



AREN'T YOU IN THE MOUSITI ISLANDS?!

I should've known that day would be **TERRIBLE**.
Not just **TERRIBLE** — **REALLY, MOUSERIFICALLY
TERRIBLE!**

Does that ever happen to you? When, first thing
in the **morning**, you realize that everything that
can go wrong that day *will* go wrong?





That morning, I woke up early and — squeak! I'm sorry, I haven't introduced myself! My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*, and I run *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous newspaper on Mouse Island.

As I was saying: as usual, I had gotten up and gone to work. At the office, my assistant, **Mousella**, greeted me by saying, "Good morning, Mr. Stilton! Why are you so **PALE**? Hurry — they are all waiting for you in the conference room, with Mr. Shortpaws!"

"Huh? **GRANDFATHER WILLIAM?**" I muttered as I climbed the stairs. "He doesn't work here anymore!" He retired from *The Rodent's Gazette* many years ago. Last I heard, he was on vacation in the **MOUSITI ISLANDS!**

I opened the door to the conference room and couldn't believe my eyes. It was really him: my grandfather, the one, the only . . . **William Shortpaws!**

You call this an early start?





“G-G-Grandfather!” I stammered. “What are you doing here? Aren’t you in the Mousiti Islands?”

Suddenly, I realized my grandfather wasn’t there in the fur and whiskers — he was a **HOLOGRAM!**

“You call *this* an early start?!” Grandfather thundered. “Is this how you run *my* newspaper?!”

I tried to respond. “Er, well, you entrusted it to me many years ago, and —”

“**Silence!**” he roared, making me

jump in fright — and hit my head on the side of the door. **Ouch, ouch, ouchie!**

Grandfather continued his tirade. “I knew that I shouldn’t have retired. *The Rodent’s Gazette* is still in need of mice like me! Now sit down, and let’s begin the **MEETING.**”





I took a seat at the table, my whiskers **trembling**.

Thea leaned toward me and whispered, “Did you really need to make Grandfather angry? You know how he is!”

“I didn’t do it on purpose!” I **squeaked**. “Who knew he would be here?! I mean, he’s not *here*, he’s *there*, in the Mousiti Islands, but he’s also here while he’s there, and . . . how did he even manage to use this crazy **new technology**?!”

“Cool, isn’t it?” Thea said. “It’s all thanks to Beaker Poirat!”

“Beaker Poirat?”

“**Silence!**” Grandfather Shortpaws roared again, making me jump in fright — and **BITE** my tongue. Ouch, ouch, ouchie!

Grandfather turned his fiery



BEAKER POIRAT



FIRST NAME: Beaker

LAST NAME: Poirat

PROFESSION:
Scientist/inventor

EDUCATION: He has thirteen degrees in the following subjects: Reactive Pistachio Science, Pistachius Accelerator Science, Green Neuronic Science, Science of the Pistachiacious Shell, Techniques of Energetic Pistachio

Extrapolation, Prototonic Pistachions, the Nutritive Theory of Dried Fruit, the Science of the Pistachiosphere Improbability, Pistachio Phenomenology, Pistachiatic Enigmas, Communicative Techniques of Pistachio Shells, the Study of Effects of Pistachio Indigestion on the Inventive Process, and the Origins of Pistachios.

DISTINGUISHING TRAITS: If you couldn't already tell, he adores pistachios.

ILLUSTRIOUS RELATIVES: His cousin Hercule Poirat is the most famous detective in New Mouse City.

FRIENDS: Professor Paws von Volt, Professor Bluster Squeak, Professor Cyril B. Sandsnout



gaze toward me. “Still a **lazyfur**, I see! You never change!”

Then he turned to Thea and said affectionately, “Thea, my dear! You are always prompt and organized. Could you kindly go over the **AGENDA?**”

“Of course, Grandfather!” Thea said. “We must:

- 1 Approve the cover for Geronimo’s latest novel.
- 2 Review **drawing** samples from illustrators.
- 3 Choose a title for our new series of joke books and puzzle books.
- 4 Decide on the **number of pages** in the next *Journey Through Time* book.”

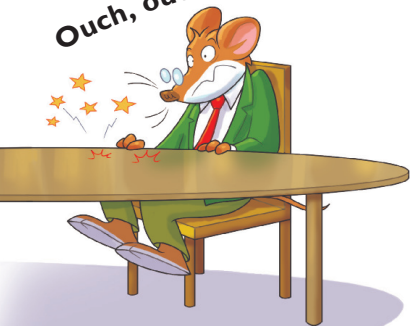
Grandfather William clapped his paws, nodding in satisfaction. “Bravo! Well done, my favorite grandchild!”

Then he turned toward me, **pointing**. “Do you see how it’s done, Geronimo?!”

That gave me such a fright, I jumped up and



Ouch, ouch, ouchie!



BANGED my knee on the table. Ouch, ouch, ouchie!

Why, why, why does everything always happen to me?

Grandfather continued relentlessly. “You should learn from your sister, Geronimo. She is really a **true Stilton!** Now get to work — they’re about to start dance class here at the resort, and I don’t want to be late! **LET’S GO!**”

