

I, *Geronimo Stilton*, have a lot of mouse friends, but none as **spooky** as my friend **CREPELLA VON CACKLEFUR**! She is an enchanting and **MYSTERIOUS** mouse with a pet bat named **Bitewing**. Crepella lives in a **CEMETERY**, sleeps in a marble **sarcophagus**, and drives a **hearse**. By night she is a special effects and set designer for **SCARY FILMS**, and by day she's studying to become a **journalist**! Her father, Boris von Cacklefur, runs the funeral home **Fabumouse Funerals**, and the von Cacklefur family owns the **CREEPY** Cacklefur Castle, which sits on top of a skull-shaped mountain in **MYSTERIOUS VALLEY**.



YIKES! I'm a real 'fraidy mouse, but even I think Crepella and her family are **AWFULLY** fascinating. I can't wait for you to read this **fa-mouse-ly funny** and **SPECTACULARLY SPOOKY** tale!

Geronimo Stilton





Grandpa Frankenstein

An extremely mad scientist and an expert in Egyptian mummies.

Creepella von Cacklefur



A journalist who lives in Mysterious Valley and solves spooky cases with her inseparable pet bat, Bitewing.



Bitewing



Billy Squeakspeare

A famous writer and friend of Creepella.



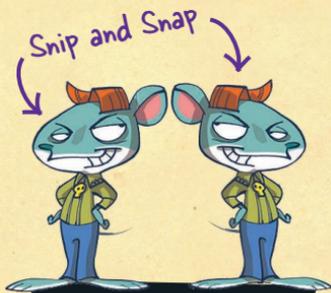
Shivereen

Creepella's favorite niece.

Grandma Crypt



She loves spiders, and her pet is a gigantic tarantula named Dolores.



Snip and Snap

Troublemaking twins and expert spies.

Dolores

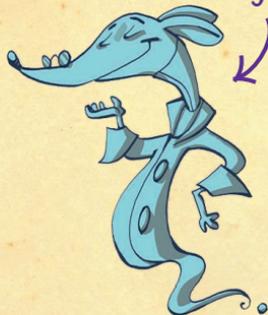


Kafka



The von Cacklefur family's pet cockroach.

Booey the
Poltergeist



The mischievous
ghost who haunts
Cacklefur Castle.

Boneham



The butler to the von
Cacklefur family, and a
snob right down to the
tips of his whiskers.

Baby



He was adopted and
raised with love by
the von Cacklefurs.

Chef Stewrat



The cook at Cacklefur
Castle. He dreams
of creating the
ultimate stew.

Boris von
Cacklefur



Creepella's father, and
the funeral director at
Fabumouse Funerals.

Madame
LaTomb



The family
housekeeper. A
ferocious were-canary
nests in her hair.

Chompers



The von
Cacklefur family's
meat-eating
guard plant.

Geronimo Stilton

CREPELLA VON CACKLEFUR

THE PHANTOM OF THE THEATER



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Text by Geronimo Stilton

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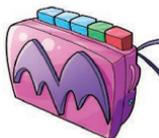
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NO TIME FOR DRAMA

It was a **splendid** September evening, and all the *New Mouse City* residents were ready to **relax** and let down their fur after a hard day at work. Everybody . . . except yours truly!

But wait! Pardon me. Allow me to introduce myself: My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*, and I run *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most **FAMOUSE** newspaper on Mouse Island.



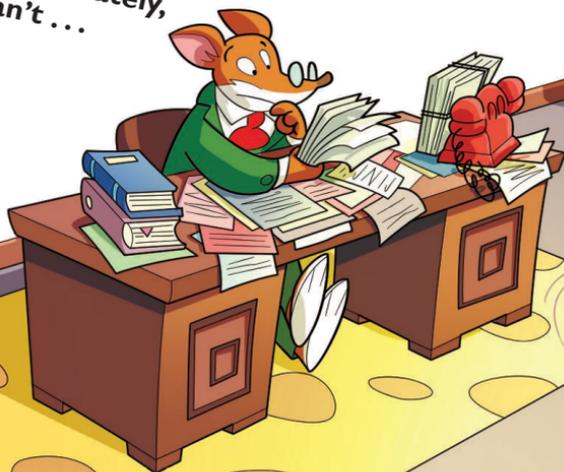
It had been a hectic day, and I was as buried under my work as my lasagna gets buried under shredded cheese.



MOUNTAINS of paper covered every corner of my desk. I was deciding what to do next — should I *rewrite* an article, or edit a feature, or sift through **PHOTOGRAPHS**? — when my sister, Thea, walked into my office wearing an *elegant* evening gown.

“Still working, Geronimo?” she asked, looking quite bright-eyed and bushy-furred. “I wanted to invite you to the **theater!**”

Unfortunately,
I can't ...



But it will be
fabumouse!





“Unfortunately, I’m up to my **sNOU**T in work.” I sighed. “What **shOw** are you going to see?”

Before Thea could answer, my grandfather William Shortpaws **barged** into the room, screaming as usual.

“It’s the **opera**, Grandson! Stop **pretending** to work and come with us!” he bellowed.

I hadn’t yet squeaked a word in reply when my grandfather **scurried** over to the window. “It’s **stuffier** than a vampire’s coffin in here!” he





grunted, opening the window.

“NOOO!”

I tried to stop him, but it was too late. A **GUST OF WIND** from the open window flew past me, and before I knew it, my organized piles of work **swirled** into the air and **tumbled** into one big mess on the floor.



“You are too **MESSY**, Grandson!” said my grandfather, shaking his snout. I got up to close the window, but a flying

SHADOW appeared through

the evening darkness — and something grazed my whiskers!

“Careful where you put your paws, **Cheddarhead!**”

It was **Bitewing**, the pet bat of my friend





CREPELLA VON CACKLEFUR! She is the most infamous writer in Mysterious Valley. In his claws, Bitewing was holding a tape recorder, which he flung at me.

“Here you go! It’s Creepella’s newest **novel**,” he screeched. “Publish it **IMMEDIATELY**,





you weak-whiskered rodent!” And with that, he was off.

FASTER than a hungry cat chasing a mouse, I turned on the tape recorder.

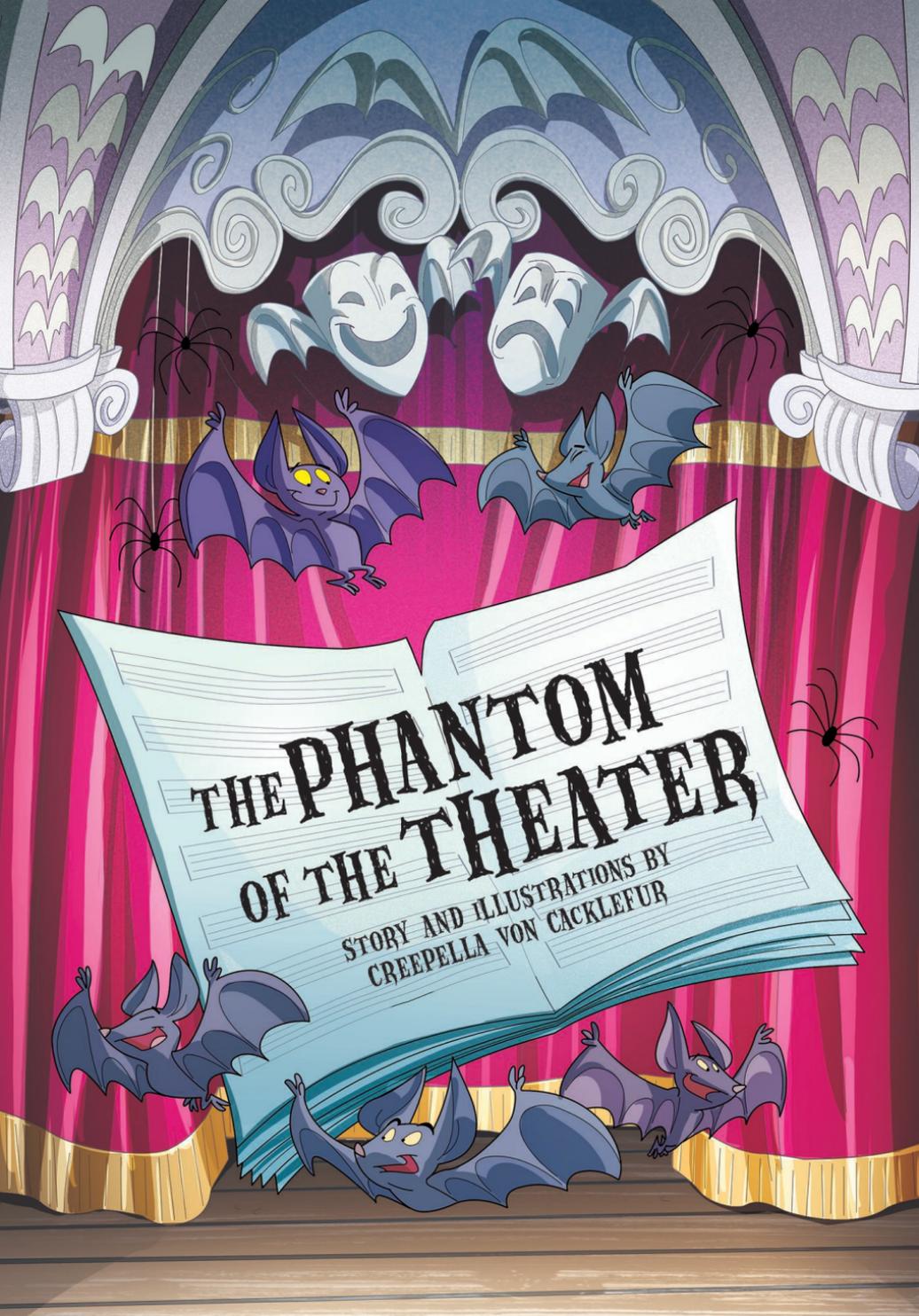
“**Aaaa-aaa-AAAAH!**” Out came a **high-pitched** shriek that pierced my eardrums and rattled my eyeglasses.

“I’ve never heard such a high squeak,” Thea said, lowering the paws from her ears.

“But **WHO** can sing like that?” my grandfather wondered.

The tape recorder emitted another sound, even **higher pitched** than the first one. Thea’s paws went right back to her ears.

But I **smiled** wider than my whiskers. “Thea, Grandfather, sit back on your **tails**. You are about to listen to one of my most **AMAZING** adventures in Mysterious Valley!”



THE PHANTOM OF THE THEATER

STORY AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY
CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR