



A SUPER-SPECIAL DAY

One cool and peaceful Monday in late September, I woke up early, stretched my paws over my head, and got ready for a **SUPER-SPECIAL** day ...

Oops, I'm sorry – I forgot to introduce myself! My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I'm the editor of *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous newspaper on Mouse Island.





My job keeps me busy, but that morning I was headed to my nephew Benjamin's school for the opening of their new science labs. I was supposed to give a speech! I wanted to look **SOPHISTICATED** for four reasons:

1) To make my little nephew proud.

2) Because the school principal is a good friend of mine.

3) Because I knew that Dr. Margo Bitmouse – otherwise known as Doc – would be there. She's a marvemously smart and *beautiful* rodent!

4) Because my grandfather had called and hollered,



I combed my fur
with Sleekfur ...



I put on my freshly
pressed suit ...



“Grandson! Did you comb your whiskers? Did you write a good speech? Don’t be a **CHEESEBRAIN**. The reputation of *The Rodent’s Gazette* is at stake!”

So I took a little longer than usual to make sure I looked **mouserific**. Finally, I checked myself in the mirror one last time and grinned. Not bad!

I hailed a taxi and headed to Benjamin’s school. On the ride, I went over the speech in my head – but the closer we got to the school, the more my tail trembled and my whiskers wobbled! **Holey cheese, I was a wreck!**

The taxi driver was a rodent around Grandfather



I put on a red silk tie. Very fancy!



I sprayed myself with a hint of parmesan cologne.



William's age. He was large and had a **THICK GREY HANDLEBAR MOUSTACHE**. He kept glancing at me in the rearview mirror.

At a red light, he turned to face me. "Aren't you Geronimo Stilton? The publisher of *The Rodent's Gazette*?"

I nodded. "Yes, that's me!"

"Mr. Stilton, your snout is as white as a slice of mozzarella cheese!" he said, looking worried. "Are you feeling okay? Are you getting **CARSICK**? There's a special sickness bag under the seat – I always keep a few handy for **weak-stomached rodents** like you."

I held up a paw and tried to reassure him. "Oh, it's

not car sickness. I promise. **I'm just nervous!** When I get to the school, I have to:

- 1) walk a red carpet in front of hundreds of rodents (WITHOUT TRIPPING!),
- 2) give a speech in front of hundreds of rodents and TV reporters (WITHOUT FORGETTING WHAT TO SAY!), and
- 3) cut the inaugural ribbon for the new science labs (WITHOUT SNIPPING MY PAW!)"

The taxi driver raised an eyebrow and muttered, "Mr. Stilton, I assumed you were a brilliant, carefree mouse, like your grandfather *William Shortpaws!* I had the





pleasure of driving him around in my taxi quite often in the old days.”

Cheese and crackers! I tried to justify myself.

“Well, usually ... I mean, sometimes ... actually ... I’m more or less an **EASY-GOING** mouse. But today I have to give a speech, and I’m so worried about it that my fur is standing on end! Excuse me ...”



I buried my snout in the pages of my speech.

“Humph, they don’t make journalists the way they used to,” the taxi driver grumbled.

“Your grandfather William was a real journalist – not a **CHEDDARHEAD** like you!”

By now we had arrived at New Mouse City’s primary school, the same school I went to as a mouseling. As I climbed out of the taxi, I noticed something weird. There were little blue clouds hovering in the air outside the school, and it **STUNK** of garlic!

Cheese niblets, how strange!



SCIENCE DAY

Geronimo!

Hooray!

Uncle G!



A CALM, BRILLIANT, CONFIDENT MOUSE?

Even though I was more nervous than a mouse in a room **FULL OF CATS**, the morning went well. I climbed the school steps without tripping and greeted my friend the principal with a polite kiss on the paw. *"You're such a gentlemouse, Geronimo!"* she squeaked.

I didn't freeze when I gave my speech, even though hundreds of reporters were watching and filming me for



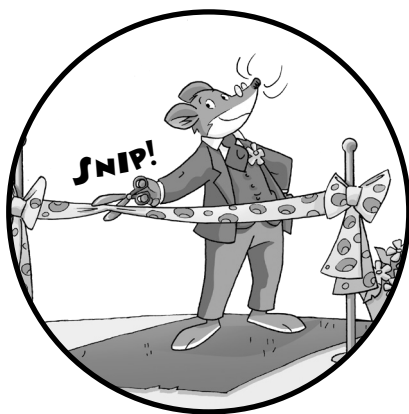
all the TV stations on Mouse Island. I didn't get tongue-tied even once – a record for a **shy mouse** like me!

And when I cut the yellow ribbon to open the new ultra-modern science labs, I didn't nick my paws, snip off any whiskers, or get tangled up in the ribbon. **SLIMY SWISS CHEESE**, it was a miracle!

Was I finally becoming a calm, brilliant, and confident rodent?

I scurried into the new science labs, feeling *marvemouse*.

When the principal began showing us the new lab equipment, I stood up straight and held my snout **HIGH IN THE AIR**, just like a mouse who was calm, brilliant,





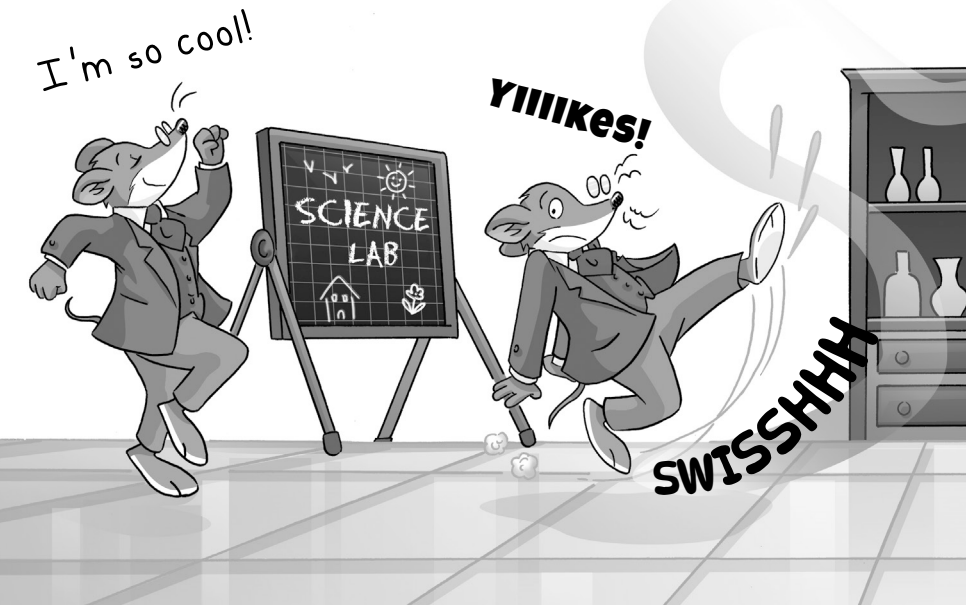
and confident ... but I didn't pay attention to the freshly waxed floor!

Proudly, I approached the principal to compliment her. "This lab is absolutely a state-of-the-art –"

I didn't have time to finish before I slipped on the waxed floor! After doing a **DOUBLE-TWISTED DEATH-DEFYING SOMERSAULT**, I ended up with my snout in the rubbish bin.

So much for being a calm, brilliant, confident mouse ...

I pulled my head out of the rubbish bin and saw



the principal staring at me with a funny look on her snout. My face turned as **RED** as the tomato sauce on a **DOUBLE-CHEESE PIZZA!** I tried to crack a joke.

“I know it looks like I slipped, but, um, I was just making sure the floor was perfectly smooth!”

The principal raised an eyebrow. “What about diving into the **RUBBISH BIN?**”

Looking down at my paws, I muttered, “I was, uh, checking to see if it was empty ...”

She burst out laughing.

SQUEAK!



I felt like such a cheesebrain!

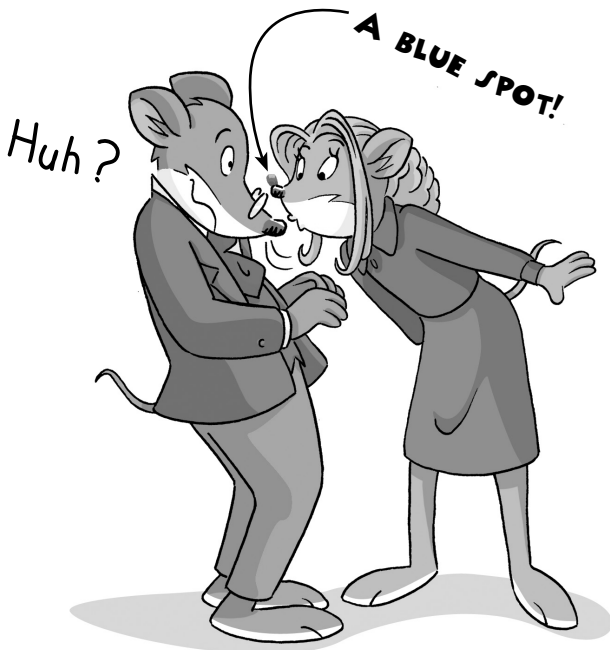




“Geronimo, you haven’t changed a whisker since we were in primary school!”

And then – rat-munching rattlesnakes! – she kissed me lightly on the tip of my snout. Now I was red from the ends of my ears to the tip of my tail!

At that moment, I noticed something strange. **There was an enormous blue spot on the principal’s snout!**





MOULDY MOZZARELLA – A BLUE SPOT!

ROTTEN RATS' TEETH! An ugly blue spot had popped up on my friend's snout! It was so enormous and so blue that I couldn't stop staring at it.

Tugging on her whiskers nervously, she asked, "Why are you staring at my snout?"

I didn't want to offend her, so I muttered, "Oh, I was just looking at your beautiful blue eyes ..."

"My eyes aren't blue," she said slowly. "They're black!"

Whoops.

She opened her purse, pulled out a mirror, and squeaked,

**"THUNDERING
CATTAILS** – what is
that **BLUE SPOT**?"

*A blue spot!
Ack! Ack!
Ack!*





A BLUE SPOT!

Ack!

Blue!

**YOU HAVE
one TOO!**



BLUE SPOTS EVERYWHERE!

OHHH!

Argh!

HELP!

GROSS!



The principal looked like she was about to faint from shock.

A second later, I heard a loud squeak from another mouse.

“MOULDY MOZZARELLA – a BLUE SPOT!”

Then I heard another squeak ... and another ... and another!

“RANCID RICOTTA – a BLUE SPOT!”

For the love of cheese, what was happening?

Just then I felt an itch on my snout. Did I have a blue spot, too? While everyone headed off to grab refreshments, I scampered to the bathroom ...

Phew, I was safe! No BLUE SPOTS! I headed back to the lab, but I couldn't help thinking that this whole thing was awfully strange.

And that's when I ran into my sister Thea – and Doc! Doc is a tough, energetic, intelligent, and





very beautiful rodent. She's **FABUMOUSE!** But every time I see her, I always get my tail in a twist and end up looking like a complete **CHEESEBRAIN!**

I was just hoping she hadn't seen my somersault – the one that ended with a **dive** into the rubbish bin. Maybe she had been looking the other way ...

Doc pinched my cheeks and squeaked, "Nice job, my little cheese puff – you gave a *marVemouse* speech. And congrats on that tumble, too!" She winked.





SQUEAK!

I felt like such a
CHEESEBRAIN!

Peering at my paws, I headed towards the refreshments with my **tail between my legs**. But when I got there, I forgot all about my embarrassment ... because most of the rodents near me were covered with **BLUE SPOTS!**

I scampered over to the principal and whispered, "Um, these **BLUE SPOTS** worry me!"

Are they
contagious?

Hmmm . . .





I lowered my voice even further. “Should we send everyone home? They could be contagious ...”

“You’re right, Geronimo,” she said, nodding her snout seriously.

She walked up to the microphone and announced, “Dear rodent friends, thank you for coming on this special day! Unfortunately, we have to bring the festivities to an end. It was wonderful seeing all of you. **Thank you, and goodbye!**”