

Geronimo Stilton

CAVEMICE

THE STONE OF FIRE



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CLANG! CLANG!

My dear mouse friends, I hope you enjoy this story. I have spent many hours **CHISELING** it into **STONE** for you!





My ears were **ringing** from the pounding of the chisel, even though I was wearing my earmuffs.

But wait! I should introduce myself.

My name is **GERONIMO STILTONOOT**, and I'm sure that you have figured out by now that I am a cavemouse. I live in the village of Old Mouse City.

I run *The Stone Gazette*, the city's most famous newspaper. (Actually, it's a stone slab. Paper hasn't been invented yet.) We carve one for every rodent in the city!

It's hard work, but life is hard for us **CAVEMICE**. When you live in the **STONE AGE**, danger is waiting around every corner!

We cavemice risk our **FUR** every time we step out of our caves. That's why I wrote up my *will* just this morning. You never know what might happen! For example, a



CLANG! CLANG!

giant **meteorite** could fall from the sky and squash me. Or the volcano could explode with **boiling lava** the color of fiery orange cheddar.



Or maybe Tiger Khan will invade with his army of saber-toothed **TIGERS**. Or a rampaging **T. REX** could

chomp on my tail or bury me in a giant pile of dung. (Yuck! What a terrible way to go!)

Boiling lava!



You're tiger meat, mouse!



Not the tail!





Or worst of all — the **GREAT ZAP** could strike me down and singe my fur!

Fortunately, **disasters** like these don't happen every day. But there are plenty of other daily dangers to worry about. For example, the **MAIL-A-DACTYL** is always dropping letters carved in stone right on top of my head! *Ouch!* Sorry, what was I saying?

Oh, yes. *My will...*

I keep it here at the entrance to my **CAVE**, and every once in a while I make a few changes.

Phew! What a smell!



The Great Zap!



*Watch your head.
Special delivery!*





**I, GERONIMO STILTONOOT,
BEING OF SOUND FUR AND WHISKERS, LEAVE:**

**— TO MY SISTER, THEA,
THE STONE GAZETTE**

— TO MY COUSIN TRAP, MY AUTOSAURUS

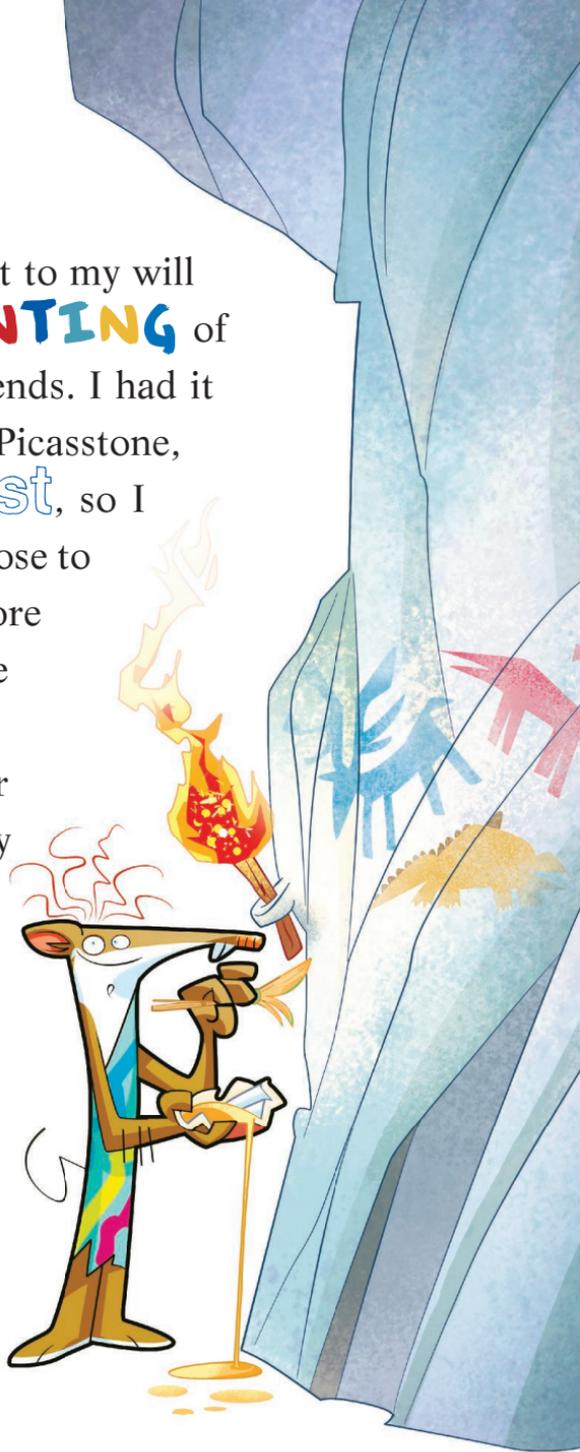
**— TO MY DEAR NEPHEW, BENJAMIN,
MY CAVE**

**— AND EVERYTHING ELSE, INCLUDING
MY SEASHELLS, TO MY GOOD
MYSTERY-SOLVING FRIEND,
HERCULE POIRAT**

On the wall next to my will is a cave **PAINTING** of my family and friends. I had it painted by Pablo Picasstone, the village **artist**, so I could always be close to them. They are more important to me than cheese.

If it weren't for them, I'd probably be **extinct** by now!

**PABLO PICASSTONE
IN FRONT OF HIS
PAINTING
Moose at Sunset**





CLANG! CLANG!

Let me introduce everyone in the painting to you. The one with **white** fur shaped like an onion on top of her head is **GRANDMA RATROCK**. She's a very strict rodent! If I spill even a crumb of cheese on my clothes, she's the first one to **SCOLD** me. She says she does it for my own good.





The rodent who's pinching my right ear is my cousin **Trap**. He never misses a chance to play a **trick** on me! He runs the Rotten Tooth Tavern, which is famous for its deep-fried cheese nuggets.

That's my sister, **THEA**, in the purple dress. She's a very lively and active rodent! She's a special reporter for *The Stone Gazette*, and she's always on the hunt for a scoop.

And that **cute** young rodent in front is my nephew, **BENJAMIN**. He's very smart — as sharp as cheddar, I always say.

Like I said, my family is very **important** to me. We are always there for one another, no matter what. That's the only way to survive in the **STONE AGE!**