

The
Sleepover
Club
Sleeps Out

The poster features a dark blue background with a large, light blue, torn-edge sign hanging from a door handle. The sign contains the title. To the right, four young girls are peeking out from behind the door. The top girl has long blonde hair and wears a purple plaid shirt. The second girl has dark hair with bangs and a red headband, holding a hairbrush. The third girl has dark hair and glasses, wearing a pink shirt. The bottom girl has brown hair and wears a green cap and a red plaid shirt, holding a toothbrush. A yellow crescent moon is visible in the top right and bottom right corners, and a yellow crescent moon is on the left side near the bottom. The text 'DEFINITELY NOT FOR BOYS!' is at the bottom left.

DEFINITELY NOT FOR BOYS!

Narinder Dhami

The Sleepover Club Sleep Out

«HarperCollins»

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Join the Sleepover Club: Frankie, Kenny, Felicity, Rosie and Lyndsey, five girls who just want to have fun – but who always end up in mischief! When the Sleepover Club go on an overnight school trip to a local museum full of Egyptian relics, they plan a sort of 'museum sleepover'. At the official sleepover at Frankie's house the night before, the girls hatch a plot to scare their arch rivals the M&Ms. Once the girls are in the museum late at night, however things don't quite go according to plan... Pack up your sleepover kit and drop in on the fun!

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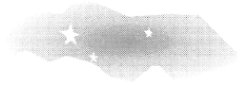
The Sleepover Club Sleep Out



Narinder Dhami



The Sleepover Club Sleeps Out

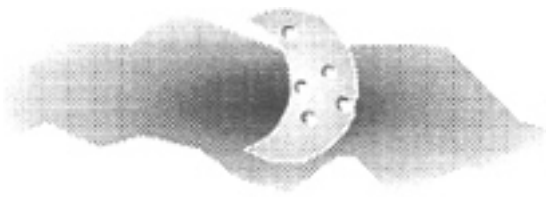


by Narinder Dhani

HarperCollinsChildren'sBooks

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CHAPTER ONE



Hiya! It's me.

No, just for once this isn't Frankie. Bet that's given you a bit of a shock, hasn't it?

No, I'm not Fliss either. P-lease!

And I'm not Rosie. Guess again.

Wrong! It's not Lyndz.

It's me.

Kenny! Or, if you want to annoy me seriously, you can call me Laura. No-one calls me Laura except my mum when she's in a mood. If you want us to be mates, you'll never, ever let the L-word cross your lips.

I guess that by now you've realised that you're stuck with me, instead of Frankie. Hey, you don't have to look so shocked. I don't know what Frankie's told you about me, but it's all lies. I'm not wild at all. I'm perfectly house-trained (joke). Well, most of the time, anyway.

The point is, Frankie's told you everything about the Sleepover Club up till now, and why should she have all the fun? I told her it was about time one of the rest of us got to talk to you for a change, and Frankie was cool about it. She's cool about most things. That's why she's my best mate. (I had to bribe her with a bag of Wotsits, but that's another story).

I wasn't the only one who wanted to tell you about the sleepover last Friday night. Once we'd decided that someone else instead of Frankie was going to do it, Fliss and Rosie and Lyndz were all dying to get in on the act, too. That's because our last sleepover was brilliant, one of the best ever. We had a totally radical time, and best of all, we completely trashed the M&Ms. Anyway, we argued for half-an-hour over who was going to tell you about it, and then Frankie persuaded the others that it ought to be me. That wasn't just because I gave her my Wotsits, but because it was me the M&Ms did the dirty on, and getting revenge was my idea.

Whoops, hang on a sec. I'm getting ahead of myself. I'm not as good at this as Frankie. I need a bit more practice. Hmm. D'you know what? I reckon the beginning would be a really excellent place to start.

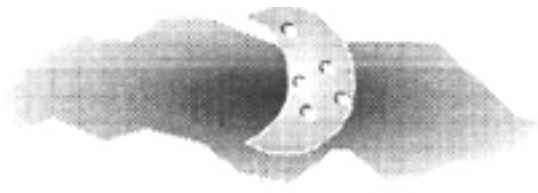
You know all about the Sleepover Club, don't you? There's just the five of us – Frankie, Fliss, Lyndz, Rosie and me, and we sleep over at each other's houses every week-end. OK, OK, so you

know all that. Don't get your intestines in a twist. I just thought that maybe if you hadn't been around before, you might not know. That's all. (You know what intestines are, don't you? They're these sort of tubes inside your stomach. I want to be a doctor, so I know about things like that. The others think I'm completely gross.)

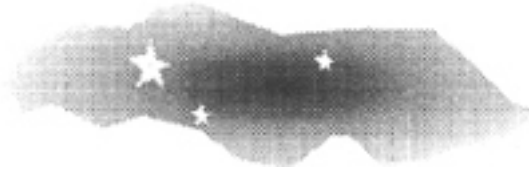
Maybe I ought to remind you about the M&Ms as well. Remember them? Emma Hughes and Emily Berryman? The Queen and The Goblin? The Gruesome Twosome? They're in our class at school, and they are the biggest enemies of the Sleepover Club in the whole world. If it hadn't been for the M&Ms playing that horrible trick on me, I'd never have come up with such a brilliant plan to get our own back.

Sorry, I'm doing it again. My mouth's got a mind of its own. My sister Monster-Features (my parents named her Molly, but Monster-Features sounds so-o-o much better) says if my brain was as big as my mouth, I'd be a genius, but what does she know? I never talk to her, except to fight. Yesterday I wanted to phone Frankie to talk about the sleepover, and Molly the Monster wanted to phone some stoo-pid friend of hers, and we got into a humungous argument, and I picked up the Yellow Pages and – but that's another story.

Come on, let's go, and I'll tell you what happened. And this time I'll start right at the very beginning.



CHAPTER TWO



It all started last week, on a really wet, cold and miserable day. We'd got soaked to the skin walking to school, and the only good thing was that it was a Friday. And that night we were all sleeping over at Frankie's.

"I asked my mum if we could make popcorn tonight," Frankie said as we went into the classroom.

"Really?" Fliss, who was fussing with her wet hair, looked impressed. The Sleepover Club have been banned from every kitchen in the universe since we nearly burnt her mum's house down. "What did she say?"

Frankie grinned. "She said over her dead body."

"Well, what are we going to do tonight then?" Fliss persisted. You must have sussed out by now that Fliss is just a tiny bit of a fusspot. "We could have a hair-styling contest."

"No, let's have a disco," Rosie chimed in. "I've got my new Spice Girls tape."

"Why don't we play Twister?" Lyndz suggested.

I opened my mouth to say I wanted to tell horror stories (I always want to tell horror stories at Sleepovers, but we hardly ever do, because Fliss is a bit of a wimp and gets scared), when suddenly I noticed the M&Ms coming towards us with their ears flapping.

"Hold on a minute, girls," I said, pretending to sniff the air. "There's a horrible smell around here."

The others clocked the M&Ms, and started to giggle.

"Oh, very funny," said Emma Hughes snootily. We call her the Queen because she thinks she *is* one. She goes around with her nose stuck in the air like the rest of us stink or something. If she ever went to Buckingham Palace, she'd expect the real Queen to curtsy to her. What's really irritating, though, is that all the teachers think she's wonderful.

"As if we wanted to listen to what idiots like you were saying anyway," growled Emily Berryman (The Goblin). We call her that because she's really tiny with great big eyes and a deep voice. If you put a hat on her and gave her a fishing rod, she'd look exactly like a garden gnome.

"Oh, yeah?" I said. "Well, your ears were flapping so much, you looked like you were about to take off and fly round the classroom."

“Like Dumbo,” Frankie added, and we all fell about.

Emma turned red with anger. She likes to think she’s perfect, but the truth is, her ears do stick out just a little bit. She opened her mouth to say something nasty in return, but just then Mrs Weaver, our teacher, came in with the register under her arm.

“Sit down, everyone,” she said, looking round.

The M&Ms skipped smartly off to their table on the other side of the classroom, and I rolled my eyes at Frankie. It’s s-o-o-o annoying the way the Gruesome Twosome smarm up to the teachers, and pretend to be all sweet and nice, when really they’re stuck-up nerds.

Mrs Weaver sat down at her desk, and everyone stopped fidgeting and shut up. Mrs Weaver’s OK, but it’s best not to push her too far. Know what I mean?

“Before I do the register, I want to talk to you about our end-of-term trip next Friday.” Mrs Weaver beamed round at us as if she was planning to take the whole class to EuroDisney. “We’ll be going to visit the Armfield Museum, near Leicester, next Friday afternoon.”

“Oh, great big fat hairy deal,” I mouthed at the others. We’ve been to the Armfield Museum with the school a zillion times, plus our parents are always taking us there when it rains in the holidays, and there’s nothing else to do. We’ve been there so many times, it’s about as exciting as cutting your toenails. The rest of the class looked just as unimpressed as we did, and everyone started muttering and moaning under their breath.

“Awesome! The Armfield Museum!” Frankie said, just a bit sarcastically. “I’m s-o-o-o glad we’re not going to Alton Towers or some other boring old theme park where we might have some fun.”

“Oh, me too!” I joined in. “Who wants to go on a pathetic log flume when they could be looking at a load of broken old pots?”

Rosie was looking a bit blank.

“What’s the Armfield Museum?” she asked. Rosie’s fitted in so well into the Sleepover Club, that we keep forgetting she hasn’t been here that long.

“Funnily enough, it’s a museum,” I grinned.

“It’s OK, really,” said Lyndz. “It’s got loads of spooky stuff like Egyptian mummies.”

“Yeah, but when you’ve seen one mummy, you’ve seen them all,” said Fliss gloomily, and she looked so depressed, the rest of us started to giggle.

“When you’ve quite finished,” said Mrs Weaver, glaring round at everyone. The whole class shut up and looked at her again.

“This trip to the museum will be very different from other visits,” Mrs Weaver went on. “We’ll be having a guided tour, and workshop activities, but we will also be taking sleeping bags and sleeping overnight in the museum galleries.”

Well, that did it. The whole class went bananas, including the Sleepover Club.

“Awesome!” Frankie said again, but this time she meant it. “A sleepover in a museum!”

“The Sleepover Club sleeps out!” Lyndz said. “Excellent!”

“D’you think they’ll let us sleep in the room with the Egyptian mummies in it?” I asked eagerly. Then I clocked Fliss, who was looking a bit pea-green. “What’s biting you, Flissy?”

Fliss was looking as if she was going to be sick.

“I don’t think I want to sleep over in a museum,” she mumbled. “It’ll be scary.”

“You bet it will,” I said. “That’s why it’ll be excellent.”

Fliss looked even more spooked, and Frankie stuck her elbow in my ribs.

“Ow! What I mean is, it won’t be scary, Fliss. Not really. We’ll all be there to look after you.”

“Anyway, you can hold hands with Ryan Scott if you get scared, Fliss,” Lyndz said wickedly.

Fliss turned pink. We think boys are mostly pretty r-e-e-e-volting, but Fliss has a bit of a thing about Ryan Scott, who’s in our class.

“Ssshh!” Fliss whispered, glancing round at Ryan who sat at the table behind us. “He might hear you!”

“I never thought we’d be going to a sleepover with boys,” I said, which started us all giggling.

“Or teachers,” Rosie pointed out.

“Or the M&Ms,” Lyndz said.

That stopped us laughing. We all looked across the classroom at the Gruesome Twosome, who saw us staring, and stuck their noses in the air. I put my hands behind my ears, and waggled them at Emma, who turned purple with rage.

“We won’t have to sleep in the same room as them, will we?” Rosie asked anxiously.

“I’d rather sleep with the Egyptian mummies,” said Fliss. She was deadly serious too, which set us all off again.

Mrs Weaver had been trying to get us quiet again for the last five minutes, and now she’d just about managed it.

“I’ve got some letters for your parents with more details about the trip, which I’ll give out tonight.” Some people were still fidgeting with excitement and whispering to each other, and Mrs W glared at them until they stopped.

“And now it’s time to settle down and get on with some work. Blue and Green groups – Maths, Yellow and Red groups – topic workbooks. Oh, and Kenny—”

I jumped. I’d been daydreaming about Armfield Museum and wondering if I’d get a chance to shut the M&Ms inside one of those big mummy cases.

“Yes, Mrs Weaver?”

“It’s your turn to use the computer.” Mrs Weaver had to raise her voice because everyone else was already moving round, collecting their work from their lockers. “You’d better get on with that story you started last week.”

“OK, Miss.” I was well pleased. I love using the computer. The only thing is, it’s over the other side of the classroom, right next to the M&Ms’ table.

“Hey, Emily,” Emma said as I walked past them to get to the computer, “have you noticed that there’s a really horrible smell around here?”

“Oh, *p-lease!*” I said, sitting down at the computer desk. “I think I’ve heard that one before. You two have got no imagination!”

The M&Ms both turned red.

“You think you’re so clever, don’t you!” Emma spluttered.

I grinned at her.

“By the way, Mrs Weaver’s watching you two,” I said under my breath.

The M&Ms both jumped, looked scared and quickly opened their maths books. I nearly died laughing. Mrs Weaver was actually writing on the blackboard, and had her back to the class.

“One up to me!” I said, and I licked my finger and drew a ‘T’ in the air. Then I turned my back on the Gruesome Twosome, and switched the computer on. I could hear them muttering to each other behind me, but I ignored them.

I found my work, and read through what I’d already written. It was a really ace story about the Loch Ness monster, and I was looking forward to finishing it and reading it at the sleepover tonight. It was so bloodthirsty, it would probably frighten Fliss into fits!

After a quarter-of-an-hour, though, I’d only written three words. Three words! At this rate I wouldn’t finish the story till next Christmas. The trouble was, it was impossible to concentrate. Everyone was supposed to be working quietly, but they were so excited about the museum sleepover, that they just couldn’t stop talking about it. However hard Mrs Weaver tried, she couldn’t shut the class up. To make things worse, one of the maths groups was measuring all the furniture in the classroom, and they kept accidentally whacking each other with the metre sticks, like actors in a silent movie.

Like I said, it was impossible to concentrate. But I can always concentrate better when I’m using the computer if I’m eating at the same time. That was when I remembered the Opal Fruits in

my jacket in the cloakroom. There were a couple of lime-green ones in there with my name on them! My mouth began to water.

I looked round. Mrs Weaver had disappeared into the book cupboard, and Ryan Scott and his sidekick Danny McCloud were fighting a duel with their metre sticks. No-one would notice if I just ducked out for a moment, and got my sweets. No, of course we aren't supposed to leave the classroom without permission, but then we're not supposed to eat sweets in class either!

"Where're you going?" Fliss asked as I sprinted over to the classroom door. That girl's got eyes in the back of her head, I swear.

"To get my Opal Fruits," I muttered, one eye fixed firmly on the book cupboard.

"Have you asked Mrs Weaver?" Fliss said sternly.

"Oh, sure," I said, "like I really want a detention that much."

"But, Kenny—" Fliss began, looking shocked. I ignored her. I was out, and back inside the classroom with my Opal Fruits hidden up my sleeve in one minute flat. Fliss looked outraged, but I winked at the others, who started laughing. Mrs Weaver had come out of the book cupboard, but she was busy examining Danny McCloud's eye where Ryan Scott had poked him with the metre stick, so she didn't notice me. I hurried back to the computer, and sat down. And that was when I got a BIG shock.

The first thing I saw was that my story had gone. Vanished. In its place was just one sentence. A single sentence repeated over and over again, from the top of the computer screen right down to the bottom.

Mrs Weaver stinks.

My jaw hit the floor. I was so shocked, I sat there staring at the computer screen, wondering what had happened. Then I realised in a flash – the M&Ms! Those nasty little nerds had done this. I just hoped I could get my story back, but first I had to get rid of the stuff on-screen before anyone saw it. I reached for the mouse, but I was already too late. I heard a voice behind me.

"How are you getting on, Kenny?"

It was Mrs Weaver. She looked at the screen, and then looked again as if she couldn't believe her eyes.

There was silence for a few moments. Somehow the rest of the class picked up that something was going on, and gradually they went quiet too, until there was a horrible silence in the whole of the room. And during that silence, the words on the screen seemed to be growing, getting bigger and bigger and blacker and blacker.

"Well, I'm surprised at you, Laura," Mrs Weaver said at last, and I could tell from her voice how annoyed she was. She didn't usually call me Laura, but this time I wasn't about to argue. "If that's how you want to waste your time, then you'd better make up for it in detention today. Now clear that rubbish off the screen, and get back to your table."

"But, Miss, I didn't write that," I began, and then I stopped. I couldn't say that the M&Ms had set me up while I went out of class (without permission) to get sweets I wasn't supposed to be eating, could I? I'd still be in trouble, whatever.

Mrs Weaver just looked at me, and walked off. I deleted all the writing, and switched the computer off. Behind me the M&Ms were giggling and nudging each other, but I ignored them, and went back to my table.

The rest of the Sleepover Club looked as shocked as I felt. Fliss was nearly crying, and Frankie, Rosie and Lyndz were as white as ghosts. As for me, I was so angry, I was boiling. I could have gone right back across the classroom, grabbed Emma Hughes and shaken her until she owned up.

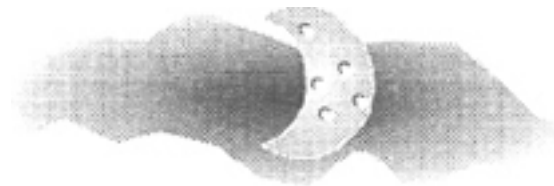
"It was the M&Ms, right?" Frankie whispered in my ear as I sat down next to her. "What did they do?"

“Deleted my story, and wrote *Mrs Weaver stinks*. A zillion times.” I glanced across the classroom at the M&Ms. They were smirking, and patting each other on the back. Emma saw me looking, and she licked her finger and drew a ‘1’ in the air. I clenched my fists.

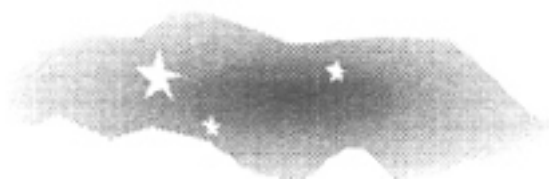
“Keep cool, Kenny,” Frankie said anxiously. “Don’t let her get to you.”

“The rotten pigs!” said Lyndz. “We’re not going to let them get away with that, are we?”

I shook my head. “No way,” I muttered. “It’s about time the M&Ms learned that they can’t mess the Sleepover Club around.”



CHAPTER THREE



“Look, we’ve got to decide what we’re going to do,” Frankie said, for about the zillionth time. “If we don’t get our own back, the M&Ms’ll never let us forget it.”

We all nodded, but none of us said anything. We were too depressed. We were sitting in Frankie’s back garden, the sun had started shining and we were eating pizza, but we were still miserable. That was because we couldn’t believe the nerve of the M&Ms.

“I still can’t believe they did it,” Lyndz said. “I mean, the M&Ms are so goody-goody and all that.”

“Yeah, I would’ve thought they’d be scared of getting caught,” Rosie agreed.

“Well, there wasn’t much chance of that, was there?” Frankie pointed out. “Mrs Weaver was in the book cupboard, and everyone else was watching Ryan and Danny fighting with the metre sticks.”

“And Emma was so close to the computer, she wouldn’t even have had to get out of her chair,” I said. “You know what I was really worried about? I thought Mrs Weaver might say I couldn’t come to the museum sleepover.”

“Yeah, you were lucky to get away with just a detention,” agreed Frankie.

We all sat gloomily looking down at our pizzas. Not even the thought of the museum sleepover could cheer us up at the moment.

“You should have told Mrs Weaver it wasn’t you, Kenny,” Fliss said, also for the zillionth time.

“I did, and she didn’t believe me,” I said impatiently.

“You could have told her it was the M&Ms,” Fliss persisted. That girl never knows when to give up. I glared at her.

“I’m not a snitcher!”

“Anyway, Mrs Weaver wouldn’t have believed you,” Frankie cut in quickly. Just in time to stop me throwing a half-eaten slice of pizza at Fliss.

After what had happened, I wouldn’t have got through the rest of the day if it hadn’t been for the others. The M&Ms were real pigs. They kept staring at me and giggling, and looking really smug and pleased with themselves, and they made me so angry, I could have gone over there and knocked their heads together. I think Frankie and the others were a bit worried I might actually do it, because they’d stuck to my side like glue all day.

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