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Opening extract from

Diary of an (Un)teenager

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Chapter 1
A Terrible Shock

Friday, May 29th

Strange things have started happening. I feel the need to write these important events down in a diary.

Zac rang me this evening, dear diary. He said, "Hi, Spencer! When you see me tonight you may get a shock!"

He wouldn't say anymore.

He was upstairs when I went round to his house.

I opened the door to his bedroom and then stepped back in horror.

I'd never expected this.

I blinked. But Zac was still there – and wearing ... a blue shirt that looked huge on him, the baggiest white trousers I'd ever seen and massive trainers with a huge flap and no laces.

"Why on earth are you dressed like that?" I gasped.

Zac swallowed hard, then announced, "Because, Spencer, I'm a skater now."

"But you haven't even got a skateboard."

"Not yet, I haven't," he agreed. "But I'm getting one next week. And you don't really need a skateboard these days. You've just got to have the right gear."

Then he put on this top with a hood.

"Once you've got your hoodie, you're a skater. It's as simple as that."

He smiled at me. I tried to smile back but I just couldn't.

"So how much did all this gear cost you?" I asked. "And have you still got the receipt?"

Zac whispered the price to me. I nearly passed out with shock. He'd used up all his birthday money on this rubbish. And nearly half of all his savings too.

I just couldn't believe it.

Zac and I had never wasted any of our money on clothes before. We'd been fine wearing the same shirt and jeans for years.

So what had happened to him?

"Just why have you decided to be a skater?" I asked, finding it hard to control my voice.

Zac started pacing around his room. He sighed heavily.

"It's ever since I turned 13. It's made me think about my life." His voice rose. "I've got to be something. My cousin Phil's a goth," Zac made a face, "so I didn't want to be one of those ..." He paused, then he added, "Did I tell you my cousin's got himself a girlfriend?"

"Only 700 times."

"Well, when girls see my new look," said Zac, "they might start showing me some interest. One or two might even want to go out with me."

Suddenly I started to laugh. I just couldn't help it. It was the shock of it all, really.

Then Zac hissed, "Shut up, you doughnut."

Such strong language calmed us both down.

Then he said, “You’ll be 13 in a few weeks, won’t you, Spencer?”

“Yes,” I agreed.

“Well, you wait. You’ll start changing just like me.”

Zac was staring at me now.

“No, I won’t,” I cried.

He smiled.

“Oh, yes you will. You can’t help yourself.”

A shudder ran right through me.

Will I soon start throwing all my money away on stupid clothes?

No, dear diary, I won’t.

I am going to stay EXACTLY as I am now.

And that's a promise, signed here in my diary.