



# Stolen Cupcakes

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“You’ll never guess what I have in my lunch box,” Samantha announced to her friends.

“Frog legs!” snickered Jimmy.

“Yuck!” gagged Dylan. Everyone laughed.

“No, silly,” Samantha rolled her eyes. “I’ve got the best cupcakes in the world!”

Linda, overhearing the conversation, rushed over to take a look as Samantha slowly and dramatically opened her lunch box and took out two store-bought cupcakes topped with creamy pink, yellow, and green frosting, and covered with candy sprinkles. She held them up for all to see.

“I can hardly wait for lunch,” Samantha confessed. “My mouth is watering already.”

Just then the bell rang. Samantha quickly put the prized cupcakes back into her lunch box, zipped it shut, and



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put it on the shelf. Then everyone rushed to their seats to get ready for worship.

During worship, all Linda could think about was Samantha's cupcakes. Her family didn't eat many sweets and they were too poor to buy store-bought cupcakes, especially fancy ones like those! Once in a while, her mom made applesauce or banana cupcakes, but never topped with thick, creamy frosting and candy

sprinkles. She wondered what they tasted like. Suddenly, she realized that worship was over. She had no idea what the story was about—and she hadn't even heard the prayer.

Linda tried to get the thought of those cupcakes out of her head. But it was no use. She daydreamed about them in Bible class and even drew pictures of them on the margins of her math worksheet. Finally, it was recess time and everyone hurried outside.

Linda stopped by the restroom and took her time washing her hands. When she came out, she was the only one left in the classroom. She hurried to put on her coat. Just as she started to rush outside, a voice inside her said, *Remember the cupcakes? Wouldn't you like to have a closer look?*

She was curious. *It wouldn't hurt to look at them again, would it?* As she started to reach for Samantha's lunch box, she heard another voice say, *Go ask Samantha.*

*But*, she thought, *I'm just going to look.* She hesitated. Then the first voice said, *It won't hurt to just open Samantha's lunch box and pick one up.*

She looked around and slowly opened the lunch box and took one out. Suddenly, the good voice inside her said, *It's wrong to touch other people's things—and it could lead to stealing. Put the cupcake back.*

*But I'm not going to steal the cupcake,* Linda argued with herself. *I'm*

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*just going to look at it. As she held the cupcake, she heard noises outside the door and jumped with fear. What if the teacher catches me? What if Samantha comes in?*

She was just about to put the cupcake back, when the bad voice spoke again, *Wouldn't you like to know what the cupcake tastes like? Just take a little bite. Chances are Samantha won't even notice if you smooth over the frosting.*

Linda looked toward the door and hurriedly unwrapped a cupcake. She had never stolen anything in her life and didn't want to now, but once again, the bad voice urged her on, *Remember, they are the best cupcakes in the world. What does it matter if you take one bite?*

The good voice immediately countered, *You should ask Samantha first. But,* thought Linda, *Samantha's out on the playground.*

Linda couldn't stand the temptation any longer. She quickly shoved the cupcake into her mouth and took a big bite. The good voice said, *Shut the lunch box quickly and run and tell Samantha.*

Then the bad voice reminded her, *You've eaten so much of the cupcake already, there is no way to hide what you've done, so you might as well finish the cupcake . . . and while you're at it, eat the second one too.*

And that's exactly what Linda did. She stuffed the cupcakes into her mouth and swallowed them so fast that she didn't even know what they tasted like. Then she quickly zipped up the lunch box and put it back where she found it. She was still chewing when she raced to the restroom. She didn't want anyone to catch her. As she washed her face, she looked in the mirror. What she saw was a very sad and scared girl looking back at her. And she imagined the devil gloating, *Ha ha, I gotcha!*

English class was a blur. All she could hear was a voice telling her that now she was a thief and was going to be in big trouble. Tears formed in her eyes. As she wiped them away, she wished she could just run out of



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