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Opening extract from

Omg! I'm in Love with a Geek!

Written by

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FULL
My details

YES! I'm skinny with no breasts but I'm mostly EMBRACING it.

Name: Hattie Moore. Nickname – "Bones". (That's what my family call me.)

Address: Derby. That's it! I don't want to be stalked. Who actually writes their address anywhere?! Weirdo Jen told me 1 in 7 people are capable of murder. I don't want them to know where I live. (Weirdo Jen also thinks trees can attack you with their branches if you abuse their trunks with graffiti. She might be slightly paranoid. I'm not risking it though.)

Phone: See above!

Email: OMG! Like I would?! No, thanks, spammers. I do not want half-price pharmaceuticals. I had to explain what Viagra was to Dimple. It was OFFICIAL near death from embarrassment.

Date of birth: Who wrote this diary information bit?! Gran?! Obviously someone who has never heard of Internet security.

In fact definitely Gran – all her passwords are "password" or "Gran". She thinks no one will ever think of that.

Best day of the year: 14/2 ~~Birthday!~~ NO, Valentine's.

Best day of the week: Thursday. No Matfield – the EVIL teacher who has killed art and craft for a generation of innocent children and teenagers.

Best month: August. No Matfield! Weirdo Jen says she has slaughtered creativity. Actually Weirdo Jen's MUM said that. If adults know that we are getting tortured with glue and tissue paper why don't they do anything about it?!

Best time of the day: 4p.m. No Matfield and it's usually before Mum gets home. DOUBLE FREEDOM from the forces of darkness.

Best movie: NOT *Spiderman*. Goose has seen it 27 times but a man who spins webs from his wrists and probably eats fly-and-small-insect sandwiches in private just makes me want to VOM. Why do men never grow out of YUCK stuff? I was OVER worms at 4 – if things in the garden can't even be bothered to grow a face I'm not interested.

Best band: Nothing with fit boys singing stupid songs about how much they love me when actually they only snog models, TV presenters who accidentally but totally on purpose flash their nice pants or Miss "I'm so pretty my face may explode" Gorgeous Knickers (MGK).

Best author: Not Jane Austen. She can wind her neck RIGHT IN. Sorry, Dimple, I know you think she's great but Mr Darcy does not exist, has never existed and grumpy men are not sexy. They just get fat and old and want their dinner at the same time every day. I remember my grandad. He hated Christmas and didn't wear sexy britches, just green cord trousers with stains on them for weeks. AND they always smell weird. If Mr Darcy *does*

exist I bet he talks to the vegetables in his allotment and smells of eggs.

Best book: *Vogue*. I'm not being shallow. I LOVE FASH. Especially when it goes totally mental and people wear lobsters on their heads. Gran says it's "ridiculous" and "things with claws should be in a cream sauce not on a hat". Gran is not fashion forward. She is fashion hopelessly-lost-in-a-foul-dress-desert-and-the-search-party-has-been-called-off.

Best website: YouTube. I'm a bit off Facebook. MGK just uses it to spread stuff about me on Messenger, like "Hattie Moore only has a shower when her mum forces her to" (I am totally clean and use Impulse), "Hattie Moore couldn't tie shoelaces till she was 11" (so what if it's true?) and "Hattie Moore's gran has a Scottish lorry driver toyboy who brings her boxes of broken biscuits from his truck". This might be true – Gran always has manky custard creams in her house and the packets look GROSS. It could just be her cupboards though. She daren't clear them out as Princess the dog tries to eat EVERYTHING. And I mean the actual tins too. She punctured a can of spaghetti once, ate half of it and played with the rest of it on Gran's pure-wool rug. Even after a bottle of Vanish you can still see the stringy orange stains.

Best place: My room. As long as my mum and brother aren't in it. My mum stands there asking me why I've got a funny look in my eye – she watches too many crime programmes – and my brother actually tries to give me a funny look

in my eye by poking something IN my eye. Like the time he put vinegar in a water pistol and went STRAIGHT for my face. No, Mum – not "just high spirits" and "considerable aiming talent" – TOTALLY MENTAL.

Best person: My gran. ← But don't tell her!

Worst person: Miss Gorgeous Knickers and Matfield. They get the gold medal for total cow faces. ← Especially now we are totally related.

Gran says I HAVE to fill the next bit in "just in case". She also says wear nice underwear "just in case" you get run over. I'm pretty sure that if I ever get hit by a bus I'm not going to be too worried about my diary OR my pants but ANYWAY...

In case of accident or emergency call:

MUM – She IS my mum BUT she might be too busy making fry-ups for builders in her cafe or moaning about the state of the house to actually listen to you telling her I'm seriously injured. Though, after last year, I now realize she's actually amazeballs lovely inside and didn't tell me about my real dad because he is medically useless.

ROB (stepdad) – Driving instructor. He's on hands-free for most of the day but won't answer if his pupil is trying to parallel park as he says that "85% of people can't do it and never will be able to". He's in a car so he can get to a hospital quickly but won't go over the speed limit because if he loses his licence – he'll lose his job. Also

he's precious about his leather interior, so if I'm bleeding put carrier bags over the seat first. He's LOVELY though. COMPLETELY TOTALLY LOVELY. He's been around since I was born. He's black so we know he didn't "do the Hattie deed" (that's what my brother Nathan calls it).

GRAN – DON'T call Gran if I'm in trouble. She's mental already and she will panic. She can barely use a mobile phone as it is and if she's at bingo there's no point. She will NOT answer. Also if her dog Princess wants anything or is "trying to talk to her" other humans are NOT important.

DIMPLE – My BEST friend. She is REALLY annoyingly AMAZING – totally sensible and smart AND her dad is a surgeon. She is aces to ring BUT never risk it after 7 p.m. Her dad works funny hours and if he's on call and you ring the home phone he goes mad. He will shout at you for "talking about gossip when somebody's head could be exploding".

Actually now I'm writing this he HAS got a point. In an emergency he could be saving MY brain. That IS slightly more important than the fact Dibbo Hannah's new boyfriend tried to pierce his nose with a stapler.

There's no point calling Dimple's mob. She loses it every 5 minutes.

WEIRDO JEN – I love her but because of her white witch beliefs she thinks that you can cure flu with herbs, oats and chanting. If my leg is dropping off I need more than a nice song and a mint-and-turmeric-paste blend.

NATHAN – My brother. DO NOT CALL. He has caused me more injury than any other person ON EARTH. When I was little he used to pull me down the stairs one by one till my bum was RED. He also tried to sellotape me to the wall every Christmas as a human angel "decoration". He managed it till I was 9 and could fight back. If he hears I'm in hospital he will probably come and put me entirely in plaster "for a laugh".

GOOSE – Actually he would be fantastic to call. We've lived next door to each other for ever and he's UNBELIEVABLE in a crisis, like when Gran ran over the shed last year. He could also probably sing me out of a coma – as long as he doesn't do anything from *Joseph*. He starred in it last month at school and I am OVER hearing him doing the entire musical. I'd decide to stay unconscious if I had to listen to "Close Every Door to Me" again!

It's complicated though because I don't know HOW I FEEL ABOUT HIM. He's been my friend for so long but then I get these weird thoughts in my head and sort of tingles. I know he's just my friend but ... when other girls are near him I feel sort of jealous. I feel like shouting, "Get your paws off him, woman! He's..."

I think I do know what I feel but I'm scared of just admitting it.

In fact don't call him. I need to get physically better not more emotionally confused. Hormone-mess could stop my recovery.

KEITH – My REAL dad, the one I'm about to meet. Don't call. He lives in Australia. He didn't care at all for the first 14 years of my life. Plus in an emergency what can you do from Australia?! Not even send a card. Keith has never managed that.

PRINCESS THE DOG – Don't call her. She's a dog. LOL! And she's not a kind, useful rescue sort of animal either. She'd let any human die for a pork chop.

MGK – OH, COME ON, HATTIE MOORE – BE SENSIBLE! I know you are meant to list everyone EVER here JUST IN CASE, BUT NO. I may have found out she is my TOTAL half-sister but she is also my TOTAL ENEMY. Even though she is now my relative it means NOTHING. DO NOT contact her. She's like my brother. She'd turn up in casualty and take a video of me for YouTube – especially if my injuries were embarrassing – like a broken nose. DEFINITELY DO NOT call her if I have a face accident or even a bad zit. Let me suffer alone. It's better that way.

Is this like EastEnders or what?! No – THIS is actually MY life. Thanks, Mum and Keith.

IN FACT – in case of accident or emergency just call 999 and don't tell anyone I know. Thank you.

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MONDAY 21ST DECEMBER

9.45 p.m.

So much has happened, I need to get it down! Dimple says in times like this it's important to assess WHERE you actually are and WHO you are.

Goose wants to see me urgently. Face to face. Could this be it? The moment that we get all this weird stuff sorted? We NEED to sort it out. I NEED to sort it out. Weirdo Jen calls it "the friction between 2 souls that may have been entwined since the time of the pharaohs". Dimple calls it "Hot Lust Tension". I think I prefer Dimple's theory. The thought of being a mummy and covered in bandages freaks me out. It reminds me of what my brother would do to me given half a chance.

9.54 p.m.

I've just hidden the first-aid kit to be on the safe side. There were only some Mr Men plasters, 1 bandage and an antiseptic wipe in there but Nathan could ruin my life with that. He's got a mind that is dedicated to causing me massive brain pain.

Now Goose.

I think I just need to admit that ... I LOVE GOOSE. WHY DENY IT?! IT'S TAKEN OVER MY ENTIRE BRAIN! OMG! I'M IN LOVE WITH A GEEK. HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?! THIS WAS NOT MEANT TO HAPPEN!



I feel sick. I think he likes me too. Well, I THINK he likes me in the snog way. That MUST be why he wants me to come round. Because he is BURSTING with it like a massive love balloon.

OMG!

I really feel sick now. Need to brush my teeth. And tongue.

10.35 p.m.

MEN!

OMG – UNBELIEVABLE!

When I got to Goose's bedroom his mum AND ROB were there. How can you have a decent snog when your parents are around? Goose just looked at me for ages. There was a massive pause and then he said, "I've got a new gecko – I wanted the most special people in my life to be here to see him first!"



I've got a new gecko?!

A GECKO.

Goose did not want to see me about our eternal love destiny spanning back thousands of years or our mahoosive hidden PASH feelings. He wanted to see me about a little lizardy thing WITH OTHER PEOPLE THERE!

Random or WHAT?! It was the last thing I was expecting. I know I rushed round to tell him about my guinea pig "Sergeant Nibbles" when I was 7 but we are slightly older now!

I said, "Great, Goose – enjoy your new pet." It has a big tongue, legs that stick to anything and looks like something Rob my stepdad tries to bang on the head with his shoe when we are abroad. Rob, though, was saying things like, "He's lovely!" (LIAR!) Goose's mum kept saying stuff like, "You'd better look after him!" ER? IS THIS *DOCTOR WHO*? HAVE WE GONE BACK IN TIME TO PRIMARY SCHOOL OR WHAT?

I felt like such an idiot. TOTAL IDIOT. And ANGRY. I didn't say anything. Then Goose's mum had to do something and Rob had to do something else (it was a bit weird that they went out together) and I was left with THE GEEK WHO DOESN'T ACTUALLY FANCY ME AND HIS CRAPTACULAR FROGGY THING.

Goose said, "Hattie – you can name him if you like!" "OK," I shouted, "call him Freak. Freak the gecko." Goose didn't like that. He said reptiles should be given decent names as they are very intelligent. I told him I didn't think a gecko would mind what he was called as they can't actually speak English or they'd be running branches of Sainsbury's. Goose reminded me I've always hated being called Hattie (actress who played a fat matron woman). YES, Goose, but I have a brain bigger than a small pea and actual sophisticated womanly feelings (AND HOPES AND DREAMS THAT YOU HAVE JUST SMASHED TO PIECES). Whereas the gecko only cares about food and climbing on ceilings with his big gluey Pritt Stick

← I didn't say that but I thought it.

fingers. Then I said, "Call him Major Freak Geek the Gecko!" Goose looked really cross and yelled, "Thanks for your lack of interest. I thought you would ... that YOU ... and me might be able to sort out some stuff. That's why Rob and Mum but... Look, I've got to get his vivarium ready. I'll see you tomorrow, OK?"

Why do I expect it to go all *Dirty Dancing* with Goose the geek when it's always going to end up with lizards?!

I feel like such an idiot. I thought he REALLY liked me in a totally erotic way. Instead it was all DORK-MONGERING and ... STUFF! What STUFF? NOTHING HOT. I was going to tell him I wanted to snog him. That's a lesson learnt AGAIN. NEVER tell a boy you like him. Check whether he's got a gecko first.

Oh, Goose. Goose. Goose.

I'm gutted.

10.55 p.m.

No, Rob – the gecko is not cool. Please let's not have a conversation when I feel like a doughnut and my heart is in pieces.

What's a vivarium?

10.59 p.m.

A vivarium is what a gecko lives in. It's a hot, sweaty tank. Sort of like a sauna only you can't fit in it so it's TOTALLY pointless.

Pets are getting luxury spas. I'm having to make my own facial masks with Weetabix. You're meant to use porridge oats but it's basically the same thing. It's all bits of cereal.

I might suggest Gran gets a mini hot tub for Princess. Why not? Pets clearly matter more than actual people.

11.03 p.m.

No point. Last time Princess heard the word "bath" she tried to run away on Gran's friend Tony's mobility scooter.

11.14 p.m.

Geckos are the most useless pets ever.

Apart from Weirdo Jen's stick insect Malcolm. He spent his life trying to be a twig.

I'm trying to cheer myself up. It's working. At least I didn't make a dork of myself. In fact I was a bit of a cow. GOOD.

11.23 p.m.

Geckos lack eyelids.

Hope MGK comes back in the next life as a gecko. No eyelids?! She would collapse without black mascara and Boots No. 7 eyeshadow in khaki-shine.

I HAVE TO REMEMBER: she is my sister.

11.29 p.m.

Apparently geckos eat live crickets. Bet MGK can catch LIVE insects with her tongue – she's had enough practise!