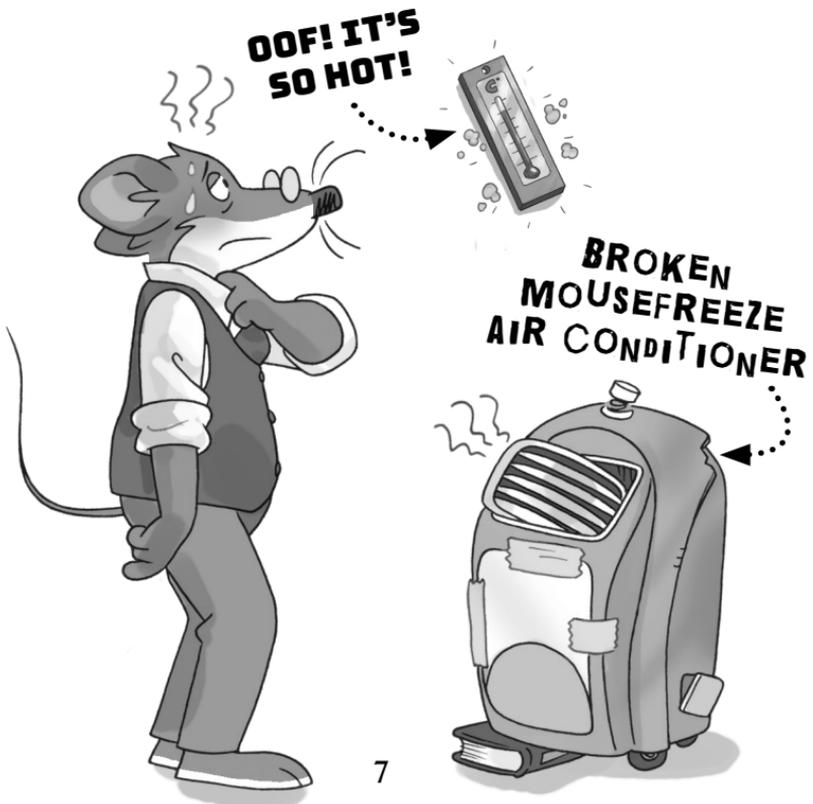




A WHISKER SCORCHER

HOLEY MELTED CHEESE STICKS, it was a hot day—a real whisker scorcher! The sun sizzled high over New Mouse City, and there wasn't a hint of a **BREEZE**. To make things worse, my air conditioner was on the blink.





Oops, I almost forgot to introduce myself! My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I run *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous daily newspaper on Mouse Island. Anyway, that day I was home catching up on my accounting. I was head-over-whiskers excited to see that my newspaper had also become the **best-selling** paper on Mouse Island! Then the phone rang.

At the other end, a familiar voice shrieked in my ear.

"Stilton! You Cheddarhead! I can't believe your newspaper has outsold mine! You'd better watch your tail! I will destroy *The Rodent's Gazette*!"

It was Sally Ratmousen, editor of **The Daily Rat** – my nemesis! I wanted to tell her not to take my success so personally, but she had already hung up on me.

**I WILL DESTROY
THE RODENT'S
GAZETTE!**



Sally Ratmousen is the publisher of *The Daily Rat* and Geronimo's number-one competitor.



I tried to go back to my work, but I was worried about what Sally might do. And the heat was making **FONDUE** out of my brain!

In a panic, I called the repairmice at MouseFreeze Cooling Company. I had to get my air conditioner fixed! But the MouseFreeze receptionist had bad news.

“With this heatwave, all the repairmice are busy. You’ll have to sit tight today!”

Sit tight?! I would **MELT** if I had to wait until tomorrow. So I decided to get a little creative ...



HERE'S WHAT I DID TO TRY TO KEEP COOL ...

FIRST TRY

1. I made myself
Cheddar lemonade ...



2.
... but it was too cold,
and I got an awful
stomach ache!

SECOND TRY

1. I took an
ice bath ...



2.
... but I had to get out
quickly because I was
turning into a mousicle!

THIRD TRY

1. I tied ice lollies to my ears and under my paws ...



2. ... but my fur got all sticky and attracted fruit flies!



FOURTH TRY

2. ... but I slipped and ended up inside Hannibal's fish bowl!



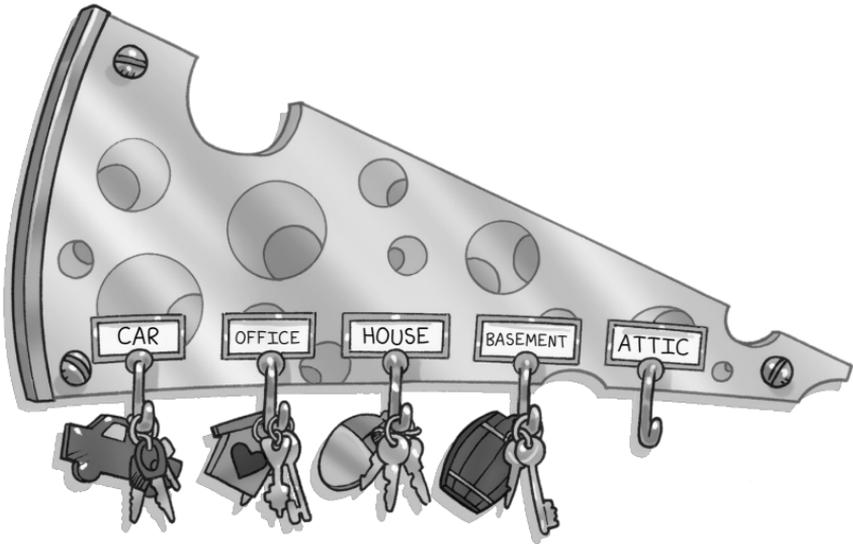
1. I decided to take a cold shower...





After all of that, I finally remembered that I still had an old fan in the attic. It was my last hope for staying **cool!**

But ... where had I put the key? Was it hanging in the hall? Did I put it in my desk drawer? Was it in the kitchen? Or had I hidden it inside a vase in the living room?

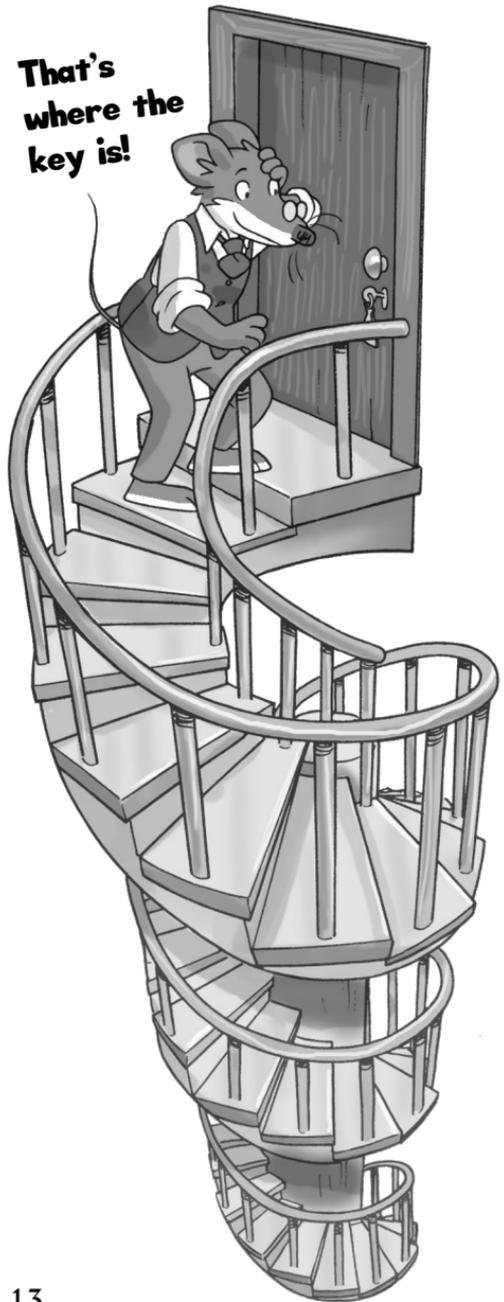


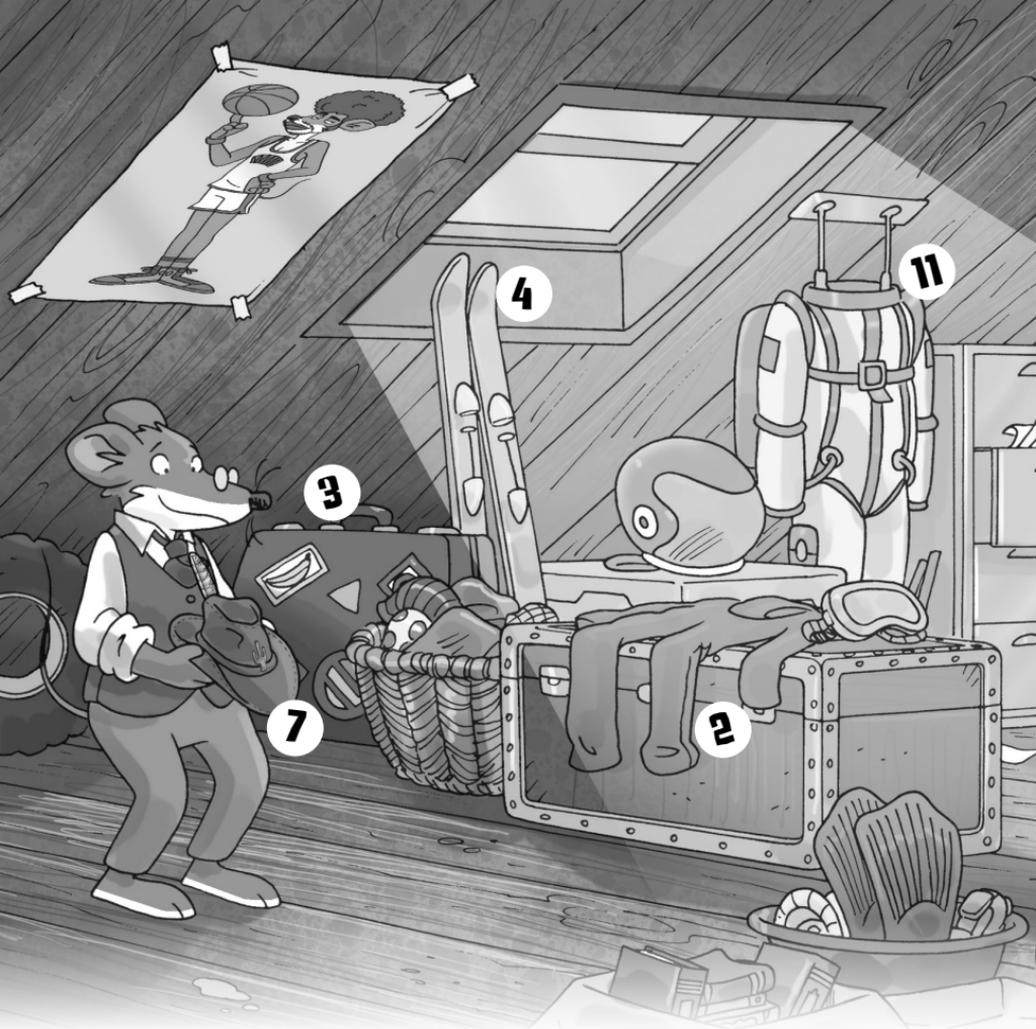
I looked everywhere until I finally found it – still inside the attic door’s keyhole! I went in and started to look for the fan. But I quickly got distracted. The attic was full of mementos from my many **ADVENTURES**.



I spotted the cowboy hat the Red Bandit had given to me, and the uniform I had worn when I won the Karate World Championship!

**SO MANY
MARVEMOUSE
MEMORIES!**





1. The golf clubs I used when I won the Super Mouse Cup with Grandfather William.
2. The wetsuit I wore while scuba-diving off Shell Island.
3. The old suitcase I used while holidaying at the Ratty Tatty Hotel.
4. The skis I used while skiing on Frozen Fur Peak.
5. The basketball signed by Bounce Ballmouse.
6. The football boots I wore when I won the Mouse Island football tournament.
7. The cowboy hat the Red Bandit gave me.



ACHOO! ACHOO! ACHOO! ACHOO!

With a start, I remembered the whole reason I had come to the attic – the fan! There it was high up on a far shelf, right above my great-grandmother’s chamber pot collection!

The chamber pots were all colours, shapes, and sizes. Some had designs of different kinds of cheeses; some were made of crystal; some were shaped like Greek columns; others were hand-painted. There was even one in the shape of a cat’s head ...





I reached out my paw to get the fan and disturbed a huge cloud of dust.

I sneezed so much, I lost my balance and crashed to the floor. "ACHOO! ACHOO! ACHOO! ACHOO! ACHOO! ACHOO!"

Even worse, I ended up pulling everything on the shelves down with me, including the chamber pots!

CRASH! BANG! SMASH! BANG! BOOM!

With a final crash, the massive chamber pot shaped like a cat's head fell right on top of me. **CHEESE NIBLETS!** That made me see a billion stars – and all their planets!

What a headache!

Rubbing my head, I took the fan down to the living room. Then I sat on my favourite pawchair with an ice pack on my head and the fan blowing at full speed.



I DISTURBED A
CLOUD OF DUST
AND BEGAN
TO SNEEZE.
ACHOO!

*I lost my balance and
crashed to the floor!*



Everything on
the bookcase
fell on me . . .



What a
headache!

. . . including an
extremely heavy
chamber pot!





Ahh, what a relief! I was finally comfortable.

I had almost dozed off when the doorbell rang, jolting me awake.

DING-DONG! DIIIIING-DONG! DING-DOOOOONG!

Who could it be? Curious, I hightailed it to open the door.





GRAAAANDSON!

As soon as I opened the door, I was overwhelmed by a booming yell.

“GRAAAANDSON!”

Mouldy mozzarella! It was my grandfather *William Shortpaws!* I didn’t have a chance to ask why he was here, because he immediately roared, “Grandson! What are you doing cooped up in the house with the shades down? Snoring away the afternoon in your pawchair, I’ll bet!”

“Actually, with this heatwave, I can’t seem to concentrate. And my air conditioner is broken, so —”





I tried to explain, but Grandfather interrupted.

“I don’t want to hear any excuses! Since it seems like you have nothing to do here, you won’t mind that I’m sending you to Portugal! A friend of mine needs a favour, and you’re the best mouse for the job.”

“Me? Go to Portugal? When? How? And, most importantly, *why?*”

“No questions!” my grandfather snapped. “Hop in the van and get going!”

Only then did I notice there was a minivan parked in front of my house.

The van was overloaded with every kind of baggage. There was even a **HUGE** inflatable duck float!





My sister Thea; Trap, my cousin; Benjamin, my nephew; and his friend Bugsy Wugsy were all ready and waiting for me.

“Are you all going to Portugal with me?” I asked.

“You bet we are, Cuz!” Trap said.

“I can’t go to Portugal now!” I protested. “I’m very busy with *The Rodent’s Gazette*!” I wanted to stick around and see what kind of revenge Sally Ratmousen might be plotting.

“No excuses, Grandson!” my grandfather thundered. “I’ll take care of the newspaper for you while you’re gone.”

“You seem a little down,” Thea said. “You have bags under your eyes, and your fur is faded.

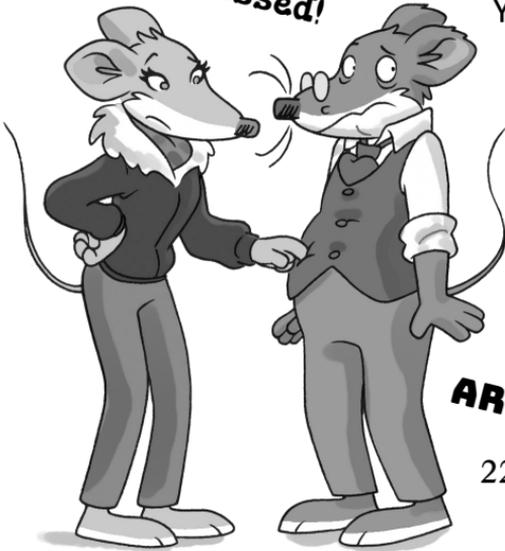
You look stressed!

You’re too **STRESSED!**

You have to come with us. It’ll be good for you!”

I was about to refuse, but Bugsy took my right paw, and Benjamin took my left one. They looked

ARGH!





up at me with big, wide eyes.

“Come with us to Portugal!
We’ll have a blast!”

they said.

How could I
refuse them? “Oh,
all right. But I have
to pack and –”

I didn’t even
have time to finish
my sentence before everybody
pushed me into the van, shouting, **“Yaaaaay! We’re
off to Portugal!”**

I looked out of the window to say goodbye

Um ...

**Uncle G, come
with us!**



Hooray!

**Everyone to
Portugal!**

Off we go!





to Grandfather and saw Aunt Sweetfur and Uncle Greyfur. Aunt Sweetfur looked worried as she waved her handkerchief at me. She dried a tear and called, **“Take care, my little nephew.”**

She always worries when we go on trips. But this time, she seemed more anxious than usual! Uncle Greyfur waved goodbye. “Once you’re on board, make us proud, Nephew!”





HOW STRANGE!

Why was Aunt Sweetfur so worried about me this time? Why did Uncle Greyfur tell me to make them proud “on board”? Why did Grandfather need me to help someone in Portugal?

“What are we doing in Portugal?” I asked suspiciously.

Thea smiled at me. “We’ve all been officially invited to Lisbon, Portugal, for a very **important** historic commemoration,” she said. “It turns out that we Stiltons are the descendants of a famous Portuguese rodent!”

Then she glanced at Trap, and he **CHUCKLED** to himself.

“What exactly will I be doing at this historic commemoration? Who is the friend of Grandfather’s





who needs a favour?" I asked.

"I don't want to say too much and spoil the surprise," Thea said. "But you'll be doing what our ancestor became famous for."

Thea and Trap exchanged a look. Trap chuckled again. *Why all the mystery?* I wondered.

I didn't have much time to think more about it, because Bugsy Wugsy shouted in my ear, "Mr G! We're at the airport! Lisbon is waiting for us!"

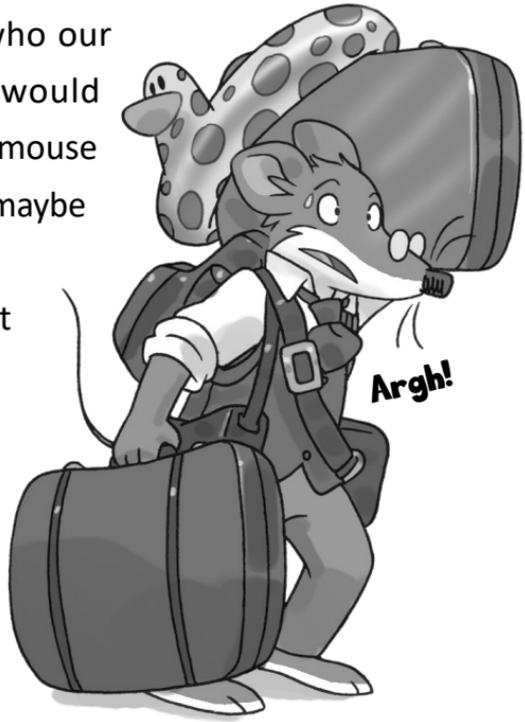
Thea checked her watch. "**CHEESE AND CRACKERS!** We're late! We have to hurry, or we'll miss our flight!"

I trudged into the airport loaded down with the



baggage. I wondered who our Portuguese ancestor would turn out to be. Was it a famous writer? Or a scientist? Or maybe an inventor?

I kept thinking about it the whole time we were waiting for our plane and while we were boarding. I was so immersed in my thoughts that I tripped over my own paws and **sprawled** in the aisle!



Baggage flew in all directions, and the inflatable duck float wound up around an old rodent's neck!

All the passengers burst out laughing.

"HA, HA, HA!"

"Hey, isn't that Geronimo Stilton?"

"I didn't know he was such a klutz!"

"How embarrassing for him!"

Squeeeek! Poor me!

Ha, ha, ha!

HEE, HEE, HEE!

HO, HO, HO!





The old rodent with the enormous inflatable duck around her neck frowned at me. **“You should be more careful!”** she scolded.

My fur turned pink with embarrassment. I picked up all the baggage and mumbled my apologies. I finally got to my seat and sank deeply into it. To take my mind off things, I picked up the travel guide on Portugal and began to read it.



DESTINATION: PORTUGAL



WHERE IS IT?

Portugal is the westernmost country in mainland Europe. It borders Spain on the north and east, and it stretches into the Atlantic Ocean on the south and west. Portugal has over 1,100 miles of coastline.

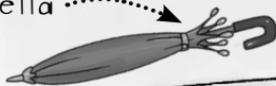
WHAT'S THE WEATHER LIKE?

Portugal's climate varies depending on the region. It is commonly hotter and drier in the south, where Lisbon is located, and cooler and wetter in the north. The weather is warmest from June to mid-September, which makes summer a nice time to visit.



DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT ...

- A pocket dictionary
- Sunscreen
- An umbrella



PORTUGAL AND NAVIGATION

At the beginning of the 15th Century, Henry the Navigator, son of the king of Portugal, organised many sea expeditions. He hoped to establish new colonies in West Africa and take advantage of the resources found there – particularly gold and sugar – and was involved in founding the Atlantic slave trade.



In 1497, Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama led the first European expedition to reach southern India by sea.

Da Gama left Lisbon on July 8, 1497, on his flagship, *São Gabriel*, and was accompanied by three other ships: the *São Rafael*, the *Berrio*, and a smaller vessel that carried supplies.

In November, he sailed around the Cape of Good Hope (which had previously been reached by Bartolomeu Dias, another Portuguese explorer). On May 20, 1498, he landed on the south-western coast of India. It was the first time a European ship had ever been there!