

Geronimo Stilton

A CHRISTMAS TALE



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IT WAS A COLD DECEMBER MORNING

How cold was it, you ask? It was so cold that the cheese sandwich I had for breakfast turned into a **CHEESE POPSICLE!**

I zipped up my winter coat. I wrapped my favorite scarf around my neck. It's cheddar yellow. My favorite nephew, Benjamin, gave it to me. It always keeps my snout very warm! Then I stepped out of my mouse hole* into the **frozen air.**



I scampered down the street, toward the center of town. I had just taken a few steps when it began to snow! Snowflakes



* I live at 8 Mouseford Lane. By the way, my name is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton. I am the publisher and editor of *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous newspaper on Mouse Island!





***Big mice, small mice,
tall rats, short rats...
they were all busy
Christmas shopping!***





swirled down from the sky. They landed on my whiskers like tiny **WHITE BUTTERFLIES**.

I smiled. It was snowing on Christmas Eve! How perfect! As I walked past the shops, I began to hum that famous Christmas carol "*Silent Mice*."

All of New Mouse City seemed to be in the *Christmas spirit*.

Bright lights



A mouse rushed down the street.

WHAM!

Our heads crashed with a crunch.





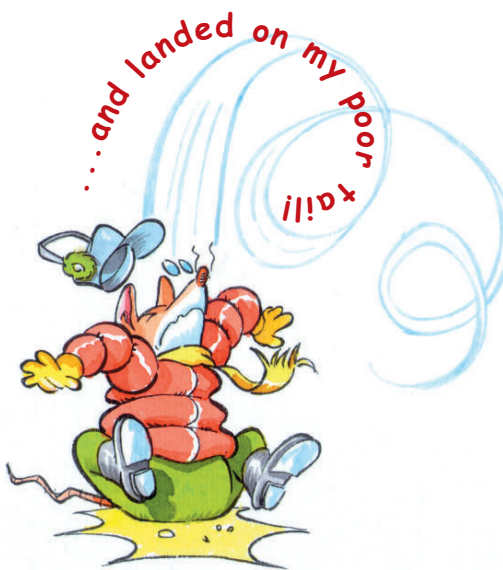
flickered in the store windows. Mice scurried by, their arms filled with presents.

I gazed up at the star on top of a Christmas tree when suddenly...

WHAM! I crashed into a mouse crossing the street! He carried an enormous red box. He seemed to be in quite a rush.

SLAM! I slipped on the ice. I landed right on top of my poor tail. **Ouch!**

I stood up, rubbing my tail. A look of





surprise came across the mouse's face.

“Geronimo Stilton! Is that you?”

I couldn't believe it. It was my old friend from school, **Buddy Pawpal**.

“Buddy! What are you doing here?” I asked.

“Shopping, of course,” Buddy said. “I want to *impress* my friends and relatives, so I'm buying all of the **HOTTEST** gifts. Have you seen the new **Cheese-o-Matic**? It slices, dices, grates, grinds, chops, mashes, smashes—and then it washes itself when it's done! It costs a **fortune**, but it's worth it.”

“Uh, no, I haven't heard of it,” I replied.

“Have you bought your gifts yet?” Buddy asked. “I bet you spent a lot of **money**, right?”

“I don't think how much money you



spend on a gift is important,” I said. “It’s the *thought* that counts.”

Buddy laughed and slapped me on the back. “Oh, Geronimo, you always were a **Strange Mouse!**” he said. Then he hurried away, calling out behind him. “*Merry Christmas! Happy New Year! Season’s Greetings! Happy Holidays!*”

