Oh, How I Love Fall!

It was a beautiful Fall morning. It had just stopped raining, and my whiskers twitched at the smell of damp leaves mixed with the scent of freshly baked cheese pastries wafting from the café. I breathed in the cool, fresh air as I pedaled toward my office.

Wait, I almost forgot! My name is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton. I am the editor of The Rodent’s Gazette, the most famous newspaper on Mouse Island.
Hi, Geronimo!

What a day!

Hi!
As I was saying, my dear rodent friends, I was really enjoying the **BEAUTIFUL** autumn air. I couldn’t wait for the weekend. I planned to invite all my **friends** to the Stilton **farm**, out in the country. There, we could pick **CHESTNUTS** and **roast** them around a fire.

**OH, HOW I LOVE FALL!**

The leaves are so **colorful**, and it’s the best season to **eat grilled cheese**!
When I reached 17 Swiss Cheese Center, I parked my **bicycle** in front. On the way to my office, I passed by the break room. There, **MUNCHING** on cheese, I saw **Vanessa Vogue** (the *Gazette*’s fashion journalist); my sister, **Thea**; (the *Gazette*’s special correspondent); and **Cara DeColores** (the graphic designer for the *Gazette*).

They were all whispering mysteriously, “**PSSST . . . DID YOU HEAR?**”

“**PSSST** . . . everyone will be there . . . **PSSST** . . . it will be scary, scream-worthy, a real frightfest!”
I interrupted them. “Hello, everyone!” I said. “What exactly are you saying is going to be **SCARY, SCREAM-WORTHY, and frightening**?”

The three rodents looked **startled** to see me.

“Why, um, we were just talking about a new article idea I just had,” Vanessa answered. “About the, um, frightening new fashions in Transylmousea.”

“That sounds **mousetastic**!” I said. “**Good luck** with the article!”

They all quickly stood up.

“Thanks, Geronimo!” Thea said. “But, um, it’s late and we need to get back to work!”

Then they ran off, and I was confused. Why were they in such a rush?

**WHAT A STRANGE ENCOUNTER!**
On the second floor, I spotted my assistant, Mousella, chatting with reporter Babs Bonbon.

“PSSST,” she said in a loud whisper. “Everyone will be there . . . PSSST . . . it will be scary, scream-worthy, a real frightfest!”

I interrupted them, too. “Excuse me, but what is going to be SCARY, SCREAM-WORTHY, and frightening?”

“Um, we were just talking about the new horror film, The Ghost of Cheddar Castle,” Mousella explained. “Sorry, we have to get back to work!” Then they both scurried away.

ANOTHER STRANGE ENCOUNTER!

I ran into Jim Dribbles (the Gazette’s
expert soccer commentator) who was whispering with his sister Gloria.

“Pssst,” Jim whispered. “Everyone will be there. Pssst . . . it will be scary, scream-worthy, and a real frightfest!”

“Excuse me, friends,” I asked. “Can you PLEASE tell me what is going to be scary, scream-worthy, and frightening?”

Jim’s eyes got wide, and he pointed. “That piece of flying cheese right behind you!”

Confused, I turned my head, but there was nothing behind me! When I turned back, Jim and Gloria were running away, giggling.

“GERONIMO HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY DISTRACTED!” Jim was saying to his sister. “The secret has been protected! And it was will be truly SCARY, SCREAM-WORTHY, and frightening!”

I tried to follow them, but they were in much better shape than I was and I couldn’t catch up.

THAT WAS MY THIRD STRANGE ENCOUNTER IN A ROW!

Jim had used the word secret. Now it was clear that my coworkers were hiding something from me. But what could it be?
I needed some fresh air to clear my head. But when I opened my office window, what I saw made my whiskers shake!

A long black car marked Funeral Movers was parked in front of the building.

Some rodents dressed in black were unloading coffin-shaped boxes.

This was the strangest encounter of them all!
I quickly ran downstairs to see what they were up to. As I passed by the cafeteria, my nose twitched. The smell of cheesy goodness wafted through the doors. But who was cooking so early? **HOW STRANGE!**

I started to push open the doors, but a furry paw pushed me back.

“Geronimo, why are you being so nosy?”
“Eeeeeek!” I squeaked.
Then I realized that it was just my cousin Trap.

“Don’t call me nosy!” I snapped. “Strange things are happening around here, and I am the only one who doesn’t know what’s going on!”

I tried to look past him, but he kept moving his body, blocking my view. Then he started to tease me by singing a silly song.

“Geroni-mini is a curious ninny! Geroni-mad is a curious lad! Geroni-mule is a curious fool!”