



A FESTIVAL OF SURPRISES

This morning, when the **alarm clock** went off, I really did not feel like getting up. My blanket was **so warm**, my pillow **so soft**, my mattress **so comfy**. What a perfect day to be a **lazy mouse**! I turned the alarm off and shut my eyes again. “Just five more minutes . . .” I mumbled to myself. But before I could go back to sleep, I heard a **LOUD** noise.

**RING
RING
RING!!!**





OH NO! MY CELL PHONE! I need my beauty rest! Oh, I almost forgot to introduce myself! I am *Geronimo Stilton*, editor-in-chief of *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous newspaper on Mouse Island. The news **sleeps** for no mouse, but sometimes even I need some extra **shut-eye**.

I reached over to answer the phone.

"Good morning," a mouselet squeaked. "I am calling from MiceOpinion, a polling company. We're asking local mice who they think will take home the top prize at this weekend's big festival."

"FESTIVAL? WHAT FESTIVAL?" I asked.

"You don't know about it?" she asked.

"Who's competing?" I asked.

"Sorry, time is short and I have to finish my **polling calls**. I'll put you down as undecided! Have a good day!"



She hung up. **Holey Swiss cheese**, what's the hurry?

But by now, I was completely awake, so I hopped out of bed, got **dressed**, and headed out into New Mouse City.

When I reached Mozzarella Avenue, I ran into a large crowd standing outside the **GRAND HOTEL**.

"I'll melt into a **PUDDLE** of cheddar if I don't get an autograph," a mouselet squeaked.

"I'm definitely getting a **selfie**!" another rodent called.

?! ? Who were they talking about? ?! ?
I wondered.

"Excuse me. What is everymouse waiting for?" I asked.

The first mouselet clutched her paws



together. “Not what — who! Noah Provoloney and Lana Ricotta, the famous **actors** who are staying here for the big festival!”

I had never heard of them. And there goes that **MYSTERIMOUSE FESTIVAL** again!

Before I could ask more, the crowd erupted in screams.

I was so blinded by the camera **flashes** that I could barely see the two famous actors leaving the hotel. The crowd surged forward and my whiskers **trembled**. I didn’t want to get **squashed** flat like a slice of American cheese!

“Help!” I squeaked.

I managed to **squeeze** out of the crowd and make my escape.

When I finally made it to my favorite breakfast spot, the barista, Flip Hotpaws,



was rushing out. He hung a **SIGN** on the door:



??? *That festival again!* **???**

“Sorry, Mr. Stilton. We’ll see you next week!” Flip said. He shut the door so quickly, he almost snagged my snout!

SLAM!