TO ELLA WHIDDETT AND MATTIE WHITEHEAD,
OUR MAGICAL EDITORS, WITH THANKS, H AND P XX

FOR ARCHIE AND OLIVE, LOVE MUM X

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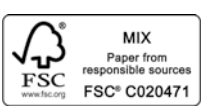
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Diary of an Accidental Witch

Flying High



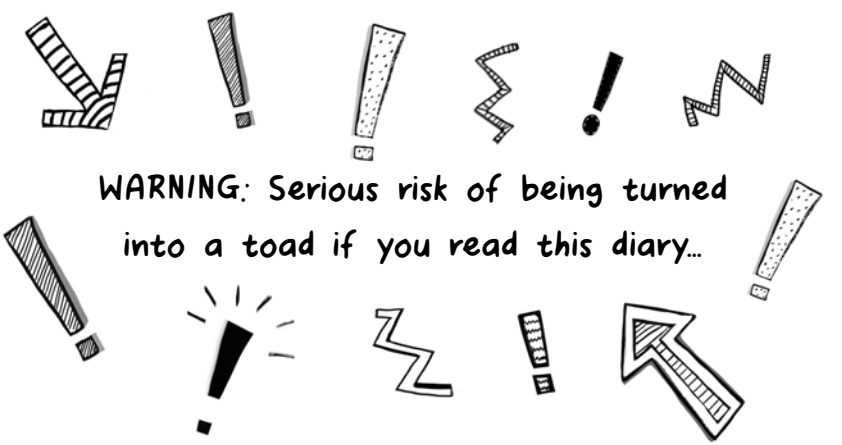
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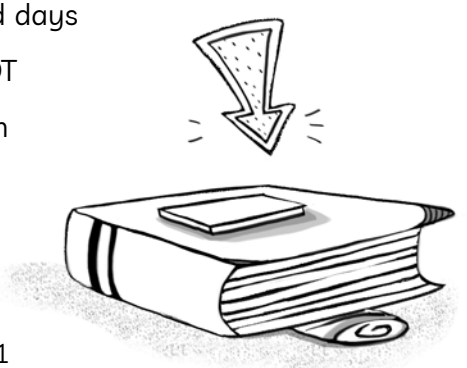


MONDAY 1ST NOVEMBER

11:03am Home

It's the first day of half-term, I'm still in my pyjamas and I've had three biscuits for breakfast and half a packet of fluffmallows that I found under my pillow. What is even more impressive is that I managed to *levitate* the fluffmallows with my WAND all the way from the bed to my mouth.

It feels weird writing in a new diary. The pages are so empty and there are almost no crossings-outs or mistakes or missed days or lists of things I have NOT managed to do (like potion spells). It's so clean and perf—



11:11am

The thing about fluffmallows is that they are very STICKY.





I've hidden the old diary at the back of my sock drawer because it is *very* important that NO ONE ever reads it. Especially not Dad because I never did learn to write in code – EDOC? FRGH? £0D*? – and it will only take him about a nanosecond to find out that I'm a ~~witch~~ witch-in-training. That's the sort of shock nobody wants to give a parent.







I feel bad keeping such a big secret from Dad, but it's his own fault for making us move to Little Spellshire and *then* accidentally sending me to the School of Extraordinary Arts instead of the perfectly ordinary **Spellshire Academy**. If it hadn't been for that one tiny classic-Dad-muddle-up, I probably still wouldn't even know witches *existed*, far less be learning how to become one.

Witches, when they're not hanging out with other

witches (like at WITCH SCHOOL), are very hush-hush about their witchiness. As our headmistress, Ms Sparks, always says, 'Those of us who know, *know* and those of them who don't, *can't*.'

So, even though Dad's mistake turned out to be the most brilliant mistake in the history of mistakes, I can't tell him. If I did, I'd probably have to turn him into a toad* or maybe Ms Sparks would turn *me* into a toad – or maybe we'd BOTH be turned into toads. (I can't really imagine any of my teachers turning somebody into a toad, but I've learned the hard way that in Little Spellshire it's best not to rule anything out.)



11:22am

I *can* imagine some people in my class turning ME into a toad.

Hunter Gunn? Izzi Geronimo?

Definitely Blair Smith-Smythe!

*NO IDEA how to do this.

12:04pm

"Bea!" Ash is leaning out of his bedroom window and yelling across the gap between our houses. "Half-term!"



We grin at each other. We might go to *very* different schools – no witchiness for anyone at the Academy – but we both have a whole week of no lessons ahead.

"Put that diary down and come over. Mum's baking."

I'm very tempted because Mrs Namdar's cakes are the best *non*-witchy cakes in the universe and I can already smell cinnamon wafting out of their kitchen window, but I've got less than twenty minutes to get out of my pyjamas and over to Taffy Tallywick's Teashop to meet Winnie and Puck and Fabi and Amara.



"I can't!" I shout back. "I'm meeting friends from school."

Ash looks a bit disappointed and I nearly ask him to come with me but a) there's the ~~huge~~ little problem of no one from his school talking to anyone who goes to my school and b) the ~~enormous~~ slightly bigger problem that if Ash found out about even ~~half a quarter~~ ONE PER CENT of what happens at Extraordinary then I'd have to start worrying about people being turned into toads again. There are a lot of secrets in Little Spellshire.

"Morning, you two!" Dad shouts up from the garden. "Come outside! It's such a glorious day."

It is super sunny and warm, which would be odd for November except that Little Spellshire is home to the weirdest weather in the world (which makes my weather-scientist dad very happy and is the reason we moved here).

"Twenty-three degrees Celsius with a light south-westerly breeze!" he shouts. "Not the sort of morning – or should I say *afternoon* – to waste indoors."

Aaaarrgh! I'm going to be late meeting my friends and I'm still not dressed.

2:31pm

Just got home from Taffy's.

"Why are you wearing pyjamas?" was the first thing Amara said when I walked into the teashop. I'd have pretended it was a style statement (how could neon-green pyjamas *not* be in style?) except that the last time they saw me – at the Halloween Ball – I was dressed as a frog so I didn't exactly have a track record as a fashion influencer. Anyway, it wasn't like the rest of them were dressed sensibly...



"I wish it could be Halloween again," I said, watching Taffy take down yesterday's decorations. I'd never known how much fun Halloween could be until I'd come to Little Spellshire and made friends with witches.

"Never mind Halloween," said Winnie, "it's only *fifty* days until—"

"Winter Solstice!" chorused Fabi, Puck and Amara.

"Er ... what's Winter Solstice?" I asked.

"It's the longest and witchiest night of the year," Winnie explained patiently.

"There's a big *party*," added Puck with a grin.

I was beginning to realize that witches really liked parties – and that was good because now I had friends in Little Spellshire I liked parties again too.

"We all wear masks to represent the creatures in the *Great Ode to the Winter Solstice* and dance round a huge bonfire and feast on yummy things," said Amara, dividing up a slice of Taffy's famous chocolate fudge cake for us to share.



"But before that," announced Fabi, "there's the Grand Tournament!"

"The Grand Tournament?"

"It's only the biggest, SPORTIEST day in the witchy calendar!" Fabi grinned.

"You'll love it, Bea," said Puck. "Lots of **GO** matches."

GO! Something I liked even more than *bonfire parties*! My favourite witch sport* – and more fun than any non-witch sport.

"And inter-year broom speed races and chimney-scoring contests and flying displays and the No-Rules-Anything-Could-Happen-Teacher/Student-Contest," added Amara through a mouthful of crumbs.

Fifty days was too long to wait!

We were making plans to practise broom-racing before we went back to school (or 'refereeing' in Winnie's** case) when the door to the teashop swung open, blowing in a blast of hot air and three *extremely* tidy teenagers who definitely did not go to Extraordinary. It was a relief when they went to sit

*Possibly ONLY witch sport??

**Least sporty witch EVER.

at the furthest table because, although we could feel them staring at us, they probably couldn't hear what we were saying.

"Imagine *them* playing **GO**," said Puck and we all got the giggles so badly that Taffy had to come over and ask us to calm down.

But now I'm back home I'm feeling bad about laughing because, although there *is* something funny about the idea of non-witches (the 'Ordinaries' – that's what everyone at school calls them) flying about on broomsticks, I HATE it when people in this town talk about 'them' and 'us'.