



# Geronimo Stilton

# THE SHIP OF SECRETS

THE TENTH ADVENTURE  
IN THE  
KINGDOM OF FANTASY



Scholastic Inc.

Copyright © 2016 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](http://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](http://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](mailto:foreignrights@atlantyca.it), [www.atlantyca.com](http://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.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data available

ISBN 978-1-338-08880-9

Text by Geronimo Stilton

Original title *Decimo Viaggio nel Regno della Fantasia*

Cover by Silvia Bigolin (design) and Christian Aliprandi (color)

Illustrations by Silvia Bigolin, Carla De Bernardi, Alessandro Muscillo, Federico Brusco, and Piemme's Archives. Color by Christian Aliprandi.

Graphics by Marta Lorini

Special thanks to AnnMarie Anderson

Translated by Andrea Schaffer

Interior design by Kay Petronio

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

17 18 19 20 21

Printed in China

38

First edition, July 2017

# Protectors of the Kingdom of Fantasy



## Geronimo Stilton

I am a bestselling author, and I run *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous newspaper on Mouse Island. I often travel to the Kingdom of Fantasy to help Queen Blossom. This is my tenth visit!



## Scribblehopper

I am Geronimo's guide on his visits to the Kingdom of Fantasy. I am a chatty frog with a big heart. I dream of writing a bestselling book someday!



## Blossom

I am known as the Queen of the Fairies, the White Queen, and the Lady of Peace and Happiness. I hope to unite the world in love, light, and harmony.

### *Sweet Melinda*

I am the Princess of the Vanilla Fairies, the only fairies in the Kingdom of Fantasy that look like young mice with wings! I am Queen Blossom's dear friend.



### *The Dragonfly Princesses*

We reign over the giant dragonflies that live in Sweetwater Lake, next to Crystal Castle.



### *Wink*

I am the fastest of the Blue Weasels. I am curious, generous, and ready to do whatever it takes to save the Blue Weasels!



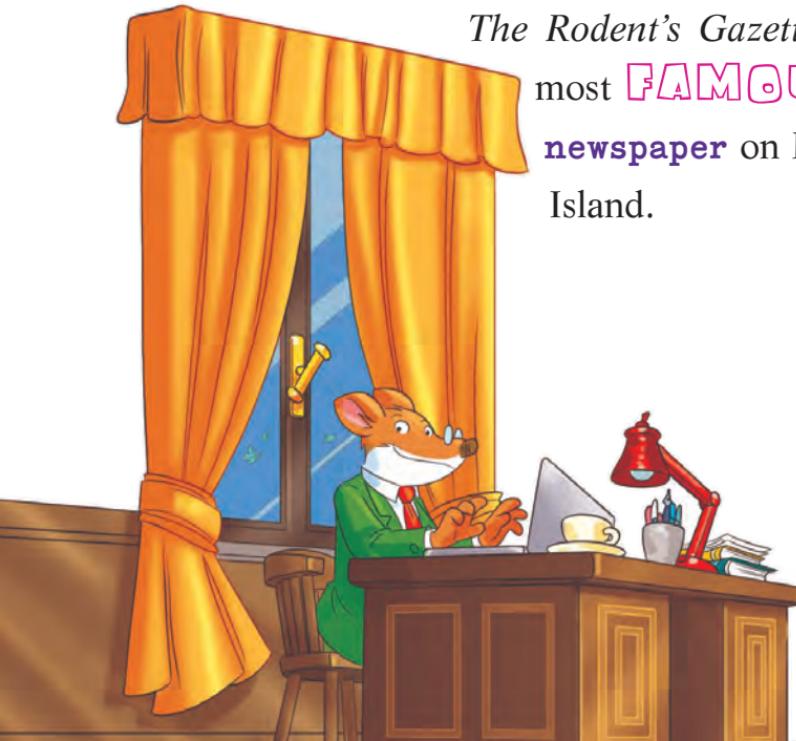


# THE BEST COUSIN IN THE WORLD...

It was a gloomy Friday afternoon in New Mouse City. The weather was **DAMP** and **cold**, and I was holed up in my office, hard at work.

Oops, I'm sorry! I haven't introduced myself yet. My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*! I run

*The Rodent's Gazette*, the most **FAMOUSE** **newspaper** on Mouse Island.





Anyway, as I was saying, I was in the office and a **thunderstorm** was brewing. The wind was **blowing** so hard it rattled the windows and bent the branches of the trees. For a second, I thought I heard a strange voice outside:

"Kniiight! Kniiight! Kniiight! Kniiight! Kniiight!  
Kniiight! Kniiight! Kniiight! Kniiight! Kniiight!"

I ran to look out the window, but all I saw were rodents **SCURRYING** to get indoors. **How strange!** It was probably all in my imagination. Or it could have been just the sound of the **WIND**...

I worked until the late afternoon, while the sky grew darker and more threatening. In the distance, I heard the booming of **thunder**. Then suddenly, the door to my office flew open!

Someone dressed in a **BLACK** jacket, a fluttering **red silk** cape, and a top hat



My hat!

Heeeeelp!



came in. He was holding a cane with a **skull-shaped** knob at the end. He wore a black **M A S K** over his snout, and in his right paw, he carried a small crystal bottle full of a **sparkling** red liquid. Behind him, he pulled a red, velvet-lined **COFFIN** on wheels. But the most **TERRIFYING** thing about this mysterious rodent was that he had fangs just like a vampire!

**“Aaaaaahhhh!”** I screamed.

I turned as pale as mozzarella. I’m not **brave** at all . . . In fact, I’m a real scaredy-mouse!

Then a bolt of lightning **LIT UP** the room.

**ZING!**

A second later, the lights went **out**!

Before I fainted from fright, the mysterious mouse **giggled**.

“Geronimo, you really are easy to **fool**,” the mouse said.



Aaaaaahhh!



It was only then that I recognized his voice. I looked more closely and saw that the **TEETH** were made of plastic. Furthermore, the mouse's paw was on the light switch. The lights hadn't gone out — he had **FLICKED** them off!

"You're not a vampire," I said accusingly.  
"You're my cousin **TRAP**!"

"Oh, Gerrykins, you're so gullible!" he said, laughing. "So, what do you think of my **vampire**



Who was the  
vampire who had  
come into my office?

It was my cousin Trap!  
His teeth were fake and  
the bottle was filled with  
tomato juice!



costume? I figured I'd try it out on you to see how **authentic** it is.”

I dried the sweat from my forehead. My whiskers were still **trembling** with fear.

“Ha, ha,” I said weakly. “It’s a very **GOOD** costume. But you almost scared me **OUT OF MY FUR!**”

“Oh, come on, Gerry Berry.” He snickered. “Can’t you take a little joke? I’m the **best** cousin in the world, right?”

“Well, you aren’t boring,” I replied. My cousin can be a bit **MUCH**.

“I just **knew** you’d like my costume,” Trap continued, smiling proudly. “Now aren’t you going to ask **WHY** I’m dressed like a vampire, **Germeister?**”

“No, thanks!” I said. “I’m really not interested, Trap. I’m very busy **WORKING**. And my name is Geronimo. That’s **G-E-R-O-N-I-M-O!**”

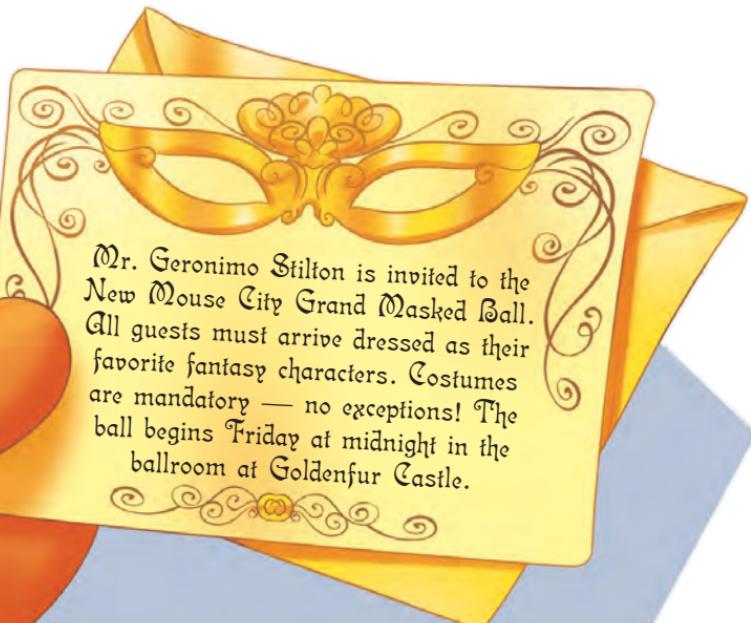


Trap drank a sip of **tomato juice**, cleaned his whiskers on my tie, and giggled.

"But I think you'll find it **very** interesting, Geronimo," he said slyly. "After all, you're **invited**, too!"

He **WAVED** a card under my nose, but I couldn't see what it said.

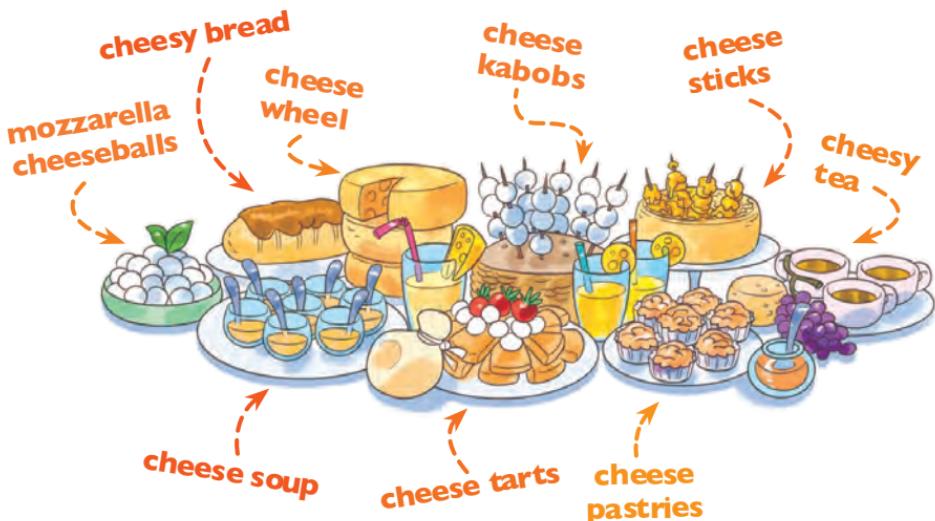
Then Trap read aloud: "'Mr. Geronimo Stilton is invited to the *New Mouse City Grand Masked Ball*. All guests must arrive dressed





as their favorite fantasy characters. Costumes are mandatory — **NO EXCEPTIONS!** The ball begins Friday at midnight in the ballroom at Goldenfur Castle.”

On the back of the invite there was a note: “By the way, don’t be late! There will be an all-you-can-eat **CHEESE BUFFET**, but it’s first come, first served!”





# MASKS FOR MICE

I hit my head with my paw. The Grand Masked Ball was the most famouse party in New Mouse City, and it was happening **tonight!** I had completely forgotten.

**“Chewy cheddar chunks!”**

I squeaked. “I promised Creepella von Cacklefur I would go with her, but I don’t have a costume yet.”

Trap just shook his head.

“Oh, Gerry Berry, you’re in **TROUBLE**,” he said in a singsong voice. “Creepella has a **TERRIBLE TEMPER!**”

I absolutely had to fix this. So I called my sister, Thea, **RIGHT AWAY**.

“Hi, Thea,” I said quickly. “Where can I find a **COSTUME** for tonight’s masked ball?”



“Are you **kidding**?” came her reply. “Everyone knows the stores in New Mouse City don’t have any costumes left!”

I was about to **cry**.

Creepella might be my friend, but she has a **TERRIBLE TEMPER**! I told her I would go to the ball with her months ago! What in the

Oh no!



1

I had **forgotten** that the Grand Masked Ball was tonight!

Oh, help!



2

I didn't have a costume yet...

What a disaster!



3

And my date—  
my friend  
Creepella—has a  
terrible temper!



name of **cheese** was I going to do?

But then Thea had an **IDEA**.

“Wait a minute, Geronimo!” she squeaked. “You could try my friend Felicia Fashionfur’s store. It’s called **Masks for Mice**, and it’s at thirteen Masquerade Lane. Give her my name, okay? Hopefully she can help you.”

I dashed out the door right away and flagged down a **TAXI**.

“Number thirteen Masquerade Lane,” I told the driver. “And please **hurry**!”

A few minutes later, the taxi stopped in front of a store with a large painted **WOODEN** sign that read **Masks for Mice**. This was it!

As I paid my driver, I noticed that a mouse dressed as a **WITCH** was locking up the shop.

“Wait!” I squeaked. “Please don’t close! I need a costume **right away**!”

The rodent at the door was wearing a **pointy**

ALE!

SALE!

50% Off

Masks for Mice

MASKS FOR MICE

Huh?

Wait!





hat, a **PURPLE** silk dress, and pointy-toed **shoes**.

“You’re Thea’s brother, Geronimo, right?” she asked.

“Um, yes, that’s me,” I replied. “My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*, and I need —”

She cut me off before I could finish.

“I know what you need,” she said. “A **costume** for tonight’s ball! But I don’t have any left. That’s how it goes — it’s the **BEST** party of the year! Everyone’s going, even me! I’m dressed as a **witch**. What do you think of my costume?”

“It’s **great**,” I replied. Then I fell to my knees, **SOBBING**. “But don’t you have a costume for me, too? Any costume will do — I’ll take **whatever you’ve got!** Otherwise Creepella will —”

Felicia **shuddered** and then interrupted me again.



“**Moldy mozzarella!**” she exclaimed. “Say no more. I went to school with Creepella. She’s a great friend, but that mouse has a **TERRIBLE TEMPER!** Follow me inside and let’s see what I can find.”

I followed her up a **spiral** staircase and into a **D A R K** room. I was feeling hopeful, until my eyes adjusted to the dark. All around me





were thousands and thousands and thousands of hangers — but they were all **EMPTY**!

Felicia began to rummage around in a corner.

“Oh, it must be here . . . or maybe here . . . or it could be there,” she muttered. “Oh, here it is! I knew I’d find it **SOMEWHERE!**”





Finally, at the bottom of a very dusty trunk, she found a **GREEN** tunic and tights, a **fROG** mask, and a fake gold **CROWN** decorated with fake stones. There was also a broken chain with a **MEDALLION** on it that read:

**WHO WANTS TO KISS ME?**