

# Glow Up LARA BLOOM



**DEE BENSON**

HOT  
KEY  
BOOKS

*For Yomi,  
who has always believed*

*&*

*for Rhema and Esther,  
my queens*

# 1

## Dear Diary, This Is Goodbye

Thursday 30 August, 1 p.m.

I am never *EVER* journaling again!!!

I know what you're thinking: if you're never journaling again, why are you journaling right now?

Well, this is the last entry I will ever write. Because before I stop journaling forever, I must explain exactly how my *ANNOYING BIG BROTHER*, Danny, has taken tormenting me to a whole new level!

This diary came with a lock and key. It contains my *BIGGEST SECRETS* and lots of *CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION*. But guess what??? Danny managed to

break into it while I was in the shower this morning, getting ready to meet up with my friends at the park, and he found out that it was me who broke his watch. I didn't do it on purpose. It was an ACCIDENT. But I didn't want to tell him because he's such a moaner.

What's worse, while Danny was rifling through my journal — like he had every right to read my INNERMOST THOUGHTS — he read other entries apart from the one about his watch, and he found out that I used to have a crush on his friend Alex.

That's when the BLACKMAIL began ☹️

It's his turn to do the chores today: dishes, dusting, vacuuming, the works. (I know, our parents are TYRANNICAL OVERLORDS!) And guess what he said???

FROM NOW ON, YOU'RE DOING MY CHORES OR I'M TELLING ALEX HOW MUCH YOU LOVE HIM!

Since I would spontaneously combust if Alex ever found out that I used to have a crush on him, I'm pretty much at Danny's mercy forever!!!

The worst thing was, I had only fifteen minutes until I was supposed to meet my friends at the park. We'd planned

to meet at noon, and I was really looking forward to it. But with Danny threatening to RUIN MY LIFE, I had to drop everything and do his chores.

My friend Anaya texted me, reminding me not to be late, but I knew there was no way I would be able to get there in time.

Nala, my cuddly grey cat, kept purring mournfully as I did the dishes. She can always tell when I'm in emotional distress, and she's the only member of my family that I truly get along with.

Half an hour later, as I was vacuuming the stairs, Anaya texted me again, saying: Where are you??? Kayleigh bought you an ice cream and it's pretty much melted now. Btw Becky says she has a new crush 😊

Great. My friends were at the park eating ice creams and trading major gossip while I was doing chores for my big brother from hell!

I sent her a quick reply: I'll be there soon. Sorry!

But it was still another twenty minutes before I was done, because Danny started pointing out all the spots I'd missed when dusting. Then, just to make my misery complete, he

*made me tidy his room, which was a stinky mess. I had to sort through his heaps of dirty T-shirts, underpants and smelly socks. There was even a slice of MOULDY PIZZA in there.*

*That was the last straw.*

*I'm now an hour late to meet up with my friends, and I'm so stressed out I'm just sitting here in my room trying not to have a total meltdown.*

*If I'm ever tempted to journal again, I'll see this entry and remember that it isn't worth it!*

**Anaya:** WHERE ARE YOU? We've been waiting for over an hour!!

**Me:** Just leaving home now. It's a long story, but Danny read my journal.

**Anaya:** 🐱🐱🐱 How much of it did he read?

**Me:** The worst parts. He found out I used to like Alex and said I had to do his chores or he's going to tell him. That's why I'm running late.

**Anaya:** Ouch 😞😞

**Me:** I know. I'm never journaling again.

**Anaya:** Really? How will you survive without journaling? You're addicted.

**Me:** Well, it's not safe. I can't have Danny finding out any more of my secrets.

**Anaya:** I think I have a solution. Give me a sec xx

**Anaya:** Okay, I have a solution.

**Me:** What is it???

**Anaya:** Check out [www.journalpixie.com](http://www.journalpixie.com). You can thank me when you get here xoxo

### *Thursday 30 August, 1.25 p.m.*

Anaya just gave me a GENIUS idea! I've been stuck in the Dark Ages this whole time when journaling software exists! I can write anything I want – just not in a diary where any old person can read it!!

I know it's been barely half an hour since I swore off journaling forever, but this changes everything.

So, hello, journaling app. I already prefer you to all the diaries I've had in the past. So safe and secure on my phone. Plus, you can use emojis 😊 😞 😐 🐼 🍷, and you can choose from lots of different fonts.

*This one is called Faerie Princess.*

*This one is Unicorn. Cute!*

This one is Courier. Tell me, has there ever been a more BORING font than Courier???

✱❧✱ ✕◻◼◆ ✕✱ 𐀀𐀁●●𐀂𐀃 ◆✕◼𐀄𐀅✕◼𐀆◆ 🍷

That font ↑↑ is called Wingdings ☹️. I suppose I could use that for extra security, but since I won't be able to read it myself, I'm settling for this one. It's called Cuckoo, which, for some reason, I'm finding pretty hilarious right now.

There's an option to publish your entries, which is

odd. I don't know why anyone would want to do that. Isn't that a blog, not a journal? Journals are for SECRETS. Why would anyone even be interested in reading someone else's journal, unless they're a diabolical big brother looking for juicy information with which to blackmail his unsuspecting little sister?!?!?

Even though I'm going to be stuck doing Danny's chores for a while, at least I can still journal, which means I won't have to bottle up all my feelings. I have an outlet for my fully justified RAGE and won't resort to STRANGLING DANNY IN HIS SLEEP.

### ***2.15 p.m.***

By the time I finally made it to our spot in the park (by the fountain), I was an hour and a half late!! Anaya must have already told Kayleigh and Becky about what happened because neither of them gave me any grief for being late. Just as well, because I still felt ready to EXPLODE.

Anaya immediately stood up from the low wall that runs around the fountain and said, 'Take a deep breath.'

I tried, but my breaths were coming in quick, shallow gasps, and I desperately wanted to scream.

'Her eye's twitching,' Becky said. 'That's how you know things are bad.'

To my horror, it was. My right eye was twitching so hard like it was going to POP RIGHT OFF MY FACE.



‘How on earth did Danny get into your journal?’ Kayleigh asked. ‘You’re always so careful.’

Somehow, I managed to speak. I told them, from the beginning, all about Danny and his sinister, spying, diary-reading ways! As they listened, their faces contorted with varying degrees of horror, which was very satisfying and made me feel much better.

‘Tell your parents,’ Kayleigh suggested. ‘Let them threaten to ground him if he tells Alex that you had a crush on him. That should sort it.’

Kayleigh has four older sisters, so she’s had to learn how to get her voice heard. The only problem with this advice is Danny was ten steps ahead! He didn’t just read my journal entries about his watch and my old crush on Alex, but he also read a rant I wrote about Mum and Dad the other week when they grounded me in the MIDDLE OF THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS!!

**Side note:** I *told* you my parents are tyrannical overlords. I got grounded for TWO WHOLE DAYS when they found out I hadn’t done any of my holiday homework.

**Another side note:** Can I just say that summer holiday homework is a ridiculous idea? It’s right up there with chocolate teapots and marshmallow scissors.

First of all, if teachers can’t teach us everything we need to know in all the *many* months we spend in school each year, they need to have a serious chat with themselves.

Second of all, it’s called a school holiday for a reason.

I just googled the official dictionary definition of the word 'holiday' and it's 'an extended period of leisure and recreation, especially one spent away from home or in travelling'. What part of that definition says work is involved? None!

Anyway, my journal rant about Mum and Dad included words like KILLJOYS, ANNOYING TYRANTS and EVIL DICTATORS. And Danny warned me that if I tell our parents about him blackmailing me into doing his chores, he's going to tell them about that rant.

I'm totally SCREWED!

After I explained this to my friends, Becky gave a low whistle. 'OMG, Lara,' she said, 'you're basically Danny's personal Cinderella now. But fairy godmothers do exist. Maybe one will show up and whisk you away to freedom.'

I think she was trying to make me smile, but after the mouldy pizza I had to scoop up in Danny's room, I don't think I'll be seeing the humour in anything for a while (except maybe Cuckoo font, ha ha).

Anyway, I'd better put my phone away before my friends start moaning about me journaling all the time when we're supposed to be hanging out.

I'm so glad I can journal on my phone now though. I won't have to lug a book around like an oddpot who would rather write in her diary than talk to actual people. Not that looking like an oddpot has ever bothered me before. You kind of get used to it when you're . . . well, me.

**2.45 p.m.**

Speaking of oddpots, Richard Skelley just walked past. He's this boy in the year above at school. At first glance, he looks pretty cool with his long-ish, black rock-star hair and eyeliner. I'll get to why he's weird in a minute, but at the sight of him, Becky almost had a heart attack. You know that hot gossip about her new crush? It's him. **RICHARD SKELLEY, OF ALL PEOPLE!!**

I just had to dig out my phone and tell you all about it, dear App. (Hmm, 'dear App' doesn't have the same ring as 'dear Diary'!!)

Anyway, Anaya told her she can do better.

She's right too. Richard Skelley is so bizarre. Last year, I had the misfortune of witnessing him run down the hallway outside the lunch room, farting with every step. He must have released, like, SEVEN FARTS. I had no idea someone could have that much gas built up inside them. And if they did, why release it so loudly and proudly??

'You'll need a gas mask,' Kayleigh told Becky, cackling with laughter.

'Well, she's survived the animal shelter all summer without a gas mask,' Anaya said.

True. Becky's parents made her volunteer this summer. It's 'character-building', they said. (I didn't tell my parents in case they got any ideas.) The shelter had some ex-racehorses, and whenever we met up with Becky after a shift, she stank of manure. 🤢🤢

(Kayleigh just noticed me journaling and went, 'You're going to get even more addicted to journaling now that you have an app.' I didn't deny it, because I think she's right. I LOVE this app already ♡ )

'I'm so glad my volunteering has turned into paid work this summer,' Anaya said.

Her so-called 'volunteering' is just helping out at her mum's café, where she gets to eat paninis, drink smoothies and have all the customers exclaim over how pretty and well-mannered she is.

'Mum thought I should be fine with only getting tips, just because there's no minimum wage for fourteen-year-olds,' Anaya said. 'Well, I've had enough of helping out practically for free. I was on Google all yesterday evening, reading about it, and I tried to convince her this morning to pay me the minimum wage for sixteen-year-olds.'

'She's going to pay you?' Kayleigh asked.

Anaya nodded. 'But she said it'll be one pound less per hour than what sixteen-year-olds get.'

'That's still good,' I said. (See? I can journal *and* contribute to conversations at the same time ☺)

'Yeah, well, she's going to put it in my bank account so I can't blow it all at once,' Anaya said with a scowl.

It's good to know it's not just my parents who always find a way to suck the fun out of everything.

Anyway, we were trying to have a civilised conversation – you know, like mature teenagers – when Kayleigh

randomly went, 'Watch this!' and started dancing.

'Uh, what are you doing?' I asked.

'I've been watching this dance tutorial on YouTube. It's so fun. There's a part where you need a partner, but I just use trees.' She ran over to a nearby tree and started to dance around it. Anaya burst out laughing, but I was just mortified on Kayleigh's behalf.

This whole time, Becky was silent. I bet she was thinking about Richard.

Richard would probably be chuffed if he found out that Becky likes him. She's pretty in an I-didn't-make-much-effort kind of way. And her straight black hair is really long these days, ever since she decided to grow it. She flicks it around constantly. I know because of all the times I've narrowly missed getting whacked in the face by it.

All my friends are pretty, actually. Anaya has dark, curly hair and flawless light brown skin, and Kayleigh is all blonde hair and hazel eyes. Then there's me. Plain as a pole! It's bad enough being ordinary, but I look even more ordinary than I am because my friends are so pretty.

Anaya and me were friends first, before we became a quartet. We started hanging out two months into Year 7 after I tried to sit next to her in an art lesson and knocked over a whole tray of paints. (I know. I'm a WALKING CATASTROPHE!) The paint splatted all over us both and everyone started laughing. I didn't even know Anaya's name at the time, and I thought she was going to be really

annoyed, but she just stared at me in shock for a few moments then burst into laughter.

A few weeks later, Anaya and I played doubles tennis against Kayleigh and Becky in PE. It was so good to find two girls who were as wild as us. The four of us have been inseparable ever since.

Anyway, Becky froze into a statue at Richard's presence, even though he was making loud SHEEP NOISES with a bunch of people on the other side of the fountain and hadn't even noticed us. Then she got up and walked away really fast.

Me and Anaya rolled our eyes and followed her. Kayleigh stopped dancing and ran to catch up.

Becky is shy like that. If she has a crush on someone, she can never be around them, so how is her crush supposed to get a chance to, y'know, realise she exists?

To be honest, though, I'm not much better. When I have a crush I avoid them like the plague. But I have an excuse: I'm not a total stunner like Becky is. I'm so glad I don't have any crushes at the moment. Having a crush is nerve-racking – especially when you know for a fact that there's no way they would ever like you back. Everyone I've ever crushed on would probably laugh in my face if they found out.

Anyway, I wasn't impressed that we had to leave the fountain area. It's really hot today and the spray from the fountain was nice and cooling. Even worse, Becky

was speed-walking towards these steps and Anaya and Kayleigh immediately reached for my hands, like I'm some OLD LADY.

I glared at them both, but that just made them laugh. Ever since the time I fell down a whole bunch of stairs at Anfield Stadium, they think it's funny to 'assist' me whenever we come across stairs in day-to-day life.

Believe me, there have been many embarrassing moments in my life, but that fall was one of the worst. I'll never forget it, and I'll never live it down.

Since it was so incredibly TRAUMATIC, it deserves a heading:

### The Most Embarrassing Moment of My Life

Last year, I went to watch a charity match that the Liverpool women's football team was playing against the Everton women's team. I was a few minutes late, so I had to fight my way to my seat. On the way, I managed to trip over someone's foot and FALL DOWN THE STANDS!!

I went bouncing down the steps of Anfield Stadium. Each bounce sent flashes of pain through my whole body and I only stopped falling because I ran out of stairs to fall down. Mum said she tried to catch me. I don't believe her. She was busy gabbing to Anaya's mum. Anaya said she tried to help but I was going too fast, then people got in her way.

Anyway, after I managed to pick myself up, guess what happened next? A ball appeared from nowhere and was flying right at me!

That's right. One of the Everton women had cleared a corner kick and blasted the ball straight at my head. It almost knocked me out. In fact, I think I did conk out for a few seconds. All I remember is a *THWACK!*, a blast of pain through my skull and a ringing sound in my ears.

Then there was nothing for what could either have been a few seconds or a few millennia (Anaya said it was just a few seconds). When my brain switched back on, the first thing I felt was the pain in my nose and neck. And then . . . the cool air on my left bum cheek. That's when I realised I was lying on the ground, face down, denim skirt around my waist.

Instead of covering my modesty like a skirt is supposed to, it was AROUND MY WAIST.

Everyone could see my knickers!

And it was this old green pair with a big hole on the left bum cheek. Hence why I could feel a breeze on my bum.

After that, I wanted to die. And writing about it now makes me want to die all over again.

Seriously, without a doubt, I have the WORST life in the whole world!



**4 p.m.**

After our hasty exit from the fountain area, we wandered around the park for a bit until we found ourselves in the jungle gym. It was empty for once.

I tried to sit on one of the swings on the side and somehow landed on the ground. I must have pushed the seat back as I tried to sit, because then it swung forward and WHACKED THE BACK OF MY HEAD!

My friends, to their credit, didn't laugh. Anaya just helped me to my feet and held the seat still while I sat on it.

'Thanks,' I muttered, my face hot with embarrassment. I could hear Dad's voice in my head: *You never pay attention, Lara!*

'Are you guys ready for school?' Kayleigh asked.

'Ready or not, school is starting,' I muttered, suddenly all morose.

'No need to sound so depressed about it,' Kayleigh replied, leaning against one of the jungle gym poles.

(If that was me trying to lean against a pole, I would have miscalculated its position and fallen flat on my back!)

'I'm actually looking forward to school,' Becky said. 'The animal shelter has been fun, but I've had enough of it now.'

I sighed. I hate school. I'd rather not waste any brain space thinking about it until Monday, when I absolutely have to.

School would be great if it was just my friends and the girls' football team. But no, there's also lots of hard work, annoying teachers and stuck-up people who look down their nose at you just because they're popular and you're not. There aren't even any cute boys. They're all gross and think they're hilarious when they're about as funny as a slow internet connection.

But Kayleigh is so excited for the new school year, she's even 'setting goals'. Basically to 'build good study habits' so she'll hardly have to study when our GCSEs roll around in Year 11. I can't believe she's planning that far ahead. We're only just starting Year 10. Anaya, however, was impressed and said she would do the same.

I'm not a bad student. I'm actually doing okay in most of my subjects. But Kayleigh and Anaya love to 'excel'. Personally, so long as I pass any tests we're given, I'm not too fussed about how well I do. English literature is probably the least annoying subject, followed by history. Mainly because they're not too much hassle and I've discovered I'm good at writing long, waffly essays. Everyone hates maths, me included, but I'm actually okay at it.

'What's *your* goal for Year 10, Lara?' Kayleigh asked, yanking me from my thoughts.

I snorted. She knew full well that I wouldn't have any 'goals'.

Thankfully, Becky saved me from having to respond by saying, 'My goal is to basically become Esme Bucci.'

None of us could refrain from rolling our eyes. Esme Bucci is this sixteen-year-old, annoyingly gorgeous girl who is famous online for her make-up tutorials. Becky is obsessed with watching them.

She took out her phone and showed us Esme's latest video: *BACK TO SCHOOL PREPARATIONS | Hair, Brows, Lashes, Nails*.

'Lashes?' Anaya asked. 'Let's see.'

'Who wears false eyelashes to school?' I asked, bewildered.

'HI, GUYS!' came Esme Bucci's syrupy, cheerful and very high-pitched voice from Becky's phone.

We ended up watching her whole 'Back to School' series. It was six videos that lasted for SEVENTEEN (!!) minutes altogether, but we were gripped, fascinated by the lengths she was going to, from getting a manicure to stocking up on pretty pink stationery that matched her nails. Pink, she said, was her 'colour of the term'.

(Oops, Kayleigh just scowled at me then said to Anaya, 'Now that Lara has a journaling app, we're never going to be able to have a proper conversation with her ever again!')

At the end of the videos, Kayleigh said, all snooty, 'You don't need to *get* ready for school when you *stay* ready.'

'What's that supposed to mean?' Becky asked.

'Well, at the beginning of the holidays I said we should have a glow up, and none of you were interested.'

But now, with a new crush and four days until school starts, you want to reinvent your whole life and become Esme Bucci!’

Anaya and I exchanged a look. Kayleigh has been talking about having a ‘glow up’ *all* summer. According to her, a glow up is when you transform yourself and become a better version of you. It sounded like fun when she first mentioned it, but then she said, ‘We really need to have a productive summer, girls’, and that made it sound less like fun and more like work. And since I basically wanted to be as unproductive as possible over the summer, I said no. Then Becky and Anaya said no too.

I did feel a bit bad for not being supportive, but I’m *really* not interested in glowing up. I know what Kayleigh is like. She likes to ‘research’ stuff, learn new things and read wise quotes online. Which is WORK!!! Between holiday homework and chores, I figured I had enough boredom-inducing stuff on my plate.

I’m so glad we no longer have to write ‘How I spent my summer holiday’ essays like we did in primary school. I spent this summer playing football, watching Marvel movies and wishing I was Zendaya. Nothing there to impress a teacher.

‘Having a glow up is better than trying to give yourself a quick makeover,’ Kayleigh said. ‘Makeovers are superficial, but with a glow up, you transform yourself from the inside out and become a better version of yourself.’

(See? I *knew* she was going to say that.)

Something you need to know about Kayleigh is that when she decides to do something, she goes ALL IN. And the whole world has to stop and do it with her.

Now, I know I'm clumsy and kind of prone to bad luck, so becoming 'the best version of myself' *does* appeal. But I'm not sure about this whole glow up thing, simply because it's Kayleigh suggesting it. I just can't trust a girl who once dipped her hair in camel's urine on holiday in Dubai. She said that in ancient times, women used to do it to make their hair shiny. Um, what happened to hairspray? Hair oils? Deep-conditioning hair masks? Anything but CAMEL'S PEE!!

With that in mind, when Kayleigh said, 'So are you in on the glow up now?' I gave her a fast 'NO'.

'Is dancing with trees part of your glow up?' Anaya asked.

'No,' Kayleigh said. 'That was just a bit of fun. You won't have to dance.'

'It's still a no from me,' I said.

Anaya and Becky also declined. They don't trust Kayleigh much either.

'I'll glow up by myself, then,' Kayleigh said huffily.

'Time for our Summer Selfie,' Anaya said, changing the subject.

Every summer, just before we go back to school, we take a group picture. As usual, I pulled a silly face, cross-

eyed with my tongue out 🙄. Kayleigh started laughing. She never stays annoyed for long. None of my friends do. They're totally awesome.

### **7.10 p.m.**

I just got back from hanging out with my friends, and I overheard Mum and Dad gushing about how great a job Danny has done with his chores today. They even said he can stay out an hour later tomorrow evening as a reward!

A reward for chores that *I* did!

I THINK I'M GOING TO PUKE!!!!

### **8.18 p.m.**

I just realised that I *do* have a goal for the coming school year! It's not a schoolwork-related goal, but it's still very important. You see, I'm the captain of the girls' football team. Now, people make all kinds of assumptions when they find out you like football, as a girl.

**Assumption 1:** *You must be a tomboy.*

No.

I'm not.

I'm just a girl who happens to like playing football. There are tomboys, girly girls and everything in-between on the team. Football is for any girl who wants to play it!

**Assumption 2:** *You can't be any good at it.*

HA! The Schoolgirls' Football League includes schools from all over the city, but *I* have been the top goal-scorer for two years straight so . . . yeah. I can't be that bad at it 😏.

**Assumption 3:** *You're only the top goal-scorer because the other girls are rubbish. You're just the best of a BAD BUNCH!!!*

ACTUALLY, we played against the boys last year. Since there are lots of boys' teams in our school and only one girls' team, the teachers put all the boys' names in a hat and chose their players at random. And guess what? We beat them 2–1. So if we're rubbish, they're even MORE rubbish!!

So, my goal for this year is to score actual goals. The girls' football team has been in SPECTACULAR form. We haven't lost a single match in almost THREE YEARS! We've had plenty of draws, and almost as many wins, but we have remained unbeaten since halfway through my Year 7.

We didn't set out to do this. In fact, when I first joined the team, we had some brutal defeats. Then Miss Simpson, our evil coach/PE teacher, joined the school, and we started losing less. (For the record, I don't mind her evilness one bit, since it works.) Then we started

winning sometimes too. We ended that season with TWENTY matches unbeaten in a row.

We tried to keep it up the next year and actually managed it, which is incredible, considering that there are thirty-eight matches in a season. We didn't lose a single one. Then we almost lost our unbeaten streak last year because Zoe, the old team captain, was now in Year 11 and had to stop playing because of her GCSEs. All the amazing Year 11 girls who were the backbone of the team left us.

What's worse, Zoe nominated *me* to be the new captain. Even though I was the top goal-scorer, I wasn't expecting it because I was only in Year 9. Besides, there were other girls who scored a lot too.

I was FUMING when she nominated me. I thought she was setting me up for an EPIC FAIL and wanted things to fall apart so that everyone would wish she was still around. But, to my shock, Miss Simpson actually agreed with her. So, near the end of last season, I became team captain.

Zoe and the other Year 11 girls came to watch us whenever they could. Having them cheer us on from the sidelines made us fight even harder to keep up our unbeaten streak. We almost slipped up a few times, but we managed it. We won a further seven games with me as captain – and guess what? Out of the blue, I became a *person*. Not popular by any stretch of the imagination, but suddenly people at school knew that I existed.



Usually, I'm just one of the many invisible losers who make it possible for popular people to stand out. However, thanks to my success as team captain, I started getting nods in the hallways! The day after the match against Morston High where we won 5–2 (!!) I even got some smiles.

But I don't play football for nods and smiles. I play because I love it. There's nothing like the thrill you get when you score a goal or win a match.

We only have four more games to go to hit one hundred games unbeaten, and I'm CONVINCED something is going to go wrong.

### **8.40 p.m.**

Dear Diary, I figured there might still be more you need to know about me before we continue on our adventures together, so guess what? I'm going to give you a ROOM TOUR!! 🧐🧐

I wish you could tell me what it's like to be an app, living in my phone, but I guess I'll just have to imagine. Is it anything like the movie *Emoji*? That would actually be pretty cool!

Well, I live with my mum, dad and the most annoying big brother in the world in a tiny terraced house that is nothing like the huge ones a few streets away that were built centuries ago. Ours is kind of modern, and it's REALLY small. You can hear the neighbours through

the walls, which I don't really mind, because my room shares a wall with Jay's house (I've known Jay since I was, like, a baby) and the only thing I ever hear is his mum's old-school music.

We used to live in the high rise on the next street until two years ago when Jay's mum told us this house was for sale. His mum and my mum are best friends and have been following each other around since they were teens.

Sorry, this room tour is turning into a house tour with random info about my neighbours.

So, back to my room. Mine is the smallest room in the whole house, but it's also the best room, since I have much better taste than anyone else in my family. My room's colour scheme is black and white with pops of hot pink everywhere: my bean bag, my bedframe, my feathery lightshade, my lamp. I chose everything myself, and I'm really proud of how it all turned out.

I have a poster of the Lionesses on the back of my door. They're England's women's football team, and they're EPIC. I sometimes high-five it before big matches. I swear it gives me good luck.

The only other hint of my love of football is the two golden boot trophies I keep on the wall shelf by my bed. At the end of every season, they're awarded to the top goal-scorer. I would like to have more football stuff in my room, but since it's so small, anything else will make it look cluttered. I always keep my room tidy for the same reason.

Okay, okay, that's a total lie. The *real* reason I keep my room tidy is because it once got so messy and stinky (the stench was from Nala's litter tray, not me) that Mum threatened to put Nala up for ADOPTION! My room has never been messy since.

I really don't know why Mum is so obsessed with having an 'immaculate house', as she calls it. Me and Danny have to do so many chores because, according to Mum and Dad, we make most of the mess. That's the only time I'm glad our house is small. If it was any bigger, I'd be doing chores CONSTANTLY!

### **9.08 p.m.**

Anaya just posted the Summer Selfie in our group chat. I scrolled back to find our selfies from the past two years and my friends all look so different now, while I just look the same, except a bit taller in each picture. My hair is exactly the same in every picture too – just stuffed into a bun. The bun has gotten a bit sleeker though. In the first picture it was really puffy with loose tufts EVERYWHERE. I looked like a TOTAL DISASTER.

I'm better at flattening my hair now, but having the same hairstyle for three years does show a complete lack of imagination, doesn't it?!

Oh, well. I have more important things to worry about than hair. Things like football and Marvel movies.

I re-posted the past pictures in our group chat and my friends started responding right away.

**Anaya:** OMG we looked like BABIES two years ago! 😄

**Becky:** Look at the state of my clothes! Why didn't you guys tell me that bow was hideous??

**Kayleigh:** It was your favourite accessory ...

**Becky:** Did you guys think it was hideous?

**Anaya:** No, we thought it was cute.

**Becky:** DON'T LIE TO ME 😞

**Me:** You and your bow are FINE, Becky. Look at the state of ME. At least you guys have changed and look better these days. I'm still the same, and I'm still so flat-chested it's unbelievable!

Honestly, I don't mind my lack of imagination about my hair that much. That can change whenever I decide I'm ready to face my 'fro. But, seriously, why don't I have boobs? Everyone else is getting them!

My phone immediately began to buzz. Kayleigh was calling me. She's planning her glow up, and she's got something special in mind for tomorrow evening.

'Think of it as a taster session,' she said brightly.

I wasn't about to let her sway me, but before I could say no she said something that got me interested: 'It might help with . . . y'know, the flat-chestedness.'

She didn't say much after that.

**9.24 p.m.**

Okay, she did. She said a few things, but I don't know if I'm brave enough to type them in case someone reads it. I know I'm using an app and everything, but I've learned that you can never be too careful.

One minute you think your secrets are safe. The next, you're picking up MOULDY PIZZA in your brother's SMELLY room. (Can you tell I'm still traumatised?)

Anyway, Kayleigh said to come to her house tomorrow after 'moonrise' as she called it.

OMG, it's pathetic how excited I am.

I CAN'T WAIT!!