

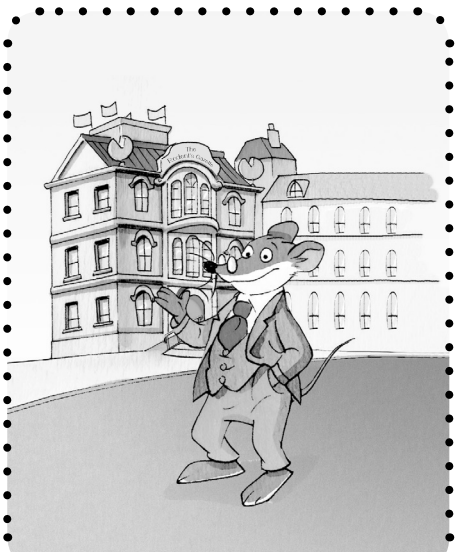


# A MYSTERIOUS GHOST STORY

Dear mouse friends, my name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I am the editor of *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous newspaper on Mouse Island. I'm also a writer by trade, and I love books.

I'm glad you're reading – I have a **THRILLING** new story to tell!

It all started one morning while I was having breakfast. As I poured a cup of **PIPING HOT** tea, I turned on the television.



**THE RODENT'S GAZETTE**

**LATE-BREAKING NEWS!**

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The newsmouse Pippi Skinnyfur announced, "Late-breaking news! We are here at New Mouse City's **GRAND HOTEL**, where all the guests are leaving because of a ghost!"



**AS I WAS HAVING  
BREAKFAST ...**

*A ghost?* I almost dropped my teacup. Had I heard right? Had she really said a ghost?

"Yes, that's right, you heard me, a ghost!" Ms. Skinnyfur continued.

"How strange!" I exclaimed. "Every mouse knows **THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS GHOSTS!**"



**... I TURNED ON THE TV  
AND STARED.**

Behind Ms. Skinnyfur, rodents were scurrying out of the hotel. I could hear them squeaking, "We want our money back!"

Ms. Skinnyfur began interviewing the owner of the Grand Hotel, Horazio



**A GHOST AT THE GRAND  
HOTEL?!**



Hoteltail. “Mr. Hoteltail, a **creepy** ghost has been **HAUNTING** your hotel for about a month now. Is there anything you want to say to your guests?”

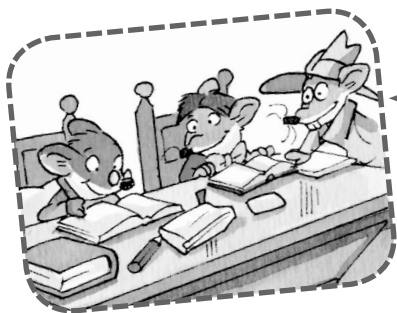
Poor Horatzio had tears in his eyes. “I want to extend a very sincere apology to our guests! I will refund all their money.”

“What will become of the Grand Hotel? It’s one of New Mouse City’s most **beloved institutions**. Will it be forced to close?” Ms. Skinnyfur asked.

I turned off the television. The whole situation was strange.

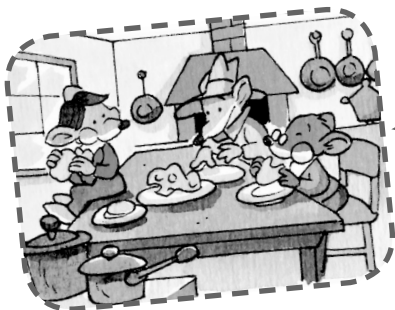
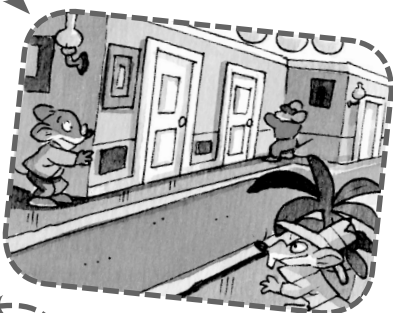
I was concerned about poor Horatzio. He was an old friend of mine. Back in primary school, we used to spend our afternoons scampering around his family’s hotel.

# Back in School ...



When we were young mice,  
my friend Hercule Poinat  
and I always did our  
homework at Horatzio's.

We used to play hide and  
seek in the long corridors  
of the Grand Hotel.



Then we would have a snack  
in the hotel's enormouse  
kitchens ...

... and we'd hide all the room  
keys from the receptionist,  
Oswald Rattaldo!





# WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? WHY?

When I left the house, I found a **surprise** waiting for me. On the doormat there was a letter addressed to me, *Geronimo Stilton*.

I was overcome with curiosity. I turned the package over and found a card that said:





Perplexed, I put the letter back into its envelope. A million questions scampered through my mind.

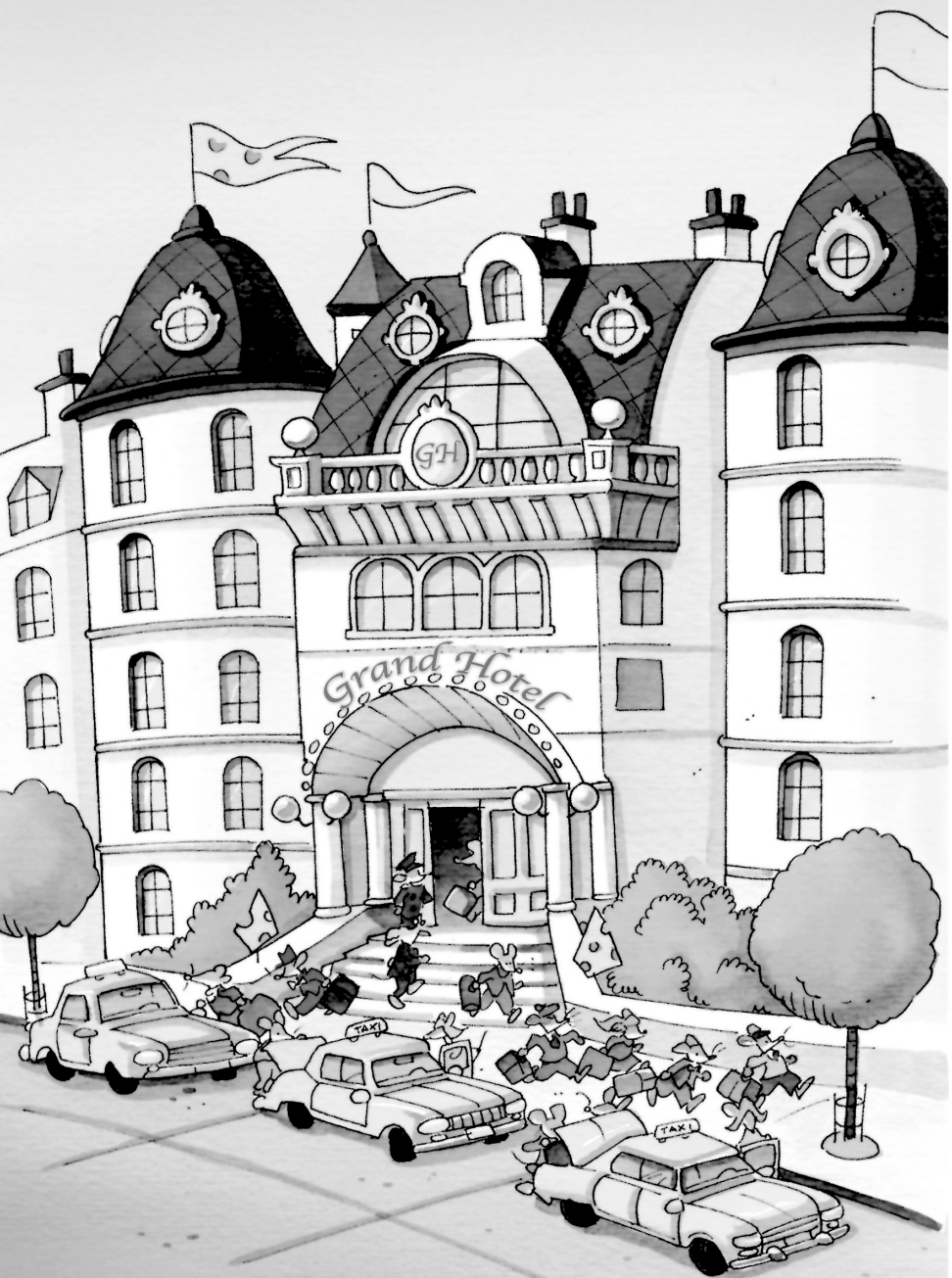
WHO was inviting me to the Grand Hotel?

WHAT did the sender want from me?

WHEN had the mysterious invitation been sent?

WHERE had it come from?

And above all ... WHY?







I was torn. I was intrigued by the letter, but I was also afraid of *ghosts*!

Eventually, curiosity won out. So I called a taxi to take me to the Grand Hotel.

When we arrived, a porter opened the door. "Welcome to New Mouse City's **GRAND HOTEL!**" he declared. His squeak sounded confident, but his whiskers were *twitching* nervously.

### PORTER

AT LARGE HOTELS, THERE IS ALWAYS A UNIFORMED PORTER AT THE DOOR. THEY GREET GUESTS AS THEY ARRIVE AND CALL TAXIS FOR GUESTS WHO ARE LEAVING.

There was a crowd of rodents leaving the hotel. I was the only one who wanted to go in!

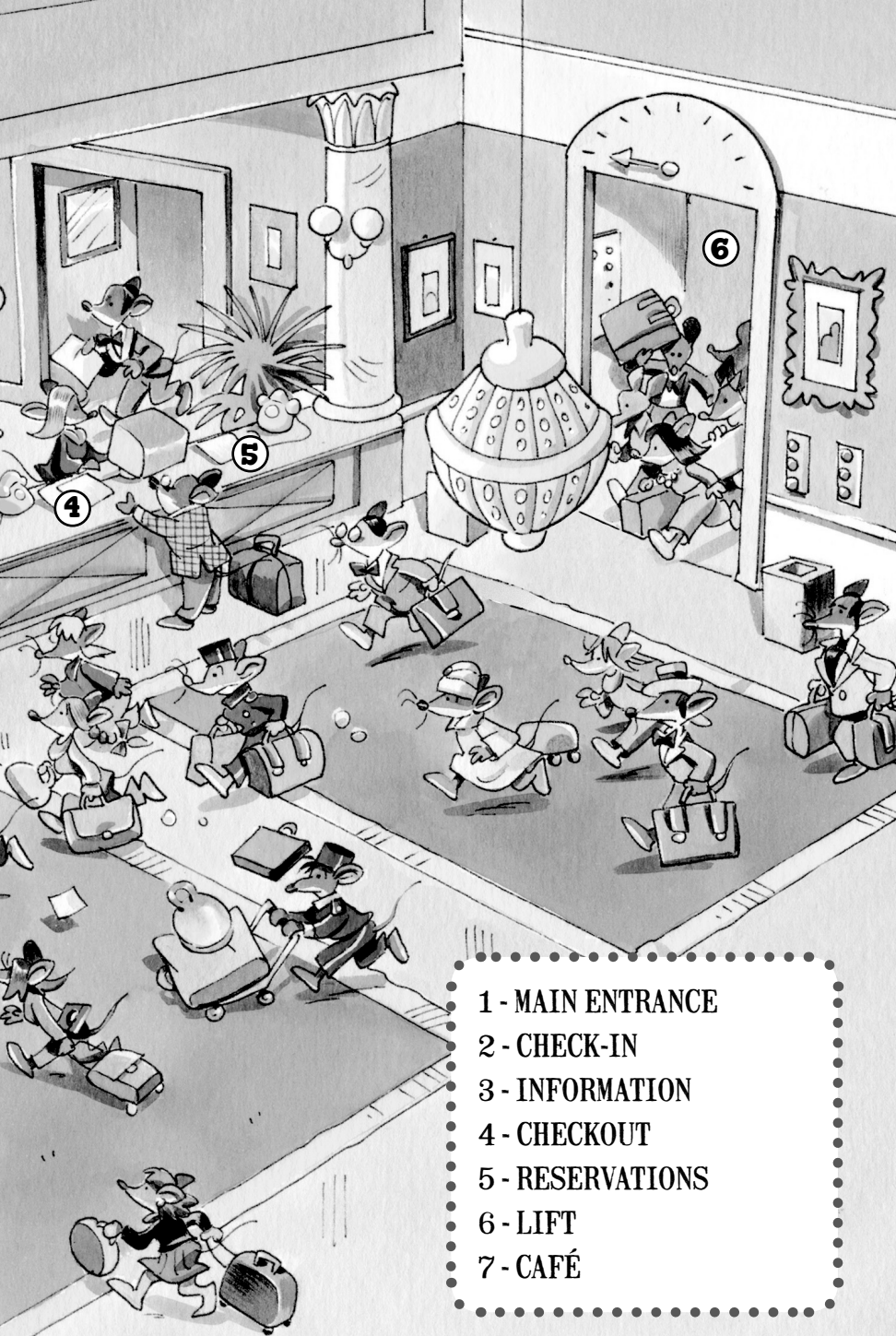
A mouse in her bathrobe ran out the door, screaming, "**I can't stay here a second longer!**"

I pushed through the revolving door and found myself in the lobby. The last of the guests were departing.

### LOBBY

THE LOBBY IS THE HOTEL'S INDOOR ENTRANCE AREA. IN LARGE HOTELS, IT IS A VERY SPACIOUS AND ELEGANT ROOM WHERE YOU CAN FIND THE RECEPTION AND CHECKOUT DESKS AND THE CAFÉ.





1 - MAIN ENTRANCE

2 - CHECK-IN

3 - INFORMATION

4 - CHECKOUT

5 - RESERVATIONS

6 - LIFT

7 - CAFÉ



# ROOM 313



I approached the reception desk, where **Oswald Rattaldo**, the receptionist, was seated. I noticed that his eyes were red, as if he had been **CRYING**.

A guest scurried past, yelling, “We want a full refund, do you hear me? I’d

rather spend the night in a cat clinic than stay in this hotel another minute!”

“I’m sorry, sir, we have never had a ghost at the Grand Hotel before!” Oswald sighed.

“Good morning,

## RECEPTION

THE RECEPTION DESK IS IN THE LOBBY. IT’S WHERE GUESTS CHECK IN AND RECEIVE THEIR ROOM KEYS. WHEN IT’S TIME TO LEAVE, GUESTS COME HERE TO CHECK OUT AND ASK FOR THE BILL.



Oswald, how are you?" I said. "I'm here for room 313."

Oswald recognised me immediately. "Mr. Geronimo! What a **pleasure** to see you again!" he said happily.

"I see that suite 313 has been reserved in your name. Come, I will take you upstairs right away."

Entering room 313 was like going back in time. Even though it had

been years since I'd been inside the hotel, I remembered the canopy bed, the **Cheddar-coloured** carpet, and the golden cheese slice wallpaper.

I thanked Oswald for bringing me up. Then I went into the bathroom to wash my paws. Even the bathroom had remained the same. The only new detail I saw was the shower curtain, which was decorated with a pattern of bananas.

I frowned. That was a bit odd. Bananas?

That was when I heard a soft voice squeaking my name. "*Geronimooooo ...*"

## SUITE

• SUITE IS A FRENCH WORD  
 • (PRONOUNCED 'SWEET') THAT  
 • MEANS 'SERIES OF ROOMS' OR  
 • 'APARTMENT'. A SUITE IS USUALLY  
 • MADE UP OF A BEDROOM, A  
 • BATHROOM, AND A SMALL LIVING  
 • ROOM.





I gulped. Could it be the ghost? No, it was probably just my overactive imagination.

I leaned over to turn on the tap. That was when I heard it again.

*“Geronimoooo ...”*

Strange!

I picked up the paw towel. Again I heard, *“Geronimoooo ...”*

Very strange!

Suddenly, the shower curtain began moving. Something inside it was reaching towards me! Its arms were open wide, like the tentacles of an **OCTOPUS**.

I was so scared, I could barely open my snout to squeak, “HEEEELLLLLLLP!”

That was when a tail popped out from behind the curtain, then a paw, and finally a rat’s snout. **“PEEKABOO!”**

I jumped backwards. “Wh-wh-who is it?”

A rodent with **GREY FUR** and whiskers shiny with fur gel poked his snout out.

“My dear Stilton, how did you like my little joke?”



Peekaboo!

Wh-wh-who  
is it?





he asked, smirking.

Only then did I recognise him. It was my friend **Hercule Poirat**! He's a detective, and loves mysteries the way mice love cheese.

Unfortunately for me, he also loves playing jokes. And I'm his favourite target! (It's not my fault I'm a 'fraidy mouse.)

I should've realised something was up when I saw that banana-patterned shower curtain. Hercule just loves bananas ... **and he knows how much I detest them!**



# STRANGE THINGS ARE HAPPENING AT THE GRAND HOTEL!

“What are you doing here, Hercule?” I demanded.

“Strange things are happening at the Grand Hotel,” he replied seriously. “Scrape the **cheese** out of your ears, Stilton! Even a scaredy-mouse like you knows that ghosts don’t exist. So who has been **terrorising** the guests at this hotel for the last month?”

Then he lowered his squeak. “I need your help to find out!”

I sighed. “Hercule, you know that I’m a very busy mouse. I have a new book to write, and —”

“I’m begging you, my dear Stilton!”

Hercule cried. “If you don’t want to do it for me, do it for our city! The **GRAND HOTEL** is a beloved New

Mouse City establishment, and that is precious. Think about how many rodents work at the Grand Hotel. You don't want them to lose their jobs, do you? Plus, we simply *must* help our old friend Horatizio! He needs us."

Then he lit up. "I have a *GENIUS* idea! Let's go to him now! He will convince you!"

Before I could protest, **he was dragging me to Horatizio's office.**

