Geronimo Stilton

Thea Stilton
THE SECRET OF THE SNOW

Scholastic Inc.
Thea Stilton and the Thea Sisters

Thea

Paulina

Colette

Violet

Nicky

Pamela
The Land of Minwa is a fantasy land where magical creatures live. They are based on creatures from Japanese myths and Japanese folktales known as *mukashi banashi*. Some of their names and abilities, however, are unique to this strange world.

**Tanuki:** This mischievous creature can shape-shift into almost anything. In Japan, its true form is thought to be a raccoon-dog, a type of wild canine.

**Tengu:** These mysterious, birdlike creatures have red wings. They live in the Forest of the Dancing Pines and are expert potion makers.

**Orochi:** This dragon has eight tails and eight heads, and each head has an angry temper. If Orochi is guarding a bridge, you must ask permission before crossing.

**The Snow Fairies:** They live along the banks of the Frosty River. Their breath can turn things into ice.
KITSUNE: These beautiful fairies have long, foxlike tails. Each one carries a mysterious golden sphere.

KAPPA: These peaceful water creatures have delicate skin and resemble turtles. They know all about natural healing remedies.

KIJIMUNA: Experts at fishing and navigation, these fairylike creatures are very unfriendly. It’s best not to ride in their boats unless you have to.

UMIHOZU: This enormous creature resembles an octopus. Legend says that it tips over boats that come close to it... but it may not be as mean as it looks.

BAKU: These creatures can visit the dreams of those who live in the Land of Minwa. In this world, the baku looks like a tiny, colorful elephant.

LAUGHING FAIRIES: They are full of information about the Land of Minwa — but they can’t stop laughing long enough to share it.
“A little bit higher,” Colette instructed Paulina, who was placing a sparkly glass star on the big spruce tree at the entrance to Mouseford Academy. “Stop! Hang it right next to that silver ball.” Paulina smiled down at her. “It’s perfect, Colette. You have such an eye for these things.”

The festive atmosphere of Christmas filled the air at the academy. The semester was over, and students were happy and excited for the holidays. They all pitched in, stringing colored lights and decorations through the halls.

The Thea Sisters had offered to decorate
It's beautiful!
the huge tree that stood at the academy entrance. Each year, it was decorated in a different theme.

This year’s theme was snow, and the five friends thought it was perfect. The magical silver and sparkling white colors were enchanting, and reminded them of the fantastic adventures they’d had together.

“I made an ornament for the tree,” Violet said shyly. She carefully opened a small box that she held in her paws.

“Cheese niblets! It’s beautiful!” Pamela exclaimed. “Did you really make this yourself?”

Violet nodded and held up the ornament — a blue glass ball with a perfect replica of Mouseford Academy nestled in the snow inside it.
Nicky looked stunned. “Where did you learn to make things like that?”

“My grandfather taught me when I was young,” Violet explained. “He would spend hours making models of ships to put inside bottles. So I thought to myself, why not try it with a glass ball, and our school?”

“It’s fabumouse, Vi!” Colette exclaimed. “It makes the tree even more beautiful.”

“Gee, snow. Could this year’s theme be even more boring?” a familiar voice asked.

The friends turned to see Ruby Flashyfur behind them. She loved to make trouble for the Thea Sisters.

“Hi, Ruby,” Nicky said with a friendly smile. “Would you like to help us decorate the tree? We really have some beautiful ornaments for it.”

Ruby shrugged. “Sorry, but I have
“Well,” Ruby continued, sounding annoyed, “I am getting ready to leave for the holidays. I’m going to an **exclusive** ski resort in the mountains.”
“Okay, well, have fun,” Colette replied casually.

Ruby clenched her paws, turned around, and walked away with her snout in the air. The Thea Sisters looked at one another — they knew Ruby well, and this was just like her. Then they continued decorating the tree.

They wanted it to be the most beautiful tree possible!