



SLEEPOVER  
GIRLS GO  
TREASURE  
HUNTING

DEFINITELY NOT FOR BOYS!



# **Sue Mongredien**

## **Sleepover Girls Go Treasure Hunting**

### **Аннотация**

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. It's treasure-hunting fever when the girls discover buried gold in Lyndz's back garden. Should they take the softly-softly Time Team approach Fliss wants, or the gung-ho metal-detector approach Frankie is in favour of? One thing is certain, there won't be much left of Cuddington by the time the Sleepover Club has finished digging...

# Содержание

Dedication	6
Contents	7
	8
	16
	25
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	28

The Sleepover Club

54

Sleepover Girls Go  
Treasure Hunting



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Treasure Hunting



# Dedication

For Hannah and Tom – my own little treasures

# Contents

[Cover](#)

[Title Page](#)

[Dedication](#)

[Chapter One](#)

[Chapter Two](#)

[Chapter Three](#)

[Chapter Four](#)

[Chapter Five](#)

[Chapter Six](#)

[Chapter Seven](#)

[Chapter Eight](#)

[Chapter Nine](#)

[Chapter Ten](#)

[Have you been invited to all these sleepovers?](#)

[Sleepover Kit List](#)

[Copyright](#)

[About the Publisher](#)



# CHAPTER ONE



Hello! Lyndz here. How are you? I don't suppose you've got a bit of time to hear about how the Sleepover Club went treasure hunting, have you? Oh, good! Come into the garden and we can sit on the swings while I tell you all about it.

The rest of the Sleepover lot thought I should be the one to tell you the story of our treasure-hunting adventures seeing as it all started off right here, in the garden. See the big ash tree over there? Well, that's where Buster...

Oh. I haven't even introduced you to Buster! He's our dog. Do you like dogs? Even people who aren't really into animals, i.e. Fliss, end up liking Buster because he's so funny and friendly and

GORGEOUS! He's our Jack Russell terrier and has always got his little nose into something or other.

It was actually Buster's cute little button nose that started us off on our search for treasure this time. Let me tell you how it all happened.

It was Saturday morning and the five of us – that's me, Rosie, Frankie, Kenny and Fliss – were sitting around the breakfast table at my house. We'd just had an awesome Sleepover the night before and were giggling about Fliss's sleep talking which had woken all of us up through the night.

"You were saying something about having your hair cut, I think," Rosie said, spreading marmalade on her toast. "You definitely said something about your fringe anyway."

"Yeah, and I heard you say, 'Shave it all off please – give me the baldy look!'" Kenny joked. (If you didn't know, Kenny is the biggest wind-up merchant in the world. Don't believe ANYTHING she tells you!)

Fliss squealed and clapped her hands onto her long, blonde hair at once. Even though she's known Kenny from the first day we were at primary school together, she still falls for Kenny's wind-ups every time. "There's no way in the world I'd have said that, Kenny," she said seriously. "Unless I was having a nightmare!"

The rest of us chuckled. "I dunno – I think a skinhead might suit you," Frankie said thoughtfully. "What do you reckon, girls?"

"Noooooo!" Fliss squeaked in horror. "Don't even SAY that

word to me!”

“They’re only kidding you,” I told Fliss, patting her arm. “I never heard you say anything about getting your head shaved anyway. When I heard you, you were muttering about mashed potato!”

“Ooh, was I?” Fliss said. “That’s because my mum’s on a diet again and we’re not allowed to have any potatoes in the house. Or biscuits. Or chocolates. Or cakes. Or cheese. Or...”

“And out of all those things, mashed potato is what you miss the most?” Frankie asked, raising an eyebrow. “You freak!”

“Oooh, but come on, though... soft, fluffy mash...” Fliss said dreamily, with a faraway look in her eyes. “I could eat it for breakfast!”

My mum was buttering some more toast for us and laughed at those words. “Fliss, I don’t have time to do you some mash for breakfast but if you stick around for lunch, I’ll make sure there’s some on the table,” she said. “How does that sound?”

Fliss went a bit pink. She always goes a bit funny and shy around other people’s mums and dads. “Thank you, Mrs Collins,” she said politely. “That’s really REALLY kind of you!”

Mum laughed again, Fliss was sounding so thrilled. “Glad to help out,” she said. “Same goes for the rest of you if you want to stay for veggie sausages and mash?”

Even though we were all stuffed with toast and marmalade and boiled eggs and porridge at this point, every single one of us said, “Yes, PLEASE!” as if we hadn’t been fed for six weeks.

The Sleepover Club have biiiiig appetites!

After breakfast, we went outside to mess about in the garden with Buster. It was a really sunny day and before long, we were running off our big breakfasts with a game of leapfrog. Our garden is quite long and wide so we were able to keep leapfrogging around in a big circle. Buster got all excited and kept running round our legs until I got worried he was going to get jumped on, and moved him out of the way.

Buster was a bit put out by that, I think – he hates being left out of anything, especially a game that involves lots of running around – but obediently trotted off to do one of his favourite things, which is sniffing around the flowerbeds.

If you've got a dog yourself, you'll know all about the sniffing thing. They just can't resist having a good old sniff of anything they come across – in the street, in the park, even in your own garden when they've sniffed it a million times already! Still, it just goes to show that dogs must know something we don't know because it was Buster's sniffing that started us off on the treasure hunt. He must have sniffed around our garden a gazillion times by now and never found much that was interesting – the odd bone, a dead mouse one of the cats had caught, some compost – you know, nothing more exciting than that... but today, all that sniffing paid off.

**WOOF! WOOF!**

If you've got a dog, you'll also know that different woofs mean different things. Big, deep woofs are to try and sound scary when

the postman is at the door. Short, high-pitched woofs are more of an excited noise. And from all the yapping he was doing at the other end of the garden, I knew he was all worked up about something or other.

“Oof!” Kenny finished her round of leapfrogs, and we all stopped to watch Buster. He was scrabbling away in the soil and kept cocking his head at me and barking louder and louder.

“I think he’s saying we should be playing leap*dog*, not leapfrog,” Rosie joked.

“Oh, I hope he hasn’t found a real frog from next door’s pond,” I said, feeling worried. “He’s got a real thing about them and I’m sure they don’t think it’s such good fun when he tries to play with them.”

“Frogs, YUCK!” Fliss said at once. She is one of those people who feels sick at the thought of blood, beetles, spiders, snakes, rats, mud, bad smells, ghosts, dead things... you get the idea.

“Oh, frogs are sooo sweet,” I said defensively. “How can you not like a cute little froggy, Fliss?” I didn’t bother to wait for her answer – I didn’t have time to listen to all the reasons she would be able to come up with for hating them. “Hang on – I’ll just see what he’s found.”

I ran off up the garden, half hoping it really was a frog but thinking that, more likely, it was going to be a worm or piece of rubbish that the wind had blown in. I certainly wasn’t expecting to find some treasure!

As I got near him, Buster started running round and round

in circles, barking dementedly. “Calm down, daft dog!” I said, laughing.

He ran over to something he’d uncovered in the soil and pushed it with his nose. It glinted gold in the autumn sun.

“What have you found, then?” I said. I still wasn’t excited at this point, I was just wondering if it was a shiny chocolate wrapper (not that I have food on the brain or anything!). It wasn’t until I got right there and bent over to look that I realised that it wasn’t just a piece of old rubbish. Oh, no! Quite the opposite, in fact. Buster had found... a gold ring.

“Buster, where did this come from?” I asked in surprise. I picked up the ring and blew the last crumbs of soil off it. It felt heavy and warm in my hand.

“Hey, look at this, you guys,” I shouted excitedly. “Buster has struck GOLD!”

The other four ran over to have a look. “Wow! A ring! Where do you think it came from?” Fliss said, eyes wide. “Can I try it on?”

“Is it one of your mum’s rings?” practical Rosie said. “Or yours?”

“It’s not mine and I don’t think it’s Mum’s,” I replied. “I’ve never seen it before.”

“Is it your dad’s?” Kenny asked. “Or one of your brothers’? It must have come from *somewhere*.”

Fliss rolled her eyes. “Honestly, Kenny, don’t you know anything about jewellery? It’s a lady’s ring – look how small it

is!” she said, wiggling her middle finger which was now wearing the ring. Fliss is very into stuff like jewellery and make-up – and she also loves a chance to go on about it whenever possible.

“No, I didn’t know because I’m not interested,” Kenny retorted, quick as a flash. “And anyone who IS interested must be...”

“Hey, I wonder if it’s something to do with the supernatural,” Frankie interrupted. Out of the five of us, Kenny and Fliss are the ones who argue most often, so Rosie, Frankie and I have to jump in and stop them before it gets out of hand. “I mean, things don’t just *appear* in people’s gardens like that, do they? It could be a sign!” she added, looking excited.

“Supernatural?” scoffed Rosie at once. “Sign? Leave it out, Frankie. It’s a ring that Buster has found, that’s all.”

“Now, don’t look like that,” Frankie said. “I saw this wicked episode of the *X-Files* once, where...”

“Here we go...” muttered Kenny, raising her eyebrows at Rosie. Those two don’t have *any* time for Frankie’s theories about aliens, UFOs and spaceships. The drama with Frankie’s telescope and ‘alien’ spotting on Cuddington Hill was something we were still trying to live down. “Now – getting back to the real world, has anyone been doing any digging in the garden lately?” she added loudly, drowning out Frankie’s *X-Files* story.

I wrinkled my nose while I thought. “Yes, Mum was out here last weekend,” I said. “She roped me into helping her with the weeding. Why?”

“Well... DERRR!” Kenny said, her face lighting up. “Hasn’t it struck anyone else what the obvious answer is?”

The rest of us looked at each other blankly. “Er... a magic plant that grows gold rings?” Fliss said feebly.

Rosie giggled. “Fliss, you’ve been reading too much Enid Blyton,” she said. “Magic plant, indeed!”


“I’m talking about buried treasure, you dimwits!” Kenny said dramatically. “I bet when your mum was digging over her flowerbeds, she dug this ring up without even realising. Which means that... ”

“There could be more down there,” Rosie put in, grabbing Kenny’s arm excitedly. “Buried treasure – in your garden, Lyndz!”

“From years and years ago,” Kenny added, eyes gleaming. “It’s probably really REALLY old and dead valuable.”

Even Fliss had stopped glaring at Rosie and was looking interested now. “What, you mean, we could be rich?” she said eagerly.

“Could be!” I said, grinning at her. I started skipping back towards the house. “Come on, let’s go and show my mum what we’ve found!”



# CHAPTER TWO



You know what it's like when you're dead excited about something and then you show your parents and they're like, "Oh yeah, whatever," as if they've just seen the most boring thing on earth? Well, that was kind of what I was expecting to happen with the ring as well – for Mum and Dad to crush our excitement with lots of boring, practical reasons why we couldn't possibly have found some real treasure.

Which just goes to show that parents are totally unpredictable creatures because – miracle of the year – they didn't say anything of the sort.

"Mum, look what Buster found in the garden," I shouted as

we went into the kitchen. Mum and Dad were both there reading the newspaper and trying to stop my baby brother Spike ripping up the TV guide.

Fliss wiggled the ring off her finger and dropped it into my mum's hand. "Treasure!" she beamed.

"Is it yours, Mrs Collins?" Sherlock Kenny wanted to know at once. "Did you lose it when you were gardening?"

Mum shook her head. "No, it's not one of mine," she said, peering at it. "I've never seen it before. It's very pretty. I wonder whose it is."

"We were wondering if there could be some buried treasure in the garden," I burst out excitedly. "What do you think? You might have dug this up the other day when we were out in the garden – and there might be loads more where it came from, too!"

Fliss sat down at the kitchen table suddenly, looking really pale and scared. "I've just had a horrible thought," she said faintly. "What if there's a dead body down there? A dead body that was WEARING THE RING!"

"Eeeeuughh, do you have to, Fliss?" Rosie said. "Thanks for that lovely idea – not!"

"Darling, I'm sure if I'd raked over the hand of a dead woman, I'd have noticed," Mum said calmly. She is not the tiniest bit squeamish – as you probably guessed.

"Raked over the... ugh," Fliss echoed, her face changing from white to green in seconds. She clapped a hand over her mouth

and looked sick as anything. “I wish you hadn’t said that, Mrs Collins.”

Dad took the ring out of Mum’s hand and examined it. “It feels heavy enough to be real gold,” he said, sounding interested. “Whereabouts did you find it?”

“Near the ash tree,” I said. “Can we go and do some digging there to see what else we can find, please, please, PLEASE?”

“Definitely not,” Mum said at once. “I can just see it now – my rose bushes all destroyed by you five, hacking away at their roots. No, thank you very much!”

“Oh, per-leeeeze, Mum,” I wheedled. “We’d be dead careful.”

“I mean, if it really is buried treasure, there’s bound to be more down there, isn’t there?” Kenny reasoned. “After all, no one would bury a single ring, would they?”

“It’ll be just like *Time Team!*” Frankie piped up. “I saw it the other week, right, and they’d found this whole Roman campground that they were digging up. It was soooo cool. They found bits of old Roman wine goblets and parts of old spears and all sorts of cool stuff!”

“Awesome,” Kenny said. “Hey – what if Romans used to live here in your village, Lyndz?”

“What if they lived in your HOUSE?” Fliss breathed excitedly.

My dad burst out laughing. “As this is a Victorian house, I doubt it,” he chuckled. “Fliss, remind me – what century is this again?”

Fliss frowned at him. "Is this a trick question?" she asked suspiciously. "It's the 21st century of course!"

"Right," Dad said. "And the Romans were around... when?"

Fliss shrugged. "Erm... about a hundred years ago?" she guessed, looking uncomfortable.

"The Romans were around in the FIRST century," Dad told her. "Nearly two THOUSAND years ago. Now, I know our house might look two thousand years old, but..." he joked.

"Dad, do you think this ring could be two thousand years old?" I asked excitedly. "How old might it be?"

Dad peered at it again. "It's hard to say with gold," he said, shaking his head. "It ages very well. I very much doubt it's Roman though, but..."

"Just think, if we DID find a whole hoard of Roman treasure, we'd be famous," Rosie said dreamily, completely ignoring my dad. "We'd be on the news and everything."

"And rich," I said pointedly. "Weren't you saying the other night, Mum, that you didn't know how you were going to pay for the loft extension?"

"Lyndsey, I don't think your friends need to hear about our money problems," Mum said with an edge in her voice. She gave me a sharp look over the top of her glasses which said, clear as day, Shut up, Lyndz.

I closed my mouth and looked down. When my mum gives you THAT look, you know it's best not to argue. But why is it that parents go all weird when you start talking about money?

When I'm grown up, I won't care about how much people earn or how much someone's house is worth – who's interested, anyway? I've noticed that grown-ups get dead twitchy and secretive about it though. Odd, isn't it? You'd think they could find something more interesting to get their knickers in a twist over.

I was just starting to think that was going to be the end of any treasure hunting, there and then, when my dad cleared his throat. "Well, maybe it would be worth having another quick look around the ash tree," he said slowly. "A SUPERVISED quick look under the tree so that no one does any damage to the rose bushes. Or their roots," he added quickly before my mum could say it.

"YEAHHHH!" I yelled.

"Yay!", "Result!", "Nice one, Mr C!" the others cheered.

Mum still didn't look too thrilled at the idea of us digging up the garden. "Keith, I mean it – if anybody digs up anything they shouldn't, I really will not be happy..." she said to my dad warningly, as she started tidying up the newspapers and Spike's toys.

"Don't worry," Dad said. "You won't even know we've been there. Apart from the huge heap of gold coins and goodies we're going to bring back with us, of course..."

"WHOOOPEEEEE!" Kenny yelled, bouncing around the kitchen like a mad jack-in-a-box. "Come on – let's go and dig up that booty – like, NOW!"

"Clever, clever Buster," I said, stooping down to pat him

proudly. “We’re going to be rich and famous – all because of you. You’ll get the biggest, juiciest steak there ever was for being such a good little treasure hunter.”

Mum rolled her eyes. “Now, don’t go making promises you can’t afford to keep, Lyndz,” she said, as we went out the back door.

Luckily, Dad was a bit keener on the idea of treasure than Mum was. He once told me his favourite book when he was a boy was *Treasure Island*, so he was getting well into the idea. “Right, girls, let’s sort out some digging tools,” he said, rubbing his hands. “Follow me to the shed and we’ll see what we can find.”

Minutes later, we were “all tooled up” as Dad put it. He had Mum’s garden spade, I had my brother Stu’s smaller spade, Kenny and Frankie had trowels and Rosie and Fliss drew the short straw and had to make do with plastic beach spades. “I’ve never seen the *Time Team* people using bright pink and yellow spades before!” Rosie joked as we went over to the tree.

“That’s ‘cos we’re the cool new version of *Time Team*,” Frankie said. “Treasure Team!”

Dad chuckled. “Right then, Treasure Team – where did Buster dig up this ’ere ’ighly valuable piece of gold?” he asked.

“Just there,” I said, crouching down and pointing. “See his scratch marks?”

“You know what, if we really ARE going to be like *Time Team*, we’re going to have to be very careful,” Fliss said solemnly. “They just scrape away at the soil dead gently, don’t

they, so they don't damage or scratch any of the buried treasure in the ground."

"Oh, let's just get on with it and get stuck into the digging," Kenny said impatiently, and then remembered my mum's warning. "Er... Very carefully, of course..."

"Fliss, if by any remote chance there does happen to be Roman treasure down there, we'll be scraping away at the soil for weeks before we get to it," Dad pointed out. "It won't be lying just under the surface, will it?"

"And remember, Mum's just dug up loads of this flowerbed and she wasn't scraping gently at all," I added. "So it might be a bit late to start all that now."

"All right, all right," Fliss said huffily, her cheeks going a bit pink. "I just think, if we're going to do this, we may as well do it properly, that's all, but if you all think you know better, then..."

"Let's get going, then," Frankie said, before Fliss could get too carried away. "And anything we find gets split equally, yeah?"

"After we've bought Buster's steak, yeah," I agreed. "Let's get to work!"

So the great garden dig-up began. At first, we were all dead excited about what we might find, and started talking about what we'd spend our riches on. Fliss was going to have a wild shopping weekend in London with her mum (of course). Kenny fancied an adventure holiday bungee jumping and snowboarding in New Zealand. I was going to set up an animal welfare centre. Rosie wanted to buy a posh new house for her mum and Frankie was

going to take her family on holiday to Florida so she could go to the Epcot Centre and the NASA space station. Dad said he was going to take Mum away on a romantic holiday and leave us kids to fend for ourselves for a few weeks. I *think* he was joking...

Then a scream came from Fliss. "Oh, oh, ugh, GROSS!!" she squealed, dropping her spade as if it was burning hot, and leaping away.

"What's up? Is it the dead woman's hand?" Kenny asked eagerly, coming to have a look at what Fliss had found.

Fliss shuddered and closed her eyes. "A worm! A worm!" she moaned dramatically. "It was wriggling on my spade and everything!"

"Oh, FLISS," I said, going over to pick it up. "You've probably scared it by screaming like that, poor little thing."

"Do you reckon?" Rosie asked, sounding interested. "Do worms have ears, then?"

The others looked at me, expecting me to know but I had no idea. "Well, I can't *see* any," I said, peering doubtfully at the pink wriggler in my hand.

"That reminds me," Kenny giggled. "What did the earwig say as he crawled into Fliss's ear?"

"Kenny!" Fliss groaned, shaking her head and looking sick again. "Please just... shut up!"

"Earwig-o, earwig-o, earwig-o," Kenny sang. "Geddit? 'Ere we go, 'ere we go, 'ere we go..."

"You're lucky I'm too scared to touch that worm," Fliss said,

sounding fierce. “Else I might just have dropped it down your neck for that, Kenny McKenzie. I’m going to have nightmares about earwigs crawling into my brain now, thank you very much.”

“How about this one?” Frankie said, with a mischievous glint in her eye. “There’s a worm at the bottom of the garden and his name is Wiggly-Woo...”

The rest of us immediately joined in the song.

“There’s a worm at the bottom of the garden

And all that he can do

Is wiggle all night and wiggle all day...”

“Stop it!” wailed Fliss.

“Come on, Fliss,” my dad said, seeing her bottom lip sticking out about ten centimetres. “Ignore them. Think about all those clothes you’re going to buy, eh?”

We were all in a silly mood by then. “I’ve just dug up a pop group,” Rosie giggled. “Look – it’s the beetles!”

Even Fliss laughed at that. “Hey, I’ve got one – what’s a gardener’s favourite Christmas carol?” she said, joining in. “Soilent night!”

Soon we were all coming out with them.

“What smells most in the garden?” Dad asked. “Your nose!”

“Where do insects live?” Frankie said. “Crawley!”

We were having such a laugh, I couldn’t believe it was lunch time already when I heard Mum calling us. Treasure hunting was turning out to be the best fun we’d had in aaaaages!



# CHAPTER THREE



After a whopping great lunch of bangers and mash – with Fliss having THIRDS of mash – digging up the garden suddenly didn’t seem like so much fun any more.

“I’ve got blisters from that spade,” I said, holding my hands out for the others to see.

“My hands are a bit sore as well,” Fliss said at once. “Has anybody got any hand cream on them?”

“And we haven’t found ANYTHING except worms and beetles and centipedes,” Rosie said, sounding disappointed.

“Hey, what happened to the rich and famous Treasure Team?” Dad said, trying to jolly us along a bit. “Not giving up already,

are you? We've hardly started!"

"Mr C, you're a much better digger than we are," crafty Kenny started. "I don't suppose you'd fancy..."

"What, finishing off the digging all by myself?" Dad said, raising his eyebrows. "I didn't think the Sleepover Club were the sort to be so lazy as to ask a poor, tired old man who's been working hard all week to give up his Saturday afternoon to..."

"All right, all right, Dad!" I interrupted hurriedly. "No need to give us the sob story."

Mum cleared our plates away and we sat around the table looking at each other. "So does ANYONE fancy digging some more?" I asked in the end. Even though I wanted to find buried treasure as badly as everyone else, my blisters really were throbbing on my hand – and suddenly, I could think of lots of other things I'd rather be doing than digging up the flowerbed all afternoon.

"I've got to meet my mum – we're going to the library," Rosie said. "Otherwise I'd stay and help, of course..."

"And my mum's having some people round this afternoon and I said I'd help look after baby Izzy while she gets things ready," Frankie added. "So I'm going to have to shoot off soon, too."

"I promised I'd clean out Merlin's cage," Kenny said. "He's getting a bit whiffy and Mum's been threatening to let next door's dog have him if I don't de-pong him soon."

"She wouldn't!" I cried in horror. Merlin is Kenny's pet rat that she's taught to do all sorts of tricks. The thought of letting

him be eaten by the dog next door was just...

“No, she wouldn’t,” Kenny agreed. “She was just trying to make me feel bad – and it worked, as usual.”

“But what about our treasure?” Fliss put in. “Mr Collins is right. We can’t give up already. I want my shopping trip to London soooo badly! I’ve been thinking about all the things I want to buy.”

I was just about to invite her to carry on digging, but she must have second-guessed me, because before I could open my mouth...

“Obviously, I’d stay and help you dig up the garden, Lyndz and Mr Collins, but I... er... I’ve got to get back, too. Mum’s got... er... something planned. Unfortunately,” she said quickly. She tossed her head and looked around the table, daring anyone to question her.

“So we all want the treasure but nobody wants to dig any more, that’s about the size of it,” I summarised. “Well, what do we do next, then?”

“I could have a look in the library for ideas,” Rosie offered. “See if I can find anything about Roman settlements around here in the local history section. We might get some clues from that.”

“Good idea,” Kenny said. “See if you can find a map that says where all the Roman ruins are around the country and which are the nearest to us.”

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