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opening extract from

Trainers V. Tiaras: Diary of a Chav

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TUESDAY 25TH DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS DAY

So much for ramming the word iPod into every sentence since last June.

Nan got me a diary for Christmas! A pink leather one with a proper lock and everything. Nan reckons I should 'write down all my secret hopes and wishes' then hide it in a place where no one will ever find it. She never said why.

I would have asked why but she chucked me it, sank almost half a pint of coffee liqueur, then passed out snoring. She was making a noise like when Mum accidently hoovers our dog.

Well, it's Christmas Day and I've nothing else to do, so here goes . . .

THE SECRET HOPES AND DREAMS OF SHIRAZ BAILEY WOOD AGED 15

- I hope my boobs grow bigger soon and get proper pointy nipples.
- I hope my mum, Mrs Diane Wood, notices the boob growth and stops muttering to my dad, Mr Brian Wood, about taking me to get 'my bits checked out by Dr Gupta'.

- I hope I get a boyfriend this year as there is a running joke amongst my sister, Cava-Sue Wood, and my brother, Murphy Wood, that I am a lezbitarian.

  (Oh and Murphy, if you're reading this, BOG OFF you smelly turd. These are my secret hopes. AND I KNOW IT WAS YOU WHO WROTE 'SHIRAZ BAILEY WOOD FANGITA-EATER' ON THE FRONT OF MY GEOGRAPHY COURSEWORK.)
- I hope I can learn this year how to be nicer to lads in general. I wish I could be a good listener like my best friend, Carrie Draper. I wish I could learn how to flutter my eyelashes and remember funny lines from *Dog the Bounty Hunter* that make boys laugh. I wish I could stop giving boys dead arms and wedgies when they do stuff like fart near me.
- I hope by January, Mr Bamblebury, our headmaster, has forgotten about my part in the Mayflower Academy Winter Festival which resulted in a request for police presence.
- I hope the local newspaper, the *Ilford Bugle*, forgets that our school, Mayflower Academy (formerly known as Marlowe Comprehensive) came bottom of EVERY exam results and behaviour table in Essex. I really hope they stop calling us 'Superchav Academy' soon 'cos now everyone in Essex calls us it and it's totally embarrassing.

  WE ARE NOT CHAVS, RIGHT?

  OK, we're not ALL chavs. Me and Carrie AREN'T

anyway. Uma Brunton-Fletcher down the road is a bit.

- I hope my big sister, Cava-Sue Wood, gets over her whiny-ass self and stops whingeing in the top bunk bed about getting a lemon dressing gown and a pink velour tracksuit off 'Santa' this morning. Does she think I'm happy with my Niko trainers off Walthamstow market? Nobody wears Niko trainers at Mayflower. NOT EVEN THE ASYLUM SEEKERS. I'll have to fake another mugging.
- I hope my best mate Carrie hasn't got an iPod off 'Santa'. What is the point in spending all December drawing arrows all over the Argos catalogue if NO ONE TAKES NO NOTICE?? It is so annoy— oh, gotta go now . . . Mum has made something totally minging with tinned ham in jelly and we're all being forced to eat some.

WEDNESDAY 26TH DECEMBER – BOXING DAY

Carrie got an iPod. A black one. A 80gb one that plays movies. It's got a message engraved on the silver bit on the back that says: 'For our special girl Carrie at Christmas from Mum and Dad XXX'.

AND she got a silver teardrop necklace from Tiffany. And a Calvin Klein bra. And a New Look voucher for £50. I'm not jealous or nothing. No way. I'm happy for her.

I told my mum. She was on the sofa feeding Penny,

our Staffordshire Bull Terrier, chocolate coins and watching a Jeremy Kyle Christmas special called *Ho! Ho! Ho! Get Out of My Home!*. (It didn't feel very Christmassy.)

Mum tutted. Mum said, 'Them Drapers have more money than sense.' Mum said, 'That girl will be ruined! Ruined! You mark my words! You reap what you sow! She'll turn on 'em, spoiling her like that all the time!'

Mum didn't explain how Carrie 'will turn on 'em', but I reckon she was hinting that Carrie might become a psycho axe-killer or something. Can't see it myself, Carrie is a right softie. Carrie once gave a homeless outside McDonald's in Ilford her Rolo McFlurry as she thought he was lying down'cos he was lacking sugar. Carrie didn't notice that he had wee all down his trousers and was carrying a three-litre bottle of White Wizard cider.

I reckon Mum just feels guilty as our presents were a bit crap. OK that's a lie. Mine and Cava-Sue's were a bit crap. Murphy loved his presents. Especially his Zombie Armageddon – Bloodbath II PS2 game. He's been in his room shouting 'Die! Die!' and blasting stuff for two days. Actually, there's another hope for my hope list:

- I really hope Murphy doesn't get into the army when he applies in three years' time, 'cos when I ask him why he wants to join up he says 'cos he wants to invade France and 'stuff it right up 'em'. (And we're friends with France, aren't we?)

11pm – Have just asked Cava-Sue what the point of keeping a diary is. She says it's just like having a blog on

your Bebo or Facebook but 'cos you're the only person reading it you actually write the truth, not a load of old crap about having 'da phattest life eva' like everyone does in blogs.

Cava-Sue always knows stuff like this. That's why she's at college.

THURSDAY 27TH DECEMBER

Carrie came round today with her iPod. I hid the Niko trainers under my bunk, but I showed her my pink hoodie and my new gold hoop earrings. Carrie went a bit red then and admitted that she got gold hoops and a hoodie too as a 'stocking filler'. 'But we'll be like twins though!' Carrie said. ''Cept your earrings are much better! Much chunkier!'

'Yeah – you'll be like twins!' gurgled Murphy. ''Cept Shiraz's got bigger norks on her back and looks like a lezboid!'

I hate Murphy. I always remember the day Mum brought him home from the hospital, making a big racket and smelling of poo. He's never changed.

I told Carrie about the secret diary. Carrie said I should definitely write one as I am good at English (when I try) and I will need it when I'm older to give to the person who is writing my autobiography. Carrie reckons I'm bound to be famous when I'm old 'cos I am totally completely unique and people are always laughing at me.

I told Cava-Sue about my future autobiography and she laughed her head off, so maybe Carrie is right.

Carrie reckoned she's gonna take the Calvin Klein bra back to Debenhams in Ilford this week as her mum got her a 34C and that's way too small. Carrie said her boobs are too big for it and keep spilling out of the sides. Carrie said she needs to get her bra fitted by one of those women who take you in the cubicles and feel them for you. Murphy groaned when she said this, then disappeared to the toilet. I think he must have stomach ache.

Everyone in our house has got the bogtrots at the moment. I think this is 'cos Mum defrosted the Christmas dinner chipolata sausages with Cava-Sue's GHD straighteners.

FRIDAY 28TH DECEMBER

So I get up at eleven and Mum, Dad and Cava-Sue are all in the living-room in their dressing gowns watching *The World's Wackiest Lawnmower Stunts* on Sky One, eating Quality Street. They're all doing my head in a bit, specially Cava-Sue 'cos she's picking out all the green triangles AS USUAL and leaving the toffee pennies. GREEDY BINT. So I ring Carrie and see if she wants to go out.

So Carrie comes round at about one and we walk to the park sharing Carrie's iPod and singing our heads off to *R&B Diva Sensations*, which I think sounds dead class, but then this old dear comes out her house on Dawson

Drive and says she'll get me an ASBO if I carry on screaming – which I'm not – I'm doing the high bits on 'Feel So High' by Bodyjunkies. So I try and tell her that and tell her she wants to get herself a hearing aid but Carrie tells me to shut up and drags me on.

So we get to the park and by this time we are FREEZING and the caff is shut and there's no one there and even the ducks are on Christmas holiday. So me and Carrie hang about the bandstand for a while, then we went on the kiddies' rocking horses, trying to make them rock really fast while listening to well loud Beyoncé and singing, which is a good laugh. Then the park-keeper turns up in his van and shouts at us that we have to leave the play area 'cos he's enforcing a 'no hoodie' rule and he'll get the police if we don't disperse. So Carrie, who is like the least frightening hoodie ever, bursts into tears and then the park-keeper, who's got a nose like a squashed strawberry, looks well guilty and says, look love he don't make the rules and we can stay in the park if we tuck our hoods in. WHY ARE ALL ADULTS MENTALISTS?

So we walk back home down Dawson Drive and Carrie gets her eye on two lads fixing a Vauxhall Nova on Dawson Drive and makes us watch them for a while, but my bum is getting piles sitting on the cold street sign so I say I'm going back indoors.

So I get back about four and Cava-Sue and Mum are having a total scrap 'cos Cava-Sue wants to see this film called *The Crucible* on BBC2 which she reckons is dead

important for her Theatre Studies A-Level and she's shouting that she had it marked on *What's On TV* since over two weeks ago which means she's gotta be able to watch it 'cos THEM'S THE RULES. Then Mum shouts even louder that she's been waiting all day for *Stars on Skates at Christmas* with Dale Winton on ITV2 and it's her house and her telly and HER RULES, END OF. Then Cava-Sue starts to get really narky and says that if she can't watch her film she will hate everyone in the house for ever and DEFINITELY MOVE OUT THIS YEAR AND NOT EVEN LEAVE AN ADDRESS. Then Cava-Sue storms upstairs in a right huff and Mum spreads her legs out on the couch and opens some Pringles for her and the dog, which our dog could totally do without as the vet says she is 'morbidly obese'.

9pm – I had no idea that Cilla from *Coronation Street* was so good on ice-skates. She jumped the big ramp for bonus points and everything.

SUNDAY 30TH DECEMBER

I am seriously, seriously JACKED OFF today. Mum has totally said no about me going with Carrie to Uma Brunton-Fletcher's New Year's Eve house party. She says no way, over her dead body. It's only over the road at number bloody sixty-seven. I can see it from Murphy's bedroom window if I shove me head out far enough.

I am gutted. I tried telling Mum that everyone in Year

Eleven is going and everyone will think I'm a bloody loser if I don't too. Mum just laughed and told me to go and fetch her violin. Mum doesn't play the violin – this is one of her jokes.

I told her that it's only a small party anyway and there won't be any booze and it will be boring and I'll come back at five past midnight. She just ignored me and turned up *Most Haunted* and pretended to be totally interested in an episode about a haunted pub that she's already seen twice and totally knows already that they don't find a ghost.

'Well what do you think, Dad?' I shouted to my dad, who was as usual NO USE WHATSOEVER and just pretended to do a David Hasselhoff Spot The Difference Puzzle in *Pick Me Up* magazine instead.

Then Mum spoke for him and said, 'Your father thinks the same as me.'

So I said, 'Oh pleeeeeeeeease! Pleeeeease let me go!' about ten times in a proper annoying voice.

Then Mum shouted, 'FORGET IT!!! I'm not having my daughter hanging about at a house party with them Brunton-Fletcher kids and god knows who else taking god knows what at fifteen bloody years old! You're 'aving a laugh.'

Then she stormed into the kitchen and came back with my plate of potato UFOs and fishfingers, which she sort of threw at me, and the plate was quite hot too as she'd been warming it under the grill. I totally wish I had

a social services caseworker like Uma as I'd show them this diary and get Mum banged up for cruelty. (Ideally before tomorrow night.)

I blame Chantalle Strong in 10C for all of this. Last summer when Uma had a party (or a bashment as Uma was calling it), Chantalle went home at 1am (two hours past curfew), fell through the door with her eyes spinning as big as dinner plates, then grabbed her mother and started cuddling her.

'Cuddling me?!' Chantalle's mum told my mum. 'I thought, right, she's GOTTA be on drugs.'

My mother knows all about Chantalle Strong taking an E. My mother even knows all about where Chantalle got the E from. My mother reckons she knows everything that has ever happened to everyone in Goodmayes EVER. That's why it takes her two hours to pop to the bleeding shop for an *Ilford Bugle* and six eggs. She is on bloody surveillance.

7pm – THIS IS THE ANNOYING THING. What has Chantalle Strong got to do with me? I have never ever taken an E and NEVER EVER WILL. As far as I can see E just makes you dance about like a knob, pulling a weird face with drool in the corners of your mouth and the whites of your eyes showing. Do I need to look more like a minger at parties? I already spend every night out holding Carrie's hoodie while she decides which lad to snog. This is so unfair.

7.05pm – AND ANYWAY, knowing my luck, I'd be the

one who would take a pill and end up in an oxygen bubble getting sung to by Westlife (and I totally hate Westlife).

8pm – Carrie just called. She's not allowed to go to Uma's party either. Carrie says she's going to go with her mum and dad to the New Year's party at Luciano's Italian Restaurant in Romford. I told my mum and she just tutted and said, 'LUCIANO'S? Very nice! Well *bonne chance* to them!'

I could tell from her face that she didn't really mean it. Her mouth was all puckered like Penny's bumhole.

MONDAY 31ST DECEMBER – NEW YEAR'S EVE

10am – I am STILL not allowed to go to Uma's party. I have tried everything. I have tried ignoring everybody, shouting at them, mumbling to myself like I'm having a mental episode, crying dead loud, and my last attempt was telling Murphy to tell Mum that I am upstairs starving myself to death. (I'm not really. I've got a raspberry Poptart and a box of spready cheese triangles under my pillow, not that anyone cares.)

4.40pm – Mum is trying to suck up to me. Mum says we can 'have our own party' – me, her and Dad. She has bought Dad some lagers and herself a bottle of that Peach Lambrella wine you always see advertised on the sides of buses. *Peach Lambrella: the ultimate party perker-upper!* Mum says she saw it on offer and just liked the name.

4.45pm – I hope to god Mum's past getting knocked

up again or the poor brat would get called Lambrella Wood, even if it was a boy.

5pm – Cava-Sue is going to watch some bands play at Trafalgar Square with Lewis from college. Lewis is a boy who is her friend, but not her boyfriend, so she says, which doesn't explain why she's been covering her spots with makeup and sticking panty-liners to her boobs to fill out her bra since noon. Mum keeps moaning that Cava-Sue's got no business going off to central London, which is eleven miles away, and Cava-Sue shouldn't come running to her when she gets trampled by police horses, blown up by terrorists, then raped on the night-tube home.

Luckily for her, Cava-Sue is eighteen and NOT IN PRISON LIKE ME, so she is still going.

5.30pm – Cava-Sue has just come downstairs dressed for her night out wearing BLACK EYELINER. Mum just nearly choked on a chocolate-covered brazil nut. 'Have you been learning to be a clown at that Theatre Studies A-Level, Cava-Sue!?' Mum laughed, ''cos you're certainly dressed like somefin' from Billy Smart's Circus!'

Mum then moaned about the lovely pink tracksuit she got Cava-Sue for Christmas that's still got the TK Maxx tags on. 'What you gotta wear those tatty jeans for!' she moaned. 'All that cash me and yer father spend on keeping you nice and you look like a bag of crap.'

Cava-Sue has just left, slamming the door so loud the Christmas-tree fairy fell off and startled the dog.

6pm – MURPHY HAS GONE OUT NOW!!! He's gone to Tariq's for a firework display. Tariq's uncles have got loads of fireworks left over from Eid so they're going to let them all off at midnight and have food. I can't believe it. Murphy is thirteen years old. He eats his own snot. He spends all day watching *Police, Camera, Action* reruns and has to be forced by my mother to change his underpants once a fortnight. AND HE'S GOING TO A NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY AND I'M NOT. I hate him.

6.30pm – The first people have arrived at Uma's. Luther Dinsdale from my class has just been dropped off by his dad. And Kezia Marshall too. I am spiralling into some sort of depression that not even my *Hip Hop Honeyz* CD can lift.

8pm – Mum must feel guilty. She has given me a glass of Peach Lambrella. It tastes of fizzy liquid farts but it blocks out the pain.

8.05pm – Actually this Lambrella stuff is not that bad. If you sip it quickly, it just tastes a bit like Summer Fruits washing-up liquid. There are fifteen people in Uma's garden, smoking, shouting and LAUGHING. I am really annoyed now. Don't worry, Mother – I'll just watch the highlights tomorrow on everyone's Bebo flashboxes, YOU OLD WITCH.

9pm – Chantalle has just texted to say Uma's utility room is full of Year Eleven boys from Stratford Hill Academy drinking bottles of lager and where are me and Carrie?

9.10pm – WHERE AM I?? I am stuck in the living-room with my mum and dad who are a bit pissed and dancing to their *Best of Level 42* album! My mother dances like a football mascot. Her arms and feet go at different speeds.

9.47pm – Oh god. My mum and dad are slow-dancing to a song called 'Careless Whisper'. I have got dead bad hiccups and am going to sneak another glass of Lambrella to my room and phone some people.

10.30pm – Why is Carrie not picking up her phone!!!!? Why!? Why has Chantalle or no one even rang again from Uma's to see where I am? NO ONE CARES ABOUT ME. NO ONE. I WISH I WAS DEAD. I feel a bit sick now. Mum has just been into my bedroom and STOLEN my glass of Peach Lambrella back off me and says I should lie down and drink water as my face looks green.

10.47pm – Dear Diary, I amm stilll notapppy aboout not beeein aloowed to Uma's party 'cos. 'COS . . . I am not a kid. And now I have been put to bed like a bloody kid!!!! WHY DOES EVRYONE TREET ME LIKE A BLOOODY KID AND I AM NOT ONE!! What is wrong with me and why are the bunk beds feeling like they are moving. Oh god I feel totally crap. Oh. Oh god. Oh no