

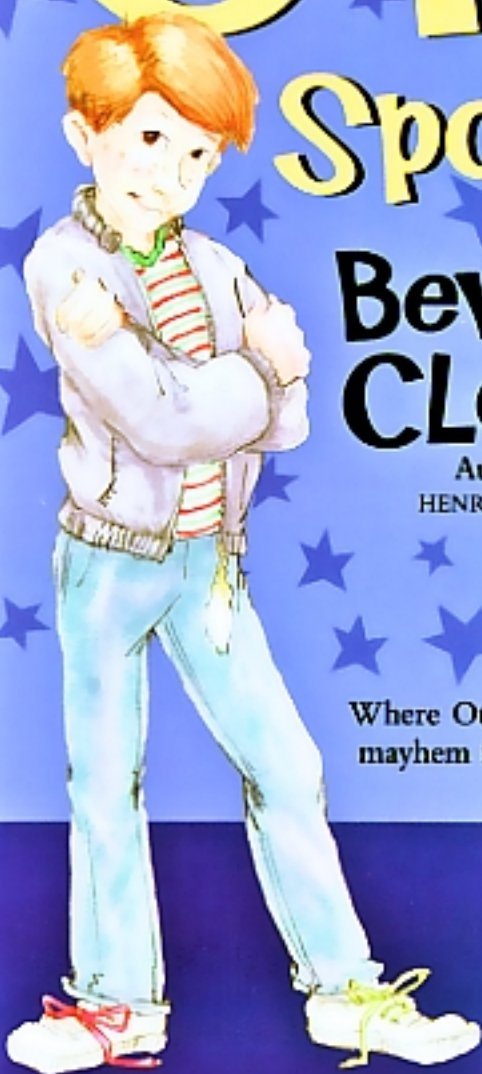
# OTIS

Spofford

Beverly  
Cleary

Author of  
HENRY HUGGINS

Where Otis goes,  
mayhem follows!



# 1

## OTIS GETS HIS MAN

**T**here was nothing Otis Spofford liked better than stirring up a little excitement. Otis was a medium-sized boy with reddish-brown hair, freckles, and ears that stuck out. He often wore a leather jacket with a rabbit's foot tied to the zipper, and he always laced his shoes with the kind of laces that glow in the dark—pink for the right shoe and green for the left.

Otis found it hard to stir up any excitement around home. He was sure it would be

easier if he lived in a house with a yard to play in, like the other boys and girls in Room Eleven at Rosemont School. Instead, he lived with his mother, Valerie Todd Spofford, in an apartment. Mrs. Spofford was away from home most of the time teaching ballet and tap-dancing lessons at the Spofford School of the Dance over the Payless Drugstore.

Otis wished his mother had more time to spend at home, so that Mrs. Brewster, the manager of the apartment house, would not have to keep her eye on him. Mrs. Spofford was never very cross with Otis for wanting to stir up a little excitement, but Mrs. Brewster made it plain that she did not like dirt, dogs, or noise, and that she stood for no nonsense from boys.

School, however, was different. Except for learning things, Otis liked school. He could find so many ways to stir up excitement.

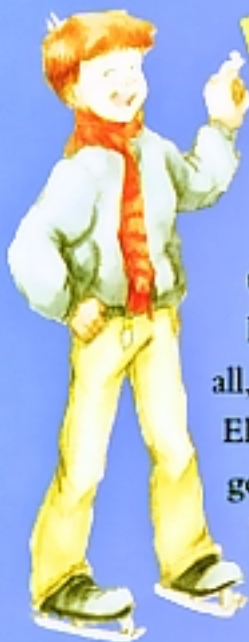
Once a week Otis's teacher, Mrs. Gitler, took her class to the auditorium for folk dancing. Otis was the only member of the class who did not like this period.

I'd rather play dodgeball any day, he always thought as they marched down the hall. I see enough dancing at the Spofford School of the Dance.

The class had learned several dances, like "Stupid One Hopping on One Foot" and "I Lost My Way in the Gooseberry Bushes," but for the past few weeks they had been practicing a Mexican folk dance for the *fiesta* Rosemont School was planning for a Parent Teacher Association meeting. Each class in the school was to give a Mexican dance. Afterward, the mothers in the P.T.A. would sell cookies and punch to raise money for visual aids for the school.

Otis was not the least bit excited about the *fiesta*. He was sure the P.T.A. would

## OTIS Loves causing Trouble. . . .



**W**hen it comes to stirring up a little excitement in class, Otis Spofford knows just what to do. He can turn a folk dance fiesta into a three-ring circus . . . or an arithmetic lesson into a spitball marathon. Best of all, Otis likes teasing neat, well-behaved Ellen Tebbits—until the day his teasing goes too far. Now Otis is nervous, because Ellen isn't just mad . . . she's planning something!

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