Helping your children choose books they will love

I reading

Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website created for parents and children to make choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from

OMG! Is This Actually My Life? Hattie Moore's Unbelievable Year!

Written by

Rae Earl

Published by

Walker Books Ltd

All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.

Lovereading4kids.co.uk

Hattie Moore's OFFICIAL SECRETS

DO NOT READ THIS

SERIOUSLY

IT IS NOT A BLOG

HANDS OFF

I WILL KNOW IF YOU DO

YES, NATHAN – IT IS AN OLD-FASHIONED DIARY THING BUT GRAN BOUGHT IT FOR ME FOR CHRISTMAS AND I WANT PEOPLE TO REALIZE JUST HOW CRAPTACULAR YOU ACTUALLY ARE.

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or, if real, used fictitiously. All statements, activities, stunts, descriptions, information and material of any other kind contained herein are included for entertainment purposes only and should not be relied on for accuracy or replicated as they may result in injury.

First published in Great Britain 2013 by Walker Books Ltd
87 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HJ

2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

Text © 2013 Rae Earl
Cover artwork © 2013 Sarah J Coleman
Cover photographs courtesy of Shutterstock.com: raw bacon by Richard Griffin, puppy beagle by Eric Isselee, old mobile phone by thumb, elderly people sign by Aquir, fresh mackerel fish by Evlakhov Valeriy, Canada goose by Miao Liao, blueberry muffin by Paul Turner, ripe melon by Viktar Malyshchyts, coffee cup by Valentyn Volkov, classic donut by Aaron Amat
Interior illustrations © 2013 Walker Books Ltd

The right of Rae Earl to be identified as author of this work has been asserted by her in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

This book has been typeset in GFY Brutus
Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, St Ives plc

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, transmitted or stored in an information retrieval system in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, taping and recording, without prior written permission from the publisher.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data:
a catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-4063-4001-3

www.walker.co.uk

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

SUNDAY 28TH DECEMBER



9.23 a.m.

OMG – I'M IN PRISON!

It's actually my bedroom but it might as well be a cell. I've seen what prison is like in *EastEnders* and except for the fact I'm in heart-print Primark pyjamas there's no difference.

10.12 a.m.

Mum just came up – she is the hardest screw ever (that's what you call prison officers when you're inside). Apparently I've "disgraced myself" and I'm growing up "way too fast".

OMG – THIS is from the woman who had her first cigarette at 11. Gran remembers because she made Mum eat it. And because it was one of hers and the last one in the packet. She's still mental about it now!

10.32 a.m.

Gran just rang – she says she feels a bit guilty and it's basically her fault. I agreed. She is going to talk to Mum.

10.41 a.m.

Mum says I cannot blame Gran as I am responsible for my own actions and Gran is a delicate old woman with crippling arthritis. A delicate old woman with crippling arthritis who does Zumba on a Tuesday at the community centre and who asks for a "Britain's Hottest Firemen" calendar for Christmas EVERY year!

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

11.16 a.m.

Just spoke to Dimple. She was zero help. She agrees with Mum. Plus she said if she'd done what I did her dad would have called the police.

11.31 a.m.

Just spoke to Weirdo Jen. She said that she would burn some lavender as it encourages forgiveness in "her wider spiritual world" (?).

She thinks I should also eat 8 mistletoe berries as they are good for detoxifying mind and body.

I might as well eat mistletoe. I'm not going to get any action under it this Christmas. AGAIN.

11.39 a.m.

Weirdo Jen rang back in a panic. She said I should cancel the mistletoe berries as they are actually deadly poisonous. She meant blueberries.

Dying might be preferable now though.

11.54 a.m.

Rob has been up. He forgives me but he says he needs a new miniature china pagoda and he's had to flush 2 of his angelfish as they were on their last legs.

12.12 p.m.

Mum has been up again. She doesn't forgive me. When I said, "Why?" she said, "BECAUSE, HATTIE, BEING SICK IN YOUR STEPFATHER'S FISH TANK IS UNFORGIVABLE!"

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

So I was sick in a fish tank?! This is not the worst thing that has ever happened. And it IS Gran's fault. She was the one who said, "Let Hattie have a glass of sherry – it's Christmas!" Mum said, "No, don't be silly – she's under-age." But I helped myself to one. Then I felt really sick. And then I thought I am actually going to be sick. And the nearest thing to be sick in was Rob's fish tank.

I don't even think it was the sherry that caused it. It was more likely the half a massive tin of Quality Street that I'd eaten before that.

12.42 p.m.

It was the sherry.

2.14 p.m.

Rob has also now had to flush a Malawi Firefish Peacock and 5 guppies – he says it's probably the shock.

I am an alcoholic mass-murderer.

2.54 p.m.

Mum just came in and said if she hears that my Facebook status has been changed to

> **Hattie Moore** has been sick in a fish tank

she will ground me for all next year.

3.01 p.m.

Mum has been back in to say, "That goes for chirping too." I said, "Mum, it's TWEETING and I am not going to tell anyone because it's TOTALLY EMBARRASSING.

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

Perhaps it was cool to drink sherry and throw up in a fish tank when you were 13 but not now!" Mum went mental and said she would have never been "like this in her day because people respected aquatic life".

3.26 p.m.

Just rang Gran. She said when Mum was 7 she went through 2 pet goldfish in a month. ANOTHER MUM LIE TOTALLY EXPOSED.

5.32 p.m.

The verdict is in. I'm grounded for a week BUT I still have to take Gran sales shopping on Tuesday. Gran the TOTAL mental who ALWAYS finds the most disgusting item of clothing in ANY shop she visits. No Gran – you cannot wear neon green – you are 67.

That really is the bum cherry on my crapcake of a day.

MONDAY 29TH DECEMBER

8.12 a.m.

Why do these diaries start a week before they are meant to anyway? It's like they want you to remember just how bad the year before was!

9.37 a.m.

My brother is threatening to spread it about the fish tank. He says if I iron his shirt on a Saturday for the next 3 weeks he will keep it quiet. I can't risk Miss Gorgeous Knickers at school knowing about this. She had a *Sex and the City* cocktail party 2 months ago and is

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

well known for being able to drink loads and still look like Carrie Bradshaw.

10.12 a.m.

Carrie Bradshaw when she was 13. Not like she is now – someone's mum!

4.55 p.m.

I've decided because of yesterday I need to examine my life fully. Why am I turning to sherry and Quality Street? Especially the purple ones with the hazelnut. Why do I keep messing up?

6.01 p.m.

Asked Gran about why I keep messing up. Gran says I have to stop "bloody navel-gazing" and help her plan which bus we are getting tomorrow. She doesn't want to walk too far because she's wearing her FOUL white stilettos. It's so she can dig her high pointy heel into the feet of anyone who tries to buy anything she wants. She nearly put someone in hospital over a bag once!

Tuesday 30th December

7.15 p.m.

That is the last time I EVER go shopping with my gran.

In the Debenhams changing room she told one woman trying on a Lipsy dress that she looked like a sausage about to burst. THEN she tried on a pair of FOUL skinny jeans (4 sizes too small!) and BROKE THE ZIP!!! Instead of saying sorry she told the assistant "when things say they

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

should stretch THEY SHOULD STRETCH" and that she "wasn't going to pay for them as they already inflated the prices to allow for retail wastage".

Yet she thinks all shoplifters and burglars should be sent to Siberia with just a pack of sandwiches and a winter coat.

8.23 p.m.

I have nicked my mum's Dr Phil book. He'll know exactly what's wrong with me. Bet even he can't help Gran though.

9.17 p.m.

Flicked through the book. Basically I need to fully examine everyone in my life and ask myself, WHERE AM I NOW? Only through doing this can I truly understand my "life strategy" – because if it's happening NOW we are going to deal with it NOW.

HATTIE NOW:

* 14 in 6 weeks. OFFICIAL YAY!
* I am a 32 AA. BOO. But I am POSITIVE-THINKING my breasts bigger.
* My mum is generally annoying and takes bad-mood tablets daily. I put this mainly down to the fact that she stares at bread for most of the day, has to make builders' fry-ups, never wears make-up and always smells of bacon. The woman needs a GLAM-INJECTION.

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

* My stepdad, Rob, is a geek from the planet Doofus who likes car boot sales and calls me "Bones" – but he's actually all right.
* My brother is the devil and must die.
* My gran is a mental but I LOVE her. And at 67 she still has her hair done 3 times a week.
* No boyfriend as have no breasts.
* BUT Dimple and Weirdo Jen, my best friends, are TOTES excellent.
* And Goose next door who I have known FOR EVER is a MASSIVE dork but sweet really. Plus he's pretty much lent me his iPod for good.
* School is DULLSTER VON DULLSTER.

Likes – my friends, getting gorgeoused-up, dancing my brain out of my head, LOUD music, BIG lattes.

Dislikes – eggs.

LIFE STRATEGY:

I need to read the rest of Dr Phil's book before I can truly say what it is.

Wednesday 31st December

11.35 a.m.

Weirdo Jen just invited me to her mum and dad's New Year party. No point even asking Mum if I can go. I'm still getting the semi-silent treatment. Mainly because the fish tank snails have now also died.

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

2.43 p.m.

Dr Phil's book is big on families and people being GOOD PARENTS (my mum definitely has NOT read this book!). The fact is, I don't even know who my actual real DAD is! No one will talk about him and all I ever get from Mum is: "Rob has been around since you were 6 months, Hattie. That's what a REAL father does." And then I have to stop asking because Mum starts welling up. BUT I NEED to know. What about family diseases and conditions that can be passed down, Mum?! And how big were my other grandma's breasts? And will mine ever get that big? VITAL QUESTIONS!

8.05 p.m.

Just asked Mum what my real dad's surname is. She said, "Hattie, honestly... I don't think it's the right time to be discussing this." When I said, "WHEN will be the RIGHT time?" she YELLED, "Well NEVER during *Casualty* for a start!"

9.27 p.m.

Casualty has finished and it's STILL not the right time apparently. I'm not stupid. I know why. It's because Mum thinks if she gives me his surname I can find him in a SECOND on Google. She'd never say that though. But it's true.

Bet it's a better name than "Moore". I have had to endure so many craptacular Moore jokes through my mum giving me HER surname. Jack Pearson and his posse of pukesters

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

once sang Britney Spears' "Gimme More" at me for an entire lunch break. Only they sang "Gimme More – NOT!"

10.32 p.m.

It's 10.32 p.m. and everyone in this house is in bed. It's NEW YEAR'S EVE. This family is a miracle as it is both dysfunctional AND DULL.

11.12 p.m.

Gran just rang. She's at an over-60s party. She's on vodka jellies because they are "easy to handle at her age". I asked her who was bringing her home. She said she hadn't decided yet but "not to worry as she's put her name and address on her dentures if she gets lost".

All I want is someone who isn't mental who gets ME!

Dad, come and save me!!!



THURSDAY 1ST JANUARY

11.01 a.m.

NEW YEAR. NEW LIFE. NEW HATTIE MOORE.

HATTIE MOORE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:

THIS YEAR I AM GOING TO FIND MY REAL DAD. I DESERVE THE TRUTH. I NEED TO FIND HIM. I know he will get me like no one else on Earth. I can just feel it. I WILL FIND HIM.

Also THIS YEAR...

1. I will become a TOTAL HOTNESS GODDESS.

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.

2. I will.
3. Actually I think that's it really.
4. Except for: I will generally be lovely to everyone. Unless they are a known force of evil.
5. Known forces of evil – my brother, Miss Gorgeous Knickers at school, the chav-mongous dog 3 doors away.
6. I would probably even be nice to the dog as I'm sure he only barks because he's forced to wear a fake Burberry collar.

Might start by going to Pets 'R' Us and buying the dog a decent collar.

I'll get Goose to put it on him though.

2.56 p.m.

Just spoke to Goose next door. He thinks finding my real dad will be mahoosively hard. He also thinks I should probably wait as I need help from my family and currently none of them are talking to me as I am the "aquarium assassin".





He's right.



And as for putting anything on the dog 3 doors away, he said it would be a TOTAL suicide mission and no way is he doing it.

He's right about that too.

Copyright © 2012 Individual author and/or Walker Books Ltd. All rights reserved.