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opening extract from

My Double Life

This double-edition includes the first two books in the series:
My So-Called Life (pp. 2-12) and *The Life of Riley* (pp. 13-27)

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December

Saturday 25

Christmas Day

Christmas presents asked for:

- mobile phone
- *O.C.* Complete First Season boxed set on DVD
- Chanel No. 5, as worn by Marilyn Monroe
- Touche Eclat to cover up hideous dark circles inherited from Granny Clegg
- hair straighteners to tame hideous curly hair inherited from Grandpa Clegg.

Presents received:

- Mum and Dad—BBC *Pride and Prejudice* boxed set. Apparently *The O.C.* has been added to Mum's list of proscribed items (also featuring *EastEnders* (common), Coronation Street (northern and common) and Ribena (purple, causing stain issues)). When I asked her why, she said it gave teenagers an unrealistic image of life in a seaside community. This is because she grew up in Cornwall where Granny Clegg made her wear a balaclava to school.
- James, my brother—*What Not to Wear* by Trinny and Susannah. This is rich coming from a seven year old who has been known to go out dressed in a Virgin Mary outfit.
- Grandpa Riley—a box of toffee with "Thank you for looking after my dog" on it, which is weird as I have never looked after his dog because it *a*) is sick all the

time; *b*) looks at me menacingly; and *c*) ate one of my pink Converse low-rise. Maybe it is a plea. I hope not.

- Granny and Grandpa Clegg—a £5 WHSmith token and a Selection Box (sell-by date last August). The concept of inflation has clearly not reached St Slaughter yet, along with central heating and Channel 5.
- Auntie Joy(less) and Uncle John—a junior New Testament. They are severe Methodists and force my cousins to go to a cult church in Redruth where they dip you in a pool in all your clothes and talk in tongues.
- Uncle Jim—nothing. I don't think they celebrate Christmas in Tibet.
- Scarlet, my best friend—this diary.
- Sad Ed, practically next-door neighbour and second best friend—*The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath. Ed's ambition is to become an alcoholic genius and die in a car crash by the age of thirty. He has no chance. He passed out at Scarlet's birthday party after two martinis, can only play 'Bobby Shaftoe' on his guitar, and came third last in the school poetry competition last year.

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Emailed Scarlet. She got: a Nokia with an inbuilt MP3 player, camera, and the *O.C.* theme as the ringtone; *The O.C.* Complete First Season boxed set; a Cure T-shirt and a pair of enormous skate trousers (she is thinking of

becoming either a goth or Avril Lavigne); and a book called *Let's Talk About Sex*. This is typical. Scarlet's mum is a sex therapist and her dad is a gynaecologist, which sounds exotic, but is, as Scarlet points out, actually gross. Especially when they start talking about pelvic floors at breakfast.

Casually mentioned Scarlet's new mobile phone to Mum. She said Scarlet would fry her brain with radiation. I said if I had one I would only use it to text people but Mum said I would get RSI and fail my GCSEs (which, I might add, are two years away). So now I am the only thirteen year old in Saffron Walden forced to use the public phone box to call Dad for a lift, which is embarrassing, not to mention unhygienic. I know for a fact that Mark Lambert once got his thing sucked in there by Leanne Jones for £2.50 and a Westlife CD.

Ate Bounty, Twirl, Mars bar, and half a Twix from out-of-date Selection Box whilst reading *What Not to Wear*. Apparently I am committing a litany of crimes against fashion. Under no circumstances should someone of my height (157 cm—only five cms off being a medical midget, according to James) wear cropped trousers. Looked in wardrobe to assess situation. Own three pairs cropped trousers, one pair of jeans (with a burn hole in the knee where James tried to invent inkstain remover), a bridesmaid's dress left over from Uncle Jim's second wedding, a kilt (don't ask), four assorted Marks and Spencer jumpers, a hoodie, seven T-shirts (three black,

one grey, one Brownies, one Saffron Walden Carnival, and one "I Love Bodmin Farm Park"), and my school uniform. Not promising.

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10 p.m.

Feel a bit sick. Maybe should have stopped at the Mars bar. Sylvia Plath would have stopped at half a Bounty. Or, probably, would have chosen an apple instead.

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Sunday 26

Boxing Day

A terrible thing has happened. Grandpa Riley's dog has been banned from the Pink Geranium sheltered housing complex after eating the turkey for the communal Christmas lunch. Grandpa says it wasn't the dog, but, according to the warden, Mrs Peason, a pile of incriminating sick was found outside Elsie Stain's porch. Apparently it is the last straw in a long list of canine misdemeanours. She has asked Dad to come and pick it up this week or it will be sent to the dog home. That box of toffee must have been a premonition.

Also, a giant tidal wave has washed away Thailand. Mum says that's the problem with choosing the third world as a holiday destination—not only are the toilet arrangements suspicious but it is ravaged by freak weather, which is why Cornwall is ideal. James pointed out that Granny Clegg still had an outside toilet and

that it had rained persistently on three out of the last four visits to Cornwall, at which point he got sent to his room to reflect on world disaster.

Emailed Scarlet but no reply. She is obviously too busy watching *The O.C.* whilst wearing enormous skate trousers and reading about her G-spot. Went round to see Sad Ed. He was depressed, as usual. Mainly because he got a David Beckham calendar and a machine that dispenses miniature Dairy Milks for Christmas. He had asked for a stuffed crow and a box of Slimfast (he wants to get in shape for his tragic untimely death—he says he cannot be a revered genius with fat upper arms). He has not liked David Beckham since Year 5 but his mum and dad are in denial. He said the Tsunami is a symbol of globalization and the capitalist society eating itself. I had to leave as he was making me depressed as well.

Monday 27

Bank Holiday (UK)

Gave up waiting for email reply and went round to Scarlet's. Suzy and Bob (Scarlet gets to call her mum and dad by their first names) are frantically setting up a Tsunami appeal fund with the Saffron Walden Labour Party and Suzy's tantric yoga group. Scarlet was too busy to watch *The O.C.* as she was helping Suzy write letters to Sainsbury's and Tesco's demanding they hand over tinned oriental produce for immediate repatriation. Even

Scarlet's brother, Jack, is doing something. His band, Certain Death, are playing a charity gig at the Bernard Evans Youth Centre next week.

I tried calling my mum Janet once and she banned me from watching *Dawson's Creek* for two weeks.

Dad is going to fetch the dog tomorrow. Mum is not happy but has agreed, under a three strikes and it's out rule regarding food theft and vomiting.

Tuesday 28

Bank Holiday (UK)

Went to collect Grandpa's dog from the Pink Geranium sheltered housing complex, which sounds like an exotic gay nightclub but is a three-storey concrete block of flats on the site of the former gasworks. Mrs Peason the fascist warden was waiting at the front door with Grandpa and the dog, who looked very sad. (Grandpa, not the dog. The dog was eating a Mars bar and was too busy to look sad.) Mrs Peason said, "At last. This dog is a menace to health and safety. I hope you have a ready supply of Jif." Grandpa shook his head and said things like, "It's all over for me and you now, pal. Don't pine yourself to death." But the dog just climbed in the boot. I think it was glad to get away from Mrs Peason.

Mum has told Dad that the dog is not allowed into the lounge, dining room, or bedrooms, except in cases of absolute emergency (what would these be, I wonder?).

She has put up James's old stairgate on the kitchen door to restrict its activities.

8 p.m.
The dog has chewed through the stairgate and is locked in a stand-off situation in Mum and Dad's bedroom, where it is growling menacingly from under the sprig-patterned duvet cover.

Wednesday 29

Went into town with James and spent my £5 WHSmith token on *Sugar Rush* by Julie Burchill. Scarlet has read it twice and says it is seminal. James bought a dictionary of Elvish and a Carol Vorderman Sudoku puzzle book.

Rival Tsunami appeals are appearing all over the place. I counted at least five in the space of 500 yards, including one by Les Brewster and his wife, Ying, who own the Siam Smile Thai café on the High Street (formerly the Dog and Bucket pub). Les (overweight, bald, fifty-seven) divorced Mrs Brewster (also overweight, bald and fifty-seven) two years ago and married Ying (thin, full head of hair, twenty-one) after a holiday in Phuket with the pub darts league. They are raising money to rebuild the sex bar where they met.

Got back to find that the dog had eaten the DVD player and the *Pride and Prejudice* boxed set. Dad claims it is

not the dog but there is a pile of sick by the dog's bowl with a picture of Colin Firth in it. Mum says it is two strikes down but James says DVDs do not count as food.

Thursday 30

Tomorrow is New Year's Eve. I have still not been invited to any parties but I know that Jack is having all the members of Certain Death over for a jamming session and that will include Justin Statham (lead guitar) who can play the solos out of 'Stairway to Heaven' and 'I Believe in a Thing Called Love'. Scarlet says Jack says he is going out with Sophie Jacobs whose dad invented Microwave Muffins and who was once in a Fairy Liquid advert, but everyone knows she is still in love with Chris Cross (seriously), who is in quarantine for glandular fever, so as soon as he is given the all-clear it will all be over with Justin and I will be there to comfort him. I just need to lay some groundwork now. I will call Scarlet in the morning and get myself invited over.

Read three pages of *Sugar Rush*. Scarlet is right. It is clearly a modern classic. Why, oh, why can we not move to Brighton, which is full of exotic and tragic people like blacks, lesbians, and the homeless? All Saffron Walden has is Barry the Blade, the notorious town madman, who eats leftover falafel from the dustbin outside Abrakebabra. Where is the urban degradation? Where is the multicultural melting pot?

Friday 31

New Year's Eve

11.45 p.m.

New Year's Eve has been a total disaster. I should be at a house party having meaningful conversations on the stairs with Justin Statham but am, in fact, at home watching Jonathan Ross. Scarlet was too busy to celebrate—Suzy and Bob are holding a candlelit vigil with Les Brewster and Ying in the Siam Smile (they have joined forces in an attempt to form one giant Tsunami Appeal and weed out the pretenders). I asked if I could go but Mum said that the sex bar being washed away was probably a good thing and that anyway, she needed me to babysit so they can play Giant Jenga with Clive and Marjory next door. Sad Ed came over for a bit and we played his Leonard Cohen CD (he is a total Emotional Music Obsessive) but he has a 10p.m. curfew. He says that we are both the products of depressingly unbroken homes and that is why our existence is so meaningless. Although his plight is worse than mine as his parents are both 48, which makes them practically pensioners, and they are in the Aled Jones fan club.

Ed is right, I need more tragedy in my life. Why is life never like it is in books? Nothing Jacqueline Wilson ever happens to me: I am not adopted, my mum is not tattooed, I am not likely to move to the middle of a council estate or be put into care. My parents are not alcoholics, drug addicts, or closet transvestites. No one in

my family is brown, gay, interestingly autistic, or even mildly retarded (although James won't eat fruit and meat on the same plate and can sing the books of the Bible off by heart, which is a bit *Curious Dog*.) Even my name is pants. Why didn't my parents call me something exotic like Lola? (Actually I asked Mum that once and she said that no daughter of hers was being named after a transsexual prostitute.) In other words, my life is earth-shatteringly NORMAL.

This cannot go on. Something deep and life-changing has to happen. Thin Kylie (Britcher) was put into care for a week when her mum's breast implant burst. Even Fat Kylie (O'Grady) has suffered tragic loss—her dad Les choked to death on a Findus Crispy Pancake last March.

Next year will be different. It has to be. Starting tomorrow.

January

Sunday 1

New Year's Day

Am in agony. And not due to highly anticipated cider and blackcurrant-induced hangover from best friend Scarlet's New Year's Eve party, but to fact that Dad had moved second best friend Sad Ed's *Dawson's Creek* ladder and I fell off the drainpipe in my attempt to escape my facially disfigured (i.e. acne-ridden) ex-boyfriend Will, god-bothering cousin Boaz, and uber-chav neighbour Thin Kylie. So, instead of spending the evening looking vintage and dancing to seminal music, had to sit in casualty for three hours with Dad, James, and local madman Barry the Blade, who, it turned out, was fine but had nothing better to do. Then the weary doctor (who looked about sixteen but was in fact twenty-six and a half—James checked) said I had only suffered minor bruising and it was lucky my fall had been broken by the mini-trampoline (disused due to injury risk—how ironic).

So am now on sofa with Baby Jesus (aka my uncle) and the dog watching one of Dad's *Lovejoy* videos and sipping Lucozade (me, not Baby Jesus. Or the dog—it is eating leftover green triangle Quality Street instead). Mum has taken James and Boaz to Mole Hall Wildlife Park (total exotic wildlife count now reduced to three otters due to unexplained marmoset death, plus the flamingos are out of bounds in ongoing bird flu crisis); Grandpa and Treena, parents of Baby Jesus, are at the January sales (i.e. Woolworth's); Will never came home

from Thin Kylie's; and Dad is fixing the drainpipe under strict orders from Mum who fears that squirrels will get in and devour the electricals.

4 p.m.

Scarlet and Sad Ed have just left. It is all too depressing. I have clearly missed a potentially life-changing experience. Apparently Scarlet's mum, Suzy, drank too much Merlot and did dirty dancing to Christina Aguilera (proto-feminist singer, according to Suzy). My mum would never do that. She only dances to Rod Stewart and it is excruciating to witness. Also, malodorous Year Ten lesbian Oona Rickets got off with a MAN in the downstairs toilet, then had a panic attack over her sexuality and had to have emergency counselling from Suzy. She has redeclared herself 'bicurious'. What is that meant to mean? It sounds like bivalve. Apparently Scarlet didn't get off with anyone. She is still too traumatized by her illicit liaison with non-goth and possible love of my life Justin Statham. I asked Scarlet if Justin had snogged anyone and she said no he was too busy doing requests on his electric guitar. Sad Ed said why didn't I ask if he had got off with anyone, so I asked him and he said no, so I said point proven.

5 p.m.

Have just got text from Scarlet's brother Jack: Hp u bounce back soon Riley! Ha! X!

Hilarious.

7 p.m.

Will came to say goodbye—his mum Fiona is driving up from Fulham in the morning to collect him. She is too hung-over to come today due to the Tory frivolities at David Cameron's organic beer and Twiglets party in Notting Hill. (Mum says it is more likely down to drugs and weird sex. She thinks all politicians spend their spare time getting drunk and breaking the law, except ginger Lib Dem leader Charles Kennedy, whom she is convinced is going to save Britain from moral turpitude and juvenile delinquency.) Will was with Thin Kylie who had four love-bites (I counted them) on her neck and her hand up Will's shirt. Will did not have love-bites. Not even Thin Kylie would dare go near that amount of sebaceous secretion. I said I was glad that love could conquer their social and mental divide. Thin Kylie said, 'I ain't no mentalist. You're the mental one to chuck him. He's like Prince William, innit.' Then they went off to do karaoke with Terry and Cherie. It will not last. He is used to organic caviar while Thin Kylie thinks crisps are a food group.

This is not a good start to the year. I will be fifteen in eight months. I should be at my peak of general brilliantness, i.e. like Peaches Geldof, not sipping glucose drinks in Mum's terry towelling dressing gown and watching Ian McShane with a mullet with my one-week-old uncle.

New Year Resolutions:

1. Attempt to discontinue friendship with Thin Kylie.

We have nothing in common and her Bacardi habit is worsening.

2. Repatriate Suzy's glow-in-the-dark rabbit vibrator asap. James has lent it to Treena to vibrate Jesus to sleep.
3. Concentrate on school—GCSEs now a mere year and a half away and do not want to end up serving doughnuts in Dorrington's like Maria Pearce (aka Pie Shop Pearce) for the rest of my life.
4. Experiment with alcohol or drugs or sex. According to Sad Ed, it is the law to have been sick on Strongbow and have seen several willies (or minkies in his case) by the end of Year Ten. So far have only seen James's (bath-sharing economy drive by Mum), and Grandpa Riley's (horrific bathroom lock failure incident), which do not count, according to Sad Ed.
5. Find THE ONE. Will utterly not snog random Tories with congenital acne but will save myself for long-haired creative type with interest in tragedy and general literariness and with musical potential i.e. Justin. For a minute last year during on-stage *Bugsy Malone* snog thought it might be Jack but he is *a*) Scarlet's brother and *b*) Scarlet's brother.

Monday 2

Bank Holiday

Auntie Joyless is coming from Redruth to collect Boaz at lunchtime. Grandpa and Treena have been sent to DFS

for the day with the baby (warm, plenty of seating, crisp machine). Mum thinks Auntie Joyless may have a nervous breakdown and have to summon emergency Episcopal services if she finds out Grandpa has an illegitimate son called Jesus with someone from Bolton.

4 p.m.
Boaz's return to Cornwall did not go as smoothly as Mum had planned. Dad is driving Auntie Joyless back to Redruth in the Passat now that her new Mini Metro is wedged into Clive and Marjory's Granada saloon in a generally mangled state and Len Viceroy (aka Fat Len) from Viceroy garage can't separate them until next week as he is having surgery on a varicose vein.

Timetable of events:

12.15 p.m. Auntie Joyless arrives in new Mini Metro, as purchased from Denzel's Crazy Car Warehouse in Cambourne, complete with 'I brake for Jesus' sticker on the window and lucky crown of thorns hanging from rear-view mirror.

12.30 p.m. Boaz apologizes for running away and agrees to attend Reverend Ray's 'Bible Bash' camp for delinquent teenagers in February half-term. James asks if he can attend for research purposes. Request denied by Mum on 'because I say so' grounds.

1.00 p.m. Dog eats Delia's vegetarian shepherd's pie (puritanical, but with a Christmas theme, i.e. shepherds) during Auntie Joyless's enforced saying of grace (eyes shut all round).

1.10 p.m. James and Boaz sent to Mr Patel's to buy emergency lunch.

1.30 p.m. James and Boaz return with four chicken korma ready meals, a tin of cling peaches and a semi-melted Viennetta (Mr Patel's freezer on blink). Dad says he is secretly glad dog ate vegetarian pie, Delia or no Delia.

1.45 p.m. Fight breaks out in DFS between Mrs O'Grady and Ying Brewster over last remaining white leatherette corner set. Police and ambulances called and DFS closes until further notice.

2.30 p.m. Grandpa and Treena arrive on doorstep four hours early. Mum sends James (crucial mistake in retrospect) to hide Baby Jesus in his bedroom.

2.45 p.m. James appears in dining room and declares an emergency.

2.50 p.m. Auntie Joyless says, 'Nothing is beyond the power of our good Lord,' and demands to know nature of said emergency.

2.51 p.m. James says Baby Jesus has been sick on his Will Young doll, and it is now not singing 'Evergreen'.

2.52 p.m. Auntie Joyless storms upstairs to find 'second coming' lying on *Lord of the Rings* duvet between sick-covered Will Young and giant glow-in-the-dark rabbit vibrator (on).

2.53 p.m. Auntie Joyless declares the house is inhabited by Satanists and demands Boaz strap himself in the Metro.

2.54 p.m. Auntie Joyless reverses Metro at full speed into Clive and Marjory's driveway whilst trying to cross herself at same time.

3.30 p.m. Auntie Joyless and Boaz depart in Passat with Dad and the dog.

3.31 p.m. Mum demands to know provenance of giant glow-in-the-dark rabbit vibrator. Rachel vows it is more than her life's worth to divulge the

sex secrets of vague acquaintances. Mum says, 'Was it Suzy?' James says, 'Yes.'

3.45 p.m. Rabbit vibrator sealed in Jiffy bag with stern letter from Mum requesting that Suzy keep her menacing sex toys to herself.

3.50 p.m. James and Rachel sent to rooms to reflect on inappropriate use of menacing sex toys in front of evangelistic humourless relations.

Thank God school starts in two days. How am I supposed to be tragic and literary with my ridiculous family? I bet Emily Bronte never had to put up with this sort of hoo-ha.

Update

3.00 a.m. Dad and dog arrive back from Cornwall. Dog wakes up entire house in incident involving leftover chicken korma.

Tuesday 3

Mum is in a panic. She says Jeremy Paxman has informed her that there is a plague of sex register pervert teachers in schools. I said I didn't know she had a hotline to Paxo. She said don't try to be funny, it was on the news, and are there any at John Major High, apart from sex pest Geography

teacher Mr Ingham, who is on permanent sabbatical? Said, 'No.' Did not inform her about Justin's ex girlfriend Sophie Jacobs's ongoing gropings with student French teacher Mr Vaughan. Or lesbian PE teachers Miss Vicar (stick-thin; no breasts; facial hair) and Miss Beadle (overweight; bulgy eyes like Joey in *Friends* or rabbits with myxomatosis).

Went round Scarlet's to discuss sex pervert crisis. Suzy said it was all blown out of proportion and that most of them were not paedophiles but merely fulfilling the Oedipal desires of sexually charged sixteen year olds. She is thinking of writing to Tony (Blair—Suzy thinks they are on first-name terms following their brief encounter at the school dinners visit last year, during which she was arrested for possible terrorist activity). I wish my mother were an enlightened sex therapist instead of a former tax clerk with a Cillit Bang obsession.

Also, school starts tomorrow. And, with it, my quest to find THE ONE (as long as THE ONE is not a teacher or other pervert). I predict it will be Justin and we will be snogging by half term.

Wednesday

First day of school.

Thin Kylie has already chucked a sickie, due to post-traumatic stress disorder (according to poorly spelt note from her mum Cherie, given to me to hand in, through

a cloud of Marlboro fumes and Impulse. Registration was awash with rumours that she had snogged Prince William. (Fat Kylie told trainee Year Eight chavette 'Primark' Donna (little sister of Leanne Jones, free giver of sexual favours), who is easily confused, and who told the entire lower school by first break). Even Ms Hopwood-White was overexcited. I said that he was not Prince William, he was an acne-ridden Tory from Fulham. But Fat Kylie said, 'You're just jealous. Because no one's been near your chuff.' Luckily, attention was diverted by news that we are getting a new girl in class tomorrow. And not one of Mrs Duddy's Retards or Criminals this time either. She comes from London and is called Tuesday Weeks and is the product of a totally broken home! According to Mrs Leech, her dad, who is American, ran off with his psychiatrist. Oh my God. She is my ideal me! I bet she looks like drug-crazed beauty Marissa off *The O.C.* and has a band on Myspace and spends all weekends getting spotted as a model at the giant Topshop. Or, even better, maybe she is black! Fat Kylie is claiming her for chav corner. She is planning to take her to sightsee the drive-through McDonalds in Harlow so that she doesn't feel homesick. The Kylies are going to be disappointed. Tuesday is bound to be on the Zone diet and will only eat Sushi and raw vegetables. Which could be a problem in Saffron Walden, which is sorely lacking in Japanese cuisine.

1 p.m.

Thin Kylie is back in school, following a miraculous recovery, according to Cherie, or success at procuring morning after pill from Dr Braithwaite (huge hands; lazy eye; bottle of whisky in desk drawer), according to Thin Kylie. Although Primark Donna told her she should keep the baby as it would be heir to the throne and she could sell her story to *Chat* for £500. Fat Kylie said she would get more from *Pick Me Up*, and she should know, her mum has sold several stories to them, including: 'I married a murderer' (not true) and 'I'm in love with a ghost' (possibly true, although probably under influence of Smirnoff Ice).

Thursday 5

Tuesday is not black. Nor does she look like Marissa Cooper. She is like a stretched out version of Kelly Osbourne, complete with excessive EMO eyeliner and daring attitude. Sad Ed tried to talk to her in French but Ms Hopwood-White caught him and made him conjugate 'manger' on the new electronic whiteboard. Which he got wrong and broke in the process, due to his oversized fingers. So we are back with chalk and felt pens until the new financial year, according to headmaster Mr Wilmott.

At lunch, Tuesday sat at the end of the Alternative Music Club table (i.e. anyone with a guitar or an Arctic Monkeys CD—main members Jack, Justin, and Stan Barret

from Year Eight who once saw Paul Weller in John Lewis) eating peanut butter and jam sandwiches (compulsory American food) with her iPod on. I tried to warn her this was totally against school rules, but I don't think she could hear me. She is clearly ubercool and wildly dangerous. I absolutely have to get to know her before the end of the week. Especially if she has access to Justin at lunch.

On the plus side, the Kylies have been unsuccessful in luring Tuesday into their fake-Burberry-clad clutches as well. They are clearly concerned that she may be harder than they are because they locked official school midget Dean 'the dwarf' Denley in a locker in last break just to reinforce their position.

Asked Mum if I could have peanut butter and jam on 'rye' for lunch tomorrow. She said I could jolly well have school dinners or take in a cheese and tomato bap. She is in a mood because it turns out she was wrong about Charles Kennedy. According to the six o'clock news, he is a total alcoholic. Granny Clegg rang in triumph—her motto is never trust anyone ginger or with a beard. Plus she voted UKIP.

Friday 6

Epiphany

Ooh. Epiphany would be a good name. Epiphany Riley. I may well ask Mum if I can change my name by deed poll,

like Edward Pratt from four doors down, who is now called Edward Jedi.

Tuesday was sent to see Mr Wilmot in registration due to three breaches of school uniform rules (nose piercing, visible Wonderbra, visible thong) and lack of remorse about said breaches (she held up three fingers to Ms Hopwood-White and told her to 'read between the lines'. Which is brilliant, even if she did steal it off Jack Black, and Ms Hopwood-White didn't get it.) Scarlet is going to organize an anti-uniform rule rally in sympathy. We are all going to wear visible Wonderbras and pants (even the boys) to school next Monday. She is going to get Jack and Justin to spread the word among Year Eleven. So Justin and I will be reunited in political endeavour, following Jack's (failed) election last year. Hurrah.

4 p.m.

Asked Mum if I could get a Wonderbra (size 32A) in Cambridge tomorrow (Saffron Walden does not stock Wonderbras). Mum said what was wrong with my M&S training bra? I said it was for a political feminist cause and everyone had one, even Marjory next door (I saw it on the washing line once, it must only come out for special occasions). Mum said she didn't care if the Queen had one, I was not going round looking like 'Britney Aguilera' and, besides, she didn't have time to go to Cambridge as she had to regrout the bath. Then James pointed out that the Queen does not need a Wonderbra as she has enormous

breasts anyway, so he was sent to his room for thinking about naked royalty.

Will have to find new source for Wonderbra. I do not want to let Tuesday or Justin down. Possible targets are: Oxfam, Treena, and Thin Kylie.

Saturday 7

Offered to take Baby Jesus for a walk into town in his pram, but was overruled by Mum on grounds that one of her Conversational French friends might think I was a 'gymslip mum'. I said that no one knows what a gymslip is, plus I am notoriously sexually inexperienced. But Mum just made her lips go super-thin so I took the dog instead. He is feeling left out now Grandpa is giving all his attention to Jesus. He is still in charge of bottle feeding, nappy changing, and reading all the manuals. Treena is in charge of wardrobe.

No Wonderbras in Oxfam. Mrs Simpson (aka hygienically-compromised lady tramp) must have bought them all. So went to lurk outside Goddard's to watch Justin do something revolting with a bit of a pig. At least that was the plan but the dog very much wanted to be inside and overpowered me, knocking a display of mince all over Justin in his blood frenzy (I blame Mum for banning beef and chicken-based dog food on the grounds that it might contain bird flu or mad cow disease, and the dog is mad enough as it is).