

Rhynch-dink and His Storied Illustrations



Rhynch-dink the duck-billed spiremole (aeronitho) was smaller than the others because of a terrible curse put on him by angry ghosts. He had destroyed their museums of kids menu toys, promotional items and other knick knacks and was now cursed to produce the selfsame junk but with his image on it. Now there was a problem at the printer shop.

“They’re WHERE?!”

“Storage room,” said the printer robot. “Come on.” Rhynch-dink floating along behind him and soon saw his storied illustrations, not packed up and ready to mail out, but arranged like houses of cards into an entire neighborhood of small apartments.

“They’re perfect!” said a tiny mouse with a glue gun, standing before the structure. Even though he was distressed, Rhynch-dink did think to himself that the cards were indeed perfect for the needs of the mice. He had ordered hundreds of them printed with his picture, accompanied with short stories to expand on the images and called them “storied illustrations”. He was going to arrange for them to be put into cereal boxes or get them inserted into bubblegum packs.

He flew around the apartments and saw happy faces on the mice families living there. “That’s fantastic, but you don’t understand! If I don’t push out my face on cheap junk to the world, a terrible thing happens to me! I’m not even normally this tiny. You need contact a friend of mine. He’ll know what to—”

Suddenly it happened. In a twinkle like a flashing LED bracelet and with a sound like a wind-up toy winding down, Rhynch-dink suddenly transformed into a small giveaway eraser with his image on it, and began to dream of pencil cases and drawn-on desks.

When he awoke, he found himself large again (for him), resting on a couch in the printing shop waiting room. The robot had a plate of fancy freshwater shrimp for him, and Rhynch-dink was very grateful for this.

“We understood what needed to be done,” said the robot. “The mice immediately got to work printing more of your storied illustrations and then flooded the town with them. They were shoved into brochure holders in all the hotels, stacked as coasters in all the bars, tucked into bags of free samples at the mall. People from all over the place are carrying them around now.”

“What a relief,” Rhynch-dink sighed. “That ought to take the pressure off for a while now.” He enjoyed more of the shrimp, and asked the printer robot about the mice.

“Well, the card stock you provided was just the right weight and firmness. They’re always on the lookout for stuff like that. The stories they enjoyed also. Gave them a reason to visit one another. Helped the kids to sleep. You know mice.”

He did know mice, so this made a little sense. He was happy they liked his cards, and he figured it was because they weren’t cheap little things to them. As he floated away, he wondered if, for his next penance project, he could come up with something that would be considered trashy throw-aways even for mice.