

Thea Stilton

MOUSEFORD ACADEMY

**MICE TAKE THE
STAGE**



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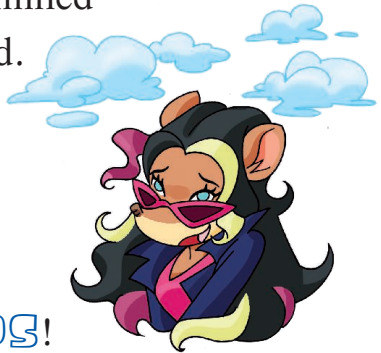


SNOUT IN THE CLOUDS!

It was a **sunny** day on Whale Island. Mouseford Academy's **music** class was packed with eagerly squeaking students. Professor Anna Aria had a special lesson planned for the day. She would be lecturing about popular music from around the world.

The **THEA SISTERS** — Colette, Nicky, Pam, Paulina, and Violet — were seated in the front row, determined not to miss a single word.

But Professor Aria, who usually had her paws planted firmly on **earth**, seemed to have her snout in the **CLOUDS!**



She'd forgotten her notes in the teachers' lounge, she couldn't get the **stereo** to play, and she kept losing her train of thought.

The Thea Sisters could see their professor needed a helping paw.

FASTER than the mouse who ran up the clock, Nicky ran to get the professor's



notebook. Violet consulted her own **NOTES** and helped the professor get her **lecture** back on track. As for Pam, she put her magic **FIX-IT** paws to work and got the stereo working again.

“Thank you, mouselets,” said Professor Aria. She tapped a few keys on her computer and told the class, “Umm, the track you’re about to hear is, er, a typical example of a traditional **Japanese** song.”

But as the first notes began to play, Paulina **murmured**, “Japan, my paw! This is a famous flute song from Peru!”

The students **giggled** under their whiskers as the professor quickly tried to change the song. It was obvious she was more **confused** than a rodent in a cat kennel.

Professor Aria pulled herself together, and the lesson continued without any other

problems. But as soon as they left the classroom, the Thea Sisters began chattering about their teacher.

“Professor Aria was more lost than a lab rat in a maze!” Nicky commented. “Something must be **BOTHERING** her.”

“Hmm, I wonder,” Paulina reflected. “This past week I’ve seen her in the computer lab a bunch of times, **typing** and *sighing*, sighing and typing . . .”

“She’s distracted; she’s making lots of silly mistakes . . . isn’t it obvious?” Colette exclaimed. “She’s got all the symptoms: Professor Aria must be **IN LOVE**! Let’s go to the computer lab and get all the juicy details.”

The mouselets scurried over to the lab. It was nearly empty — most students were at lunch. The only rodent seated at a

computer was Professor Aria.

The music teacher was tapping steadily on the **KEYS**. Then she cried,

"oh, my goodmouse! i can't believe it!"





A MYSTERIOUS FRIEND . . .

Alarmed, the Thea Sisters hurried to their professor's side. She was chatting with someone on the computer.

The screen **lit up** with the words: "I would like to hold our next concert on Whale Island. After all these years, **AT LAST** we'll have a chance to see each other again! What do you say?"

A **concert** on Whale Island? Who was the professor chatting with . . . and why did she seem so flustered?

Colette, Nicky, Pam, Paulina, and Violet exchanged curious **GLANCES**.

"Oh, it's nothing, mouselets," said Professor Aria, trying to **calm** down. "I'm talking to Mark Mousington, an old friend



I've just gotten back in touch with."

Colette, who was always very well **informed**, twitched her tail. "Mark Mousington? You mean the producer of the mouserrific **RATSTREET BOYS?**"

The other mouselets stood there with their snouts hanging open like a pack of hungry cats at feeding time. The Ratstreet Boys were the hottest band on Mouse Island!

"Yes, him," Professor Aria admitted with a **SMILE**. "We grew up together. We've been **FRIENDS** since we were mouselings."

The professor pulled an old **PHOTO** out of her pocket. It





showed a young mouselet holding a guitar. Her snout was full of **JOY** and **HOPE**, and she was smiling broadly. Next to her was a young mouse with a crazy fur-do and a funny outfit. He was looking at her *tenderly*. It was the professor and Mark Mousington, many years earlier!

“We were close **friends** who shared a love of music. When we turned fifteen, we

started our first **band**,” Professor Aria **EXPLAINED**.

“We played small shows whenever and wherever we could. It was so much fun to go through it all **TOGETHER** . . .”

