

# Geronimo Stilton

## **DOWN AND OUT DOWN UNDER**



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# IT ALL BEGAN WITH A PHONE CALL

I'll admit it. I'm a bit of a 'fraidy mouse. But does that stop me from loving **adventure**? No way! This rodent is up for anything. Well, maybe not anything. I get sick on planes, boats, and when I walk too fast. Still, my last adventure was SUPER-EXCITING.

It all began with a phone **call**. I was at my office when . . . Oops, I almost forgot to introduce myself! My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I am the publisher of the most famous





**newspaper** on Mouse Island, *The Rodent's Gazette*.

Anyway, that day the phone rang.

“Hello, Stilton here. *Geronimo Stilton*,” I answered.

A female voice giggled sweetly on the other end. “Hi, G! What’s squeaking?” she asked.

My snout broke into a broad grin. It was my fascinating friend Petunia Pretty Paws. She is a famous TV reporter. Petunia has dedicated her life to **SAVING THE ENVIRONMENT**. What a sweet mouse!

“Hi, Nepunia—I mean, Tenunia—I mean, Petunia,” I babbled. Why, oh why, did I turn into such a fool every time I talked to Petunia? She is an amazing mouse. I watch her TV show every night. I have had a huge **CRUSH** on her for the longest time. Too bad I can’t even scamper in a straight



line when I'm around her. Still, Petunia is so nice that she never makes fun of me.

"Listen, G. I've got an idea," she said now. "Are you sitting down?"

I grabbed the arms of my chair.

"**Ahem**, yes, I'm not standing. I mean, I'm in my chair. I mean, sitting, check!" I rambled. I clamped my paw over my mouth before Petunia decided to check me into the Mad Mouse Center.



“I need your **help** on my latest assignment,” Petunia continued. “We must make a date.”

I chewed my whiskers. I loved getting together with Petunia, but I hadn’t had my fur cut in weeks. I’d need to make an appointment at Clip Rat’s Salon and Day Spa right away. And I could use a sharp new suit. I stared down at the buttons straining on my jacket. I didn’t want Petunia to think I was turning into an out-of-shape fur ball.

“**Ahem**, well, how about text Tuesday, I mean, next Tuesday?” I suggested.

Petunia giggled. “I have a better idea,” she squeaked. “But first, open the **WINDOW** behind your desk. It’s always so stuffy in your office, isn’t it?”

I scratched my head. I wasn’t sure why Petunia was suddenly interested in climate



control, but I did what she asked. I could never say no to Petunia.

I opened the window. A fresh breeze tickled my whiskers. I closed my eyes and took a **DEEP BREATH**. Ah, my yoga teacher was right. **DEEP BREATHING** is so wonderful. I felt so refreshed. So energized. So completely

**KNOCKED OUT!**

You see, before I could say “squeak!” a **BLONDE** rodent had parachuted in through my window and kicked me right in the snout.

I crumpled like a used Cheesy Chew wrapper. Just before I fainted, I noticed three things: The mouse had shocking **BLUE** eyes, a tight **HOT-PINK** jumpsuit, and a look of fearlessness on her pretty face.

Petunia Pretty Paws had landed.