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Opening extract from

Return of the (Un)Teenager

Written by

Pete Johnson

Published by

Barrington Stoke Ltd

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Return of the (Un)teenager

by

Pete Johnson

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From the Author

Writing this book scared me – here's why

I first wrote about Spencer in another book called *Diary of an (Un) Teenager*. Spencer is thirteen but doesn't want to be a teenager. So he decides he'll stay an (Un)teenager instead.

After I'd finished the book I worried what you'd think of Spencer. Would you think he was annoying – or just weird? No, you loved him. Spencer got fan mail. And at some schools I visited, pupils even dressed up as him.

And many of you asked me to write another book about Spencer. That's when I got scared. Everyone liked the first one so much, I didn't want the next one to be a let down.

So I spent ages just thinking about Spencer. I thought about Spencer at a school disco. I began to smile. And what would Spencer think of Facebook? Now I was laughing and couldn't wait to start writing this book.

And I really hope it makes you laugh too, whether you're meeting Spencer for the first or second time.

This book is for all the people who asked me to write another book about Spencer. Well, here it is.

Visit Pete's website:
www.petejohnsonauthor.com

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Find out how it all started in

Diary of an (Un)Teenager

by

Pete Johnson

Chapter 1
The Real Me

Friday July 24th

4.20 p.m.

I shouldn't have done it.

But what else could I do?

"Soon be over," I said. And then I did it. I put on – a hoodie.

I looked at myself and I felt sick.

"Hey, you look cool, Spencer," said Zac, my best mate.

"No I don't," I muttered. "I look gross."

I had a baggy top on too. And skinny jeans with rips all over them. Why do teenagers buy jeans that are full of holes? They're mad, that's why.

"Well, move around a bit, then," said Zac. I'd put on my new hoodie in Zac's bedroom.

I took a few slow steps.

Zac laughed. "You're walking about as if you've got a suit of armour on. Just chill out and copy me." He had a hoodie on too. Then he started to strut about with his hands nearly touching the floor. He looked just like a gorilla.

"This is how you've got to walk tonight," said Zac, "when you meet any hot babes."

"I'm not interested in hot babes," I said.

"That's good, because they're not interested in you either," Zac snapped.

"You know I'm doing all this for just one girl," I said.

"I know," yawned Zac. "You love Emily."

I was thirteen last week and Emily sent me a birthday card with a heart on it. That was my first big surprise. The second one was that we then had two kisses which I enjoyed greatly. So did Emily. I'm very happy about that. But Zac said tons of other boys fancy her. So I can't hang about. And I'm going to ask Emily out at the school disco tonight.

Zac also said I can't ask Emily out in my normal clothes. He kept on about how she deserves better. So that's why I'm going to all this trouble. To please the only girl I've ever kissed – or ever wanted to kiss.

But it doesn't feel good. I feel ashamed.

That's because on my thirteenth birthday I made a promise I'd never change into that terrible of things – a teenager. I'm never going to bother about designer clothes and girls, and all the other terrible things that go with being a teenager.

But I've already let myself down very badly.

So once Emily says she'll go out with me, I shall be back in my normal clothes forever. I shall also tell her that I can't see her every

night, because I've got lots of hobbies. And they take up a great deal of my time. But I will be only too happy to see her most Saturdays.

I shall tell Emily all this at the school disco tonight.

5.10 p.m.

I've spent all my birthday money and part of my savings on terrible clothes. So I expected my parents to go mad. But they don't. They looked shocked for a moment and then smiled.

"You're seeing Emily again tonight," said Mum, "aren't you?"

"Er, I might be," I said. I hoped I wasn't blushing. "How did you know?" I added.

Mum and Dad smiled as if they knew all my secrets.

"She's a nice girl," said Mum.

Dad agreed and then said, "When I was growing up, the Mods came back in fashion." He shook his head. "So I blew all my money on Mod clothes. But I had to have them."

And that's all they said about my clothes.

How dare they not tell me off? They're not acting like proper parents at all.

Later I heard Mum say to Dad, "Spencer's growing up fast."

That made me very cross. I'm wearing these awful clothes for one night only, and then I'm going right back to my old ways.

5.40 p.m.

I look around my bedroom at my computer games, my super-hero comics and all my model aeroplanes. It's such a great place to be. Somewhere you don't ever want to leave.

And I've never been to a school disco before. So I'm feeling a bit nervous about that. But I've got to look on it as an exciting adventure, like going into the jungle.

6.00 p.m.

I walked downstairs in my disgusting new clothes and then shot upstairs again. I'd just remembered something. Emily said she liked me because I'm "different from the others". Those were the very words she said. I can't go

to a party looking exactly like everyone else. I don't think she'll like me any more.

How can I have been so stupid?

6.10 p.m.

I changed back very quickly. Now I'm wearing clothes that I like – a very smart, orange jumper which my nan kindly knitted for me. It's also got a matching knitted tie. I've put on my black school trousers – they go really well with the orange jumper.

It's so great to feel like me again.

6.30 p.m.

My parents looked very surprised to see me in my normal clothes again.

"You've changed, Spencer," said Mum.

"The other clothes didn't feel right," I said. "These do."

Mum and Dad didn't answer at first. They were so shocked, they couldn't breathe, I think.

Then Zac rang on the door-bell. "All right, Spencer?" he began, "ready to meet lots of fit girls ..." Then he gave a sort of yell. "But what have you done to yourself?"

"I'm going to the party as the real me, and I'm not going to pretend to be someone else. This is my favourite jumper, you know." Then I added, "Everything comes back in fashion in the end."

"You'll have a long wait before that comes back in fashion," Zac said.

"You wore clothes just like this once," I said. And it's true, Zac did. "But then you got brain-washed," I went on.

"Spencer, go and put on the clothes we bought today," shouted Zac. "I don't mind waiting for you." He was almost begging me.

I think Dad must have been listening because he came out into the hall. "If you want to get changed, Spencer," Dad said, "I'll drive you and Zac to the school disco."

I gave him a hard look. "So, Dad, you'd rather I went to the disco in a hoodie, than in a very smart jumper and tie. Just what kind of

a father are you? We don't want a lift, thank you."

Dad hung his head and didn't say another word. He just went back into the front room and sat down again.

7.20 p.m.

Just before we got to the school Zac stopped. "You go on ahead, Spencer," he muttered. "I've got to ... do something."

"Do what?" I asked.

"Oh, just one or two things," he said, not looking at me.

"You're too embarrassed to walk in with me, aren't you?" I said crossly.

"No," he said at once and then added, "It's just there's this girl I like and if she sees me with you ..."

"She might think we're mates," I said. "And you don't want her to think that, do you? You don't want to talk to me at the disco either."

Zac shook his head slowly.

"But," he said, "I'll talk to you on the phone tomorrow, for as long as you like. And good luck," he called after me. "You'll need it."

7.25 p.m.

Once men fought dragons to win a girl's heart.

I'm going to a school disco.

I'd so much rather face a dragon.