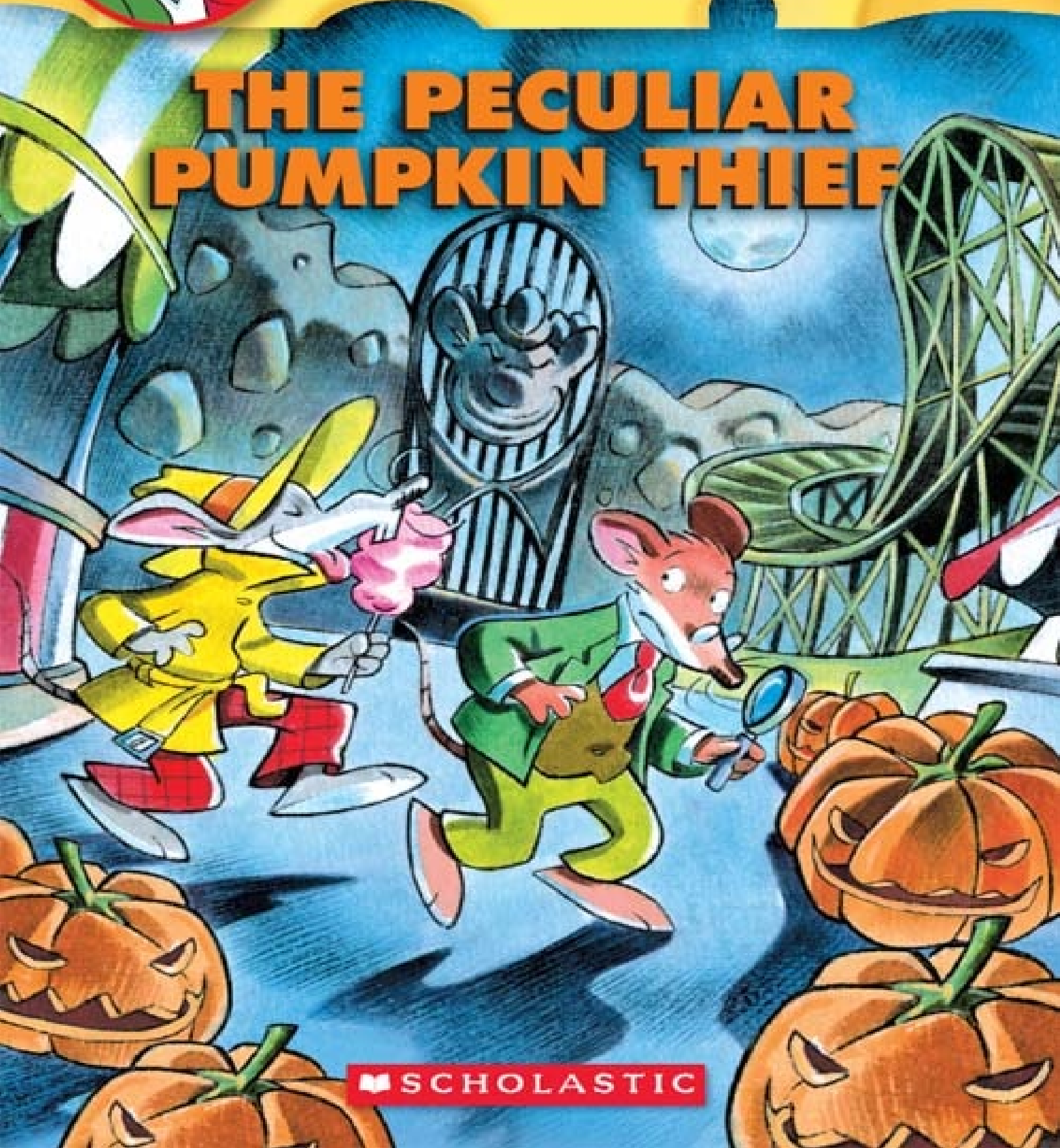




Geronimo Stilton

THE PECULIAR PUMPKIN THIEF



 **SCHOLASTIC**

Dear mouse friends,
Welcome to the world of



Geronimo Stilton







Geronimo Stilton
A learned and brainy
mouse; editor of
The Rodent's Gazette



Thea Stilton
Geronimo's sister and
special correspondent at
The Rodent's Gazette



Trap Stilton
An awful joker;
Geronimo's cousin and
owner of the store
Cheap Junk for Less



Benjamin Stilton
A sweet and loving
nine-year-old mouse;
Geronimo's favorite
nephew

Geronimo Stilton

THE PECULIAR PUMPKIN THIEF



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THE GREATEST HALLOWEEN PARTY EVER!

It was a cold, rainy October night.
On the streets of New Mouse City,
the **HOWLING WIND** threatened to
rip my favorite **CHEESE-COLORED**
umbrella right **out of my paws!**

Rat's whiskers! How I
wished I were home relaxing
in my comfy cat-fur slippers.

Instead I was heading
downtown to . . .

OOPS! I did it
again! When will
I ever remember to
introduce myself? My



name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I am the publisher of *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous **newspaper** on Mouse Island.

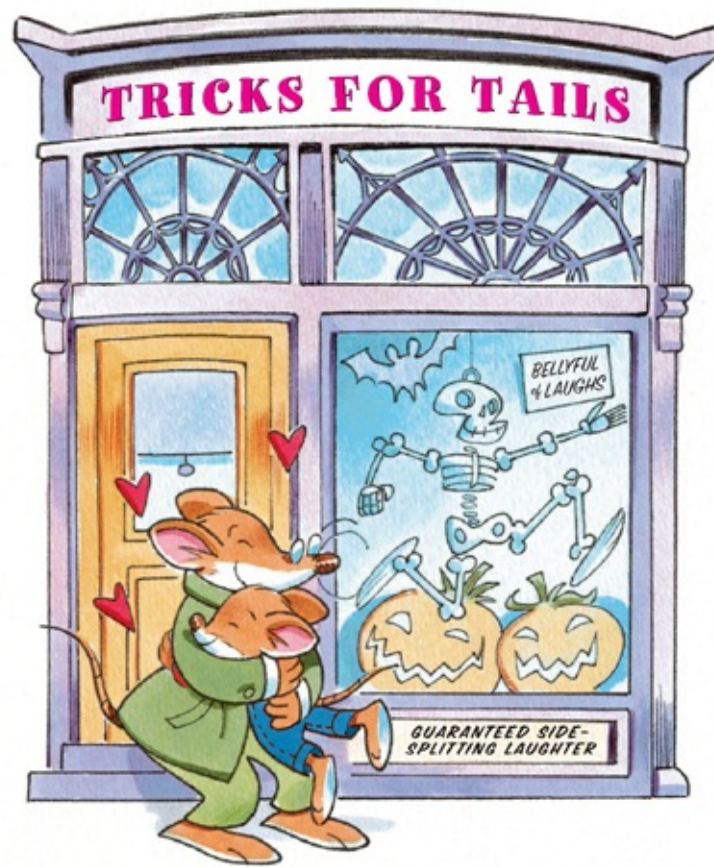
Anyway, where was I? Oh, yes, I was heading downtown to meet **my favorite nephew**, Benjamin. It was only a few days until **HALLOWEEN**, and I had promised him I would throw a Halloween party at my house. We would invite all of his friends.

"Ready to go shopping for the party?" I asked the little mouse.

Benjamin's **smile** made me forget all about the dreary weather.

"This is going to be the **GREATEST** Halloween party ever!" he squeaked. "You're the **best**, Uncle Geronimo!"

Did I mention I have the **sweetest** nephew on the planet?





Yoo-Hoo!

I took Benjamin to **TRICKS FOR TAILS**, the most popular party store in New Mouse City. It has lots of decorations, **weird** gadgets, and party pranks.

When we entered the store, we were greeted by the owner, **PAWS PRANKSTER**. One thing you should know about **PAWS**: He loves to test out his pranks on unsuspecting customers.

Of course, today was no exception.

“Like my ring?” he giggled, waving his paw in my face.

I took a closer look, and a stream of **water** squirted me in the snout!

Cheese nibblets!

“Got ya!” **PAWS** guffawed.

“Look at this, Uncle,” Benjamin said, pointing to a **humongous** orange pumpkin.

I had to admit it was pretty impressive.

But why had someone left a **banana peel** on top of the pumpkin? How **strange**!

Benjamin found a rack with lots of scary costumes.

He tried on a **ghost**, an **ALIEN**, and a **SKELETON** costume.

They were all so **SPOOKY**, we couldn't decide. We decided to think it over and come back in a few days.

We were about to leave when I felt someone — or something — tug on my **tail**.


I turned around, but there was no one there. **How odd!**

I took another step. Again I felt a tug on my **tail**.





AT TRICKS FOR TAILS:

1. Disgusting green slime
 2. Plastic Swiss cheese with
punching glove
 3. Fluorescent fur dye
 4. Giant bat with glow-in-the-dark eyes
 5. Ghost costume
 6. Bogeyman
 7. Rubber snake
 8. Jack-o'-lantern
 9. Stink bombs
 10. Hairy spiders
 11. Plastic skull
 12. Spider magnet
 13. Squirt ring
- 

I whirled around fast, but still no one was there. **How weird!**

A rubber bat dangling from the ceiling stared at me with evil eyes. **YIKES!** I was beginning to get the creeps.

At that moment, the giant pumpkin began to move.

"Yoo-hoo!" a voice whispered.

Suddenly, a furry gray snout popped out of the pumpkin.



“Like my little **joke**, Stilton?” the mouse giggled.

I should have known. It was my friend **Hercule Poirat**, the famous detective. Hercule loves to play pranks, and he’s always eating **bananas**.

“Stilton, I could really use your help solving a **HALLOWEEN MYSTERY**...” he began.

But I cut him off.

Hercule loved to get me to help with his crazy cases, but I wasn’t about to get involved. I had a **HALLOWEEN** party to plan!

“**Sorry**, Hercule, no time,” I said quickly.

Then I took Benjamin by the paw and **RAN** out the door before **Hercule** could stop me.



IF YOU'VE SEEN THESE PUMPKINS . . .

The next day, I went back to **TRICKS FOR TAILS**. I was going to buy the giant jack-o'-lantern and a few other scary decorations to surprise Benjamin.

But when I got there, there was nothing left: no **TRICKS**, no **DECORATIONS**, no **COSTUMES**.

"I was robbed!" **PAWS PRANKSTER** sobbed. "They took everything!"

I looked around. This time, **PAWS** wasn't pulling my **paw**. The **robbers** had taken *everything*.

Right then, the phone **rang**.

PAWS blew his nose — **HONK!** — then answered the phone. He chatted for a



minute before hanging up.

"Well, it looks like I wasn't the **only one**," he said with a sigh. "**RATS**

AUTHORITY, **Better Cheddar and Beyond**,

and **PROFESSOR PRECIOUSFUR'S PRICELESS ANTIQUES**

were robbed, too."

HOW STRANGE, I thought.

I left **TRICKS FOR TAILS** and took the bus to the other side of town to do my shopping. On the bus, I sat next to a **SCOWLING** mouse with a tuft of black fur on top of his

head and three silver rings in his snout. He was chattering into his cell phone.

“Can you believe it?” I heard him squeak. “Last night, some rat robbed the **P R A N K F A C T O R Y**. Now where am I supposed to get a scary costume for Squeaky’s Halloween party?”

I was about to tell Snout Rings he already looked pretty scary to me when we reached my stop.

I jumped off the bus and headed for the farmers’ market. I knew I could find a **H A L L O W E E N** pumpkin there. But I was in for another surprise. All of the pumpkins had been stolen!



Instead, I saw a TV crew interviewing a farmer. He was holding up pictures of his **MISSING PRODUCE**.

"If you've seen these
pumpkins," he squeaked,
"please call the **POLICE**."
I started thinking.



First **TRICKS FOR**
TAILS. Then the **P R A N K**
F A C T O R Y. **THEN**
ALL OF THE PUMPKINS
IN NEW MOUSE CITY!



P R A N K F A C T O R Y

It looked like someone
was out to sabotage
H A L L O W E E N.

But *Who? Who?*



Who?
Whooooooo?



GLOPPY GREEN SLIME

There was only one thing to do. I ran to the office of **Hercule Poirat**. As I said, Hercule is a great detective. Unfortunately, his office is less than great. In fact, it's a **DISASTER**.

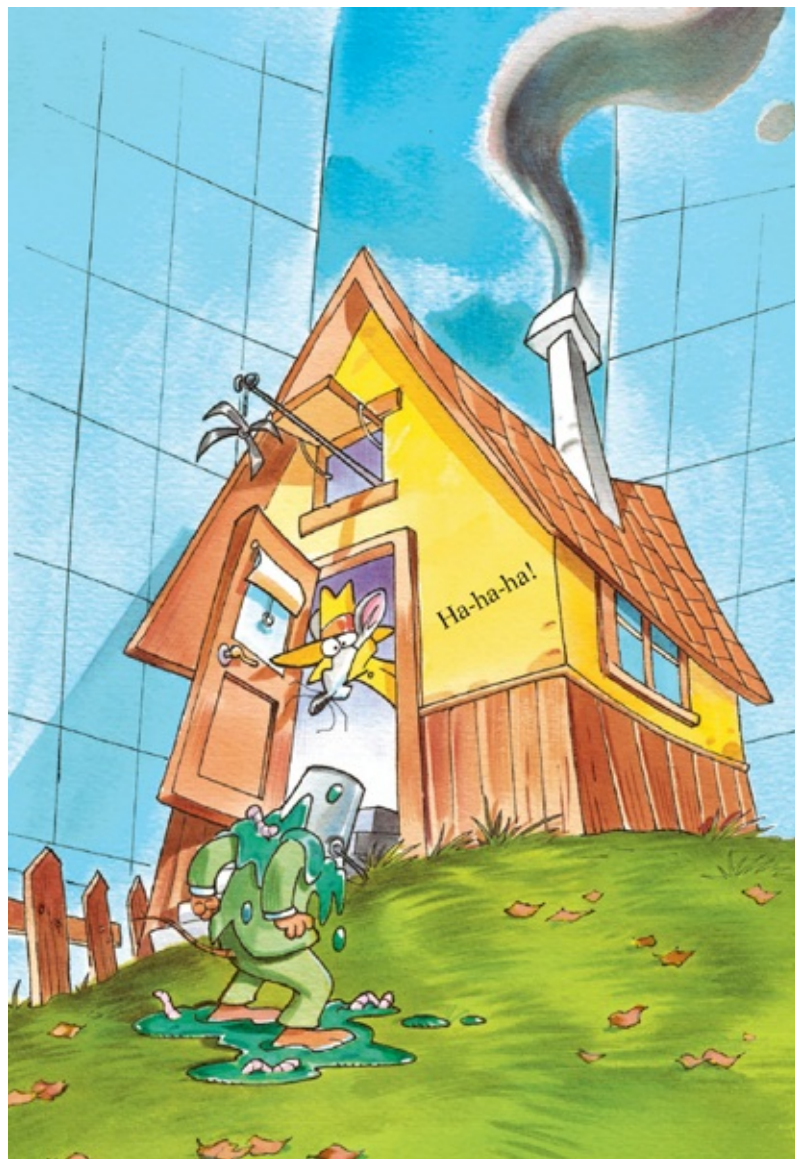
I knocked on the door to his flea-infested shack. **Cheese niblets**, the place was a **DUMP**!

I was about to pull out my paw sanitizer when I heard a clanking sound.

I looked up and a bucket filled with **worms** and gloppy **green slime** poured down on me.

"**HEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEELP!**" I squeaked.

The door flew open and **Hercule Poirat** peeked out.



"Is that you, **Stilton**? How do you like my new **ANTI-SPY** trap?" he asked, grinning.

I pulled the bucket off my head.

Oh, how did I get myself into these messes? I'm *Geronimo Stilton*. I'm a good mouse. I wear a helmet when I ride my bike. I cross on the **green**, not in between. I never litter. Well, except for that one time the wind whipped a **Cheesy Chew** wrapper out of my paws when I was driving on the freeway.

"**What brings you here, Geronimo?**"

Hercule asked, interrupting my thoughts.

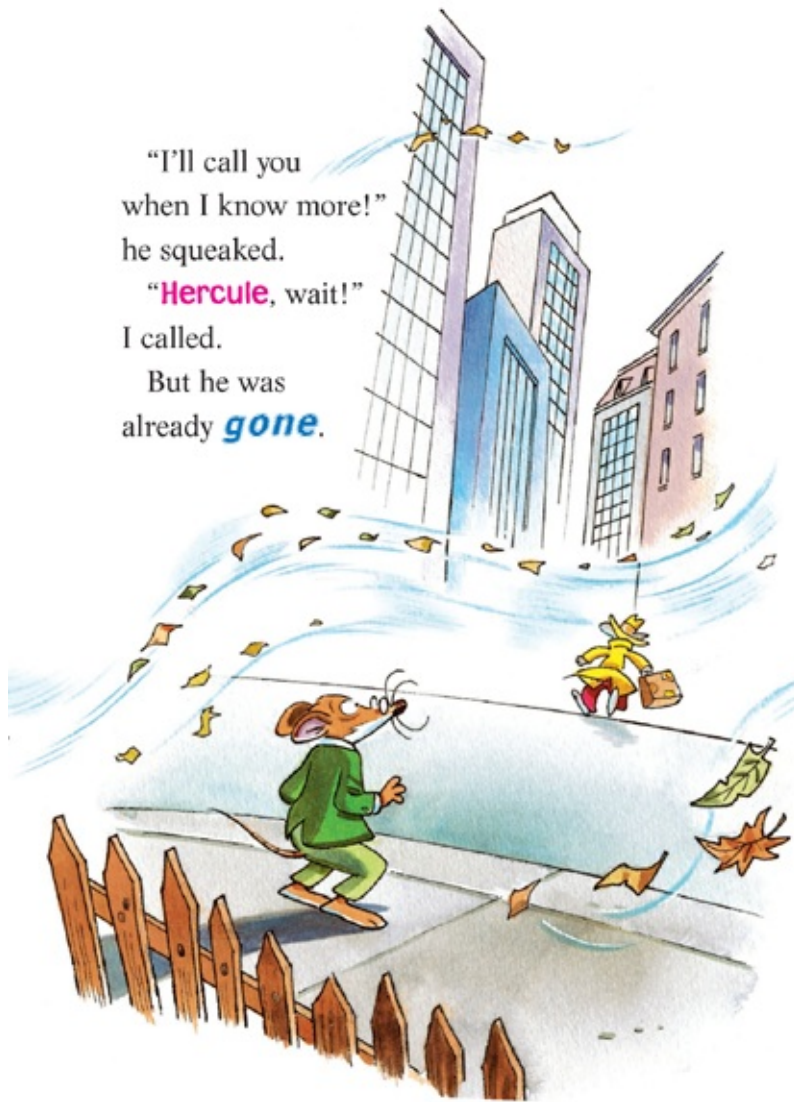
"I'm ready to help you solve this **HALLOWEEN** mystery," I declared.



Hercule picked up a suitcase near the door. He told me he was off to check out some **SUSPICIOUS** activity.

"I'll call you
when I know more!"
he squeaked.

"**Hercule**, wait!"
I called.
But he was
already **gone**.





OPEN . . . IF YOU DARE!

The morning before Halloween, I woke up **early**. I had a lot to do to prepare for my Halloween party. I was sweeping my stoop when I noticed a bright orange-colored envelope in my mailbox. On it was written: **"Open . . . if you dare!"**

Inside was a sheet with a strange poem:



**You're invited to my
Halloween party.**

**Please do your best
not to be tardy.**

**I've planned a great night
full of games and prizes.**

**And all the best music,
rides, and surprises.**

**Candy corn, caramel apples, and,
of course, lots of cheese.**

**The food is all free —
eat as much as you please!**

**You don't know my name, but
we'll meet tomorrow night:**

**Come to Mystery Park when the
moon's shining bright.**



X: Mystery Park

On the back of the invitation was a map on how to get to Mystery Park. It was all very **STRANGE**.

I mean, I'd never even heard of a place called

Mystery Park.

I decided to make some **hot cheddar**. Sometimes I think more clearly with a **steamy** mug of **hot cheddar** in my paws. I was still trying to make sense of the invitation when my doorbell rang.

It was my cousin Trap, my sister, Thea, and my nephew Benjamin. Each of them was waving an **ORANGE** envelope.

"Hey, Gerry Berry, I see you got the invite,

too!" my cousin squeaked. "Fabarooni! We can all go **together!**"

I chewed my whiskers.

"Not so fast, Trap," I warned. "How do we even know who sent this? I don't like accepting invitations from **STRANGERS.**"

Trap guffawed.

"Oh, don't get your fur in a **frenzy**, Geronimoid. Everybody's going. Plus, someone stole all the **HALLOWEEN** stuff in town. How else are you going to celebrate?" my cousin demanded.

Then he added,
"And, you don't even need a costume, Cousinkins. You've already got a face like a **Zombie.**"

I ignored him.



“Why don’t you all come to **my house** instead?” I asked. “We don’t need **DECORATIONS** to have fun on **HALLOWEEN**.”

Trap smirked. Thea rolled her eyes. And Benjamin’s shoulders **SLUMPED**. “Are you **sure** you don’t want to go to the party, Uncle Geronimo?” he asked.

I gave in.

How could I say no to my favorite nephew?





WHAT IS IT?

That night, I couldn't get to sleep. Just when I'd *drift off*, I'd be woken up by what sounded like someone **revving up their car engine** right outside my window. How **rude**!

The next morning, I stumbled out of bed. I was determined to find the late-night **noisemaker** and give him a piece of my mind. But when I got outside, I couldn't believe my **eyes**. Smack in the middle of town, a **gigantic** tower seemed to have risen right out of the ground. It was covered by an **orange** tarp.

A crowd stood **GAPING** at the tower with open snouts.

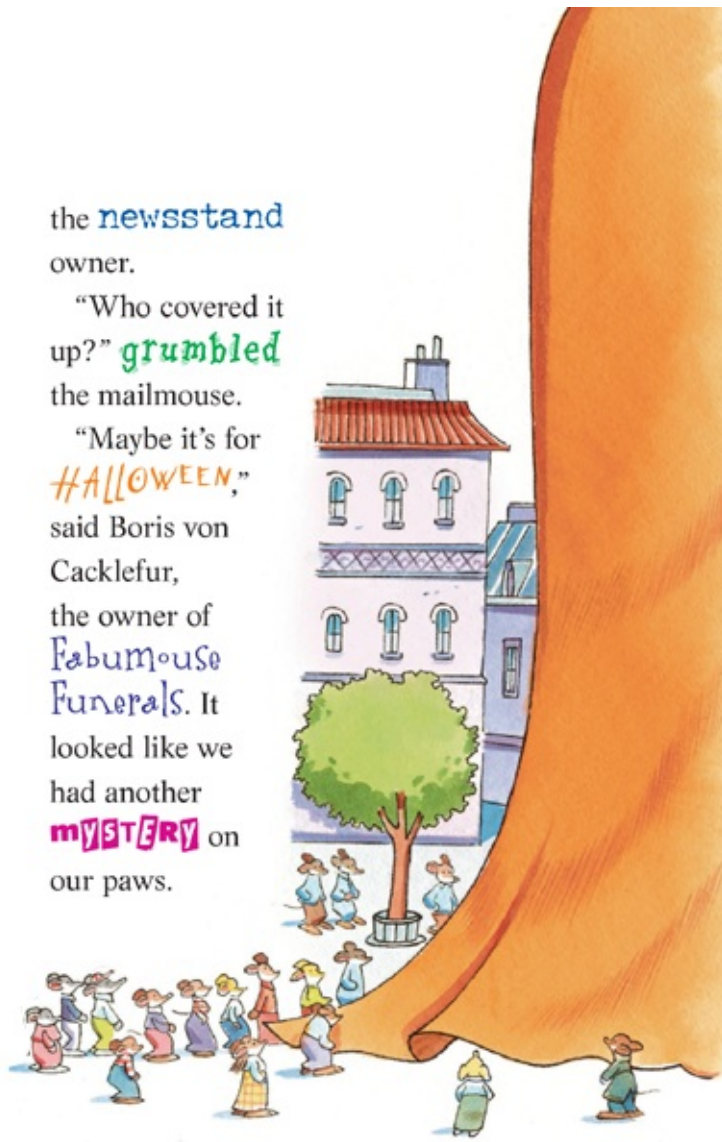
"**What is it?**" asked



the newsstand
owner.

"Who covered it
up?" grumbled
the mailmouse.

"Maybe it's for
HALLOWEEN,"
said Boris von
Cacklefur,
the owner of
Fabumouse
Funerals. It
looked like we
had another
mystery on
our paws.





A CREEPY KIND OF MUSIC

Halloween had finally arrived. What a strange day. All afternoon, a creepy, eerie kind of music could be heard throughout town.

Come to Mystery Park
As soon as it's dark.
You'll shiver with fright
And munch treats all night!
So come if you dare—
I'll meet you all there!

As soon as the sun went down, my family showed up on my doorstep. "Get your tail in gear, Germeister," my cousin announced. "We're off to **Mystery Park**."

Reluctantly, I followed them outside. I was still feeling nervous about the mysterious

invitation. I couldn't put my **paw** on it, but something just didn't seem right.

As we headed for the park, I noticed a ton of rodents all going in the same direction. It seemed like the **entire** city would be celebrating **#A[LOWEEN** at **Mystery Park!**

"This is going to be **fabumouse**," I heard one rodent remark.

"I can't wait to try the cheese treats," another added.

"And it's all **FREE!**" a third squeaked.

Everyone was **so excited**. I tried to shake off my nerves. After all, it was a party. What was there to be **nervous** about? It was just a **DARK** Halloween night, and I was going to a party thrown by someone I'd never met. I **gulped**. Oh, why was I always such a **SCAREDY** mouse?



Just as I was about to enter the park, my cell phone rang.

I looked at the number. It was **Hercule Poirat**.

There was a lot of **Static** on the phone.



"DON'T ... O ... ARK ... DAN ... ROOOOOOUS!" he squeaked.

"What did you say? I can't hear you!" I shouted.

But it was **TOO LATE**. The call had been disconnected.

A minute later, I was pushed along by the crowd into **Mystery Park**.

The heavy
gates slammed
shut
behind me.



IT'S JUST A PARTY

I started to panic. Why was I feeling **so trapped**? *Get a grip, Geronimo*, I told myself. *It's just a party*. And what an **amazing** party it was!



There was music and rides and food galore. Plus, everyone entering the park was given a clown mask. Sort of like a **door prize**, I guess. Rodents dressed in clown costumes passed out all kinds of yummy treats.

I tried to *relax*, but I still felt uneasy. Who

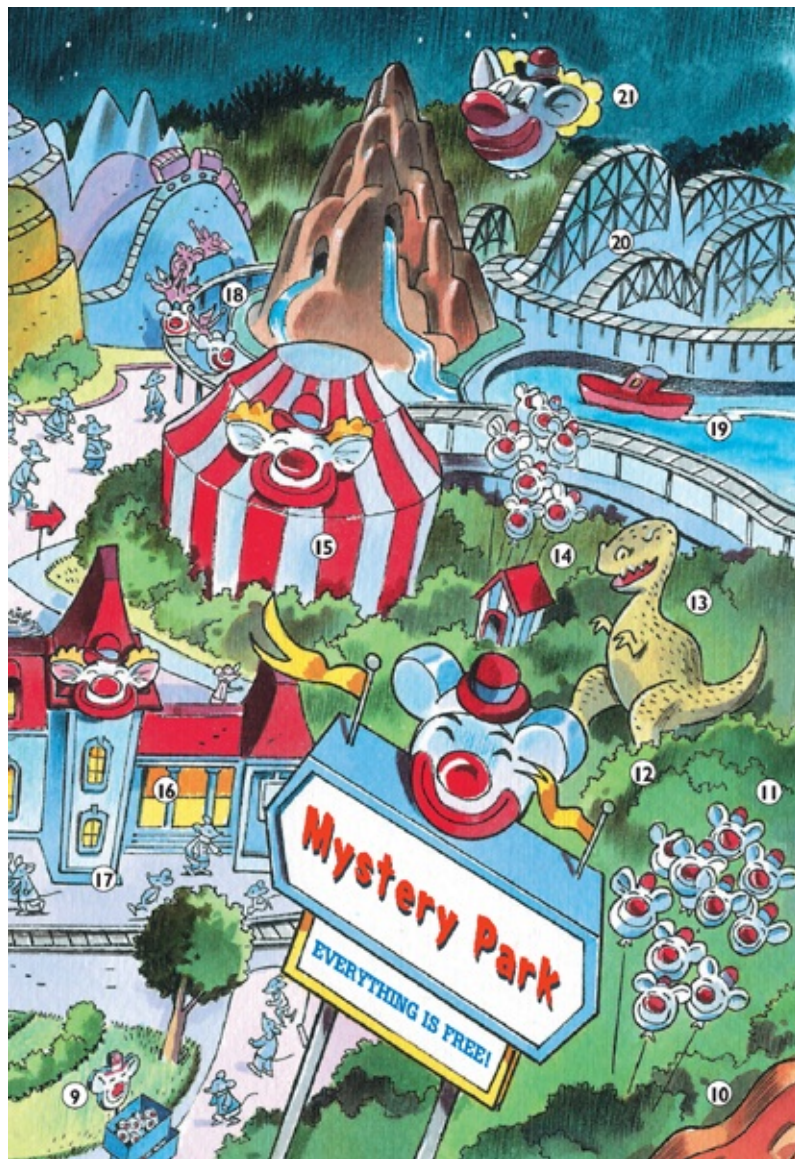


would throw an extravagant **HALLOWEEN**
party and invite a whole city of strangers?
And what was up with the clown costumes?

I was trying to figure it out when someone
clapped me on the back.







I nearly **JUMPED** out of my fur.

“Hey, **JUMPY GERRY!** What’s the matter?” my cousin Trap asked as he smirked. Then he waved a **TRIPLE-DECKER** cheese sandwich in my snout. “Is this free food **scaring** you?”

Next to him, Benjamin was **happily** munching on **cheddar popcorn**.

“**Taste some**, Uncle Geronimo,” he offered.



Thea sipped a **megasize** milk shake.
“**LOOSEN UP**, Gerrykins,” Thea said.
“You look like you’re in the dentist’s chair
about to have a **ROOT CANAL**.”

I looked around and saw all my friends.
Everyone was having such a *wonderful*
time.

Everyone, that is, except **ME**. Oh, why did
I have such a *bad* feeling?





I WANT MY MOMMY!

Suddenly, all the lights **WENT OUT** in the park.

Holey cheese! What was happening? I heard a rustling sound nearby. In the **darkness**, I could make out a pack of rodents dressed in clown costumes. They scurried through the **FRONT GATE**, locking it behind them.

Then a **SCARY** voice rang out:

"Welcome, strangers, to Mystery Park.

I'm so glad that you fell for my trap in the dark.

That's right — my assistants have locked all the gates.

So forget about leaving — just sit down and wait.

Yes, while you were laughing and talking and eating.

I surrounded your houses for my own trick-or-treating.

So sit tight, foolish mice. I'll be done soon enough.

I'm the best of the best at stealing your stuff!"

I gulped. What a **NIGHTMARE**! All of the rodents around me began to scamper around. Some tugged at the iron gates, but they were **impossible** to open. They were all bolted with enormous **LOCKS**.

Others tried to climb the walls. But these were no ordinary walls. They were covered with creamy **whipped chocolate**! It was perfect for eating, but not so great for climbing. Mice were **SLIPPING AND SLIDING** all over the place.

"I want **OUT** of here!" a rodent fumed.

"I want my **LAWYER**!" another one squeaked.

"I want my **mommy**!" I **sobbed** hysterically.

Oh, I knew I should have stayed in my **cozy** mouse hole!



DO YOU KNOW HOW TO FLY A HELICOPTER?

At that moment, I heard the **thunderous** roar of a helicopter.

I looked up. A helicopter with a clown face was flying above us. In the light of the moon, I could just make out the pilot.



He wore a trench coat and was waving a **banana** in the air.

I cleaned my glasses, then I looked again. Yes, it was **Hercule Poirat**! Who else would fly a **HELICOPTER** and eat a **banana** at the same time?

“Stilton, grab hold of the hook!” he yelled.

I looked around. Hook? What was Hercule talking about? A minute later, a huge steel



hook dropped from the helicopter and bonked me on the head. **Yowch!** I squeezed my eyes shut tight, grabbed it, and hung on for **dear life**.

I yelled down to Thea, Trap, and Benjamin.



“Don’t **worry!** I’ll be back soon to get everyone out!”

With a **jerk**, I was reeled up into the plane. Hercule shoved a headset onto my head so we could communicate with each other over the **ROAR** of the engine.



Soon we were flying high over the park. The wind was like a cyclone **WHIPPING** my whiskers all over the place. I made a mental note to remember to book an appointment with **Clip Rat**, my barber. It would

take weeks to **UNTANGLE** this fur!

Just then, the helicopter took a **nosedive**, and I let out an ear-piercing squeak.

“Um, Hercule. **D-d-d-o you know h-h-h-how to fly a helicopter?**” I stammered.

I stole a quick glance at my friend. He had a funny smile on his face.

“Don’t be **silly**, Stilton. I’ve definitely flown a helicopter before.” He grinned. “Maybe not a **REAL** one, but I had loads of **TOY** airplanes when I was young.”

MOLDY MOZZARELLA! I was a passenger in a helicopter flown by a mouse whose only experience as a pilot was playing with tiny plastic planes! I began to feel **FAINT**. Tiny dots of light swam in front of my eyes. Well, maybe that was because it was nighttime and we were hurtling past lots of **STARS**. But you get the point. I was a bundle of **nerves**!

“We’ve got to **RESCUE** our friends!” I shrieked at Hercule. But he shook his head. “First we need to find **Chuckles**!” he said.

Chuckles? Who was my friend talking about? Maybe the altitude was affecting his brain cells. I was about to suggest we head for the nearest hospital when Hercule began to explain.

It seemed a **thief** who called himself **Chuckles** had decided to rip off New Mouse City. First he stole all the **HALLOWEEN** supplies in town, then he built **Mystery Park** and invited



everybody to a party. After everyone had gathered, he **LOCKED** the gates and began **LOOTING** all the houses.

“He’s got an army of mice helping him, and they’re all dressed like **clowns**!” Hercule finished.

I was **stunned**. So that was what my friend had called to warn me about. **Too bad** I hadn’t been able to hear him.

“Oh, and one more thing,” Hercule added. “This helicopter? It’s **Chuckles’s** private helicopter. Can you imagine how **Mad** he’s going to be when he finds out I **STOLE** it?”



At that moment, I heard a sound more **HORRIFYING** than a hissing cat. More **PETRIFYING** than pawnails on a **chalkboard**. It was the **roar** of helicopters — smaller clown helicopters. *And they were headed right for us!*





I REALLY DESERVE A LITTLE SNACK!

“We’re being followed!” I shrieked in a panic as the clown copters grew closer.

But **Hercule** just laughed. That mouse loves a challenge. With a gleeful **squeak**, he yanked on the control stick, then began doing **somersaults** in midair.

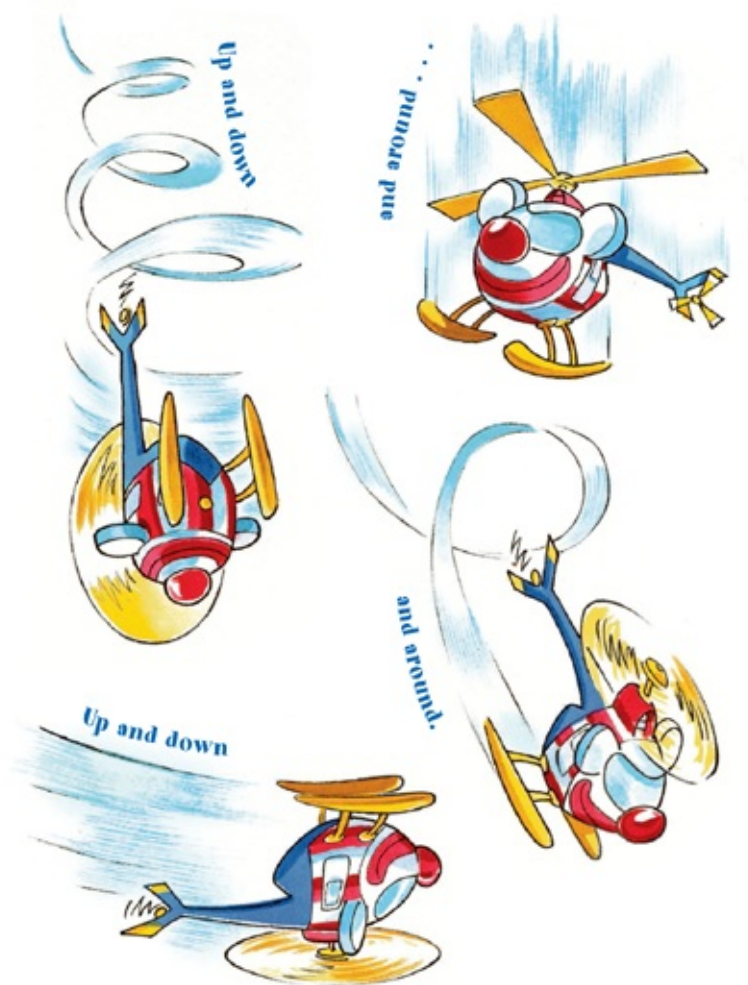
A wave of nausea hit me. I grabbed an airsickness bag.

“Weak stomach, Geronimo?” Hercule smirked.

I couldn’t answer. I was turning as **GREEN** as a stalk of celery.

*Did I mention that
I get airsick? And
carsick. And seasick.*





Oh, and I also get sick when I watch clothes *tumbling* around in the dryer at the Squeaky Clean Laundromat. But that's another story.

Even though my stomach was hurting, I still noticed the **STRANGE** activity going on in the streets far below. **Clowns** were everywhere. They were **ransacking** the city! Houses, stores, banks. The **clowns** were stealing everything!

Luckily, **Hercule** was able to lose the clown helicopters that were chasing us.

"Another job well done!" he congratulated himself. Then he pulled a **banana** out of his coat pocket.

"I **really** deserve a little snack," he announced as he **SHOVED** the fruit in his mouth and flipped the **peel** over his shoulder.

But the peel got **STUCK** under the control panel.

“**Oops**,” Hercule muttered.

Two minutes later, the helicopter began sputtering in the air.

I looked out the window and saw the **sea** under us.

The **WAVES** were getting nearer and nearer and nearer!

SPLASHHHH!

Before I could scream, we hit the water. The helicopter began to **SINK**.





WE WERE DOOMED!

I watched in horror as the helicopter began to fill up with water. **Hercule** was passed out by my side.

We were **doomed**! I saw my life **FLASH** before my eyes — my first step, my first squeak, my first **chocolate Cheesy Chew**. Yum. I love **Cheesy Chews**. I promised myself if I made it out of this alive I'd treat myself to one whole box. Or maybe two.

But there was no time to think about **Cheesy Chews** now. I had to think **FAST**. I knew that the external water



pressure would prevent me from opening the helicopter door. So I waited until the entire helicopter filled up with **water**. Then I grabbed **Hercule** by the **tail** and pushed open the door.

The water was **ICY**.

And it was so **DARK** at the bottom of the sea.

Above me, the light from the moon made the waves **SHIMMER**. I swam desperately toward the surface. My lungs were about to **EXPLODE**. But I had to keep going. For my friend, for my family, and, okay, I admit it — for those delicious **chocolate Cheesy Chews**!

Finally, I reached the surface. "**I did it!**" I squeaked.



FISH FOOD!

Right then, **Hercule** came to. “What happened? What are we doing in the water? What’s for dinner?” he babbled.

Before I could respond, I noticed lights on shore. The **clowns** were looking for us! We hid under a pier. Too bad there was a sewer nearby. The **stench** was unbelievable.



Footsteps thundered above us.

Two clowns stood on the pier. Their evil laughs filled the **dark** night.

“That copter sank like a **BRICK!**” we heard one say.

“Those rodents are **fish food** now!” another giggled.

“Let’s tell the boss. He’s at the Clown Tower.



He just got rid of the tarp that was on top of the building.”

Hercule nudged me.

So that’s what the **MYSTERIOUS** cloth-covered skyscraper was all about: It was the **thief’s headquarters!**



THE CLOWN TOWER

As soon as the clowns left, we splashed out of the water. It felt good to be on dry land. But what was that **AWFUL SMELL?** I **sniffed** the air. Then it hit me. The **stench** was coming from my own fur! Putrid cheese puffs! I smelled just like a **SEWER RAT!**

Putrid
cheese
puffs!





AN ARMY OF CLOWNS

I was dying to wash off my fur in a nice relaxing **bubble bath**, but there was no time to waste. We had work to do. We had to find **Chuckles** before he left town with all our stuff.

Just then, I remembered the clown masks we had been given at **Mystery Park**. I had one for me and one for Benjamin. Now I pulled both masks from my pocket.

“Let’s put on these clown masks so **no one** will notice us,” I told **Hercule**.

We headed toward the center of the city. When we arrived, I choked back **tears**. What a dreadful sight! An army of clowns marched through the streets stealing everything —



jewelry, television sets, video equipment, computers, food, and clothing. They dragged **HUGE** sacks of **MONEY** from the New Mouse City Bank. They emptied everything into clown cars.

With a heavy heart, I watched as the thieves carried **priceless** artwork out of the National Mouseum. They even **stole** the *Mona Mousa*!

Then they marched up the stairs to *The Rodent's Gazette*.

I couldn't watch anymore.

"What kind of a

MADMOUSE would want to ransack a *whole city*?"

I whispered to **Hercule**.

As we headed toward the tower, Hercule gave me the lowdown on **Chuckles**.



Chuckles

Who is he: An evil clown.

What does he do: Commands an army of evil clowns to rob Mouse Island.

His dream: To become hilariously rich.

Unusual features: He lives in an extremely tall tower shaped like a clown.

His obsession: He collects clown shoes.

His secret: He loves to knit.

His strong point: He is very funny and can fool anyone — even his own grandmother.

His weak point: He is very sentimental and sobs like a newborn at sad stories.





WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

At last, we reached the Clown Tower. I saw a line of clown cars coming and going. The clowns were piling up the **stolen goods** and heading back for more.

Hmmm. How would we get close to the **TOWER** without being noticed?

“What we need is another plane,” **Hercule** suggested. “No one can grab us while we’re in the air.”

Just then, I saw a three-wheeled contraption attached to a huge **clown-faced** kite.

“It’s a motorized hang glider!” Hercule **squealed**. “And look, those two **FOOLS** are guarding it!”

What luck!

Quietly, we **Scampered** over to the plane. The two guards were playing **ring-around-the-rosy** with each other.

When they finished, they collapsed.

"That was fun," said one of the guards.
"But now I'm tired."

"Guess the boss won't mind if we take a **little sneeze**," said the other guard.

A minute later, the two guards were **snoring** like babies.

Hercule **sprang** into action. He raced over to the hang glider and turned on the motor.

"What are you waiting for, Geronimo?" he squeaked excitedly. "Climb on!"

Suddenly, I realized what I was about to do. My paws began to shake **UNCONTROLLABLY**.



"Um, **Hercule**, do you know how to **FLY** this thing?" I asked.

Hercule grinned gleefully. "Don't be **SILLY**, Geronimo. Of course I know how to fly a glider," he said. Then he added, "Maybe not a **real** one, but I flew loads of paper gliders when I was a **little mouseling**."

My fur turned **pale**.

"We're off!" Hercule cried as the glider rose and dipped in the sky like a **SEASICK** pigeon.

Hercule took a **banana** out of his pocket.

"I deserve a little snack!" he announced.

I gulped. I wondered if it was possible to die from **fright**.





THE CLOWN TOWER

The hang glider lifted us **HIGHER AND HIGHER** into the air. I chewed my whiskers to stop myself from screaming.

Then, way down below, we spotted it. An **IMMENSE** statue of a **clown** rose from the ground.

The Glewn Tower!

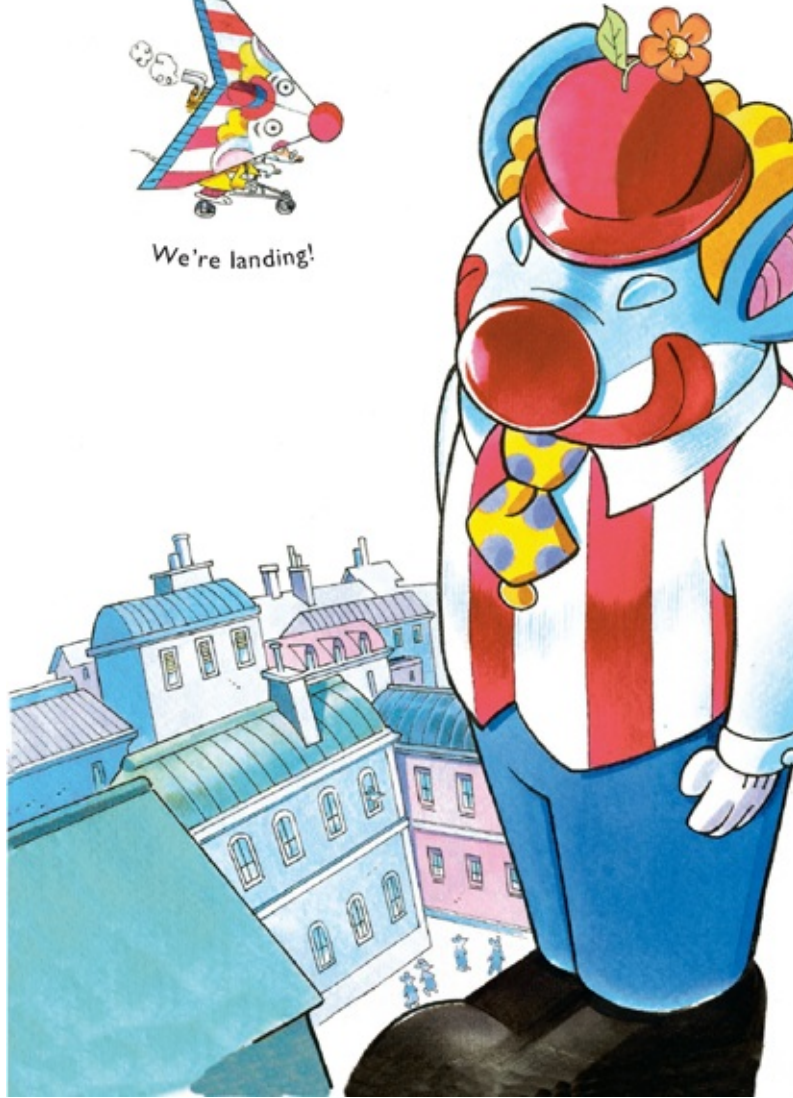
A flower on top of the statue's hat spun around at regular intervals. It was a **RADAR** detector. It looked like **Chuckles** was serious about keeping away trespassers.

I closed my eyes as **Hercule** plunked the hang glider down on the edge of the statue. Whew! The radar **JUST MISSED US!**

I stepped gingerly away from the glider,



We're landing!





trying not to look down. Did I mention I'm afraid of **HEIGHTS**? Meanwhile, **Hercule** was busy munching **bañanas**. He threw the peels on the ground. I followed behind him, picking them up. One thing you should know about Hercule: He's the biggest **litTerbug** on the block!

There was a small door in the ear of the statue. We opened it. Did I mention that I really, really **H A T E** small spaces? And



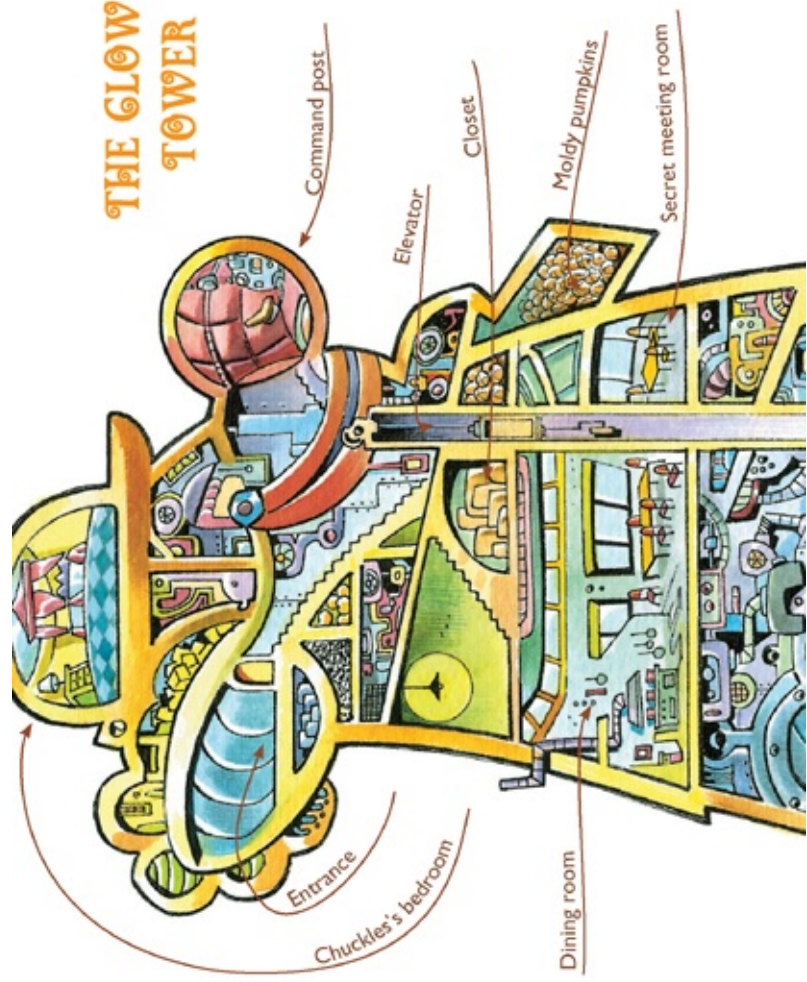


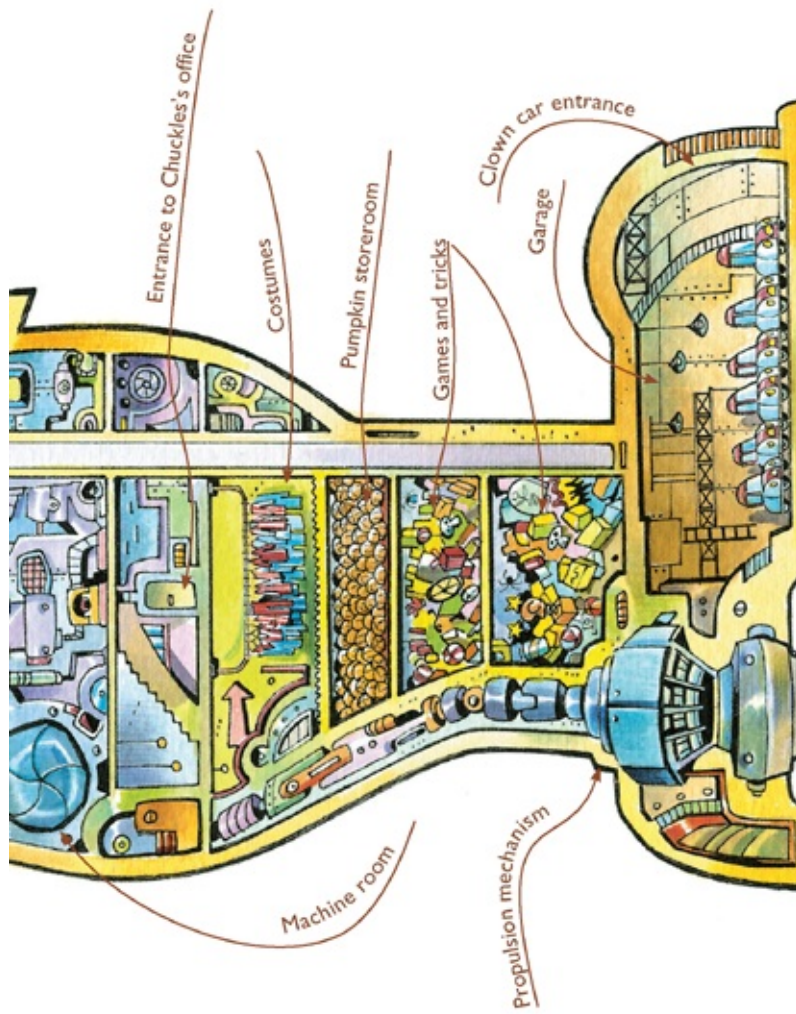
the **DARK**? I am without a doubt the biggest **scaredy mouse** on Mouse Island!

The door led to a **lonnnnnnnng**, dark flight of stairs. It was so **SPOOKY**. I was **SCARED** out of my skull.



THE CLOWN TOWER





113TH FLOOR!

We came to an elevator.

On the wall was a map of the tower with an inscription:

You are on the 113th floor!

I began to feel TRAPPED.

"We have to get . . ." I started to squeak.

But **Hercule** interrupted me.

"Yes, we have to get to **Chuckles**," he said.

Hercule nudged me into the elevator and the doors slid shut behind me.

He pushed a button that read: **100th floor: Chuckles's effice!**





I wanted to *cry*. I wanted to **SCREAM**.
I wanted to run to the *Restful Rodent* for a
massage with **cheese-scented** oils.

"We have to get out of here," I whispered.
But it was too late.

Ding!

The elevator had arrived on the 100th floor.
The doors opened into Chuckles's office.

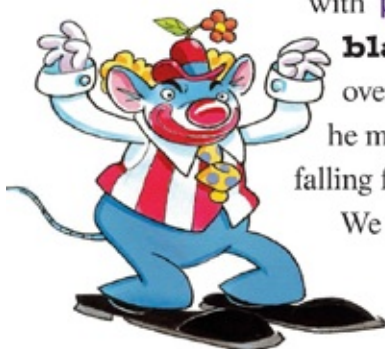


I KNEW IT WAS YOU!

Chuckles's office looked just like the inside of a circus tent!

There was a huge stage and lots of brightly colored lights. And in the center of the stage sat . . . *Chuckles!*

He wore **WHITE** gloves, a **yellow** wig, and a little **red** hat. His **blue** pants were super baggy, and his **yellow** tie was dotted with **purple** polka dots. His



black shoes were so oversized I wondered how he managed to walk without falling flat on his face.

We watched as *Chuckles* picked up something

orange from a big orange pile in the corner.
What was **Chuckles** doing?

We crept closer. He was **CARVING** a
pumpkin!

When he finished, he looked at it with
satisfaction.

Then he sang a little song in a high-pitched
voice,

"Oh, this Halloween is the best!

I'll be richer than all of the rest!

I'll steal all of the money!

Oh, aren't I funny?

This Halloween is the best!"

What a rotten, low-down, no-good rat, I
fumed to myself. He had stolen from all of
the good mice of New Mouse City! Hadn't
anyone ever told him that **stealing** is





wrong? Without thinking, I let out a loud

SNORT.

Uh-oh. The clown heard me and screamed,

"Who's there?"

Show your face in my place!"

We approached timidly, our clown masks still on our faces. He looked at us suspiciously and yelled,

"What's with the clothes?"

Why are you in those?"

Hercule spoke right up.

"Chief, we took our uniforms to the cleaners," he offered. But **Chuckles** didn't seem to be **BUYING** it. He stared at us skeptically. Then he pointed to me, and boasted,





**"You're dressed just like Stilton,
the newspaper mouse.
He thinks he's so smart,
but I'll steal his whole house!"**

I groaned inwardly. I pictured the clown army ransacking my house and making off with my **precious** antique cheese rinds and my **Encyclopaedia Ratannica** collection.

Then **Chuckles** pointed his paw in Hercule's face and said with a smirk,

**"And you're dressed like Poirat,
the detective, that's who!
He such a big slob,
he belongs in a zoo!"**

I could hear **Hercule** gnashing his teeth.
A minute later, he whipped off his mask.





“I’ll tell you who belongs in a zoo,
CLOWN FACE!” Hercule shouted.

Chuckles shrieked, “**I knew it was
you!**”

Then he **jumped** to his feet. It took him
a little while because of those **oversized
shoes.**





WATCH MY SHOW

I shivered. What would **Chuckles** do to us now?

Chuckles let out a **cruel laugh**. His nose **lit up** when he was excited. Or maybe he had a sinus infection. It was hard to tell.

He put his paws around us. Then he said, **"I'll let you both go if you watch my show."** His show?

Chuckles challenged us to a contest. He would do his act. And if we did not *laugh*, he would let us go.

That sounded easy. After all, I consider myself an **INTELLECTUAL** mouse with a **sophisticated** sense of humor. Silly **clown jokes** wouldn't work on me.

We agreed. **Chuckles** began.

First he jumped
into a little car.
He pressed the
horn, and water
squirted
him in his face.



Next he
pretended to
trip and **smacked** his snout
on the floor.



Oopsy-daisy!



He turned out the **lights**. Then he pulled a glow-in-the-dark skull out of his hat.

Ha-ha-ha-ha!

He made a thousand *funny* faces.



He sat on a
whoopee
cushion.



Achoo!

He threw a
pepper bomb
that made
us both
sneeze.



Then he threw a **stink** bomb.

And he made a fake spider **JUMP** from his pocket.



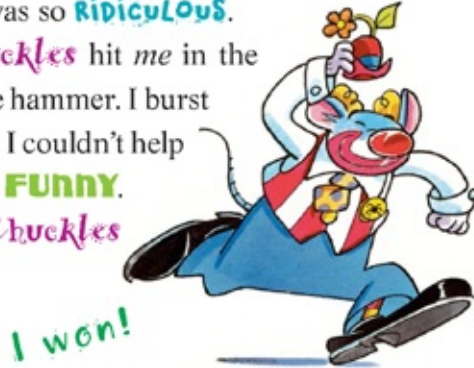


Finally, **Chuckles** took a giant rubber hammer and smacked Hercule in the head. My friend **giggled**. Then he began to **LAUGH**.

I couldn't believe it. How could Hercule fall for the old rubber hammer trick? It was so **SILLY**. It was so **RIDICULOUS**.

Then **Chuckles** hit *me* in the head with the hammer. I burst out laughing. I couldn't help it. It was too **FUNNY**.

"I won!" **Chuckles** declared.





POOR STRAWBERRY!

I was **crushed**. I stopped laughing immediately and began to **cry**.

“GET A GRIP, Geronimo!” **Hercule** ordered. “I’ve got an idea.”

He told **Chuckles** he was challenging him to another contest. “If I can make you **cry**, then I win,” he said.

Chuckles hesitated.

“What’s the matter, **Clown Face**? You’re not chicken, are you?” Hercule teased.

That did it. The clown rolled his eyes and said, **“I accept your dare. Like I really care.”**

Hercule winked at me. Then he began his story.

“Once upon a time, there was a **teeny tiny**

mouse who lived in a **teeny tiny** house deep in the woods. One day, the **teeny tiny** mouse was out looking for food when he spotted a **HUGE RED STRAWBERRY**. He pushed and he pulled and he dragged the strawberry all the way back to his house. Then he was so tired he took a nap, dreaming of **STRAWBERRY PIE**. But while he was sleeping a big, hungry wolf came by. "Oh, what a delicious-looking combo meal," he said. And so he opened his **GREAT BIG** mouth and gobbled up the strawberry and the **teeny tiny** mouse in one giant **gulp**! The end."



Chuckles's lip began to **quiver**. Then two big tears slid down his cheeks. Then he rolled on the ground, **sobbing** uncontrollably and blowing his nose in his **polka-dotted** handkerchief.

**“Poor
strawberry!
Poor mouse!”**

he cried.

I nodded,
wiping tears
from my own
eyes. What can I say? I’m a
sensitive mouse, too.

Meanwhile, Hercule made **Chuckles** tell
us the **secret Password** that opened the
locks to **Mystery Park**.

But just as we were about to leave,
Chuckles ran to a small round room filled
with levers and switches.

He hit a few buttons. Then the whole room
began to **RUMBLE!**







YOU WILL BE MINE

What was happening?! Was it a **tornado**?
Was it an **earthquake**?

Just then, I realized the noise was coming
from inside. The whole tower **shook**.
Then we rose into the air. Yes, the Clown
Tower had turned into a giant **FLYING
MACHINE**!

Chuckles began to sing a little song.

"You can't get away from me!

I need some friends, you see.

And you will be mine

Until the end of time—

Yes, you'll keep me company!"

Wow! Chuckles's **CHEESE** really had
SLIPPED off his cracker.

Next to me, **Hercule** stamped his foot. "We

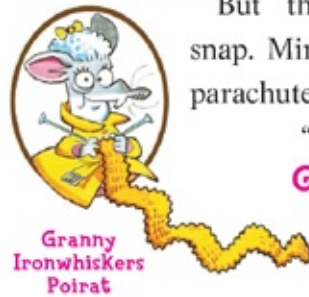
don't want to go with you!" he shouted. "You can't **FORCE** someone to be your friend!"

Annoyed, **Chuckles** pressed a button. In a flash, two windows on which we were leaning opened.

"Too bad for you!" he yelled.

A minute later, we found ourselves **hurtling** into space.

*Hmm. Maybe being forced to travel the world with a **CRAZED CLOWN** wasn't such a bad idea after all,* I thought as my life **FLASHED** before my eyes.



Granny
Ironwhiskers
Poirat

But then I heard something snap. Miraculously, a **YELLOW** parachute opened above us.

"Good thing I listened to **Granny Ironwhiskers** this morning when she reminded me to

take my chute!"
Hercule chuckled.

**"Yessirree,
I never
leave home
without it!"**





PARTY AT MY HOUSE!

We landed outside the giant **GATES** to **Mystery Park**. I punched in the **PASSWORD** **Chuckles** had given us, and the gates swung open.

Our friends swarmed out. Benjamin gave me a **giant hug**. "I knew you'd **SAVE** us, Uncle Geronimo!" he **squeaked**. "Too bad we didn't get to celebrate **HALLOWEEN** this year."

I sighed. But then I had an **idea**. Who says **HALLOWEEN** can only be one night of the year?

"Let's have a **HALLOWEEN** party at my house tomorrow night," I told my nephew.



AS MY GRANDMOTHER SAYS . . .

The next day, I worked like a **MADMOUSE** getting things ready for the party. I cleaned my mouse hole from top to bottom. Then I made my own **HALLOWEEN** decorations.

I drew **PICTURES** of **pumpkins**, **GHOSTS**, and **BATS** on construction paper. Then I cut them out and hung them up all over my house. I filled a glass pitcher with punch and labeled it **VAMPIRE JUICE**.

Before I knew it, it was time for my party to begin. I wrapped myself up in **TOILET PAPER**.

Just as I finished, the doorbell rang. Guests streamed into my house. I welcomed a **MONSTER**, an **alien**, a **ZOMBIE**, and more.

I must admit, some of the costumes were pretty **scary**. I had to keep reminding myself that they were all my friends. Still, my knees shook every time I passed by Frankenstein. And Count Dracula's **FANGS** were positively **FUR-RAISING!**

I was trying to calm my nerves when **Hercule Poirat** showed up. He was dressed in his usual **YELLOW TRENCH COAT** and hat.

"Where's your costume?" I asked.

Hercule **scratched** his head. "This *is* my costume," he said. "I'm dressed like a **DETECTIVE.**"



Then he added, “As Granny Ironwhiskers says, always be yourself.”

I **snickered**. “Um, **Hercule**, I don’t think she was talking about **HALLOWEEN** costumes,” I said.

Hercule bristled. “Are you making **fun** of my grandmother, Geronimo?” he accused. “I’ll have you know my grandmother is one of the **SMARTEST RODENTS** I know. She gives the best advice. Like ‘**Never talk to strangers**’ and ‘**Don’t take any wooden nickels**’ and



'If you're happy and you know it,
clap your paws.' Well, that

last one is actually the title
of a song she used to sing,
but you get the idea. My
grandmother's amazing."

He kissed the photo of
his **grandmother**
that he kept in his wallet.

Then he looked around
the room. "Speaking of
amazing, Geronimo,"
he squeaked. "When are
you going to set me up
with that **amazing** sister
of yours?"

I sighed. All of my friends
love my sister, **THEA**. She is
smart, beautiful, and super



adventurous. The thing is, my sister has **so many** boyfriends, she can't keep them all straight.

Still, I felt bad for **Hercule**, so I told him I'd see what I could do.

"Great!" Hercule shouted happily. "How can I repay you? I know! I'll set you up with my cousin **Brutella Poirat**. You'll love her!"



Brutella Poirat

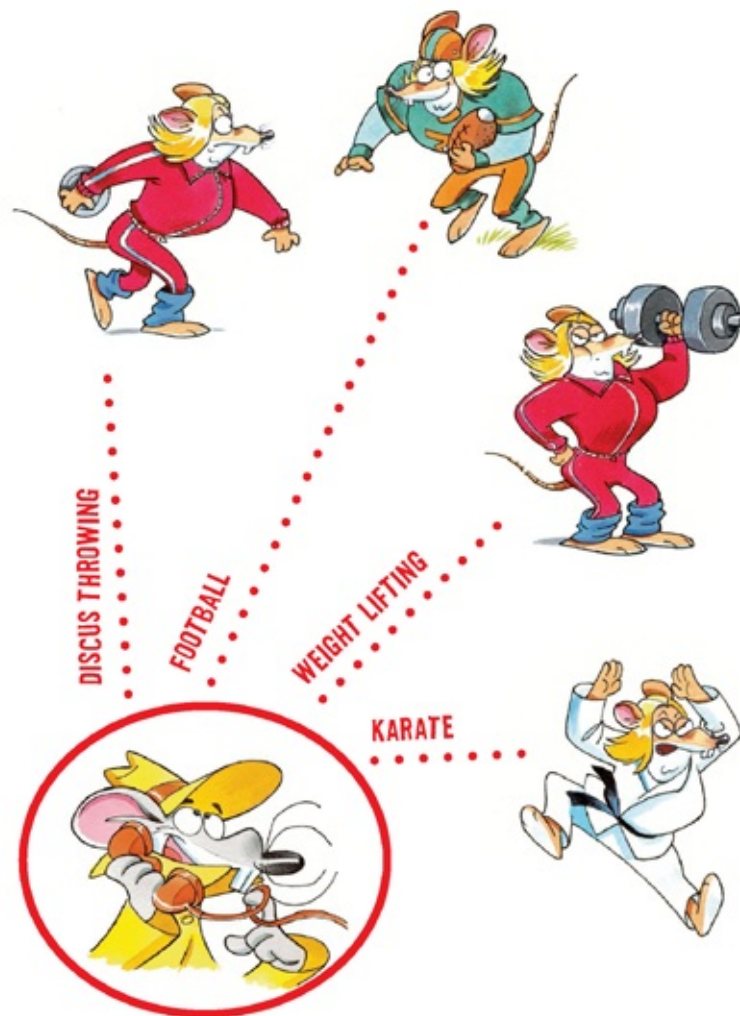


WHAT'S SQUEAKING?

Before I could **STOP** him, **Hercule** pulled out his cell phone and called his cousin.

“**Brutella**, what’s squeaking? It’s your cousin Hercule,” he began. “Listen, I want you to meet my friend Geronimo Stilton. You’re gonna **love** him. He’s not **brave** or **athletic**. In fact, I guess you could say he’s an uncoordinated **scaredy mouse**. That’s why I thought of you. You could whip him into shape. Maybe take him to your **WEIGHT-LIFTING CLASS** or show him your karate moves. You’re a **BLACK BELT**, right? You two would be great together! Just don’t break his **tailbone** like you did to your last boyfriend.”

I chewed my **whiskers**. Weight lifting?



KARATE? Broken **TAILBONE**? Oh, how did I get myself into these situations?

I started to tell **Hercule** that I planned on being **busy** for the next **ten Million YEARS**, but he ignored me.

“It’s all set, Geronimo. You call **THEA** and we’ll all go out tomorrow night. This is **perfect**! Just think of it. If I **married** your sister . . . and you **married** my cousin . . . we would be **RELATED**! Wouldn’t that be **INCREDIBLE**?!” he squeaked happily.

I gulped. It would be incredible, all right. An incredible **NIGHTMARE**! Still, what could I say? **Hercule** was so **EXCITED** he looked like he was about to explode. So I plastered a smile on my snout and just nodded. After all, I didn’t want to make a scene in the middle of my Halloween party.

Later that night, I **COLLAPSED** into bed and **FELL ASLEEP** instantly. Can you guess what I dreamed about? I'll tell you. I dreamed about **Chuckles** and stolen **pumpkins** and one **CRAZY HALLOWEEN** I will never forget!





A Super-Duper HALLOWEEN Party



Note: Before you start organizing a party, ask an adult for help.

Remember that knives and sharp scissors can be dangerous!



SCARY GHOST!

1. Take a balloon, inflate it, and tie it with a long string.



2. In the center of a sheet of tissue paper large enough to cover the balloon, cut a small hole for the string. Be sure to use safety scissors!

3. Insert the balloon's string through the opening.



4. With a black felt-tip pen, draw the ghost's eyes and mouth. Hang it as a decoration.

BAT NAPKIN HOLDER

1. Draw a bat on a piece of construction paper.
(See drawing.)



2. Cut along its edges,
and then cut an opening
along the mouth. (Be sure
to use safety scissors.)

3. Wrap the construction paper bat around a rolled
napkin and insert its long tail through its mouth.



SCARY FACES!

1. Fold a white, black, or orange sheet of construction paper into an accordion as shown.



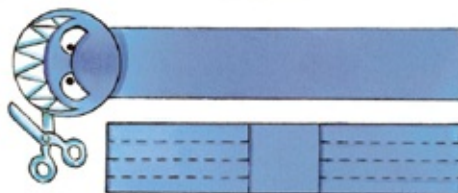
2. On the front of the first fold, draw a ghost (A), a bat (B), or a pumpkin (C).



3. Cut along the edge of the drawing with safety scissors. Then open the paper chain. With a black felt-tip pen, color some scary expressions on every face.



TARANTULA DECORATION



1. Copy the above designs on a sheet of black construction paper. Using safety scissors, cut along the edges of both designs, and cut along the dotted lines.

2. Glue the body to its legs as shown.



3. Roll the body and stick it under its head.



4. To make the tarantula look more realistic, make folds on every leg.



AWESOME STRAWS

1. Make lots of awesome straws for your guests. Draw, color, and cut out black cats, bats, skulls, and spiders from different colored construction paper (always using safety scissors).



2. Put a piece of tape behind each design and attach it to a straw.

WINGED BOTTLES

1. On a sheet of black construction paper, draw wings as shown. Cut them out with safety scissors and attach them with adhesive tape on two sides of a bottle.



2. Draw eyebrows, cut them out, and glue them on the bottle.



3. Draw two circles, cut them out, and color them yellow. Transform them into eyes by coloring the pupils with a black felt-tip pen. Glue them under the eyebrows.



4. Draw a mouth with four teeth, cut it out, and glue it on the bottle as shown.



CONCOCTIONS AND POTIONS

Vampire Juice: Put some ice cubes in a pitcher and fill it with your favorite red punch.



Bug Juice: Fill a pitcher with yellow lemonade. Add a drop of green food coloring.

Bat Juice: Put some ice cubes in a pitcher and fill it with grape juice.



Label each beverage.

MONSTROUS PIZZA

Ingredients: Ready-made pizza crust, tomato sauce, shredded mozzarella, a hard-boiled egg, olives, pineapple slices, small tomato, pepperoni slices.

1. Ask an adult to turn on the oven to 375°F.

2. Spread tomato sauce evenly over pizza crust and sprinkle shredded mozzarella over sauce.



3. Place two half slices of the hard-boiled egg where the eyes should be. Place an olive on the slices to form the pupils.

4. Cut two slices of pineapple into the shape of eyebrows. Place them over eyes as shown.

5. For a nose, put a slice of tomato in the center of the pizza. Use the small slices of pineapple for teeth.



6. Place the pepperoni slices around the face.

7. Bake for about 25 minutes, or follow baking directions on the crust package.



FANCY SANDWICHES

Sarcophagus Feet

1. Take several slices of soft bread and, with the help of an adult, cut them into the shape of feet.
2. On one side, spread some grape jelly. Place grapes on the toes.



Mummy Dentures

1. Take some slices of soft bread and, with the help of an adult, cut them into the shape of a half moon.
2. Spread cream cheese on one side, then put some pistachio nuts all around the edges.
3. Place another slice of bread on top.



Have a fun and



happy Halloween!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

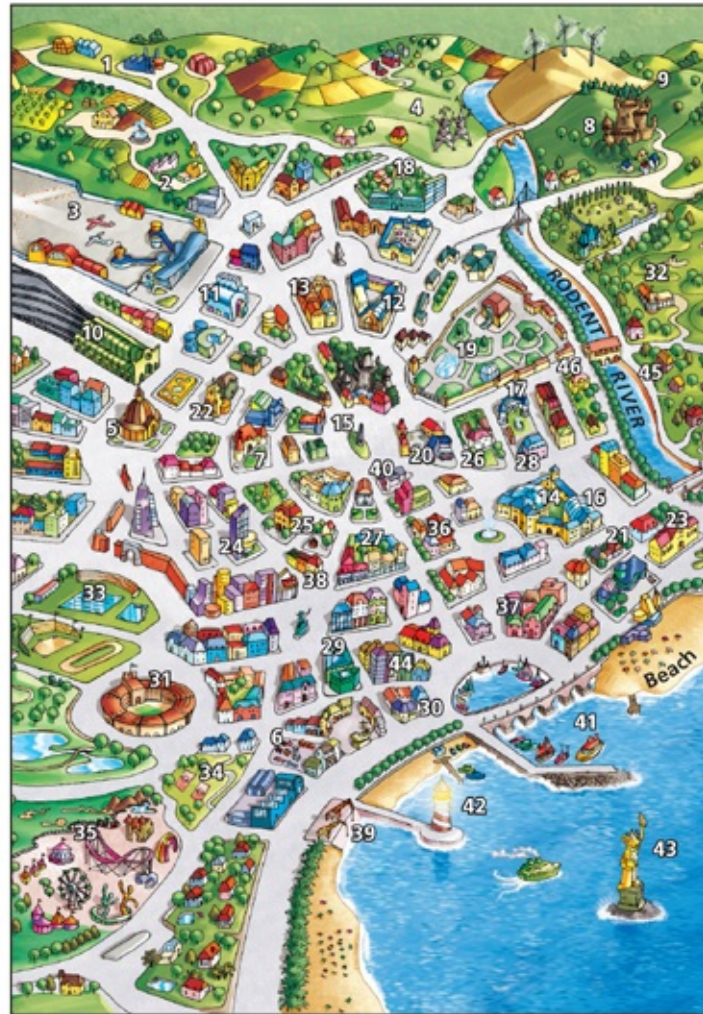


Born in New Mouse City, Mouse Island, **GERONIMO STILTON** is Rattus Emeritus of Mousomorphic Literature and of Neo-Ratonic Comparative Philosophy. For the past twenty years, he has been running *The Rodent's Gazette*, New Mouse City's most widely read daily newspaper.

Stilton was awarded the Ratitzer Prize for his scoops on *The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid* and *The Search for Sunken Treasure*. He has also received the Andersen 2000 Prize for Personality of the Year. One of his bestsellers won the 2002 eBook Award for world's best ratlings' electronic book. His works have been published all over the globe.

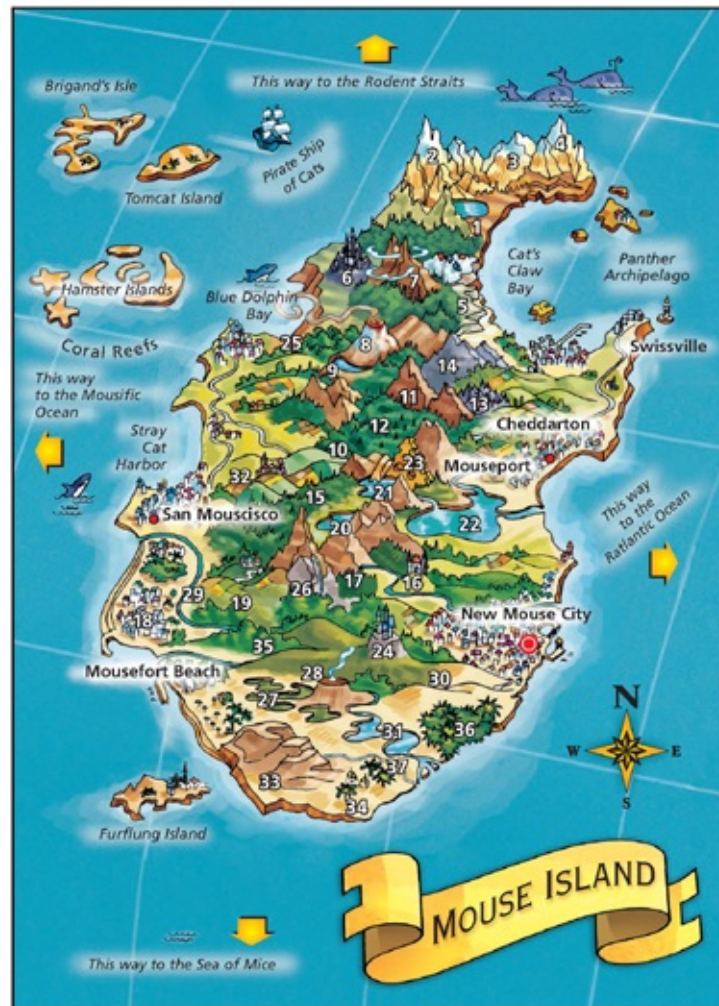
In his spare time, Mr. Stilton collects antique cheese rinds and plays golf. But what he most enjoys is telling stories to his nephew Benjamin.





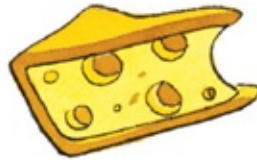
Map of New Mouse City

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Industrial Zone | 25. <i>The Rodent's Gazette</i> |
| 2. Cheese Factories | 26. Trap's House |
| 3. Angorat International Airport | 27. Fashion District |
| 4. WRAT Radio and Television Station | 28. The Mouse House Restaurant |
| 5. Cheese Market | 29. Environmental Protection Center |
| 6. Fish Market | 30. Harbor Office |
| 7. Town Hall | 31. Mousidon Square Garden |
| 8. Snotnose Castle | 32. Golf Course |
| 9. The Seven Hills of Mouse Island | 33. Swimming Pool |
| 10. Mouse Central Station | 34. Blushing Meadow Tennis Courts |
| 11. Trade Center | 35. Curlyfur Island Amusement Park |
| 12. Movie Theater | 36. Geronimo's House |
| 13. Gym | 37. Historic District |
| 14. Catnegie Hall | 38. Public Library |
| 15. Singing Stone Plaza | 39. Shipyard |
| 16. The Gouda Theater | 40. Thea's House |
| 17. Grand Hotel | 41. New Mouse Harbor |
| 18. Mouse General Hospital | 42. Luna Lighthouse |
| 19. Botanical Gardens | 43. The Statue of Liberty |
| 20. Cheap Junk for Less (Trap's store) | 44. Hercule Poirat's Office |
| 21. Parking Lot | 45. Petunia Pretty Paws's House |
| 22. Mouseum of Modern Art | 46. Grandfather William's House |
| 23. University and Library | |
| 24. <i>The Daily Rat</i> | |



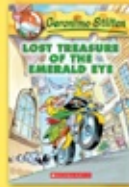
Map of Mouse Island

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Big Ice Lake | 21. Lake Lakelake |
| 2. Frozen Fur Peak | 22. Lake Lakelakelake |
| 3. Slipperyslopes Glacier | 23. Cheddar Crag |
| 4. Coldcreeps Peak | 24. Cannycat Castle |
| 5. Ratzikistan | 25. Valley of the Giant Sequoia |
| 6. Transratania | 26. Cheddar Springs |
| 7. Mount Vamp | 27. Sulfurous Swamp |
| 8. Roastedrat Volcano | 28. Old Reliable Geyser |
| 9. Brimstone Lake | 29. Vole Vale |
| 10. Poopedcat Pass | 30. Ravingrat Ravine |
| 11. Stinko Peak | 31. Gnat Marshes |
| 12. Dark Forest | 32. Munster Highlands |
| 13. Vain Vampires Valley | 33. Mousehara Desert |
| 14. Goose Bumps Gorge | 34. Oasis of the Sweaty Camel |
| 15. The Shadow Line Pass | 35. Cabbagehead Hill |
| 16. Penny Pincher Castle | 36. Rattytrap Jungle |
| 17. Nature Reserve Park | 37. Rio Mosquito |
| 18. Las Ratayas Marinas | |
| 19. Fossil Forest | |
| 20. Lake Lake | |

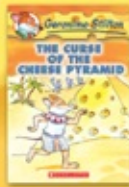




**Don't miss
any of
my other
fabumouse
adventures!**



**#1 Lost Treasure
of the Emerald Eye**



**#2 The Curse
of the Cheese
Pyramid**



**#3 Cat and
Mouse in a
Haunted House**



**#4 I'm Too Fond
of My Fur!**



**#5 Four Mice
Deep in the Jungle**



**#6 Paws Off,
Cheddarface!**



**#7 Red Pizzas for
a Blue Count**



**#8 Attack of the
Bandit Cats**



**#9 A Fabumouse
Vacation for
Geronimo**



**#10 All Because of
a Cup of Coffee**



#11 It's Halloween, You 'Fraidy Mouse!



#12 Merry Christmas, Geronimo!



#13 The Phantom of the Subway



#14 The Temple of the Ruby of Fire



#15 The Mona Mouse Code



#16 A Cheese-Colored Camper



#17 Watch Your Whiskers, Stilton!



#18 Shipwreck on the Pirate Islands



#19 My Name Is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton



#20 Surf's Up, Geronimo!



#21 The Wild, Wild West



#22 The Secret of Cacklefur Castle



A Christmas Tale



#23 Valentine's Day Disaster



#24 Field Trip to Niagara Falls



#25 The Search for Sunken Treasure



#26 The Mummy with No Name



#27 The Christmas Toy Factory



#28 Wedding Crasher



#29 Down and Out Down Under



#30 The Mouse Island Marathon



#31 The Mysterious Cheese Thief



Christmas Catastrophe



#32 Valley of the Giant Skeletons



#33 Geronimo and the Gold Medal Mystery



#34 Geronimo Stilton, Secret Agent



#35 A Very Merry Christmas



#36 Geronimo's Valentine



#37 The Race Across America



#38 A Fabumouse School Adventure



#39 Singing Sensation



#40 The Karate Mouse



#41 Mighty Mount Kilimanjaro



#42 The Peculiar Pumpkin Thief



#43 I'm Not a Supermouse!



#44 The Giant Diamond Robbery



#45 Save the White Whale!



#46 The Haunted Castle



#47 Run for the Hills, Geronimo!

**Be sure to check
out these exciting
Thea Sisters
adventures:**



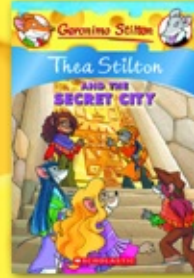
**THEA STILTON
AND THE
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THE SHIPWRECK**



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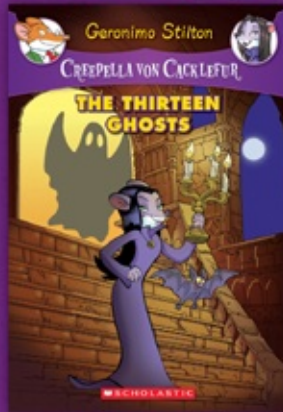
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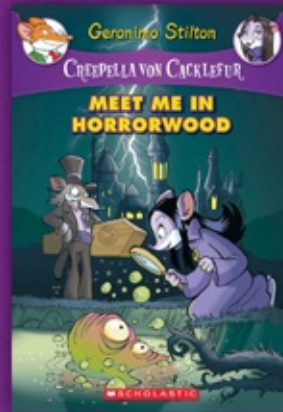
Meet CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR

I, *Geronimo Stilton*, have a lot of mouse friends, but none as **spooky** as my friend **CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR**! She is an enchanting and **MYSTERIOUS** mouse with a pet bat named **Bitewing**.

YIKES! I'm a real 'fraidy mouse, but even I think **CREEPELLA** and her family are **AWFULLY** fascinating. I can't wait for you to read all about **CREEPELLA** in these **fa-mouse-ly funny** and **spectacularly spooky** tales!

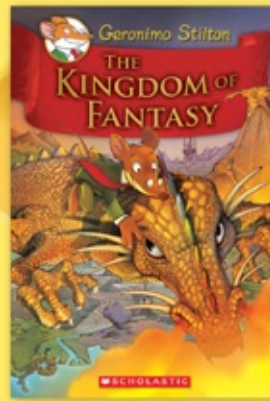


#1 THE THIRTEEN GHOSTS



#2 MEET ME IN HORRORWOOD

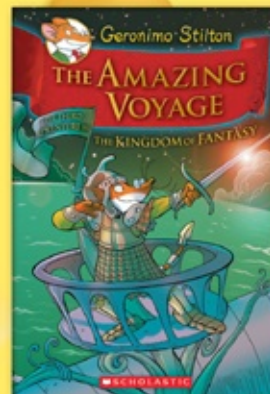
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OF FANTASY

Dear mouse friends,
Thanks for reading, and farewell
till the next book.
It'll be another whisker-licking-good
adventure, and that's a promise!



Geronimo Stilton

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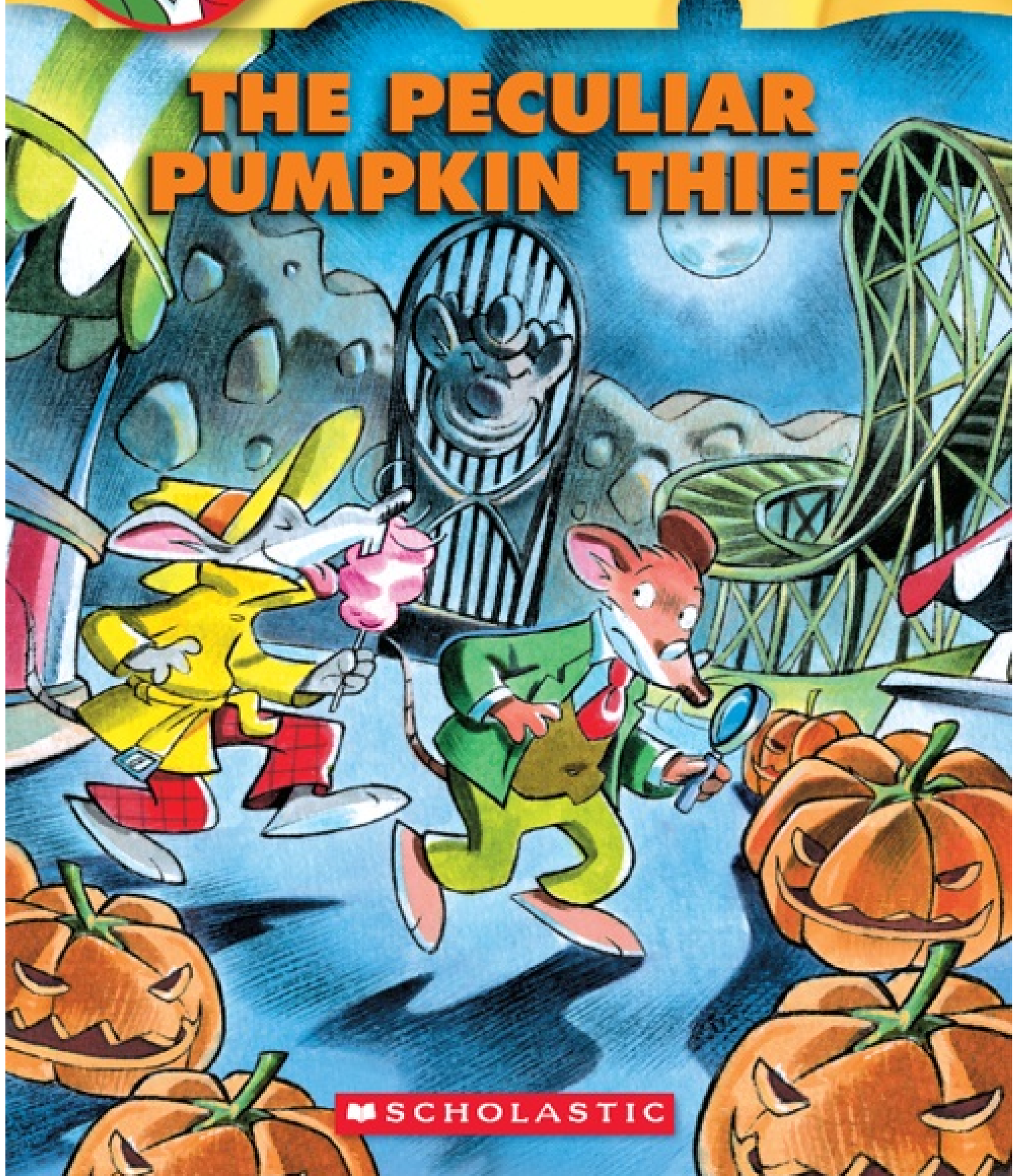
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