

# BESSIE BUNTER IN LUCK!

By  
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## CHAPTER I

“OH!” breathed Bessie Bunter.  
She was startled.

Her eyes, and her spectacles, shot round to the door of No. 7 Study.

As No. 7 Study belonged to Marjorie Hazeldene, Clara Trevlyn and Dolly Jobling, Bessie Bunter had no business there. But Miss Elizabeth Bunter was often found where she had no business.

At the moment, she was standing at the study cupboard, with the door wide open, blinking into it through the big spectacles that were so like her brother Billy's at Greyfriars. It was not only in looks that Sister Bessie resembled Brother Billy. She shared his predilection for tuck—anybody's tuck. Had there been a cake in that cupboard, two plump hands would have pounced upon it immediately. It might have been Marjorie's. It might have been Clara's. It might have been Dolly's. But as soon as those plump paws had closed on it, it would have been Bessie's.

But—alas!—there was no cake! That the chums of No. 7 had a cake for tea, Bessie knew. She had witnessed its purchase at the school shop. She had rolled up to No. 7 Study expecting to find it there. But it seemed that Marjorie and Co. had not yet brought it up to their study. For the cupboard like Mrs. Hubbard's, was bare.



*She almost bounded across the study*

And then—

Footsteps and voices in the passage warned Bessie that the proprietors of the study were coming. No doubt they had that cake with them. But that was not very useful to Bessie if they found her there!

“Oh!” breathed Bessie.

Not as a rule swift in her movements, Bessie Bunter was on this occasion quite rapid. She almost bounded across No. 7 Study to the corner where the high-backed armchair stood. She was behind that armchair, huddled in the corner, when the door opened.

Three Fourth-form girls came in. Bessie heard Marjorie’s voice:

“Put it in the cupboard, Clara. Why, the cupboard’s open.”

“Who’s been here?” came Dolly’s voice.

Bessie heard Clara sniff.

“That’s an easy one!” said Clara. “Bessie saw us getting the cake. Bessie Bunter’s been here.”

Marjorie laughed.

“I shouldn’t wonder,” she said. “But don’t waste time, Clara: we’ve got to get a spot of tennis before tea.”

“Tennis can wait,” said Clara. “I’m going to put this cake in my hat-box. Bessie’s pretty sure to pay that cupboard another visit.”

Behind the armchair, Bessie grinned. She would have chuckled her fat chuckle, but that would have revealed her presence in the study. So she contented herself with a grin.

"Now come on, Clara," said Dolly Jobling, when the cake was duly deposited in the hat-box.

"I'm not through yet," said Clara. "If that fat little frump comes nosing into our study cupboard again, she's going to get a surprise. Hand me that empty chocolate box, Marjorie."

"What for?"

"I'm going to fill it with soot from the chimney."

"Soot!" exclaimed Marjorie and Dolly together.

"Just soot! And I'm going to leave it on the top shelf of the cupboard. And I'm going to tie a string to it, and tie the other end of the string to the cupboard door. What do you think will happen when the cupboard door's pulled open?"

"It will pull the box of soot off the top shelf, and it will come down—wallop—on whoever opens the cupboard door!" she said. "That will be a lesson for Bessie Bunter, if she noses into our study after our cake, what?"

"But—" said Marjorie.

"No time for buts, if we're going to get some tennis," interrupted Clara. "Now, where's the string—oh, here it is! And here goes."

"Cat!" breathed Bessie Bunter behind the armchair. But she breathed that word inaudibly.

Clara Trevlyn was busy for a few minutes. Then Bessie heard her voice again.

"That's that!"

"But—" murmured Marjorie.

"Hold the door just ajar, Marjorie, while I tie this end to the handle inside. Mustn't have too much slack. That's right."

"But—"

"Now I'll shut it, and we can go down to tennis. Bessie can come after our cake as soon as she likes—now!"

Still as a fat mouse, Bessie Bunter listened, while footsteps and voices receded down the passage. Then she emerged grinning from behind the armchair.

"Cats!" said Bessie.

She blinked at the closed cupboard door. There was nothing to indicate the sooty trap that was hidden within. Had Bessie not been put on her guard, undoubtedly she would have opened that cupboard door and received a shower of soot on the fattest head in the Cliff House Fourth.



*She blinked at the closed cupboard door*

But Bessie had no interest in that cupboard after what she had heard. She headed for Clara's hat-box.

"He, he, he!" chuckled Bessie.

Plump hands lifted a cake from the hat-box. With the cake under a plump arm, Bessie Bunter blinked cautiously into the passage. Then she rolled out of No. 7 Study and headed for her own—No. 4. After which, anyone who had passed Number 4 Study in the Cliff House Fourth, would have heard a sound of munching and crunching from within—munching and crunching that continued till Elizabeth Bunter had finished that cake to the last plum and the last crumb.

## CHAPTER II

"WELL!" exclaimed Clara Trevlyn.

"Well!" said Marjorie.

"Well!" said Dolly Jobling.

All three were surprised.

After the tennis, they came up to No. 7 for a study tea. They fully expected to find sooty traces of a surreptitious visit to the study cupboard.

But there were no such traces to be seen.

The cupboard door was closed, as they had left it. Not a speck of soot was

visible. If the cupboard had been opened, obviously the booby-trap had not worked! They had no doubt that Bessie had been there!—no doubt that she had opened the cupboard. But nothing had happened!

“Blow!” said Clara, “the booby-trap hasn’t worked. Blow!—perhaps I left too much slack on the string. What rotten luck—Bessie would have had to wash, and she hates washing. Anyhow, even if she didn’t get the soot, she didn’t get the cake either, as there was nothing in the cupboard. I suppose that beastly string came loose, or something.”

“Must have,” said Dolly. “The booby-trap certainly never worked or there would be soot about.”

“Bother!” said Clara. “I wonder what went wrong with it. I’ll soon see.”

Clara stepped to the cupboard and pulled open the door.

The next moment there was a wild shriek in No. 7 Study. Clara Trevlyn staggered back under a shower of soot.

“Ooooooogh!” spluttered Clara. “Oooooogh! I’m all sooty—oooooo! I’m smothered! Ooooooch!”

Marjorie and Dolly gazed at her, almost in horror. Soot smothered her from head to foot, she was clothed in soot as in a garment. Soot rose in clouds round her as she dabbed frantically at her face and her hair.

“Oooooooch!” gurgled Clara. “Ooooooch!”

Bessie Bunter blinked in through her big spectacles. Bessie seemed amused.

“He, he, he! I say, is that Clara, or a nigger minstrel? He, he, he! I say, Clara, you’d better not let Miss Bellew see you like that! I say, you want a wash! He, he, he!”

“Ooooooogh!”

“He, he, he!”

Bessie Bunter rolled away gurgling with merriment. She left Clara gurgling also—but not with merriment!

### CHAPTER III

THE booby-trap in No. 7 Study had worked—there was no doubt about that! Why it hadn’t worked for Bessie Bunter remained a mystery. It certainly hadn’t: but it had worked for Clara: and for quite a long time afterwards, Clara was busy with soap and hot water—lots of soap and lots of hot water, getting rid of the soot. She hardly cared when it was discovered that there was no longer a cake in the hat-box. Clara was not bothering about cakes—she was bothering wholly about soot!

THE END