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opening extract from

Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang

written by

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The Diary

Here we are on the first day of the shoot of the new Nanny McPhee film. I am playing Nanny McPhee, but not today because she does not appear in this scene. Today I am just the writer. I am here in case anyone needs to change what they say or needs something extra to say or needs to CUT DOWN what they say.

We are on the set of Deep Valley Farm and a most magnificent set it is. Months ago, Susanna White (the Director – see Glossary) and Simon Elliott (the Designer – see Glossary) saw this location and decided it was perfect for the story. So Simon drew lots of pictures and hundreds of people worked like stink and now I am sitting in front of a beautiful old farmhouse with a dovecote and outhouses, an original ancient barn and a fascinating garden, which ALL looks as if it has been here for hundreds of years but in fact was only finished last Thursday.

I'm wearing mud-covered snow boots, leggings (ill-advised) and an enormous puffy jacket. I am sitting next to my friend Lindsay Doran, who is producing the film (see Glossary). To our right is the Scratch-O-Matic (see page 17); to my left, the Sound Department (see Glossary). It's raining and we have had to stop filming.

'Why is it raining?' I whine to Lindsay.

'Because we are shooting this picture in England during the summer,' says Lindsay. 'Of course it's raining.'

Lindsay has produced lots of films in England during the summer and, even though she is American, she understands our weather. Everyone is squelching about, looking depressed, especially Mike Eley, the DP (see– you get the idea).



The only thing I can usefully do is to start writing the first chapter of The Story. There's nothing else to do. Soon I shall also be IN THE WAY. That's how it always works on a film set. You're nearly always in the way. But I shall perch here for a minute and begin. The story is called *Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang.* You'll see why later . . .

Families are weird. You'd think that people who live and eat and sleep in the same place would always have a lot in common. But sometimes they don't have anything in common AT ALL. You can have a brother who really likes ballet and a sister who thinks it's girlie. You could probably have Darth Vader and Mickey Mouse in the same family; they're that weird.

The story I am about to tell you concerns one such family . . .

The Story

The grandparents in our story were so posh that they weren't even called Mr and Mrs. They were called Lord and Lady Carrington. Everyone assumed they were happily married because