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opening extract from

The Clumsies Make a Mess

written by

Sorrel Anderson

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By ~~Sorrel Anderson~~ Klumsiez

The Clumsies make a mess

Illustrated by Nicola Slater





HarperCollins *Children's Books*

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Klumsiez
Bumpy Day



It was a Tuesday morning and everything was just as it usually was. As usual, Howard Armitage arrived at his office at a quarter to nine. As usual, he bought

a cup of coffee and two sausages from the office canteen. Then, as usual, he set off down the long corridor to his room.

Suddenly there was a

booming

voice behind him.

'ARMITAGE!' it said.

It was Mr Bullerton, Howard's boss.

'Hello, Mr Bullerton,' said Howard.

'Hmph,' said Mr Bullerton, crossly. 'I've just been in your room, and it's a mess. As usual.'

'Oh, I—' began Howard.

'Why is it?' said Mr Bullerton.

'Well, err—'

'I won't have it,' said Mr Bullerton.

'No, I—'

'Tidy it!' said Mr Bullerton.

He gave Howard's sausage-box a nasty look and his nostrils, which were large, gave a twitch.

'What's in the box?'

'Sausages,' said Howard.

'Sausages?' spluttered Mr Bullerton. 'I hope you're not intending to eat sausages in your office.'

'Err, I—'

'No eating at desks!' said Mr Bullerton. 'It's unhygienic!'

'Yes, Mr Bullerton,' said Howard.

'And **untidy!**'

'Yes, Mr Bullerton,' said Howard.

'Desks are for working on, not eating off. Any eating to be done will be done in the canteen and in the canteen *only*.



said Mr Bullerton. 'Well, go on then.'

Howard went back to the canteen, waited until Mr Bullerton had gone, and then took his breakfast to his room, just as he always did. He was about to take a large bite of sausage when there was a rustling noise.

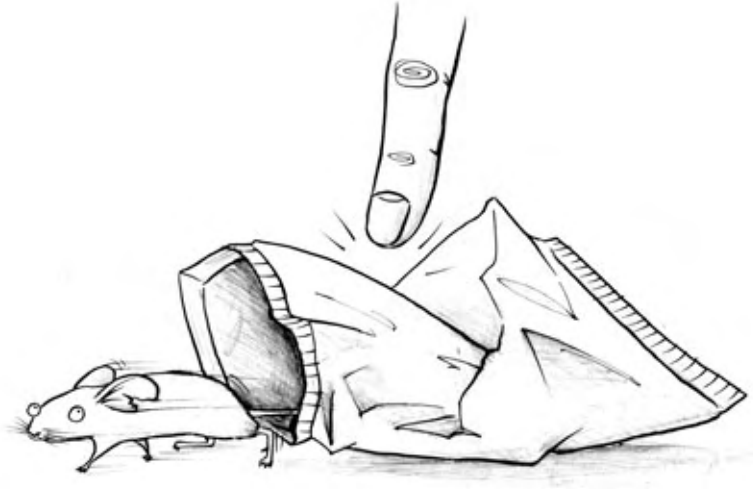
'That's unusual,' said Howard, and the noise stopped. Then it started again, **loudly**.

There was something under the desk, *and it was moving*. . .

Howard sprang upwards and backwards and peered underneath. There was a bag, and it was twitching. He ***prodded*** it and something small and round ***SHOT out.***

'Squeeeep!'

it said.



'Tut,' said Howard. 'A mouse.'

The mouse hurtled off into the corner and Howard sat back down. He was about to take a large bite of sausage when there was another rustling noise.

'Now look,' said Howard. 'I've had just about enough of this.' He kicked the bag and another

mouse **popped** out, smaller and **rounder** than the first. It started to trundle away, glancing nervously at Howard over its shoulder.

'You may well glance at me nervously,' said Howard, picking up an empty water glass and placing it over the mouse.



'You'll stay in there so I can eat my breakfast in peace. I shall deal with you afterwards.'



It was the first mouse, back again. ‘Let him out!’ squealed the mouse, *pummelling*.

Howard choked on his coffee, and the mouse stopped pummelling.

‘*Please*, I mean. *Please* let him out, Howard Armitage,’ said the mouse.

Howard made a gargling noise, and the mouse giggled.

‘Here, you’ve got coffee all down your chin,’ he said, passing Howard a small tissue.

‘So would you, if you’d been sprung at all over the place and *pummelled*,’ said Howard, mopping.

‘Sorry,’ said the mouse. ‘It was the biscuits.’





'*What* was the biscuits?' said Howard.

'They were in that bag,' said the mouse, 'and we, err, *borrowed* some, and fell asleep. If I get you some more, will you let my brother go?'

'I don't want *biscuits*,' said Howard. 'I want ***sausages***.'

'I'll get you some sausages then,' offered the mouse.

'I've already *got* sausages,' said Howard. 'All I need now is a bit of calm in which to eat them. Is that too much to ask?'

'Not at all,' said the mouse.

'Well, quite,' said Howard.

Sighing, Howard lifted the water glass and the smaller, rounder mouse scuttled out, looking a bit hot and *very* relieved.

'Thank you,' said the first mouse. 'We'll be off then,' and he started bundling his brother away.

'One second,' said Howard. 'How do you know my name's Howard Armitage?'

'There's a sign on your door that says:

"Howard Armitage",
said the mouse, 'so I assumed.'

'Did you now?' said Howard, narrowing his eyes.

'Isn't it then?' asked the mouse, sounding confused.

'As a matter of fact it is,' said Howard. 'I think you'd better tell me who you are.'

'He's Mickey Thompson,' said the mouse, **poking** his brother's tummy.

'*I* can tell him,' said Mickey Thompson, wriggling,

and poking his brother back.

'I'm Mickey Thompson,' announced Mickey Thompson, to Howard.

'Pleased to meet you, Mickey Thompson,' said Howard.

'And I'm Purvis,' said the first mouse, **thumping** himself on the chest.

'Purvis what?' said Howard.

'Purvis what?' said Purvis.

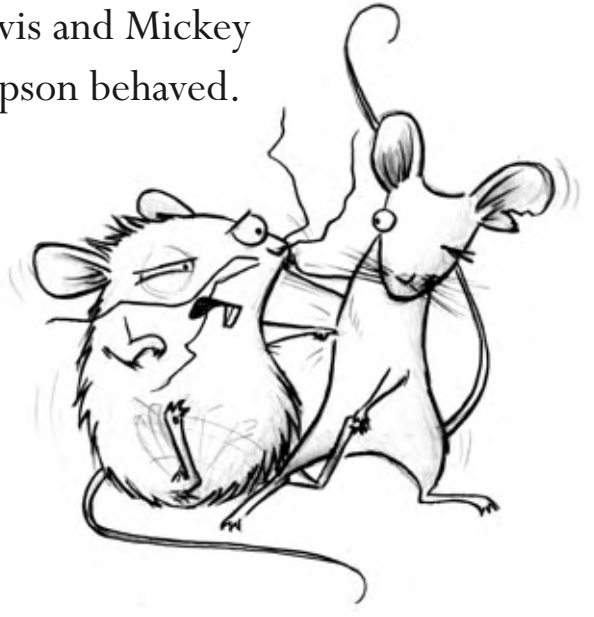
'Or what Purvis?' said Howard.

'*That* Purvis,' said Mickey Thompson. 'There's only one, and he's him.' Mickey Thompson

prodded Purvis in the ribs, and there was a small scuffle.

Howard's head was beginning to throb. **'That's enough, you two,'** said Howard. '**When you're in my office you'll behave, or I shall put you under that glass again.'**

Purvis and Mickey Thompson behaved.



'That's better,' said Howard. He went over to a side table and

clattered about,



. . . and finding

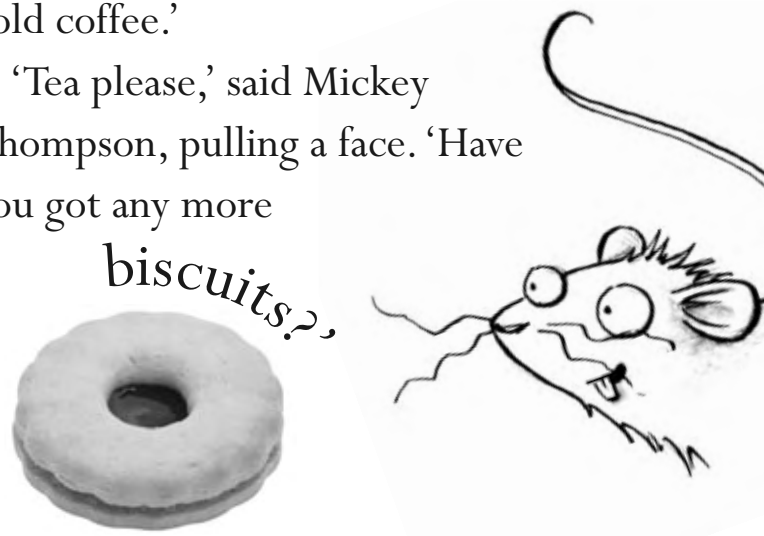


'Yes please,' said Purvis.

'Have you got any juice?' asked Mickey Thompson.

'No,' said Howard. 'It's tea or cold coffee.'

'Tea please,' said Mickey Thompson, pulling a face. 'Have you got any more



'Don't push your luck,' said Howard.

While Howard made the tea the mice climbed up on to his desk and had a look around.



'Absolutely not,' said Howard. 'Leave everything exactly as it is.'

There was a loud **crash** as Mickey Thompson slid off a stack of books,

