

Chips, Beans and Limousines



♥ The Fantastic Diary of ★
Bathsheba Clarice de Trop

♥ by Leila Rasheed ★

To the great readers and writers at Writewords

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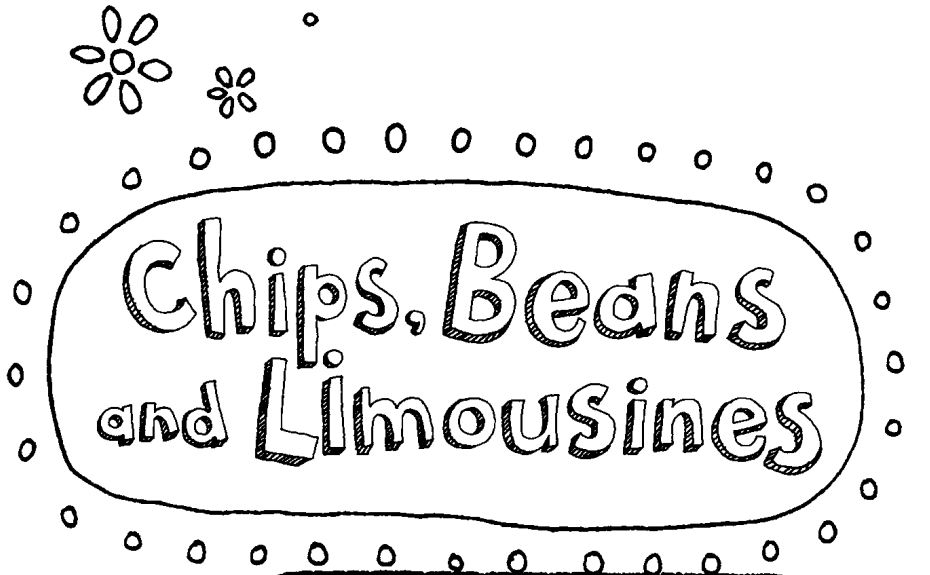
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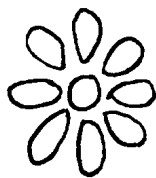
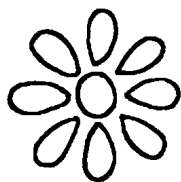
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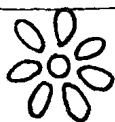
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藏书章

by Leila Rasheed



The
Fantastic Diary
of
Bathsheba
Clarice de Trop



Day One

**6:47 p.m. and forty-seven seconds
if I start writing right NOW...**

Dear new Diary,

I have a surprise for you. It is a **BIG** surprise. (Don't worry – it's also a **GOOD** surprise!)

You are going to be so thrilled when I tell you!!!

Are you sitting down???

...No, you are lying flat on my desk while I write in you. Obviously. Okay, just breathe deeply, and try to stay calm.

Dear Diary,

I can just imagine what your life was like on the shelf at Paperflo's. Pretty dull, no?? No one to talk to except other diaries. Nothing to

talk about because no one had written in you yet. Maybe you wondered who would pick you up and take you home. Who would write in you? Would you be hearing the thrilling details of a spy's secret life?? Or the love confessions of a wacky teenager??? Or the rotten poetry of a spotty computer geek????

Well. No. It's FAR more exciting than that!

Because – the hand that picked you up and took you home was MINE. The hand that is writing in you now, belongs to...

(I hope you are remembering to breathe deeply and stay calm...)

BATHSHEBA CLARICE DE TROP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Ta Daaaaaaaah!!

Yes!! Yes yes yes yes yes yes yes yes!!!!!!

THE Bathsheba Clarice de Trop!!!

You never thought you would belong to a celebrity, did you?

Yes. It is I. Heroine of *Bathsheba's Amazing Party*, *Bathsheba's Brilliant Best Friends*, *Bathsheba Saves the Day*, *Bathsheba Glamour Queen and the Smugglers of Doom* and *Bathsheba Shops* (vols. 1, 2 and 3). And all those other amazing, astonishing, best-selling a million times over books which my mother – the charming, beautiful and intelligent Mandy de Trop – writes about ME.

Me me me me me me me me me me me!!!

Isn't it exciting?

Aren't you thrilled??

You are SO LUCKY!!!

You are going to be hearing ALL ABOUT ME!!!!

And we can be best friends, right?

Because that's what a diary is, isn't it?

A Girl's Best Friend.

No. Don't thank me. I know it's an honour
for you, but after all, I'm just like you, really.
Only FAMOUS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
(And less papery.)

Ooo, there is Natasha, the housekeeper,
calling me for supper. I do wish she would not
call me "Bath", though. I must have a Word
with her, like Mummy does.

Mummy isn't home yet.

I keep running out on to the landing
because I think I hear the front door opening
and it might be her, but it is always just
Natasha bashing pans in the kitchen.

She might still get home in time for supper.
I do hope so!

Mummy is so extraordinarily busy writing
about me that sometimes I don't see her for
ages. Sigh.



**9:08 p.m. and sixteen
seconds-ish.**



No Mummy, as usual. And Natasha had lots of work to do, so I had supper on my own. I ate my lasagne in front of the television in the small sitting room with lots of cushions round me like a family. But even the small sitting room can feel awfully big and empty when it is just you and *Doctor Who* in it.

I had a Word with Natasha. I said, “Natasha, maybe when you call me for supper, instead of shouting ‘Bath, grub’s up’, you could shout ‘Bathsheba Clarice de Trop, grub’s up’.”

Natasha laughed and laughed in a very disrespectful way, and said, “Bath, love, if I did that you’d never get any supper. I’d be too busy saying your crazy name to cook anything.”

I do not have a crazy name! Although I

suppose it is a bit difficult to say. Bath-Shee-Bar. Cla-rees. (It's French!) Der Troe, like toe. (It's aristocratic!) Maybe you could repeat it after me, dear Diary, or maybe not, as I have just remembered you do not have a mouth.

Anyway, Bathsheba is a name for a Heroine! And a Film Star, which is what I am going to be when I grow up. It is glamorous and dignified, unlike Bath. I mean, she might as well call me Shower Curtain and be done with it.

I pointed this out to her, but she just said, "Hurry up and eat your dinner, Butterball."

I wish she would not call me Butterball, either.

It makes me sound dumpy, which I am NOT. Very.

Oh, but I am so glad you are here, dear Diary!!! It will all be better now I have

someone to talk to. I mean, write in. Sometimes it does get a little dull being all on my own. This evening, for example, I was so bored I tried to help Natasha make the lasagne, but she said “No chance, Bath, don’t you remember what happened last time? I don’t want another visit from the fire brigade!”

I don’t think that is fair: anyone could mix up minutes and hours in a recipe. It is not my fault the tinned tomatoes burst into flames.

Anyway, while I was eating my supper, it struck me, dear Diary, that, being a book, and having lived on a Deprived Shelf all your life, you may not actually have read many other books.

And therefore it is possible – just possible – that you may not know all about me already.

Although probably you will have caught a glimpse of the novelty key rings, or the bookmarks, or seen other, not-famous girls,

with their *Bathsheba – The Best by Far!*

T-shirts. (Aren't they great? I've got twelve!)

Maybe I had better fill you in on what you've been missing. (Don't worry. The books are available, priced £5.99, from all good bookshops. You could ask for a box set for Christmas. There is still time to learn ALL ABOUT ME!!!)

Where shall I start?

Well, I am just always either

1) saving the day

or

2) having extraordinarily glamorous sleepovers with my amazing best friends, Aurelia Windsor-Battenberg and Fifi LaQuiche-Lorraine.

Aurelia and Fifi and me like to spend our time shopping in Harrods or Saks Fifth Avenue (if we are in America) or Gucci or Pucci or

Prada. Aurelia has smooth chestnut hair and is very refined and intelligent. She wears glasses but they are such expensive ones that she looks even better when she's wearing them than when she's not. She is fifteenth in line to the throne. Fifi has curly black hair and is extremely French and also a champion showjumper. Her mother is a supermodel and her father is related to the Prince of Monaco.

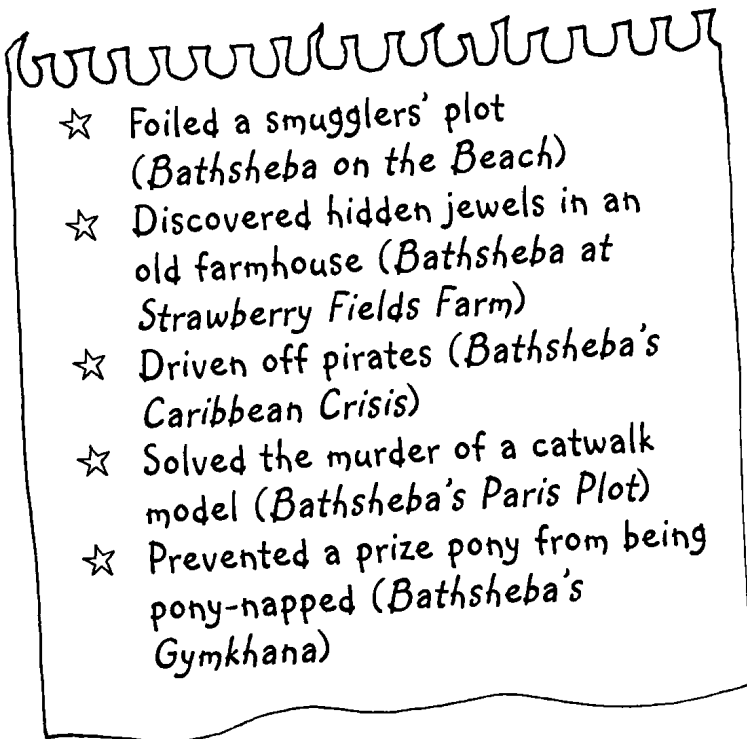
You are probably wondering why I am complaining about being bored when I could be out shopping or drinking lattes with my super-amazing friends, and, um, that is quite a good question. The thing is, Aurelia and Fifi have both got measles, or possibly something more glamorous, so sadly they cannot be with us today. I know it is a really big coincidence that they have both got it at the same time, but things like that sometimes happen, and it does NOT mean it is not true.

Well, anyway, I do not have measles, and I

am just more glamorous and intelligent and champion-showjumper-y than either Fifi or Aurelia, and, also, I have Natural Leadership Skills. Plus, I have blonde hair, which is just the colour of champagne, and is beautifully wavy, NOT frizzy.

Aurelia and Fifi and me go to a very select boarding school called St. Barnaby's. I just love boarding school! I am head of all the school, even though I am only in Form One (if you want to know why, read *Bathsheba's Victory*). And I am captain of the hockey team (*Hail, Bathsheba*) and of the swimming team and the riding team, and I am also house librarian and form monitor and more or less everything else too. Plus, I always star in all the plays our drama club puts on. I am top of my class in everything, including cookery, where my lasagne is always the best. I am just soooo good at everything that it is actually a bit embarrassing sometimes!!!

But right now I am not at boarding school. It is the start of the holidays. As it is the holidays, I expect I will have an adventure soon. I have saved the world thirteen times (*Bathsheba Crime-Fighter*, *Bathsheba Leads The Way*, *Bathsheba Triumphant*, *Bathsheba the Brilliant* and lots and lots of other books). I have also:

- 
- ☆ Foiled a smugglers' plot (*Bathsheba on the Beach*)
 - ☆ Discovered hidden jewels in an old farmhouse (*Bathsheba at Strawberry Fields Farm*)
 - ☆ Driven off pirates (*Bathsheba's Caribbean Crisis*)
 - ☆ Solved the murder of a catwalk model (*Bathsheba's Paris Plot*)
 - ☆ Prevented a prize pony from being pony-napped (*Bathsheba's Gymkhana*)