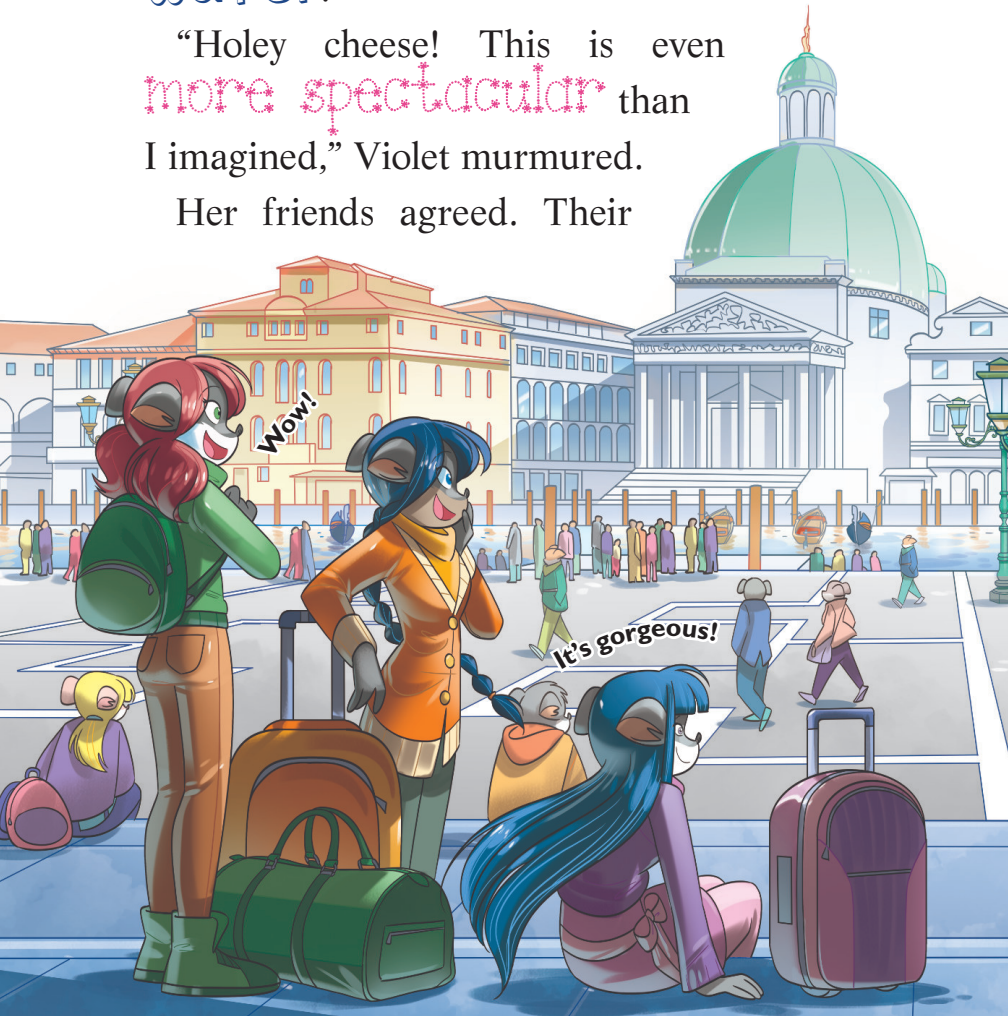


A PLACE OF DREAMS

water was so close you could **dive** right in. And the elegant buildings on the other side of the canal seemed to float on the **water**.

“Holey cheese! This is even **more spectacular** than I imagined,” Violet murmured.

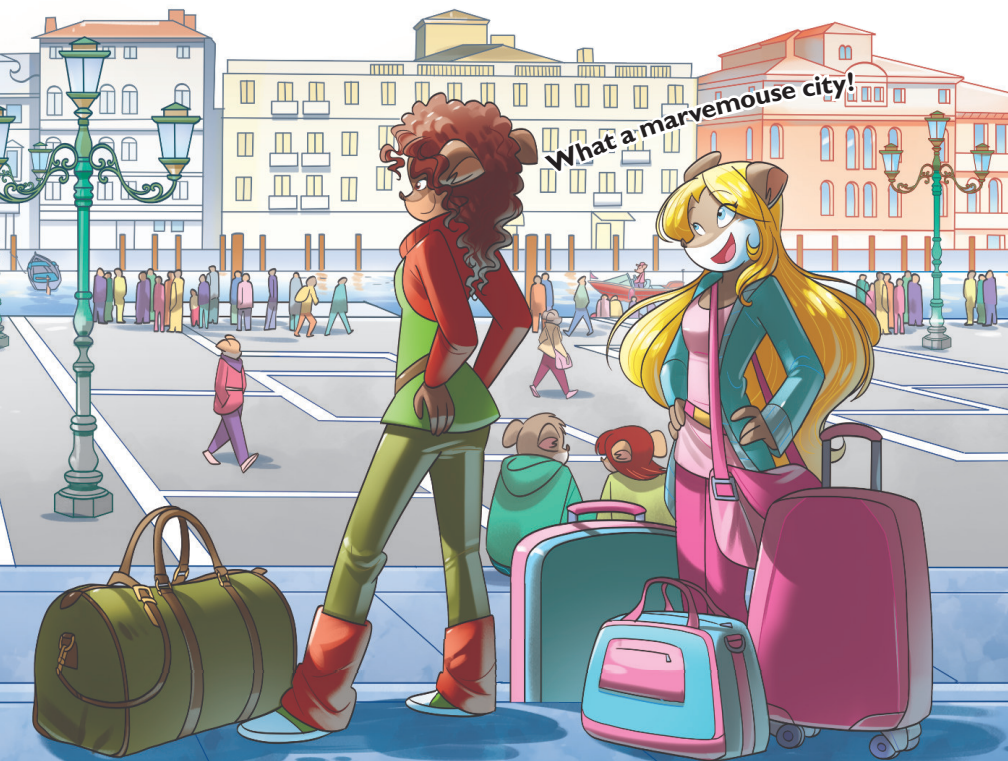
Her friends agreed. Their





journey from Whale Island had been filled with **misadventures**. Their flight had been bumpy, and the turbulence got so bad they'd had to land in Milan. From there they'd boarded a **train** to Venice.

But the hassle was worth it: **Venice, that enchanting city on the water**, lay gleaming before them in all its **majesty**.





“Thank goodness we’ve finally arrived,” Nicky said. “Where do we go from here?”

Paulina fished out her MousePad. She’d downloaded a **GUIDEBOOK** before they left Mouseford Academy, the school all five mouselets attended.

“Let me **check** Elisa and Marco’s address . . .”

The previous year, the Thea Sisters had made two new friends during Mouseford’s

SUMMER session.

Marco was there for an *investigative* journalism course, and his sister, Elisa, had **joined** him for a summer **athletic** program.

In the months



afterward, they'd kept **in touch** with the Thea Sisters, and a few weeks earlier Marco and Elisa had invited the mouselets to visit Venice, their hometown, to take part in the famous **Carnival!**



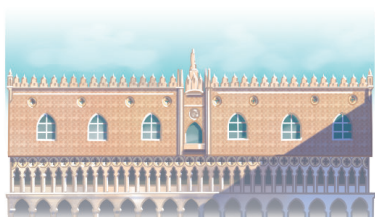
When the Thea Sisters received their invitation, the mouselets were so excited, they started jumping up and down like baby bunnies. Colette couldn't wait to see Carnival's famous **M·A·S·K·S** and **fancy costumes**. Pam's belly started rumbling at the thought of all those delicious **fritters**. Paulina and Violet were dying to **EXPLORE** the canals, and Nicky wanted to learn how to steer a **gondola**.





“Here we go,” said Paulina, reading from her book. “Let’s head for **Calle del Paradiso**. Elisa and Marco’s house should be close.”

“Calle del Paradiso . . . the streets of Venice have such **marvemouse** names.”



Colette sighed, admiring the sparkling sunshine on the **water**. “It’s all so romantic . . .”

“Sure, it’s *romantic*, but how in the name of string cheese are we going to get there?” Pam asked. “There aren’t any buses here, and no taxis, either.”

“Oh, there are **taxis** here.” Paulina smiled. “They’re just not cars . . . they’re **boats!**” She pointed to a wooden boat with a yellow flag on its prow.

“Well, what are we waiting for?” Nicky



asked. "Let's shake a tail!

VENICE

is calling!"

