



Geronimo Stilton

# THE GOLDEN KEY

THE FIFTEENTH ADVENTURE  
IN THE KINGDOM OF FANTASY



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## *Dear Rodent Friends,*

I'm so excited that I'm jumping out of my fur! I'm going to tell you about a fabumouse adventure, an epic tale that will ward off boredom. It's like a super-strong spell that's capable of erasing bad moods and sad thoughts . . . just like magic!

Do you want to know how it all started? Easy — with a *magical duel*! And that's exactly where my story begins, too . . .

It was a dark and mysterious night. You could sense battle in the air, even though silence blanketed everything like a cloak.

Two figures stood out in the sky . . .

Two enemies . . .

Two fates, bound together by a challenge. This challenge would decide the destiny of the most precious resource in the world:

*imagination!*



On one side was a beautiful maiden, with skin as delicate as tissue paper. Her long hair, dark as **INK**, swayed in the wind.

Her face glowed, but what made her truly extraordinary was her incredible dress: layers and layers of **PAPER**, covered with sparkly writing. It rustled in the air like pages being turned by an invisible hand. In her own hand, she held a golden pen that she pointed at her foe.





On the other side was her opponent, wrapped in a sinister lead-colored cloak. His name was **REGULUS**.

This wizard was holding a strange wand: a lead ruler with many numbered notches and mysterious **magical symbols** carved on it.

The woman spoke firmly. “Regulus! I beg you — no world can survive without fantasy! I will protect it with my life!”



In response, Regulus moved forward quickly and flicked the ruler. A giant **lead-gray** ray burst forth.

The woman jumped to one side, but the sinister ray still grazed her ankle.

“How’s that for an answer?” the wizard said. Without hesitating, he attacked again.

The woman reacted quickly, even though the ankle that had been struck by the evil spell had already turned the color of lead. It was growing **stiffer** by the second. She would have to be smart in battle now! She turned away from the wizard and uttered a magic spell under her breath.

Before her opponent knew what was happening, she disappeared in a whirlwind of golden sparkles. Her words echoed through the air after her.

*“Paper comes, paper goes, vanishes from under your nose!”*

It turned out that this woman was also an expert

in the magical arts, just like the wizard Regulus!  
She was

*Imaginaria,*  
*the queen of Imagination,*  
*Lady of Books and*  
*Creativity.*

Traveling through enchanted dimensions, she thought, *Now that the lead ray has struck me, there's no turning back. I will soon transform into a lead statue. There is only one person who can save me: the Fantastic Hero! I must summon him before it's too late.* She lifted her golden pen and said aloud, *"Paper comes, paper goes, Fantastic Hero to expose!"*

And so our story begins . . .





# THE HERO'S DREAM

One evening, I was wandering the streets of New Mouse City, feeling confused. Everything was covered in this **STRANGE**, ink-like **darkness**. It seemed almost magical. I wandered through the dark and tried to figure out exactly where I was. Holey cheese! How could I be lost? I knew New Mouse City like the back of my paws!

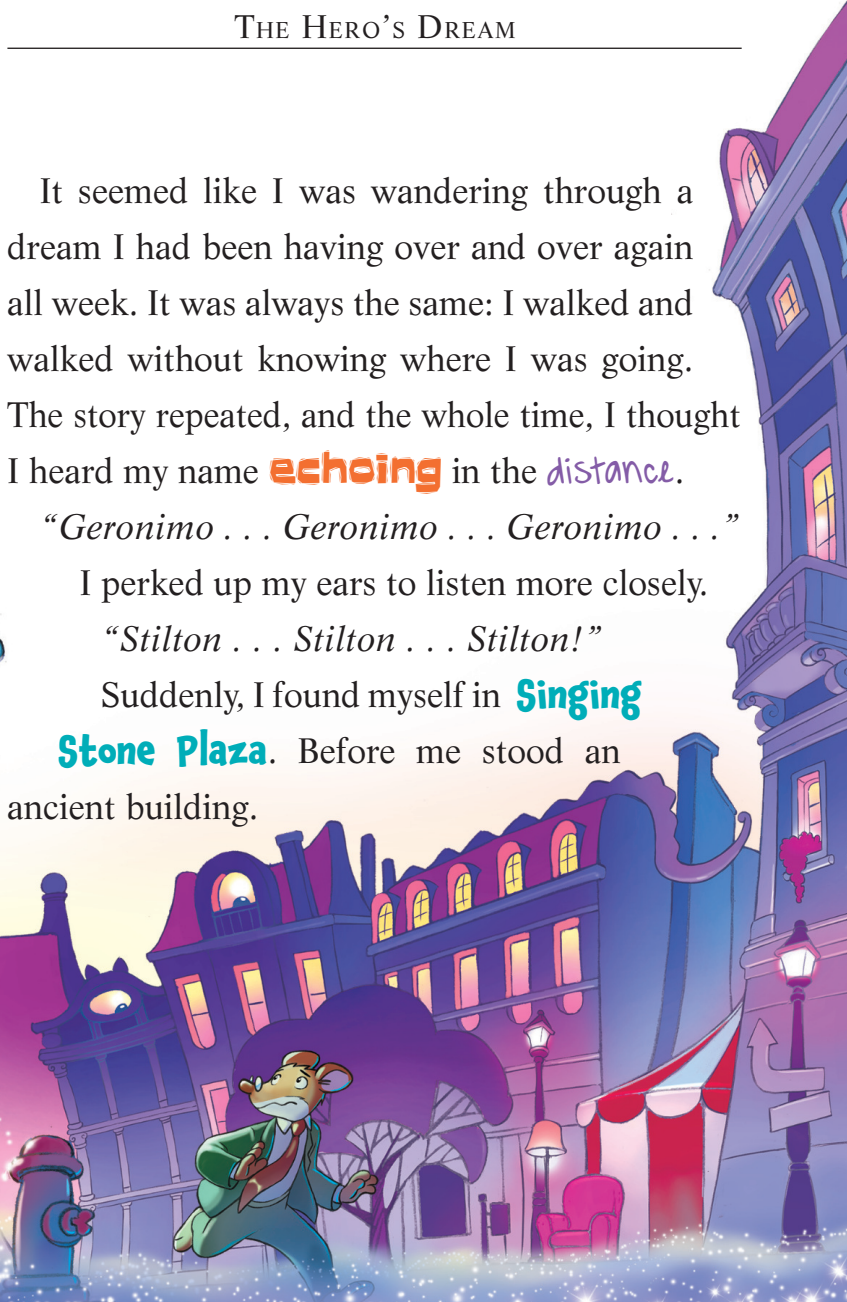
It seemed like I was wandering through a dream I had been having over and over again all week. It was always the same: I walked and walked without knowing where I was going. The story repeated, and the whole time, I thought I heard my name **echoing** in the *distance*.

*“Geronimo . . . Geronimo . . . Geronimo . . .”*

I perked up my ears to listen more closely.

*“Stilton . . . Stilton . . . Stilton!”*

Suddenly, I found myself in **Singing Stone Plaza**. Before me stood an ancient building.



I knew this place well! I had passed it many times before, but I remembered it dilapidated and crumbling. Now it was so beautiful — each detail was perfect!

At the entrance stood a golden stand, and above the door there was a strange **SUNDIAL**.

Just then I realized that the mysterious voice that seemed to be calling me was coming from inside the building! I tiptoed closer on trembling paws and noticed that the door was slightly open.

“Squeeeeak!”

My voice echoed in the silence and scared me out of my fur! Moldy mozzarella!

I ducked through the doorway and tried to hide inside the building, but . . . a *whirlwind of golden sparkles* blocked my path!

After a moment, it vanished. In its place was a woman, wearing a magnificent dress made of



thousands  
of paper  
pages  
filled with  
sparkly  
writing. She  
held what  
looked like a  
precious  
golden pen.  
But the most  
remarkable thing about  
her was her sweet smile!



How magnificent!

Her voice was also **sweet**. “Oh, my hero,  
I finally found you! You’re fantastic, just like I  
*imagined!*”