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Opening extract from

What's the Drama, Malibu Bennet?

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Monday 29 July – 3 p.m.

Hi guys… I'm back! Did you miss me?

Mum's just been up to see me.

"How are you, sweetheart?" she said, tilting her head sympathetically.

I. HATE. PITY.

But since my meltdown last week – on only the biggest TV breakfast show in Britain! – I don't want Mum worrying that I'm a headcase so I said, "Fine. Just need to get some sleep."

Usually she'd screech something like, "*Sleep?* At *this* time?"

But instead she just stroked my head and said, "Yes, I'm sure you do, honey." (Clearly, does think I'm a headcase.)

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Oh well, could be worse. I could have spent the whole day in bed sobbing or cringing – or my new one, crinsobbing (a combination of the two). But no, I'm v. proud to say that for the first time in a week, I, Remy Louise Bennet, have been out. Yay!

Went to see a psychiatrist: boo–oooo!

Yep, I finally caved in to the powers that be: namely my agent, Harry Burton. I did it so that the bigger and, more importantly, RICHER powers that be (those that provide serious wedge for my Terri Catalogue clothing range) will not drop me. All I need to do is show them that I'm "fixing" myself; that their celeb "fashion designer" is not meltdowning EVER AGAIN. But believe me, I'm so embarrassed about said meltdown that a part of me would rather be dropped. Actually, I'd rather not show my face in public for the rest of my life and just stay in bed crinsobbing! But when I called Dad he said earning this kind of money at my age is a godsend. Especially when there are people with top-notch degrees that can't even get a job in Mickey D's.

"Just give it a try," he said.

"Why – do you think I need fixing, Dad?"

"Erm… I suppose everyone does, in a way."

Obviously, he also thinks I'm a headcase. 😐

My psych is called Dr Stephen Clein. He assesses all the contestants before they go into the *Big Brother* house. Spent half my session trying to get some info out of him – like "Did Jasmine really like Lee or was she playing a game?" – but his lips were properly sealed. Told me nada.

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Said he'd protect me in the same way too.

"What's to protect? I've already shown myself up on national TV."

"And now seems the perfect time to talk about it," he replied.

That's the kind of link presenters make on *The One Show*: *"Aha! And speaking of embarrassing moments…"* But it's not a poxy TV programme, is it? This is my life!

"I'd rather not, thanks."

He tried to coax it out of me. "I've heard all about the incident. I believe you've been referred to me because your reaction was out of character?"

"Very," I replied. "I mean the only person who might've seen me flip like that is Mum, when I'm premenstrual and she has done my head in."

"Hmm. Embarrassment is understandable but can you explain what made you so angry?"

Told him I didn't want to talk about it. But the answer was no. And the worst part was that I could feel the anger building up again. It scared me. The whole thing scares me… If I'm honest, that's the real reason I decided to see Dr Clein. Just being in his office, talking to an actual shrink, was majorly scary. Luckily, he realized that and stopped pushing me. He's asked me to write down what happened instead – blow for blow. He wants me to add how I felt at the time, and how I feel about it now. Then I have to take my account to my next session.

So, here goes…

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I'd felt nervous as soon as I'd opened my eyes that morning – first appearance on live TV and all that. Those nerves doubled when I got to the studio, and went into the stratosphere when I was waiting off set (just out of view) and I heard the voice of Mum's favourite TV presenter: Lorraine Macintosh. I swear Mum was more excited about me meeting Lovely Lorraine (as she calls her) than she was about me being on TV.

"Now, my next guest was thrown into the public eye when her boyfriend, footballer Stephen Campbell, fought her *ex*-boyfriend, teammate Robbie Wilkins, during a televised match…"

WTF?! I was so annoyed.

Every interview I do brings up the Robbie business and it winds me up, big time. Come on, guys, it was a whole year ago! Why couldn't "Lovely Lorraine" have mentioned how well my salon, Tah-dah!, was doing? Or have focused on the launch of my autumn clothing range, which was what I was there to promote? I'd even kitted myself out in a "Remy L.B. by Terri Catalogue" dress: green velvet, fitted to the waist, then flared out into a tutu. (Very fashion!)

"… so, please welcome to *Good Morning A.M.* … Remy Bennet."

I began the strut I'd practised with Malibu the night before. (She'd lifted it from Naomi Campbell on *The Face*.) I executed it perfectly; was genuinely thinking my

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big sis would be proper proud, right before I tripped over a camera cable, went flying and landed on the floor – green dress over my head, matching green thong exposing my bare bum cheeks to the nation. Aa–aaaaaaaaah! 😐

Wanted to die of embarrassment. Almost did, but something – maybe the cameraman's grin, the fact that I was STARVING from the crash diet I'd been on (had to look good for my first live TV appearance), or the discovery that Lovely Lorraine was just as bad as everyone else who had interviewed me this year (oh, and way smaller than she looks on TV, by the way) – SOMETHING made me lose it.

"What you grinning at, you *cringe* *sob* *cringe*? And as for you, Lorraine *mothersobbing* Macintosh, you can just *sob* off. (Decided to keep this clean for you, Dr Clein.)

Anyway, that's basically why I need to address my "anger issues", as my official statement (that I didn't actually write) said. And I might have sounded a bit attitudey in your office today, but I do know there's no excuse for shooting my mouth off like I did, and I'm almost as ashamed about it as I am of my exposing my backside to the world; and the fact that it's had five hundred thousand views on YouTube only adds to my shame. But why, why, why did the *Sun* have to go overboard with its "Bumgate!" headline?! Did I twerk with Santa? NO. And I don't care who their source was – I did NOT do it for publicity.

As for that so-called comedian (refuse to mention his

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name) who said the force from my bum's wobbling could have caused an earthquake ("Can you imagine – death by bumquake!" he joked), there is a special place for you in hell, my friend.

The End.

3.20 P.M.

PS Forgot to say that Dr Clein isn't as bad as I thought he'd be. He says he just wants to improve my self-esteem, and then the "managing anger" bit should take care of itself. To help, he wants me to start each day by telling myself: "I am Remy Louise Bennet. I am not perfect. But I still love being me."

When I asked whether I could add, "With a tiny bit of lipo, I will love myself so–o much more," he sighed and said, "No, Remy." *boo*

Oh yeah, he also thinks I shouldn't have stopped writing in my diary. It's been a whole year, I can't believe it; but things went cra–azy when I appeared on the front page of the *Sun*, and after that I didn't have the time. Well, I'll have to make some because Dr Clein says it's a good way to get things off my chest. He reckons I'd been bottling everything up and then released it all on the *Good Morning A.M.* cameraman and "Not-so-lovely" Lorraine. Methinks he might have a point, so here is said diary… Tah-dah! ← (See what I did there?) ☺

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5 P.M.

Gr–rreat. Just checked Twitter. Have tons of replies to my "I'm back! Did you miss me?" tweet. Loads of "Welcome back" etc. But just as many "Who cares?!" and "No, we didn't!" Also found a couple of joke accounts: *@Bumquake-Remy* and *@Remysbuttcheeks*. Twitter = #selfesteemfail

Tuesday 30 July – 7.05 a.m.

I am Remy Louise Bennet. I am not perfect. But I still love being me.

Hmm… Personally, Dr Clein, I could think of much better ways to start the day, all of which involve STEPHEN. And I'm up at early o'clock to look as good as I can for my Skype date with Mr McFitness himself. ☺

Blow-dried hair: ✓
Applied bronzer: ✓
Added copious amounts of mascara: ✓
Twenty-five minutes to go. Woo-hoo!

8 a.m.

Was lovely to talk to Stephen all the way over in Tokyo city. He's in Japan for a pre-season tour and it must have been doing him good because he looked proper hot. Everything was one notch better: his hair, his body, THOSE lips.

"How have yer been, gorgeous?"

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"Not too bad, considering Harry made me see that psychiatrist," I grumbled.

"It's just fer show though, right?"

"*Yeah*, of course."

"I mean, what yer gave that cameraman and Lorraine MacShort-ass was an average bit of hairdryer treatment."

("Hairdryer treatment" is what footballers call it when their manager starts screaming in their face when they've not played well. Which happens a lot. Fact learned from Google five days ago when Stephen first mentioned it.)

"Oh yeah. It was totally average," I agreed.

Luckily, Stephen left for Japan the day before *Good Morning A.M.* He only saw what happened on YouTube and so far he's always tried to be really positive about it.

"OK, I understand it's embarrassing but just think how yer'd feel if yer didn't happen to have the best bum ever seen on TV," he said after he first saw it. Followed by: "To be fair, that Lorraine 'Edinbugger' Macintosh probably deserved it." (Edinburgh isn't popular with Glaswegians.)

With Japan being eight hours ahead and him busy travelling, training and playing, I'm not sure how many "Bumquake" jokes he's heard either. I was just wondering whether I should get the worst ones out of the way, to prepare him, when I spotted his roomie Oscar Raymond in the background.

Oscar's American and he's become Stephen's closest teammate. He's super-square and slightly gullible, and we love winding him up.

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"Do you love me, baby?" I said, suddenly putting on a cute voice.

Stephen made a sideways glance at Oscar, and twigged. "Aw yeah, I love yer loads."

"How much though?"

"Aw, up to the moon and back – easily."

"Ahh." I started making loud kissing noises. *mwah, mwah, mwah*

Stephen put his face close up to his computer screen until he was practically snogging it: *MWAH, MWAH, MWAHHHH*

"Hey buddy," said a majorly blushing Oscar, "do ya need me to leave the room?"

"Naw… I think you'll be all right." Stephen's big cheesy grin gave it away (it's taken a while for Oscar to adjust to our sense of humour).

"Oh right. You're just throwing the piss, huh?"

"I think yer might mean *taking* the piss there, dude. Now behave yourself," Stephen said to me as I cracked up laughing.

"Sorry, Oscar – just playing," I called out.

"No problem," Oscar breezed back. "And make sure you call Suzy."

"I will."

His wife Suzy completes the squareness of Oscar's world. I knew she must have been well shocked by my foul-mouthed rant, so I've been avoiding her, even though she sent an uplifting text: *You can get through this – you just*

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gotta believe in yourself. Ish happens. (She doesn't swear.)

"What time's your match?" I asked Stephen.

"Five-thirty. We've got to leave in a minute."

"OK. Well make sure you bloody score, then."

He smiled. He's had a brilliant pre-season so far. "Yer have such a way with words."

I smiled back. "Can't wait to see you tomorrow, baby."

"Aye, me too."

6.45 P.M.

Well, my second day out of the wilderness was full-on. Harry called at 8.30 a.m. and I swear he didn't take a breath for a whole hour. Said he'd found the perfect person to rebuild my image: a PR woman called Camilla Douglas-Smith.

"What's wrong with Mandy?" I asked. I like the PR woman we've been using so far.

"She ain't right for this. Camilla's in another league. I've arranged for us to take 'er to lunch."

"When?"

"Today?"

"But I wanted to spend the day in the salon! I owe my beauticians that after staying away for a week."

"The salon?" Harry repeated as if he'd never heard of it.

"Yes, Harry – *the salon*. The salon that I own."

"But you've got a four o'clock meeting with Terri Catalogue."

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"Yeah, I know. I plan to be at the salon until then."

He gave a theatrical sigh. "I can't begin to tell you how important it is for you to meet Camilla. It's the only slot she's got. And if anyone can get rid of your 'Bumquake' label, it's her. She could convince people the sky's green."

I was sold. "What time?" (Getting rid of the "Bumquake" label is a major priority.)

"One o'clock at Scott's in Mayfair."

"See you there."

Got to the salon at 10.15 a.m. and Lara was running the place like clockwork. Felt like they hadn't missed me at all. (Slightly annoying.) Lara and Charlie didn't mention *Good Morning A.M.* but neither of them made eye contact when I spoke to them. I suppose they're embarrassed for me. (Even more annoying.) Not like my very-to-the-point "Catalan *not* Spanish" beautician Isabel, who said, "Wow, I saw de YouTube. I don't think your bum was all dat wobbly. In fact in Catalonia we would say deese eese—"

"Isabel!" Lara interrupted hurriedly. "Your client has arrived."

The good news was that every beautician was fully booked. *Kerching!*

Got a taxi to Scott's in Mayfair and arrived bang on time for my meeting with Harry and Camilla Douglas-Smith. Never been to Scott's before. It's proper plush, full of suits, and when I saw Camilla I decided that she must have chosen it. She's way more posh than Mandy, the "lives in Windsor Castle" kind of posh that I've only seen on TV.

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Camilla doesn't say "of course", she says "of caws", and "yah" instead of "yeah". She's a middle-aged blonde with a pinched nose and three children: Octavia, Sebastian and Tristan, who all ride a "haws". She says that she's going to kick "some proverbial ahse" for me.

"And will you stop the press calling me Bumquake?" I checked.

"Of caws. I intend to rebrand you. By the time I've finished, your name will be synonymous with clahss."

This all sounded great to me. Then when we left, Harry told me her fee.

"Five hundred pounds a week?!" I gasped.

"She's worth every penny. 'Ow many people do you think would 'av already sorted a top interview for you before you'd even signed a contract with 'em?"

He had a point, but I only agreed to a month or two, as I'm not made of cash. Going to do the "top interview" and photo shoot with *Here* magazine tomorrow.

Had some time to spare before my meeting at Terri Catalogue's Essex headquarters so browsed the shops for a bit. Bought my little nephew a cute T-shirt that says **My Mum Rocks!** and myself some control pants (seeing as Dr Clein says liposuction is a no-no). Also tried on a few dresses and decided that, from now on, black is the best colour for me – the black ones all made me look slimmer. The others – ugh!

As I left the last shop, two men in football shirts passed me in the street and then turned back to point.

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"Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's the Bumquake!" one of them shouted.

Ha. Frickin'. Ha. Thought about swearing at them, but as I'm rebuilding my image and all that, I told myself, "I am Remy Louise Bennet. I am not perfect. But I still love being me." Then I dug my teeth firmly into my tongue and showed them a middle finger instead.

Need to put this Bumquake crap to bed. As soon as. Hope this Camilla's as good as she says she is.

My Terri Catalogue meeting was with Annouska Hemmings – the *real* designer of the Remy L.B. clothing range. As soon as I arrived, Annouska hit me with a bombshell opening statement: "This season, red will be the new black."

"No. I can't wear red. I'll look like a bus."

I don't know why, out of lack of self-esteem maybe, but I was fishing for a compliment. Something along the lines of: "A bus? You? NEVER."

Annouska said, "Not a chance… The photographer will stretch the picture to make you look slim."

😐

8.30 P.M.

Hey Twitter folk, some breaking news: red is the new black! #RemyLB #TerriCatalogue

Just took Mum and Mal to see some flats I like. First thing

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Mal said was "You'll make it easier for Stephen to not commit if you buy a flat."

"*You're* the one who said it would make him pull his finger out if I told him I was buying one!" I replied.

"Yeah, but I didn't tell you to *actually* buy one."

Aa–aaargh!

Good thing I worked out a while ago that it's best not to take advice from Mal – a little something to do with her "Who's the daddy?" drama.

She must have been reading my mind. "Anyway, it probably isn't worth listening to me any more."

No shit.

Mal thought the first flat was the best. It's a swanky one-bedroom place on the top floor of an eight-storey building that's literally five minutes away from Mum's. (V. handy if I want her to keep doing my washing and ironing.) ☺

Mum preferred the second, which is more like twenty-five minutes from hers. "It may be smaller but it's in a better area," she said. (Methinks she wants to avoid doing my washing and ironing.) But she probably does know what she's talking about, seeing as she's watched every episode of every property programme at least twice. "They don't call it *Location, Location, Location* for nothing, you know."

Will wait and see what Stephen thinks. Made an appointment to take him to see them tomorrow night.

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9.30 P.M.

Was trawling through YouTube comments about my "bum flash" under my fake name, Romano Di Caprio, when Malibu came in, just as I was typing *You don't even frickin' know Remy!*

"I don't know why you do it to yourself," she said. "They're all losers. Now come and say goodnight to Junior."

"Junior" aka my baby nephew, Gary Johnson Junior, is small but surprisingly strong. I went to Mal's room and bent down to say, "Goodnight, chunky monkey," but he replied with a head-butt to my right eye. Ow!

Apparently it's Alan's fault. Whenever Gary Junior has a bad night, a knackered Malibu hands him over to a knackered Mum, who then hands him over to Alan. Alan must still be on Australian time because he doesn't moan about it. Instead, he says, "I'll take him to the front room and find something to watch."

I used to think *Ah–hhh, how sweet* – imagining Junior's surrogate grandad enduring *Bob the Builder*, *Peppa Pig* and *Tweenies* – but stopped wasting my breath when I found out that he then sits down with him and watches three of the most violent sports on the planet: ice hockey, rugby, and Aussie Rules Football. Now, Gary Junior tackles, bites or head-butts people at will. And his dad, Gary Senior (used to be known as Goldenballs but they're more like lead now), is proper pissed off about it. SO AM I.

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Right, that's it. The pain's too much. Going to have to ice my eye. 😐

10 P.M.

Eye is still throbbing. BAD.

One more sleep till I see Stephen. YIPPEE!

Wednesday 31 July – 8 a.m.

I am Remy Louise Bennet. I am not perfect. But I still love being me.

Woke up thinking today's going to be a good one: my McFit comes home from Japan! Then went to the bathroom and looked in the mirror – my eye looks like I've been sparring with Mike Tyson! WTF?!

8.30 a.m.

Had a few strong words with Malibu. "I've got a photo shoot today and your son's blooming given me a black eye!"

"He was just playing."

"That's not the way normal kids play."

"*Normal* kids?! What're you trying to say?"

"I'm not *trying*, I'm saying it: one-year-olds do not go around head-butting people. *Fact*. At this rate, he'll be expelled from nursery the first day he walks in."

"He'll probably stop doing it by then."

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"He'll *never* stop if you keep letting him get away with it!"

Then she started to cry and Mum, who'd just come out of the bathroom next door, rushed into her room asking what the commotion was. Malibu said I made out that she's a crap mother.

"What? Check the T-shirt I bought him – My Mum Rocks!"

"And what do you want – *an award*?"

"I can't win," I huffed as I walked out.

Mum followed me to give me another talk.

"New parents are very sensitive," she said. "You have to choose your words carefully."

"Fine. But when 'Baby Psycho' hurts someone else, don't say I didn't warn you."

"Shu–uush. She'll hear you," Mum whispered, then added, "I think she's post-natal."

I'm the one who should be depressed, after the week I've had – although, to be fair, even after *Good Morning A.M.,* I wouldn't swap with Mal. She's the one sleeping in a cramped bedroom with her "challenging" baby son while Gary Senior hums and haws about whether he wants her back for good. Apparently he's still finding it hard to get his head round her cheating on him with Lance. Last week I told her that as his mum's a Christian, she should teach him how to forgive.

"But who's going to teach him how to forget?" she replied.

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8.45 a.m.

Yippee! Stephen just landed and called me straight away. He wanted to meet up for lunch, but I can't because they've set aside 10 a.m. till 6 p.m. for the *Here* mag photo shoot and interview. Looks like Camilla's really pulled it out of the bag. Apparently it's going to be a double-page spread and, as Ron Burgundy would say, that's "kind of a big deal".

Arranged to meet Stephen tonight so I can show him the flats.

Dear God, please let him see sense and ask me to live with him instead. ☺

7 p.m.

Strange day.

Used to get proper excited about photo shoots – loved getting my hair and make-up done by professionals. But the shine soon wore off. Well, I got butterflies over today's shoot as if it were my first. This was important: the fight back from the brand new, sophisticated me – a chance to bury Bumquake FOR EVER.

The glam squad did their bit – clipped in a few extensions, concealed my black eye, shaded and highlighted my face to make it look like I had amazing cheekbones. It may have taken ninety minutes but I did look ten times better. Then a stylist called Fran turned up with a clothes rail full of dresses, jeans and tops – a mass of blues, pinks and reds.

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I used to gasp at the amount of clothes stylists brought along. Today I just said, "Erm… Got anything in black?"

Luckily, she did. My first pick was a black leather dress with white daisies running along the hem. Luke, the photographer, said, "Great dress, Fran," when I came out, as if she were the one wearing it. Then, as an afterthought, added, "You look good, Remy. Right, let's rock and roll." It was time to pose. Eek!

For me, posing always feels awkward. Just can't help it. And if it feels awkward, it looks awkward.

"Imagine you're in a club, yeah, and the lens is… Who d'you like that's famous?"

"Leonardo DiCaprio."

"Yeah. This lens *is* Leonardo DiCaprio."

Awkward.

"Now… Smile… Pout… Make a sexy face, yeah."

AWKWARD.

There was an electronic instrumental tune playing. I'd never heard it before and never want to hear it again.

"Move to the beat, yeah, sway to the… Shall we change the music?"

Poor Luke.

We stopped for lunch. Then Camilla Douglas-Smith called Fran and everything changed. Fran passed her phone over to me.

"Remy, dahling." Camilla sounded even posher over the phone. "I've been sent some of the shots. Now, do you trust me?"

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V. strange question coming from a person I barely knew, but she sparked my curiosity so I found myself saying yes.

"Good. Becawse I have an idea that will stop them talking about your ahse, and start them concentrating on your clahss."

"I'm in."

Fran left her half-eaten lunch, took her mobile and walked to another room.

"Yes, can you bike it to me asap?" she said, phone glued to ear, when she came to join us again fifteen minutes later. She ended the call. "New hair," she said to Max, the hairdresser. "An up-do."

"Sure," he replied.

"And make-up?" checked Bethany, the make-up girl.

"Yes, something a bit softer, please."

She could see me frowning. "Camilla's idea," she explained.

It took an hour to be transformed into a Disney princess. *Is that really me?* I thought when I looked in the mirror – wow! Then the bike arrived and Fran walked in with a WEDDING DRESS. Literally the most beautiful wedding dress I'd ever seen. A mix of cream lace and chiffon – loveliness fit to marry Prince Harry in.

"We're thinking of a fairy-tale bride theme," Fran explained.

Well worth breaking my black-clothes-only rule for. "Bring it on!" I replied.

I reckon Luke still thought my posing looked awkward,

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but it felt a lot better for me that time around. At least I managed to smile. It was easy once I pretended it was *my* big day getting hitched to Stephen. #bliss

Then off came the dress, down came the hair, and I was suddenly faced with reality: a five-foot-nothing, leathery skinned journalist named Samantha "call me Sam for short" Turner.

"So, obviously this is your first interview since *you know what*. How are you feeling?"

"Still a bit embarrassed, to tell you the truth – about the fall *and* the ranting afterwards."

"Uh-huh."

She brought up my statement, the one that Harry wrote and released to the press. "You said that you've found it hard to cope with fame and you'll be seeking some professional help. Have you done that?"

I imagined how shocked Grandma Robinson would be to find out that I'm now seeing a psychiatrist. In her day, that probably meant I'd be wearing a straitjacket and locked in a cell with padded walls.

"Um… Well… Sort of. I'm talking to someone. You know, just airing my feelings – I'd been bottling them up."

There. Nothing to worry about, Grandma!

"It must have been hard for you – girl next door one minute, making front-page news the next. *Very hard*."

Tell me about it! Stupid old me thought trying to keep up with the Netherfield Park WAGs was difficult; then I wound up being a celebrity (fully aware that some people

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would call "celebrity" an overstatement) and realized the real meaning of PRESSURE.

"I never classed myself as a beauty or anything," I explained, "but suddenly people started turning up at the salon expecting me to look like Miss World."

She frowned. "The salon?"

"Yeah. My salon. I own a salon called Tah-dah!"

"Oh yes. Of course."

"If people turned up there and I wasn't looking perfect, they'd actually make comments about it on Facebook or Twitter – sometimes even to my face."

"Any examples?"

"Well, one girl who didn't think I was as pretty as she expected said, 'You're actually quite plain, aren't you?'"

"Hmm." Sam looked sympathetic. "People don't think; and it can't be easy with you dating a footballer."

"Huh?"

"I mean, it's hard enough to keep hold of a rich handsome guy, but a *footballer*…"

Is it me or did Sam for Short ram the pressure up to max right then?

"Yeah… Well…" I stuttered.

"You looked beautiful in that wedding dress today. Any plans you want to tell me about?" she said with a cheeky smile.

"Plans?" I repeated.

"Yes. *Plans*."

I laughed. "Look, we don't even live together, so

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one step at a time, as they say."

Sam leaned towards me and lowered her voice. "Listen, as this is your first interview since *Good Morning A.M.*, what Camilla would like me to do is to show that you're moving on with your life. Basically, I'm after a good news story and our audience love weddings and babies."

She sat straight again and raised her voice to normal. "So, do you have any *plans*?" she repeated.

"Er… No… Not really." Sam sighed. I'd clearly let her down, so I quickly added, "But I hope to have some soon."

That made her smile. "And babies?" she pressed.

"What about them?"

"Have they been discussed?"

I shook my head.

She sighed again. "Would you like any?"

"Me? Yeah, I'd like at least two."

Now she was happier. "Good for you. I think you'll make a great mother."

"Thanks. I hope so. I suppose having a little nephew is good training."

"And how old is he?"

"One."

"Ah–hh. Bet that's made you broody."

"Er… Yeah… Sort of."

"When my older sister had a baby, I picked baby names for my own children, even though I didn't have a partner at the time."

We both laughed.

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"I've done that too," I admitted. "Maybe it's a girl thing."

"Well… What are they, then? Don't leave me in suspense!"

"Effie for a girl, and Doug for a boy."

"Traditional Scottish names. Oh, they're beautiful, Remy."

I was proper chuffed about this (had put a lot of work into finding those names). Sam for Short was OK really, I decided. If a little nosy.

Got home and when I told Mal I was going to show Stephen the flats she brought up commitment again.

"If he says they're great, you're going to look silly if you don't end up buying one. And you don't *want* to buy one because that leaves him commitment-free."

I thought of the irony of me having photos taken in a wedding dress today.

"What you smiling at?"

"Nothing. Besides, he *has* committed – we're boyfriend and girlfriend, aren't we?"

"I'm talking about taking it to the next level. You know I am."

Anyhoo, I've packed an ickle overnight bag and now I'm off to meet Stephen. Hoping that seeing my potential new flat makes him pull his finger out.

Hi everyone, look out for me in HERE mag – coming to a store near you very soon!

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