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Opening extract from

Amazing Abby: Drama Queen

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Chapter One

To: TheRealRedVelvet100@gmail.com

From: amazingabby@abbys_world.com

Hi Tiffany,

It felt weird typing 'Hi, Red Velvet' so I'm using your real name instead of your vlogging name. Is that OK? It's also kind of weird – in a nice way – calling you Tiffany, just casually like we're mates! Meeting you at Springdale fundraiser last week was literally the best day of my life, and I wanted to say a huge sparkly THANK YOU for giving my friends and me tips about our YouTube channel. We are insanely proud to have launched Girls

Can Vlog and we've got our first planning meeting soon. Can't wait to get the whole thing up and running. It was super nice of you to share your email address and I was wondering if . . .  you could maybe mentor me and give me advice for the channel in the future?

But I get that you have nearly twelve million subscribers to keep entertained, so I totally understand if you don't have time. 

Anyway, it would be fabulous to hear from you, even if it's just leaving a comment if you get the chance to watch any more of our vlogs. I hope your perfume launch went well – obvs I'll be asking for a bottle of Velvet Touch for Christmas. I bet it smells INCREDIBLE!

Abby XOXOXO



'I'm home!' shouted Abby, slinging her school bag on the kitchen counter and pouring herself a glass of Coke. 'You here, Josh?'



Silence.

And no blaring music from his bedroom either.

Her older brother attended the same school as her, but they often went entire days without crossing paths – and for now she was glad that loudmouth ball of energy was out of the way.

Her mum had said she was working late tonight, which meant that Abby had the house to herself. Result! She needed to prepare for the Girls Can Vlog meeting she was hosting for her friends, and she wanted everything to go perfectly. Lucy, Hermione and Jessie had gone home to change (school uniform was a big no-no when vlogging) and they would arrive soon.

'Hi, Weenie!' she cried, scooping up the little cream pug who had zoomed over to greet her, and giving him a kiss on his funny squashed face. 'What a day! I missed you. Did you miss me when you went for your walk with

Susie?' She giggled as he licked her face, grimacing at the smell of dog-food breath. Susie the dog walker came to take Weenie to the park every day when Abby and Josh were at school and their mum was at work.



Still clutching the pug, Abby jogged upstairs and cast off her uniform, shedding with it the memories of a long and stressful day at school.



Wow, that felt good, she thought, kicking her wardrobe door shut so that the dreary uniform was out of sight and changing into her favourite black skinny jeans and a fluffy pastel-pink jumper. Lessons had dragged on FOREVER today, and her biology teacher had given her a talking-to for her terrible mark in the test last week – she thought everyone had found it hard, but apparently she was bottom of the class. *Whatever!*

The fun and chaotic *Grease* rehearsal at lunch had been the saving grace of her day, although she was starting to panic about the extra lines she needed to learn. She'd joined the production later than the rest of the cast in order to replace Kayleigh (who'd been thrown

out, which came as a surprise to literally no one).

'Apparently I need to be "off book" in two weeks, Weenie,' said Abby, picking up the pug again and addressing their reflections in the mirror. 'As in, know all my lines! In TWO WEEKS. Hashtag *help*!' She laughed as the pug stared at her in confusion, then set about tidying her room. She could worry about *Grease* tomorrow.

'I hereby call the first official meeting of Girls Can Vlog . . . to order,' shouted Abby forty minutes later, leaping on the bed and banging her hairbrush against her bookcase.

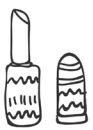
'Whoa – easy there, chairperson!' giggled Jessie from where she lay stretched out on the carpet, a bowl of sour-cream-and-onion pretzels precariously balanced on her stomach. 'That was loud!'

'Well, I had to stop you lot gassing away somehow!' said Abby, plonking herself back on to the bed with a grin. 'Anyway, now that I've got your attention . . . AHEM! Your ATTENTION . . .'



She stopped talking and glared at Lucy and Hermione, who had discovered Abby's basket of nail polishes and were busy trying out different shades on each other.

'It's OK, Abby, we're l-listening!' said Lucy, as Hermione muttered something about pink not being her colour. 'What's the f-first item on the agenda?'



Ever since they'd decided to switch from Lucy's YouTube channel to a group channel, Abby had basically appointed herself team leader – and they were all happy to let their bubbly, outgoing friend take charge, especially Lucy, who was looking forward to a well-earned break from running a channel on her own. The way she'd battled with her stammer and her confidence issues through vlogging had been a source of inspiration to the whole group.

'First things first: we need to get the rota straight,' said Abby. 'Are we all agreed that between us we'll upload two Girls Can Vlog videos per week?' The point of having a shared channel was that they'd all take turns, vlogging on different days, on a variety of different subjects,

alone or in groups, and grow the fanbase together.

'Sounds good to me,' said Jessie, flipping a pretzel high in the air and catching it in her mouth. 'We can brainstorm our ideas for videos at each meeting and decide who's doing what.' The others nodded in agreement.

Abby clapped her hands. 'Awesome. Next up is – our subscribers! How to give them videos they'll LOVE, and how to get our numbers up!'

'Actually, I'm glad you've raised this,' said Hermione, blowing on her nail polish and using her other hand to nudge open the pages of a notebook. 'I've thrown together some statistics, and although we haven't uploaded any content yet, the Girls Can Vlog channel already has fifty-four subscribers. I cross-checked against Lucy's subscriber list and most of them come from her channel.'

'Yeah – a few people left comments below the f-final LucyLocket vlog, saying they would follow us to our new channel right away,' chipped in Lucy. 'N-not as many as



I'd hoped, though. Feels a bit de-depressing going from over a thousand subscribers to fifty-four.'

Jessie jumped to her feet, upturning the bowl and scattering pretzels everywhere – much to Weenie's delight.



'Let's not panic. The key, my friends, is content.' She gestured dramatically to the skies. 'Content, content, content! People only subscribe to a channel once they know what they're getting and wanna see more of it. So we need to send a clear message about Girls Can Vlog delivering *amazing*, *inspirational*, *addictive* videos from our very first vlog.' She emphasized each word with a karate side kick.

'The very vlog that we are recording in a minute! Assuming Jess doesn't take one of us out with her crazy moves,' laughed Abby, edging away from the kicks. 'So let's get thinking. Jess, you've got that Halloween candy left over – food challenges are always fun to include – and we all need to come across as really chatty and friendly.' She glanced at Hermione, who

was still flicking through her notebook.

'What, so I'm not always that chatty.' Hermione sighed, looking up from under her fringe and catching Abby's eye. 'But sometimes I think it's best when we just act like ourselves. So what if I'm kind of shy sometimes? Don't we want people to like us for who we are?'

'Hermione's right,' said Lucy. 'We can't all be mega-chatty all the time. Anyway, I think the f-four of us balance each other out really well!'

Abby nodded and flashed an apologetic smile at Hermione. 'Totally. I just meant we should keep our energy up. We *are* great together!'

'Ooh, SPEAKING of being "great together" . . . anything you'd like to share with us, Luce?' said Jessie.

'YES, LUCY,' said Abby meaningfully. Hermione giggled and smiled at Lucy.

Lucy blushed. 'I have n-no idea what you mean.'

'You don't?' Abby looked round at the others, enjoying the moment. 'My mistake, I guess. It's just, I was under the impression you'd been on this, like, super-hot date

with the guy you'd fancied, *massively* fancied, for weeks, and it was pretty much the most exciting thing that had happened to you in ages, and yet you failed to update your besties within twenty-four hours?'



'Well, the thing is . . . S-Sam and I . . .' Lucy trailed off awkwardly, occupying herself with patting Weenie.

Jessie looked at her in disbelief. 'You can't leave it there! Sam and I . . . went for a swim? Sam and I . . . ran away to Vegas and got married? Sam and I . . . got abducted by aliens and had our brains switched?'

'Guys!' cried Hermione as Lucy continued to stroke Weenie in silence. 'Leave her alone.' She lowered her voice sensitively. 'Maybe the reason she hasn't told us about it is . . . she just didn't have the perfect time she was expecting?' But she too couldn't help looking curiously at Lucy, who laughed.

'Thanks, H. But actually the date was . . . n-nice. *Really* nice.' The others shrieked and wolf-whistled.

'So why didn't you reply to my texts, you foxy lady!' said Abby.

'I was j-just letting it sink in, I guess . . . Sorry to act mysteriously.' Lucy gazed dreamily into space. 'Anyway, it wasn't r-really that dramatic. We just went for a burger, then a walk, then a coffee, then for another walk. We ch-chatted for hours.' Ignoring the shrieks and giggles, she ploughed on, suddenly unable to stop talking. 'I think I like him . . . l-like him a lot. More than before. Thinking about it, I m-might even be in love!' She blushed and hid her face behind a cushion.



They all squealed with excitement. Abby jumped down from the bed and hugged her. 'Ooh, I'm so pumped for you! Lucy and Sa-am sitting in a tree . . . K-I-S-S– wait, *have* you actually kissed?'

Lucy looked down at Weenie beside her. 'Did me and S-Sam kiss, Weenie? Did we? Y-yes! We kissed. On the walk. By a lake. W-well, more of a pond.'

'Woohoo!' yelled Abby. 'I can't believe I'm only hearing this now.' She addressed the group. 'And this reminds me, guys, I might have my eye on someone too!'

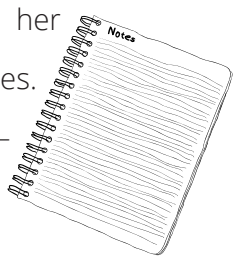
Hermione rolled her eyes. 'Who? Charlie? I hate to

break it to you, Abs, but that's not exactly news.' The others laughed. Charlie was one half of the Prankingstein YouTube channel (Abby's brother, Josh, was the other half) and definitely easy on the eye. He always made Abby go weird and giggly when he was around.

'No! He's just my brother's friend – please! No, I mean Ben – you know the one who's Kenickie in *Grease*? He's got some really good dance moves, and his voice is amazing. I'm pretty sure he winked at me in rehearsal today . . . so, basically, it's only a matter of time until we're double-dating, Luce!' She leaned over to high-five her friend.

'Sounds good!' laughed Lucy. 'Now . . . sorry to break up the gossip session, but m-maybe we should go back to vlog prep?'

'Yeah,' said Hermione, grabbing her notebook and flipping through the pages. 'So where were we? Halloween candy – and please subscribe!'



VLOG 1



FADE IN: ABBY'S BEDROOM – DAY

ABBY, LUCY, HERMIONE and JESSIE are scrunched together on the end of Abby's bed. Hot-pink fairy lights are strung up around the bedposts; tea lights flicker around the room.

ALL

Hi, guys!

ABBY

It's hard for us to know who's watching, but some of you might remember us from the fantastic Lucy's channel.

They all point at LUCY.

ABBY (CONTINUED)

We did some group videos together, so this channel will give you more of the same!

LUCY

It's n-not that I didn't love having my own channel, but this is way less p-pressure on me – and you'll get to see more of these beautiful girls, so it's all good!

ABBY

Especially as you have a BOYFRIEND now and will probably only have time to do COUPLY things.

LUCY shoves her.



LUCY

I'm still completely committed to v-vlogging AS YOU KNOW.

Plus I'm n-not the only one with a LOVE INTEREST.

ABBY tackles her to the ground before she can say any more.

HERMIONE

Now, now, children!

JESSIE

Can we PLEASE do the super-sour challenge?

HERMIONE looks at her notebook.

HERMIONE

Not yet! We have to welcome our lovely subscribers properly – looks straight into camera – SORRY, VIEWERS. Some of us seem to be behaving like five-year-olds today! The point of this vlog was to say thanks for checking us out, guys! I, er, hope you'll stick with us despite this chaotic start . . .

ABBY gathers herself and neatens her hair.

ABBY

Yeah, it was just to give everyone a taste of our videos and to encourage you to tune in twice a week. And to ask for your feedback about the kind of videos you want to see. We're still working out how regular our content will be, but we will definitely upload a new vlog at least twice a week and we can cover loads of things . . .



ABBY starts ticking them off on her fingers as she says them.

ABBY (CONTINUED)

. . . make-up, fashion, shopping hauls, baking, fitness, tag videos, all kinds of challenges, pranks, pizza parties, yoga challenges, dance routines, room tours, makeovers, ooh, I know! How to make sushi—



JESSIE

(interrupts)

– AND super-sour challenges!

All laugh. HERMIONE takes notes frantically, then throws her pen on the floor in relief.

ABBY

OK, OK! Point taken. We'll get started, then . . . over to you, Jess!

JESSIE dishes out the super-sour eyeball gobstoppers and puts the bag on the bed.

JESSIE

So I ordered these specially from the US for Halloween, but still haven't tried them – apparently they start out sweet and then get more and more sour. The challenge is to see who can keep them in their mouth the longest! Ready? Here goes!

JESSIE pops hers in her mouth and the others follow suit. They smile and exchange looks before slowly their faces drop. HERMIONE looks particularly horrified, wincing more and more as the seconds tick by.



HERMIONE stands and runs to the bin off camera, spitting her gobstopper out.

HERMIONE

OH MY GOD, that was so disgusting!

ABBY paces around the room, shaking her head. LUCY has her hand over her mouth. JESSIE is sitting calmly with a smile on her face.

HERMIONE (CONTINUED)

Guys, how are you *doing* that?

ABBY and LUCY look at each other, then run and spit theirs out. JESSIE shrugs then crunches her gobstopper to pieces and swallows it.

JESSIE

Too easy! All I ask for is a little bit of competition from you guys in these eating challenges!

HERMIONE

How did you do it? I nearly vommed!

ABBY

(still grimacing)

So . . . not sure if that's what you wanted to see today,

viewers, but there you have it! Three sets of very unhappy taste buds and one example of Jess's superhuman powers. If you liked it, give us a thumbs-up down below and leave a com–

NO! WEENIE!

WEENIE has found the gobstoppers on the bed and is sniffing them curiously, then gives one a lick. WEENIE yelps in dismay before running from the room. All gasp.



ABBY

Oh dear – I should go and see if he's OK . . . Er, bye, everyone!

All wave.

FADE OUT.

Views: 156 and counting

Subscribers: 103

Comments:

billythekid: Haha, poor Weenie!

PrankingsteinJosh: Stop trying to poison our dog, sis!

Amazing_Abby_xxx: He's fine . . . Happily eating some *actual* dog food right now . . .

queen_dakota: Ugh you guys are back – oops, I forgot to subscribe! #sorrynotsorry

MagicMorgan: Yay Girls Can Vlog! Can't wait to collab some time x

StephSaysHi: So excited ☺ Welcome back, ladies – I'd love to see more beauty videos ❤❤

pinksparkles: And more hauls! *subscribes*

(scroll down to see 5 more comments)

