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*The Rodent's Gazette***

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**Geronimo Stilton**  
A learned and brainy mouse; editor of *The Rodent's Gazette*

**Thea Stilton**  
Geronimo's sister and special correspondent at *The Rodent's Gazette*



**Trap Stilton**  
An awful joker; Geronimo's cousin and owner of the store Cheap Junk for Less

**Benjamin Stilton**  
A sweet and loving nine-year-old mouse; Geronimo's favorite nephew





# I'M TOO YOUNG TO GO BALD!

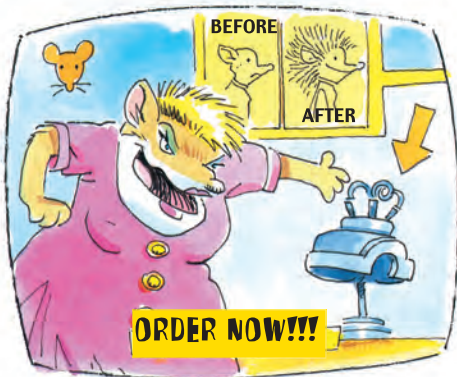
Let's see, it all began like this — it really did.

One evening, I was happily sprawled out on my couch, **CHANGING CHANNELS** on my TV, when a strange commercial caught my eye.

A female rodent with blonde fur was shouting **LIKE A MADMOUSE**. “Are you going bald? Has your fur lost its fluff?” Then she stuck her snout right up to the camera.

“That’s right, I’m talking to you,

**COUCH MOUSE!** she shrieked.





I jumped. Her beady little eyes seemed to be staring right at me!

“Now, do as I say and put your paw on your head,” she ordered. **“I bet you have a bald patch. Am I right?”**

I gulped. With a shaking paw, I patted the top of my head. **Holey cheese!** My fur *did* seem to be getting a little thin on top! Could I really be losing my fur?

The mouse on TV kept squeaking at me. “Listen, **CHEESYFACE**, you need to do something to strengthen your fur! If you don’t, you’re going to be as bald as a bowling ball down at Lucky Paw Lanes!”

She wound up her arm like a professional bowler rat. **“Striiiiike!”** she yelled, glaring at me.

**I TURNED PALE.”**



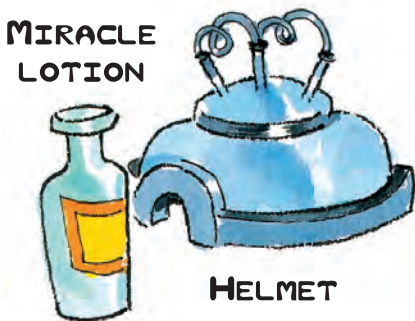
*I patted the top of my head.*



Now I was really getting worried. I was too young to go bald. I was still in my prime. Yes, I think you could even call me a spring mouse. I still had a twitch in my tail, and my bones hadn't started creaking yet.

More hollering from the TV interrupted my thoughts. "Wake up, **NOODLEBRAIN**, because today is your lucky day! That's right. I have right here the cure for that **great-looking** bald spot! But you'd better order now, **you silly mouse**, or you'll be left with your tail between your legs!"

I grabbed a pen and paper to take notes.



The mouse on TV held up a helmet and a big bottle of green lotion. "This



is a special kind of helmet that uses

micro-macro-eeny-meany-miney-magnetic-waves.  
micro-macro-eeny-meany-miney-magnetic-waves.  
micro-macro-eeny-meany-miney-magnetic-waves.

First you spread the **MIRACLE LOTION** all over your fur. Then you put the helmet over your head,” she explained. “Keep the helmet on for at least two or three hours. The helmet **squeezes** your head to **WAKE UP** those lazy hair roots. Got it?”

I nodded my head.

“Well, what are you waiting for, Baldy?!” the TV mouse squeaked at me. “Order now, **before they're all gone!**”

As if in a trance, I **reached** for the phone and dialed the number on the screen: **1-555-GROW-FUR.**

“Yes, I'd like to order one helmet,” I began, patting my fur.





The operator at the other end coughed. “I take it you must be tuned into our special supertelethon, **Baldies Unite!**” she said.

I choked. *I’m not bald yet!* I tried to say. But I had lost my squeak!

“Don’t be embarrassed, Furless,” the operator babbled on. “I’ll send off your helmet right away! You want the **MIRACLE LOTION**, too, don’t you? **HOW MANY** bottles? They are on special offer, you know.”

I cleared my throat. “Um, well, I guess I could use two,” I decided.



The operator lowered her voice and began to whisper **C O N F I D E N T I A L L Y**. “You sound like a very nice mouse,” she began. “So I’m going to let you in on a *secret* . . . there are only a few bottles left!!!”

I **G A S P E D**. Were there really that many bald rodents scampering around out there?

“We’ve received so many calls,” the operator continued **K N O W I N G L Y**. “The lotion is selling like hot cheese sticks at a winter carnival! I would





order a few more if I were you. *I think we're going to sell out!*"

I chewed my whiskers nervously. I couldn't wear my new helmet without the lotion. What if I ran out? I would be in big trouble then. I'd be one sorry, bald mouse. "I'd better order **3**, no **4**, no **5**, no make that **8**, or even **10**, yes, I'll take **10** . . . no, how about **12** bottles?" I stammered.

"Good choice," the operator murmured. "I'll put you down for twelve bottles. We'll deliver them right away.

**Have your money ready!**