MICEKINGS

THE MYSTERIOUS MESSAGE
Welcome to the Ancient Far North... and the World of the Micekings!

Where they live: Miceking Island
Capital: Mouseborg, home of the Stiltonord family
Other villages: Oofadale, village of the Oofa Oofa, and Feargard, village of the vilekings
Climate: Cold, cold, cold, especially when the icy north wind blows!
Typical food: Gloop, a superstinky but fabumouse stew. The secret recipe is closely guarded by the wife of the miceking chief.
National drink: Finnbrew, made of equal parts codfish juice and herring juice, with a splash of squid ink
Means of transportation: The drekar, a light but very fast ship
Greatest honor: The miceking helmet. It is only earned when a mouse performs an act of courage or wins a Miceking Challenge.
Unit of measurement: A miceking tail (full tail, half tail, third tail, quarter tail)
Enemies: The terrible dragons who live in Beastgard
MEET THE STILTONORD FAMILY . . .

GERONIMO
Advisor to the miceking chief.

THEA
A horse trainer who works well with all kinds of animals.

TRAP
The most famous inventor in Mouseborg.

BENJAMIN
Geronimo’s nephew.

BUGSILDA
Benjamin’s best friend.
The dragons are divided into 5 clans, all of which are terrifying!

**1. Devourers**
They love to eat micekings raw — no cooking necessary.

**2. Steamers**
They grab micekings, then fly over volcanoes so the steam and smoke make them taste good.

**3. Biters**
Before eating micekings, they nibble them delicately to see if they like them or not.

**4. Slurpers**
They wrap their long tongues around micekings and slurp them up.

**5. Rinsers**
As soon as they catch micekings, they rinse them in a stream to wash them off.
Geronimo Stilton

Micekings
The Mysterious Message

Scholastic Inc.
A Peaceful Evening for Geronimo!

It was a peaceful spring evening in Mouseborg, the capital city of Mouseking Island. The stars shone brightly in the sky. A gentle breeze blew in from the sea. Crickets chirped a soothing song.

Sorry, I should introduce myself: I am Geronimo Stiltonord, and I am a mouseking. Not a very fierce, fighting mouseking, but a scholarly one.
And that **night**
I had returned home after a terrible day!

1. During morning exercises, Sven the Shouter, our **village chief**, had forced me to do 333 sit-ups!

2. At noon, dragons had attacked our village! They were looking to lunch on **fresh miceking meat**. I fought...
bravely (well, as bravely as I could. I have \textbf{weak} muscles for a mouseking). And after that, my sister, Thea, had asked me to help her \textbf{rearrange} all the furniture in her house!

I was so tired that my \textbf{whiskers were drooping}!

So I was very happy to retreat to my house for a \textit{peaceful}, quiet night. My plans included:

A light dinner of aged \textbf{miceking cheese} and herring soup . . .
A Peaceful Evening for Geronimo!

Reading a book of **LEGENDS** about the famous miceking **EXPLORER** Erik the Furry . . .

Ending with a **soothing** cup of tea before bed . . .

I had just finished setting the table when I heard a knock at the door.
Bam! Bam! Bam!

Why, oh why, did someone always have to interrupt me when I was eating?

As I peered through the peephole, I heard the deep voice of our village chief.

“Open up, you smarty-mouseking! So says Sven!” he shouted.

A chorus of micekings behind him cried out,

“SO SAYS SVEN THE SHOUTER!”

Clattering cuttlefish! How many of them were out there? And what did they want from me?

“Well, lazy bones?” Sven yelled. “Are you going to open up?”

You should know that Sven is known as THE SHOUTER because he shouts very
loudly! And when he’s angry, his *shouts* could make the walls of your house shake. So I hurried and opened the door before the chief could shout again.

A crowd of miceking warriors pushed into the house. They took seats in my chairs, on my tables, on my bed, and even in the rafters. Shivering squids, Sven had called a meeting of the Miceking Assembly in my house!

The warriors whispered to one another, “What could it be?” They were excited for a mystery to solve!

Then Sven spoke, **“MICEKINGS OF MOUSEBORG,** I have gathered you here for a matter of great importance.”

The micekings listened in *silence,* leaning forward in their seats.

Sven turned toward the foreman of the
Shhh!

Silence!

Listen to me!
finnbrew factory. “Stocker! Tell us what you found.”


Great salty sardines, what kind of mystery was this?

Stocker is the foreman of the factory that makes finnbrew, the most popular miceking drink. He guards the barrels of finished finnbrew. He’s a very slow-moving mouseking. When you ask him a question, he stares at you like a frozen codfish!
Sven turned as **red** as a pepper. “Stocker, stop acting like a **sea slug** and tell the others what you told me!”

**“So says Sven the Shouter!”** the micekings chanted.

“Hmm. Let’s see,” said Stocker. “Where should I start?”

“Start at the **Beginning**!” Sven demanded.

Stocker nodded. “Okay, then. I will start at the beginning,” he said. “As you know, every night I take a walk around the outside of the factory.”

“Yes, we know,” Sven said **impatiently**.

“I check to make sure that all the **barrels**
of finnbrew, left outside to ferment in the **sun**, have been brought inside,” Stocker went on.

“**By my beard**, get on with the story!” Sven shouted. “At this rate, it will take you all night to tell it.”

Stocker’s fur was not **ruffled**. He kept talking. “So tonight, during my usual stroll, I **noticed** something floating in the water by the dock. So I walked over to get a better **look**, and . . .”

“**Aaaaaand?**” all the micekings shouted, making my house **shake** as if it were made of fjordberry jelly.

“And . . . I saw that it was an **amphora**.”

An amphora is a clay jug with two handles. But what was so **important** about Stocker finding a jug?
“I pulled it out of the water,” he continued. “I opened it. And inside I found a . . .”

“Aaaaaaaa?” the micekings squealed.

“A parchment!” Stocker finished. “There was a message written on it, but I don’t know how to read, so I ran to Sven.”

“And I decided to come directly to Geronimo,” Sven said. “Now read this message, smarty-mouseking. That’s an order!”

“So says Sven the Shouter!”

Stocker handed me the parchment, and I began to read the message:
“I declare . . . to shake . . . um . . . strong mouseking! . . . sail the stormy seas . . . um . . . dragon . . . stinkiest . . . you . . .”

“Geronimo, quit **joking** around!” my cousin Trap exclaimed.

“I’m not **joking** around,” I protested.

“These are the only words I **understand**. I can barely make out two runes in a row!”
“You’re supposed to be the **smarty-mouseking**!” Sven shouted. “Figure it out!”

“But, but, but . . .” I sputtered.

Trap took the parchment from my **paws**. “Leave it to me, cousin! In addition to being an **inventor**, I’m also an expert at messages in bottles, secret codes, and invisible clues!”

*Let’s see...*
We, Sir Gally,
and the brave men of the crew,
declare with solemn
awe and wonder,
that we will not
shackle or
weave with a strong mouseking!
We will sail the stormy seas,
and do a sync plin dragon.
per ce f the lettuce dancer
a stinkiest among your
plunder in a place
the most secret and
place.
Trap examined the parchment carefully (**forward** and **backward**, **up** and **down**. from **close up** and **far away**). Then he announced his conclusion: “**Brave** Sven! The amphora probably wasn’t closed tightly. The **salt water** from the fjord has erased almost everything that was written here. And so . . . **the original message is a mystery!**”
A MESSAGE FROM
YAN THE YAWNER

While Trap continued to study the message, our village chief paced the floor of my house, muttering about what to do next.

“Holey cheese!” Trap cried out suddenly.

“What’s this seal at the top of the parchment?”

“Let me see!” Sven yelled, grabbing the parchment from him. His eyes got wide.

“Why, this is the coat of arms of Yan
Yan the Yawner is the chief of Oofadale, where the Oofa Oofa live. He’s called “the Yawner” because it’s said he can yawn 1,007 times in a row without dislocating his jaw. His motto is, “Why do tomorrow what you can do next week?”

the Yawner, the chief of Oofadale!” Sven exclaimed.

“Salty sardines! Then this must be a message from him!” Trap said.

A loud murmur rose up from the micekings. This could be a very important message!

The micekings were jumping out of their fur with curiosity. They started to guess what the meaning
of the message might be, based on the few words I had read.

"Why, it’s clear!" declared a tall, muscular mouseking. "It’s a challenge sent by the Oofa Oofa! **THEY WANT TO ATTACK US!**"

"What if Oofadale is being attacked by **dragons**?" another mouseking wondered. "And Yan the Yawner is asking for help from the **strong, brave** warriors of Mouseborg!"

A third mouseking spoke up. "They’re insulting us! They think we’re **stinky**!"

I had my own theory. "It could be that Yan was just writing a **simple** message of greeting to a **friend,**" I suggested. "This very well could have been a **personal** letter that was **lost** and arrived here by accident. We all know how the miceking mail works . . ."
It's a challenge!

Is it a declaration of war?

It's an insult!

Um...

If you ask me...

Hmm...

They're asking for help!

What do we do?

I don't believe it!

No way!

I don't know!
But nobody took me **seriously**.

**“By my beard,** Geronimo, you must be the most **foolish** smarty-mouseking in micking history!” Sven scolded me. “Didn’t you see the coat of arms? It’s clearly an **official** message of some kind. Therefore we must respond in an **official** manner.”

Sven paced the room, twirling his beard and thinking. The mickings **eagerly** waited to hear our chief’s decision. Finally, Sven cleared his throat.

“**If the village of Oofadale** is in danger, our micking honor requires that we go help them!” Sven shouted. “And if they want to attack us, we must be ready to fight back with the strength of **Stenchberg cheese**! There is only one way to find out what the message really said. We will make an
A Message from Yan the Yawner

official expedition to oofadale!

"SO SAYS SVEN THE SHOUTER!"

Ready to go, smarty-mouseking?

Oh no!
All the micekings cheered with **joy** at this announcement. They hurried off to prepare for the expedition.

**Everyone was excited ... except me!**

Great stinky clams, this journey could be **risky**, **dangerous**, and **perilous**!

And I . . . I was a scaredy-mouseking!
MISSION TO OOFADALE!

As soon as Sven said the word *expedition*, I tried to sneak off without being noticed. With everyone cheering, I had a good chance. I was only half a tail from the *door* when someone *grabbed* my shoulder.
MISSION TO OOFADALE!

It was Sven. “Geronimo, you spineless jellyfish, where do you think you’re going?”

“W-w-well,” I stuttered. “I just thought I’d go get us some more finnbrew and maybe a snack. Aren’t you hungry?”

“I am hungry for adventure!” Sven replied. “We need to plan.”

I tried again. “B-b-but . . . I left my laundry on the clothesline, and, um . . .”

“Stop blabbering, blubber head!” Sven shouted. “As smarty-mouseking of this village, and the official reader of runes, you must be part of this expedition. Don’t you want to finally earn your very first miceking helmet?”

I paused. A miceking helmet is the
greatest **Honor** any mouseking can get. It is awarded to those who show great **Strength**, **Courage**, and **Skill** in battle. But my greatest strengths are in miceking **History**, rune **Grammar**, and fjord **Geography**, and no helmet is awarded for those skills.

But if I did earn a **miceking helmet**,
then Sven’s daughter, the beautiful Thora, might finally respect me!

With a far-off look, I daydreamed about my miceking crush. Trap snapped me out of it.

“Don’t worry, cousin,” he said. “I’ll go with you on this mission!”

Great salty sardines, now I was really in TROUBLE! Every time my cousin Trap got involved, he usually tried out one of his crazy inventions. He has used me as his official test mouse, risking my fur every time!

“Why are you so excited to go on a miceking expedition?” I asked suspiciously.

“I’d like to see an old friend of mine in Oofadale, Fen Whiskersson,” he explained. “We went to the Young Miceking School for Inventors
together when we were micelets.

“He’s really nice,” Trap continued. “I’m hoping to discuss some of my new ideas with him.”

I groaned. **Shivering squids**, not another inventor! Now I’d have to deal with two of them. Who knew what dangerous inventions they would make me try out?
**Squeak!** I really didn’t want to be a part of this miceking mission!

But I had no choice.

“I HAVE MADE MY DECISION!” Sven thundered. “Tomorrow we will **SET SAIL** for Oofadale at dawn. But I will not be leaving this mission in the **clumsy** paws of you two **cheeseheads**.” He pointed to Trap and me.

“You won’t?” I asked.

“Of course not!” Sven shouted. “I will **lead** the mission. You two will accompany me. And we will need a team of **brave warriors** to go with us.”

He started pointing to different micekings.

“You! Prepare the barrels of **finnbrew** and the crates of **anchovies**!” he ordered.

“You! Pack the wheels of **cheese**!”
“You, you, and you, go shine the helmets and the shields!
“You, go polish the Mouseborg coat of arms until it glows like the sun! This expedition will be made in GRAND MICEKING STYLE!”
The micekings all replied together,

"SO SAYS SVEN THE SHOUTER!"
I had trouble falling asleep that night. My whiskers trembled at the dangers we might encounter. **How, How, How** did I always end up in these situations? When the **rooster** crowed at dawn, I put my head under...
the covers. I didn’t want to go. I was a **smarty-mouseking**, not a warrior!

Then I heard a **knock** on my door. It was Trap.

“**Geronimo!**
Come on, Cousin! It’s time to begin our great mission!” he shouted.

I tried to get out of it. “Um, I **can’t** find my boots anywhere. You go without me, and I’ll meet up with you in Oofadale.”

“I can tell when you’re **lying**, Cousin,” Trap said. “**Open the door!**”

I quickly thought of more excuses. “No, I woke up with a terrible **stomachache** and I have to run to the bathroom. And . . .

**Achoo!** I think I also caught a **miceking cold**, and I don’t want to get everyone sick!”

Trap still didn’t believe me. “No more **excuses**, Cousin. You don’t want to
make Sven **ANGRY**, do you?” he asked. **By my whiskers**, I certainly didn’t want to make our village chief angry! At the thought of Sven **shouting** at me, I got up and got dressed. As soon as I opened the door, Trap **grabbed** me by the paw and **dragged** me along with

*Get a move on!*
him. He didn’t even give me a chance to grab my **BACKPACK**!

“Let’s hurry, Cousin! They’re waiting for us!” Trap squealed.

He was right. When we reached
Ready to Set Sail, Blubber Heads?

the port, we found micekings loading up two **drekars** for the long voyage. Others were rubbing the ships’ hulls with **codfish oil**.

I gazed up at the **towering** ships. Sven
commanded the majestic Miceking Hero. It was adorned with his official emblems. I tried to go on board, but a mouseking stopped me.

“Walt! There’s no more room!” he said, holding up a paw. “Find another ship.”

The next ship was the Scourge of the North Sea, with a fearsome dragon on its prow.

But another mouseking stopped me there.

“SCRAM, smarty-mouseking. We’re full! There’s no more room!”

“Not even for a small mouseking like me?” I pleaded.
Then Sven shouted from the prow of his ship,

"MICEKINGS, SET SAIL!"

I have to hurry!

Off we go!
I had **one choice** left . . . and I didn’t like it! The only drekar left was the *Bated Breath*, the **shaky** tub that belonged to Olaf the Reckless. 

**And I get drekar-sick!**

“Hop on board!” Olaf called out. “Don’t
you want a free ride?"

I gave in and climbed on board. Then we **SET SAIL** for Oofadale, the home of the Oofa Oofa!

*Hurry up, cabin boy!*
DRAGON ATTACK!

Olaf put me to **work**. After I had **organized** our cheese supplies and **cleaned** the deck, he sent me up to the main mast to be the lookout.

Me, who is **afraid of heights**!

The journey started off smoothly, and a **breeze** pushed us forward. After a while, though, the sky began to **darken**. A strange, oddly shaped **cloud** was floating toward us.

**Was there a storm coming?**

The cloud came closer . . . and **holey cheese**, it wasn’t a storm cloud at all! It was much worse!

“**Dragon attack!**” I shrieked.
What a strange cloud...

I see something!
DRAGON ATTACK!

The micekings on all three ships rushed to take up their shields, bows, and arrows. Four dragons swooped down on us. We could smell their swampy stink and see the smoke coming from their nostrils.

An orange dragon with a very, very long tongue licked his fangs.

“Purple Beard, look at all that fresh miceking meat!” he called out to his friend.

“You’re right, Blue Tail!” the other dragon called back. “We could gobble one for a snack and take the other back to Beastgard!”

“Sizzle the cook make a great miceking stew!” said Blue Tail.

“I prefer them roasted,” said Purple Beard.
Sven raised his fist in the air. “You won’t get a taste of us, you UGLY LIZARDS! Micekings, ATTACK!”

All of the MICEKINGS threw themselves into the BATTLE, fighting off the dragons. Well, almost all. I stayed in the CROW’S NEST, so I wouldn’t get in anybody’s way.

Then the LOOKOUT on the Scourge
Take that!

Hey, ugly!
of the North Sea called out to me.

“Catch this **net**, smarty-mouseking!”

He **tossed** me one end of the net.

“This is no time to go **fishing**!” I called back.

But I **caught** the end of the net anyway, and it hung between the two ships.
Whoosh! A red dragon swooped down and flew right into it! He got all tangled up in the net!

“Hooray! One down!” the other lookout and I shouted.

Meanwhile, the battle with the other dragons continued.
Some micekings fought bravely with **bows** and **arrows**. Others used **long oars** to fend off the dragons.

Still others **blasted** them with jets of **icy water** from the North Sea. Everyone knows that dragons hate clean, cold water!

But as bravely as we fought, we were no match for the **enormouse**, strong dragons. And there, out in the **open ocean**, we had no place to take shelter!

I scanned the horizon, looking for some sign of land.

I spotted a **foogy** patch of sky not far off. And as a scholarly mouseking, I knew that **oofadale** was almost always surrounded by fog.

**Holey cheese**, we were close!
Dragon Attack!

If we could make it to shore, we could take shelter and be safe! I had to think of something, fast!
Forward, Micekings!

I quickly came up with a fabumouse plan: We could row at top speed until we were hidden in the fog. But how could I let the others know? It wasn’t easy to be heard over the loud sounds of battle. But I tried.

“We must go into the fog!” I shouted.

“Geronimo, don’t be a blubber head! Now is not the time to sit on a log!” Sven shouted back. He had misunderstood me!

So I tried to act it out. I made rowing motions with my arms.

“By my beard! This is not the time to
exercise, **smartymouseking**!" Sven shouted. He just didn’t get it! I had to leave my safe perch. I scurried down the mast and found Olaf and Trap.

They don’t understand!
I *quickly* explained my idea.

“**GOOD THINKING**, smarty-mouseking!” Olaf agreed.

We ran to the oars.

“**MICEKINGS, FULL SPEED AHEAD!**” Olaf commanded.

The *Bated Breath* bolted forward. The crews on the other two drekars guessed our plan and followed in our wake toward the *Fog*.

“What do those ta*t*t*y mouthful think they’re doing?” Purple Beard asked.

“They won’t *e*cape u*ss*!” said Blue Tail.

Purple Beard roared, “Follow them, fa*ss*!”

Fortunately, though, the *north wind*
started to blow toward Oofadale, and helped us go even faster! Soon we were immersed in a fog as dense as ricotta cheese.
“By my breath, I can’t see a thing!” Blue Tail moaned.

“I think I see a drekar in front of me!” said Purple Beard. “Let me blast it with my Fiery breath!”

He shot a Blast of flame into the fog.

“Hey!” cried Blue Tail. “You scorched my tail!”
The dragons kept **bumping** into each other, and we kept **sailing** through the fog. Luckily, we quickly **arrived** at the port of Oofadale.

We tied up the drekars at the dock and set out in search of the village chief, **Yan the Yawner**.

We passed by many of the **oofa oofoa**, but they were all **asleep**. They always **nap** in the **afternoon**. And in the **morning** time. And at **noon** . . . They are known for being very **sleepy** micekings!

“Where is **Yan the Yawner**?” Sven asked one of the Oofa Oofa.
OOFADALE is a village on the southern coast of Miceking Island. It is almost always engulfed in thick fog. It’s a boring place where nothing ever (well, almost ever) happens.

The micekings in this village call themselves the Oofa Oofa. They’re generally very sleepy and don’t get much done during the day. Their official cheese is Sluggozola, which takes a long, long, long, long time to ripen.
“Answer Sven the Shouter!”

the micekings yelled.

The villager yawned in response. Then he closed his eyes and fell asleep standing up!

We kept walking until we got to Snoozy Square, the village center. Sven walked up to another Oofa Oofa.

“Tell me where I can find your village chief!” he barked.

But this Oofa Oofa was sleeping, too, and didn’t wake up.

Furious, Sven stomped to a small building in the middle of the
square. I read the runes above the window: oof oof oof. That stands for The Official Tourist Office of Oofadale.

Sven pounded his fist on the counter. “Shivering Squids, do you know who I am?” he shouted at the sleeping rodent working there. “I order you to tell me right now where I can find Yan the Yawner, or I’ll have your fur!”

I wouldn’t have wanted to be in the place of that Oofa Oofa, When Sven gets angry, his loud voice can curl your whiskers!

The rodent opened his eyes very, very slowly.

Then he opened his mouth very, very slowly, as though he were going to speak...
Zzzz... Zzzz... Zzz Zzz... I need an answer!
Zzzzzzzzzz! Zzzzzzzzzz!

Zzzz! Zzzz!

But he only snored.

Then I noticed something on the wall of the office.

“Chief, take a look at this sign!” I told Sven.
It suddenly made sense. When there’s **FOG** in Oofadale (which is most of the time), the villagers take a miceking nap!

“There’s **NO TIME** to waste!” Sven shouted. “As soon as the fog lifts, the dragons will attack. **WE MUST WAKE UP THESE CHEESEHEADS!**"
Wake Up! Wake Up! Wake Uuuuup!

Sven began to **shout** orders at all of the **Micekings** from Mouseborg.

“Geronimo and Trap! Go **find** Yan the Yawner!”
“Wh-wh-why us?” I stammered.

Sven gave me a **Stern** look. “Would you rather stay here and **Fight** the dragons, smarty-mouseking?” he asked.

I didn’t **wait** for him to change his mind. I grabbed my cousin and **dragged** him back toward the tourist office. We had to find out where **YAN THE YAWNER** was!
Behind us, Sven continued to shout orders.

“You, wake up the sleeping Oofa Oofa! You, take the young micekings in this village to safety! The others, come with me!”

Meanwhile, I stared at the sleeping Oofa Oofa at the counter of the tourist office. I had no idea how to wake him up!

“I’ve got this, cousin,” Trap said.

Then he clapped his paws right next to one of the ears of the napping rodent!

Clap! Clap! Clap!

The rodent opened his eyes.

“Oofa! Didn’t you (yawn) read the sign (yawn)? When there is fog in (yawn) Oofadale, it’s time for a (yawn) miceking nap,” he slowly complained.
HOW TO WAKE A SLEEPING OOFA OOFA

Whenever the fog rolls in, the Oofa Oofa start napping wherever they happen to be: on the street, at the market, or even in the bathroom. There are only three ways to wake them:

1. With a loud noise! CLAP

2. With a dose of fresh fruit to the head! BONK!

3. By tickling their feet! HA HA HA!
“Please excuse my cousin’s manners,” I said. “But this a **super-miceking emergency**!”

The Oofa Oofa did not move a **whisker** at this news.

“We must find Yan the Yawner **immediately**!” I shrieked.

The rodent **very, very slowly** opened his mouth again.

“Take Oofwood Road (**yawn**) to Oofson Way and make a right (**yawn**),” he said. “Then take the second right (**yawn**), cross the bridge, and turn onto the first street (**yawn**) on the left. The (**yawn**) fifth house on the right is Yan’s. Got it?”

“Um . . . we **hope** so!” Trap and I replied.

“You won’t (**yawn**) find him awake,” the Oofa Oofa told us. “It’s **nap time**.”
“He has to wake up! **IT’S AN EMERGENCY!**” I exclaimed.

Trap nudged me. “Hey, do you think we should ask this rodent about the mysterious **letter** we found in the **amphora**?”
When the Oofa Oofa heard this, he suddenly **lit up**. “Did you say letter? Hidden in an amphora?”

But I was already **pulling** Trap away. “We’ll worry about that later! Right now, we have to **save** your village from an army of **ferocious** dragons!”

As we **ran off** to find Yan, we heard a **strange alarm** ring through the village.

**Yaaawn! Yaaawn! Yaaawn!**

It was Oofadale’s **dragon alarm**!

That meant the dragons were close by. Trap and I had to hurry, or else . . .
... we could become a dragon’s dinner!

Run, run, run!

Hurry!
Ruuuuuuun!

The fog was lifting and the dragons had spotted Oofadale! Hungry for meat, they sped toward the village. There was no time to lose!

Sven pointed to one of the napping Oofa Oofa. “Wake up, lazybones! Tell us where the catapults are, quick, or we’ll all be toasted like grilled cheese sandwiches!”

Without opening his eyes, the rodent pointed to a large
building on the other side of the square. Sven and the micekings raced inside.

"By my beard! These catapults are dusty, rusty, and covered in cobwebs!"

Sven exclaimed.

Then he frowned. "Let's move them out! We have to at least try."
The micekings of Mouseborg dragged the **HEAVY** catapults out into the square. By that time, the dragons were overhead. “Now is the moment, my **BOLD** and **brave** micekings,” Sven shouted. **“GET READY TO ATTACK!”** “Chief, we need **rocks**!” one of the micekings said. “You mean the catapults
aren’t loaded?” Sven asked. “Oofa Oofa, where are your rocks?”

Zzzzzzzz. The Oofa Oofa were still all napping!

By now the dragons were so close, the micekings could smell their horrible breath.

“There’s only one thing to do,” Sven said.
“Ruuuuuuun!”

The dragons looked down on the village, confused. Some of the micekings (from Mouseborg) were running back and forth, looking for rocks. But other micekings (from Oofadale) were fast asleep!

“Why are they sleeping?” a green dragon asked. “Don’t they fear uuu?”
While Sven and our fellow micekeeping warriors faced the dragons’ attack, Trap and I searched for the house of Yan the Yawner.

We made a right on Oofa Road. Or was it Oofa Way? Then we made two lefts . . . and one right . . . and soon we were as lost as two anchovies in the big sea!

“We were supposed to go left back there, Cousin!” Trap said.

“No, I’m sure we were supposed to go right after the bridge!” I argued. “And then make another right? Or was it a left?”

Great moldy mussels, I
couldn’t remember!
And while Trap and I stood there, scratching our heads, a threatening shadow crept up over us. We looked up and gasped!

Purple Beard and Blue Tail, those two hungry dragons, had found us!

“SSSniff, SSSniff,” Purple Beard hissed. “Do you SSSmell the tASSSty aroma of fresh micekings? It SSSmellSSS familiar . . .”
“YeSSS! Look!” Blue Tail exclaimed. “It’s that SHRIMPY mouseking who SSSailed away from uSSS before!”

“Run, Cousin!” Trap shouted.

I darted after him. He looked over his shoulder.

“Let’s SPLIT UP to confuse them!” he yelled.

“Wh-why? I don’t want to be alone!” I yelled back.
But Trap was already heading in the opposite direction.

“That mouseking is mine!” Purple Beard shouted, and he flew after Trap.

But the dragon wasn’t used to flying so low. When he turned the corner to follow Trap, he didn’t see the big wooden and iron sign for the Oofadale blacksmith.

Baaaaaam!
Saved by Invention!

He flew into it, smashing his face as flat as a flounder!

Meanwhile, I was running as fast as I could. But I ran right into a dead end! When I turned, I saw Blue Tail flying right at me, with his jaws open wide!

Shivering squids, I was as good as fried! I closed my eyes, waiting for the worst.

All of a sudden

I heard

Ow!
Trap’s voice. “Hey, Cousin! Check this out!”

I opened my eyes and saw that Trap had strange springs attached to his feet. He was wearing **Spring Steppers**!

“**Hurry**, jump on!” he urged.

“I don’t think so, Trap! Are you sure those things are **s-s-safe**?” I stuttered.

Then Blue Tail launched a
**FIREBALL** at me, and I didn’t wait for Trap’s answer. I jumped on, and Trap quickly bounced away.

**Boing! Boing! Boing!**

**SPRING STEPPERS**

This invention adds a **bounce** to your step! Thanks to the springs on the bottoms of these shoes, it’s possible to jump as high as ten mickering tails. **These are not recommended for mickings who are afraid of heights!**
No Time for Tea!

Many bounces later (SQUEAK! I was getting motion sick!), we arrived at the home of Yan the Yawner, the village chief. Inside we saw two Oofa Oofa, dozing in armchairs.

“Greetings, Oofa friends,” I said. “My name is Geronimo Stiltonord, and this is my cousin Trap.” Zzzzzzzzzz.

“We are sorry to wake you, but...
we have come all the way from Mouseborg on an important matter,” I continued, but Trap interrupted me.

“Fen Whiskersson, is that you?” he cried. He clapped his paws next to one of the sleeping rodents.

The mouse’s eyes fluttered open. “Trap, my old inventing buddy, is that really you?”

“It sure is!” Trap replied. The two old friends hugged.
“What good **north wind** brings you to Oofadale?” Fen asked.

“As my cousin said, we’re here on an **important** matter,” Trap explained. “We need to see Yan the Yawner right away!”

The rodent in the other armchair began to stir. “**Oofa!** What’s with all this racket? Don’t you know it’s nap time? Who is **disturbing** my slumber?”

At that moment, a third rodent entered the room, carrying a tray. “Who wants a cup of **tea**?”

“There is no time for tea!” I cried, but then I stopped. “Hey, aren’t you the **Oofa Oofa Oofa** from the tourist office?”

“Correct!” he replied. “My name is Bronk Snorborg.”

Then Bronk whispered in my ear. “I’m glad you **finally** got here,” he said. “We
Who wants tea?

Fen, old friend!

What a surprise!

There's a dragon attack!
really need to talk about that letter you told me about earlier. The one you found in the amphora.”

“We can talk about the letter later!” I blurted out. “Right now, we have important news! Dragons are attacking Oofadale!”

The other Oofa straightened up in his chair. “Holey cheese! Why didn’t you say that immediately?” he cried.

“Are you Yan the Yawner?” I asked.

“Yes, I am!” he said, squinting at me. “And are you sure you’re from Mouseborg? Micekings there are usually very tall and strong. You seem very short and softer than a jellyfish.”

“And where is your Miceking Helmet?” Fen asked me.

So many unnecessary questions! These two
No Time for Tea!

Rodents were really getting \textcolor{red}{\textit{under} my fur!} “Great salty sardines!” I shrieked in exasperation. “There is no time to explain! The dragons are attacking.

\textbf{DON’T YOU HAVE A DRAGON DEFENSE PLAN IN OOFADALE?”}
Fen the inventor and YAN the Yawner talked privately for a few minutes. Then Fen motioned for Trap and me to follow him. He led us to a **Small Hut** nearby.

“**Welcome to my laboratory!**” he exclaimed as he opened the door for us. “It is here that I create my **Genius** inventions. If the **answer** to our dragon problem is anywhere, it will be here.”

Inside the hut was what looked like a great big pile of **junk**.

Fen dove into the **Mountain** of junk and started rummaging around.

“Tell me what you’re **Looking** for, old friend, and I’ll help you find it,”
ESSENCE OF SEA JASMINE

Trap offered.

“It’s obvious!” Fen replied. “I am looking for my Fabumouse invention designed to defend Oofadale from dragons: THE WIND CYCLE!”

Trap and I shared a confused look. We had no idea what he was talking about!

Then Fen extracted a strange-looking contraption from the pile. It had a wheel with two pedals.

“Eureka!” he cried. “Found it!

THE WIND CYCLE

This invention can be used to create wind or to blow good or bad smells across the village. The faster you pedal, the faster the fans turn, which is why only a very athletic mouseking should operate it.
And in this little bottle is **essence of sea jasmine**!

I sniffed it. “It smells very clean! **What’s it for?**”

“We will use the Wind Cycle to spread the **scent** of sea jasmine over the whole village,” Fen replied.

“I **get it!**” Trap exclaimed. “Dragons hate **clean** smells. It will drive them away.”

“Exactly!” Fen said.

“So where is the **highest** point in Oofadale?” I asked.

Fen went to the window and pointed. “The top of **Mount Mattress!**”

I looked out the window and saw only a **small hill**.

“But that’s just a **tiny** hill,” I said.
“But that’s the highest mountain in all of Oofadale!” Fen said, sounding offended. “The Wind Cycle must be taken to the very top of the pine tree that grows on the mountain’s peak.”

I started to get a bad feeling. “And who,
exactly, will take it there?” I asked.

“It’s obvious!” Fen said. “You need to get a miceking helmet, don’t you? Well, here is the perfect chance to earn one. Good luck dodging those dragons on your way!”

Clammering clams, I had a true miceking mission ahead of me!
Pedal, Geronimo!

Trap and I walked along the path that led to the Peak of Mount Mattress, the tallest... hill in Oofadale!

We carried Fen’s Very Heavy invention with us. Or rather, I carried it. Trap carried the tiny bottle of sea jasmine essence and a roll of parchment with instructions for using the Wind Cycle.

“Couldn’t we... Puff... trade... pant?” I asked.

“What kind of Mouseking are you?” Trap asked. “Use your miceking muscles, Cousin!”
Finally, we arrived at the base of the pine tree. I started to **climb** up the **ladder** to get to the top, but . . .
1. First I stepped on some mountain eagle poo. **BLECH!**
2. Then I lost my footing, slipped, and fell on some sharp pine needles. **OUCH!**
3. I slipped again and smacked my snout on a branch. **SQUEAK!**
Finally, I reached the observation platform at the top of the tree. From there, I could see the whole village of Oofadale!

“Get on the Wind Cycle and pedal, Geronimo!” Trap called up to me.

I had to act fast. I hopped on the seat and started to pedal fast...faster...even faster!
My tired legs were starting to feel like **string cheese**!

Trap emptied the essence of **sea jasmine** in front of the fan, and the **wind** spread the scent all over Oofadale.

Down below, we could
see the brave micekings *battling* the dragons. The Oofa Oofa had finally woken up from their naps and joined the *warriors* from Mouseborg.

“Where is that smarty-mouseking?” *Sven* shouted, hurling a *hammer* at a green dragon. “He was supposed to bring more help!”
“WATCH OUT, CHIEF!” Olaf shrieked.

The hammer missed the green dragon. The ANGRY dragon grabbed Sven by the tail.

“Now to Gobble you up!” the dragon said. Then he suddenly sneezed.

“ACHOO!”

The dragon dropped Sven.
In less time than it takes to eat a cheese cracker, all of the dragons were in tears.

"Hammering herrings, what’s happening?” Olaf asked. “Why are the dragons crying?”

The green dragon began to wail. “What smell? That terrible smell?” he asked. “I can’t keep my eyes open!”

“It’s too clean!” whined a red dragon. “I smell soap! And flower! And I can’t stop sneezing! ACHOO!”

“Fen was right!” I told Trap. “The dragons can’t stand the super-clean smell of the sea jasmine.”

The dragons beat a quick retreat, flying off into the clouds one after another.

From the top of the pine tree, Trap and I watched as they fled, crying, sneezing, and swerving back and forth.
“It worked! We did it!” Trap and I cheered. Then we happily ran toward the village. We still had to figure where that letter came from.
The Secret of the Letter

The miceking warriors hugged one another and cheered when the dragons flew away.

“Micekings work better when they fight together! Hip, hip, hooray! Hooray! Hooray!”

Yan the Yawner hugged Sven. “Thank you for bringing that smarty-mouseking!” he said. “He really saved the day.”
Then he turned to the rest of us. “Brave Friends from Mouseborg, we thank you for your invaluable help today! We couldn’t have done it without you. To celebrate, we will have a grand miceking feast!”

“So says Yan the Yawner!”

chanted the Oofa Oofa.

Then Sven approached me. “Geronimo, this time you acted bravely, like a true miceking,” he said. “I have decided to award you with a miceking helmet.”

What, what, what? I couldn’t believe my ears. At last I would receive my first miceking helmet!

My whiskers were shaking with excitement!
“First, however,” Sven continued, “I would like to find out at least what was written in that mysterious letter from Yan the Yawner!”

Yan looked confused. “I didn’t send a letter.”

At that moment, Bronk Snorborg from the tourist office stepped forward.

“I think I can solve this mystery,” he said.
Sven and Yan both shouted at once. “Speak! We order you!”

“So says Sven the Shouter!” chanted the Mouseborg warriors.

“So says Yan the Yawner!” chanted the Oofa Oofa.

Bronk cleared his throat. “Well, you see, I think it might be a love letter that I wrote for the lovely Snorina.”

“What?” shouted Sven.

“A love letter?” yelled Yan.

Trap handed the letter to Bronk. “Is this it?”

“Yes!” Bronk cried happily.

“But why is the official seal of Oofadale on your letter?” Trap asked Bronk.

“Because I used one of the pieces of parchment that we use at the tourist
Dear Snorina,
You have stolen my heart,
and to you I declare all my love.
When I look at you,
my whiskers begin to shake.
With you by my side,
I could be a strong mouseking!
I could sail the stormy seas,
or slay the fiercest dragon.
For you I would climb the highest hill,
or eat the stinkiest cheese.
One smile from you is all I need,
but it would be nice if I had your love, too.

Bronk

* The original letter was written in runes, the mouseking alphabet. This is a translation for you readers!
office to draw maps,” Bronk admitted. “They all have the official coat of arms!” I had a question, too. “Then why did you hide it in an amphora and throw it into the sea?”

“That’s not how it happened,” Bronk answered. “You see, Snorina is the daughter of the Oofadale milkman, and every evening she comes to collect the empty milk bottles. I hoped that she would find my letter.”

“So how did the amphora end up in the sea?” Trap wanted to know.

“That night there was a terrible storm!” Bronk replied. “A blast of wind must have carried the amphora to the dock, and then it rolled into the water.” Trap’s eyes lit up. “Aha! Then the
current brought it to Mouseborg, where Stocker found it!”

Bronk nodded. “That must be what happened,” he said, and then he turned to look at a lovely rodent who was smiling at him. “And all this time I thought that Snorina didn’t return my feelings!”

Snorina stepped forward. “Oh, Bronk! If I had received the letter, I would have told you that I feel the same way about you.”

“You mean the letter wasn’t a call for help?” Sven fumed. “And you didn’t want to attack our village? We arranged an official expedition in grand miceking style just for a love letter?”
“It looks that way,” Bronk said.

“Why didn’t you tell us this as soon as we arrived?” Sven shouted.

Bronk pointed at me. “I did try to tell someone—that shrimpy mouseking over there.”

Uh-oh. This was not going to be good.

“Is this true, Geronimo?” Sven asked me.

“W-well, yes,” I stammered. “B-b-but the dragons were attacking, and . . .”

“You cheesehead!” Sven shouted. “First, you failed to figure out the letter. Then, you could have found out it was just a love letter, but you didn’t listen.

**NO MICEKING HELMET FOR YOU!**
“B-b-but the dragons . . .” I tried to explain.

“Enough of this. It’s time for the **feast**!”

Yan yelled.

**“SO SAYS YAN THE YAWNER!”**

cheered all the micekings.
Everyone ate and talked and laughed. I sat outside all alone, thinking about the miceking helmet that I had won and lost in a matter of minutes. Would I ever be able to show Thora that I was a truly brave miceking?

Then Bronk and Snorina approached me.

“Thank you for bringing the letter back to us, Geronimo,” Bronk said. “It brought Snorina and me together.”

“Even without a helmet, you are very brave,” she said. “One day you will win over your own miceking love, I’m sure.”

I smiled. “Thank you,” I said. “I know one day I will finally get my miceking helmet!”

But that’s another miceking story, for another miceking time!
Don’t miss any adventures of the Micekings!

Up Next:

#1 Attack of the Dragons
#2 The Famous Fjord Race
#3 Pull the Dragon’s Tooth!

#4 Stay Strong, Geronimo!
#5 The Mysterious Message

#6 The Helmet Holdup
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#4 I'm Too Fond of My Feet
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#6 Paws Off, Cheddarface!
#7 Red Pizzas for a Blue Count
#8 Attack of the Bandit Cats
#9 A Fabumouse Vacation for Geronimo
#10 All Because of a Cup of Coffee
#11 It's Halloween, You Traidy Mouse!
#12 Merry Christmas, Geronimo!
#13 The Phantom of the Subway
#14 The Temple of the Ruby of Fire
#15 The Mona Mousa Code
#16 A Cheese-Colored Camper
#17 Watch Your Whiskers, Stilton!
#18 Shriwreck on the Pirate Islands
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And check out my fabumouse special editions!
Dear mouse friends, thanks for reading, and good-bye until the next book!
WHO IS Geronimo Stiltonord?

He is a mouseking – the Geronimo Stilton of the ancient far north! He lives with his brawny and brave clan in the village of Mouseborg. From sailing frozen waters to facing fiery dragons, every day is an adventure for the micekings!

THE MYSTERIOUS MESSAGE

The micekings have received a mysterious message in a bottle! Unfortunately, most of it has been damaged by water – but Geronimo can tell it’s from the Oofa Oofa, the laziest rodents in the ancient far north. The micekings set sail to Oofadale, in case the Oofa Oofa are in trouble. But on their way, the dragons attack! Fjords and fiddlesticks, what an adventure!

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