

# Geronimo Stilton

## Thea Stilton AND THE RIDDLE OF THE RUINS



Scholastic Inc.

If you purchased this book without a cover, you should be aware that this book is stolen property. It was reported as “unsold and destroyed” to the publisher, and neither the author nor the publisher has received any payment for this “stripped book.”

Copyright © 2016 by Edizioni Piemme S.p.A., Palazzo Mondadori, Via Mondadori 1, 20090 Segrate, Italy. International Rights © Atlantyca S.p.A. English translation © 2018 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 and THEA 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.

ISBN 978-1-338-26857-7

Text by Thea Stilton

Original title *Il tesoro scomparso*

Cover by Barbara Pellizzari, Giuseppe Facciotto, and Flavio Ferron

Illustrations by Barbara Pellizzari, Chiara Ballello, Valeria Cairoli, and Valentina Grassini

Graphics by Chiara Cebraro

Special thanks to AnnMarie Anderson

Translated by Andrea Schaffer

Interior design by Kay Petronio

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1                      18 19 20 21 22

Printed in the U.S.A.                      40

First printing 2018



# AN UNEXPECTED PRIZE

Most places on Whale Island are known for being beautiful and tranquil, but there's one **EXCEPTION** to the rule: **MOUSEFORD ACADEMY!** Students from all over the world come to study at the famous school, making it a **lively, ENERGETIC,** and not particularly **quiet** place.

Usually most students **LEAVE** campus for vacation in the summer. But this year was unusual: It was late June, and one classroom at Mouseford was still **OVERFLOWING** with mice!

"This **archaeology seminar** was a huge success!" Nicky commented as she looked around the room.

"I know," Paulina agreed, nodding. "I



## AN UNEXPECTED PRIZE

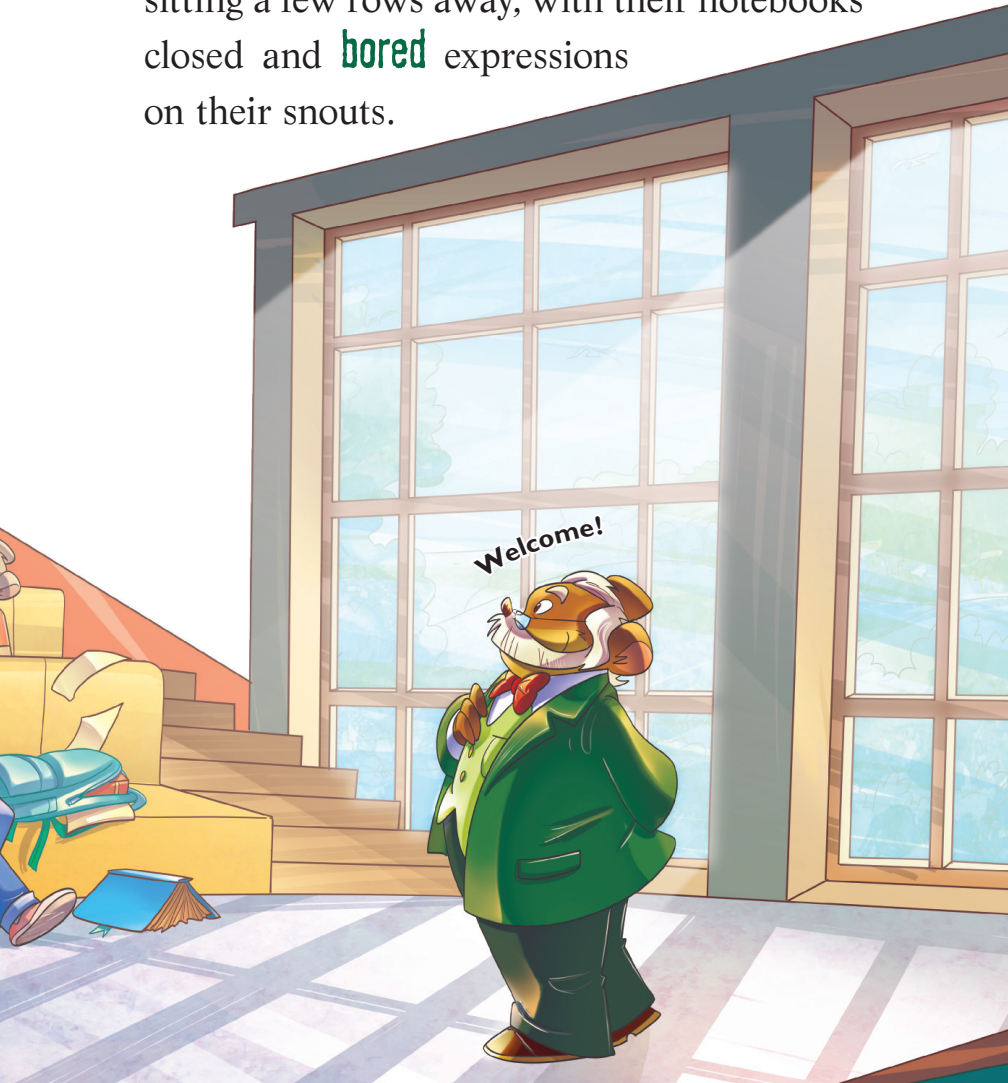
didn't think there would be so **many** archaeology enthusiasts!"

Colette laughed. "If you ask me, I'd say some of the mice in this room are more *passionate* about the extra credit they'll get for attending the seminar than they are for ancient times," she said.





Her friends immediately knew who Colette was talking about: the Ruby Crew. They were sitting a few rows away, with their notebooks closed and **bored** expressions on their snouts.





“Luckily, today is the last day of this **torture**,” the Thea Sisters heard Zoe tell her friends.

“I know,” Ruby agreed eagerly. “The second this class is over, I’m hopping on my mother’s yacht and sailing to a **PRIVATE** island. I’m spending the rest of the summer at a fabumouse **LUXURY** resort!”

At that moment, **headmaster Octavius de Mousus** cleared his throat and began to squeak.

“Students, during this summer course, you’ve worked hard and completed some **interesting** projects,” he said proudly. “You’ve all done excellent work.

“The group of students who received the highest grade on the final project is Colette, Nicky, Paulina, Pamela, and Violet,” he continued. “Their website dedicated to revealing the **history** of Whale Island was an **ENORMOUSE** success!”



Ruby rolled her eyes. “Does it really matter who got the **highest** grade?” she muttered to her friend Connie. “I mean, we all get extra credit just for taking this **BORING** class.”

But the headmaster’s next words knocked the grin right off Ruby’s snout.

“I’ve also decided to award a **special prize** for the best project,” he said. “These five students will have the opportunity to travel to Turkey for an **archaeological excavation** at Hierapolis!”

The Thea Sisters jumped to their paws: Had they understood correctly? Would they get to work with a **REAL** team of archaeologists?

“Sounds like a great prize,” Ruby snickered.





“Who wants to spend her vacation working hard on a **dusty** old dig in the **hot** sun?”

“The archaeological site at Hierapolis is located near Pamukkale, a town famous for its fascinating and beautiful travertine terraces and hot springs.”

Ruby stopped squeaking immediately and regarded the Thea Sisters **enviously**.

At that moment, Professor Sparkle burst into the classroom.

“Please forgive the intrusion, Headmaster,” he interrupted. “But I’m afraid there’s a problem with the **reservations** for the students traveling to Turkey!”

The Thea Sisters glanced at one another: Was their dream going to be dashed so quickly? They had only just found out about the **incredible** trip!