

# Geronimo Stilton

## THE KARATE MOUSE



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# HI, GERONIMO!

It was a nice, *quiet* spring morning. The sun was shining, and the birds were singing. I woke up feeling cheerful. I decided to treat myself to a nice, *relaxing* bubble bath. So I grabbed my favorite bath gel, Mr. Cheddar, and hopped right into the tub.

Oh, excuse me! Here I am telling you about my personal habits and I haven't even introduced myself. My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I'm the publisher of *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous newspaper on Mouse Island.



As I was saying, I was in the tub enjoying some marvelously cheese-scented bubble bath. I was right in the middle of shampooing my fur when the phone **RANG**.



I sighed. *Wasn't this supposed to be a nice, quiet day?*

I tried to climb out of the tub, but I couldn't see a thing — I had soap all over my eyes. But the phone kept ringing and ringing!

I put down my paw on the edge of the tub,



**I PUT DOWN MY PAW...**



**...SLIPPED ON THE EDGE  
OF THE TUB...**

slipped . . . and **dived** headfirst into the sink!  
The soap made the sink so slippery, I slid  
out and smashed against the bathroom door.  
Ouch! My snout was completely squished!

*Wasn't this supposed to be a nice, quiet day?*

I answered the phone with one paw and  
rubbed my bruised snout with the other.  
“Hello, *Geronimo Stilton* here. Or at least  
what’s left of me!”

“Hi, Geronimo! This is **HYENA**, Bruce  
Hyena! Are you ready? I can’t hear you. I  
asked: ARE YOU READY??”



**...DIVED HEADFIRST INTO  
THE SINK...**



**...AND SMASHED MY SNOOT  
AGAINST THE DOOR!**

Hi,



GERONIMO!



Oh, no, not Bruce Hyena! Do you remember him? He's a devoted sportsmouse. He likes all kinds of athletic activity, especially **extreme** sports.

And as you know, I am more of a bookmouse than a sportsmouse. But that doesn't stop Bruce from dragging me around on his adventures!\*

*Wasn't this supposed to be a nice, quiet day?*

"Hmm, that depends on what you mean by 'ready,'" I replied cautiously. "**READY FOR WHAT?**"



Bruce just laughed. "Didn't **Shorty Tao** warn you?"

"W-w-w-warn me about what?" I stammered.

Bruce started squeaking so fast, I could hardly keep up.

\*If you want to read about my last adventure with Bruce, check out my bestseller, *The Race Across America*.

# PERSONAL PROFILE

**Name:** Shorty Tao

**Who she is:** By day, she's the managing editor of *The Rodent's Gazette*; on weekends and at night, she's a karate world champion! She keeps trying to convince me to publish a karate handbook.

**Interesting facts:** She's Bruce Hyena's cousin. She's as tough as a rock, but melts like butter at the mention of her little brother, Baby Tao.

**Favorite sports:** Karate and triathlons

**Annoying habits:** She likes to pinch rodents to wake them up. In my case, she uses her pinch to stop me from panicking.

**Believes in:** Friendship, truth, and strength of character

**Her passion:** To do everything . . . enthusiastically!

**Her motto:** Laugh, laugh, laugh!

**Her secret:** Shorty Tao takes life lightly. She likes to tell jokes to cheer everyone up.



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These characters mean "Shorty Tao"

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“That’s bad, really bad!” he said. “So what you’re telling me is that you’re not in **shape!** You haven’t trained! Your muscles are as **squishy** as string cheese! Well, too bad for you, Cheesehead! I’ll pick you up tomorrow morning at five A.M. sharp! You’d better be waiting for me outside your mouse hole! Leave everything to me! Wait until you discover the fun adventure that’s in store for you!”

I **cried** out in panic, “I can’t go on a new adventure! I don’t want to! **BRUUUUUUUUUUUCE!**”

But he had already hung up.

**I was a goner! I was doomed! I was dead meat!**

I just couldn’t let Bruce and Shorty drag me off on another adventure.

*Wasn’t this supposed to be a nice, quiet day???*