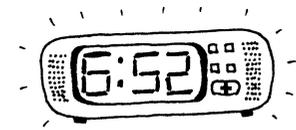


Wednesday
the 17th August,
at 6.52 o'clock exactly!



Hi girls! Lucy Jessica Hartley is back! A great big



to my supercool summer holiday journal!

I am starting it now 'cos two completely exciting things are occurring at once. They are:

A) It is my birthday on Friday and I will be 13 – a very actual teenager instead of just a very nearly one. Hang on, let me lean across to look at the clock – it is right now 6.54 p.m., so that's only 29 hours and 6 minutes of being 12!



B) Me and Jules and Tilda are going on holiday together! How totally cool is that?! We are not going completely on our own of course, but with Mum, Alex and also Mr. Van der Zwan, who is coming to help Mum out with the children (not that she *needs* helping out 'cos we are not children – by then we will all be very actually teenagers. He obviously means helping Mum out with my little bro, Alex, who is most *definitely* still a child). Anyway, we are going to Newquay in Cornwall which is known for its surfing – and we have all made a pact to definitely have a go!

I haven't started this journal before, even though it has been the summer holidays for absolute ages, because nothing exciting has happened so far. Mum's been working and me and Alex have been mainly getting looked after by Nan (whoops, I mean Delia – she says being called Nan makes her feel old!). Going round Delia's (you



know, Nan's) house means helping her out with the dresses she makes for ballroom dancers and going to museums and *Places Of Historic Interest*, which is good but not massively thrilling. Sometimes Dad's in charge of us instead, and that usually means going round his and all of us watching *Behind The Music* on MTV while his ginormous pants dry on the radiator and having strange unidentified objects from his leftover takeaways for lunch. Dad lives at Uncle Ken's now because he recently got separated from Mum. Oh, actually, it was almost a year ago. How weird that so much time has gone by, when I can remember it just like it was last week or something. Anyway, you can see why Mum is far more keen for *Nan* to look after us, 'cos of it being more educational.

Of course, being a very very nearly teenager I don't actually *need* looking after – it's all to do with Alex really. If it was just me I could stay at home on my own and start up a business doing makeovers and hairstyles and nails – like in a posh



salon where you give the customers tea and coffee for free and where the mags are not from like 1994 or something but this actual month's. Maybe I should mention that to Mum for next summer. I'll be very nearly fourteen then – wow, that is amazing to imagine!

Me and Jules and Tilda had the idea of all going on holiday together ages ago, when school hadn't even broken up yet. You must know this by now, but just in case you have been away living on a space station or something, Jules and Tilda are my cool BFF (BFF means Best Friends Forever, BTW) (BTW means By The Way, BTW). Anyway, because we are BFF we like to do everything together as a three or it's not as good. I asked Mum about the holiday as soon as we had the idea but at first she said we couldn't afford to go away at all, not even just me, her and Alex. Dad isn't coming 'cos *apparently* holidays are another thing we can't do all together any more. How unfair is that?!

But the GREAT NEWS is that Dad's radio show



has now got lots of listeners (thanks to me, Jules and Tilda – read my journal called *Picture Perfect* for all the rocktastic details!). So anyway, because he is no longer teetering on the brink of being fired, he chipped in half the money for me and Alex, so then Mum said she could just about manage it after all – yay!

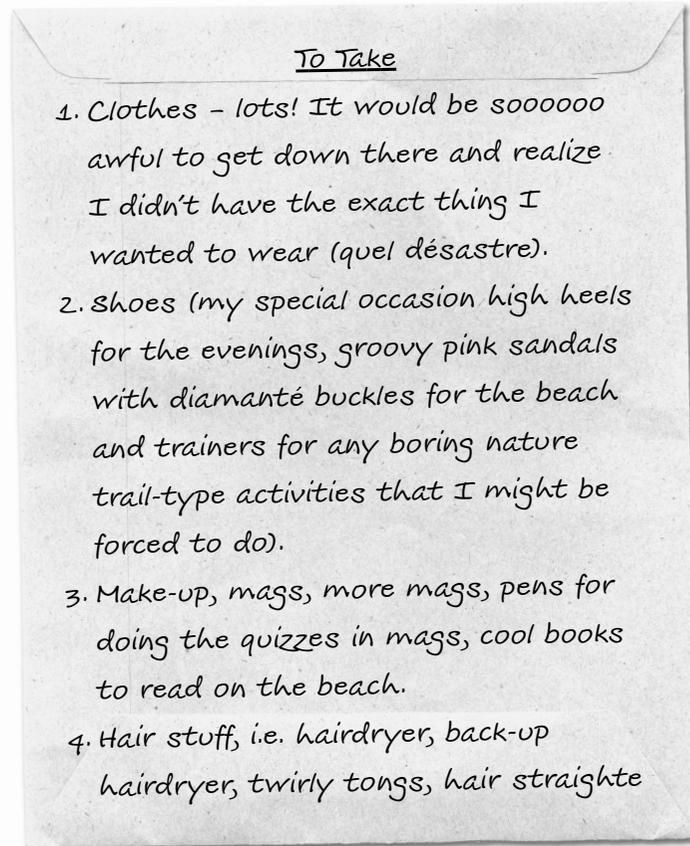
When Mum finished talking to Isabella (Jules's mum) and Mr. Van der Zwan (Tilda's dad) she said we could all go, so I instantly rang up Jules and Tilda on their mobiles and we did squealing down the phone together in total excitement! That was about 2 weeks ago and I have been doing a holiday countdown as well as my birthday countdown ever since.

It is especially cool 'cos we are going to be sharing a room, so it'll be like having a sleepover every night. We can have midnight feasts and tell secrets and do spells and stuff. I am definitely taking my Teen Witch Kit with me for max spooky fun!

I have just now been going round the house



making a list of what else to take, which I will stick in here so it doesn't get lost.



I was just writing that bit when Mum came in the bathroom and looked over my shoulder, going, "Lucy, it's not a hairdressing holiday!"



I went, "Mum, as you know, those are just the absolute bare essentials to survive for one week and **BTW**, could you not read my private list while reaching for your contact lens solution?"

But now I am actually having the idea to let my hair dry naturally on the beach so it goes a bit wavy and that, 'cos then I will look like a *surf Dude*. Hang on, what is the female for dude? ~~Dudess?~~ ~~Dudette?~~ Anyway, the point is I will look cool and Cornwall-ish. Oh, I soooooo can't wait for our holiday!

The end of school was a *bit* like a holiday in itself actually, according to Mr. Cain*. The minute it got hot and sunny everyone went a bit mad. Like, us girls were all giggly and silly for no special reason and the boys kept suddenly throwing themselves on the floor and writhing around, which was meant to be break-dancing.

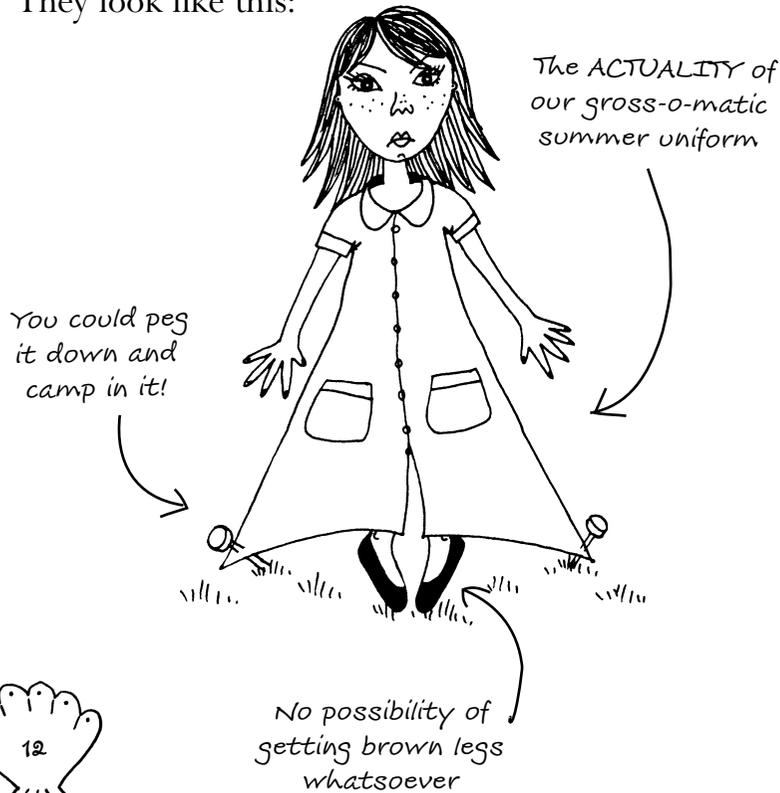
Obviously Mr. Cain tried to get us to be sensible by saying announcements in assembly like: "Students are reminded that this is a school not a

**Mr. Cain is this stricty teacher who believes in correct uniform and exemplary behaviour at all times - urgh!*

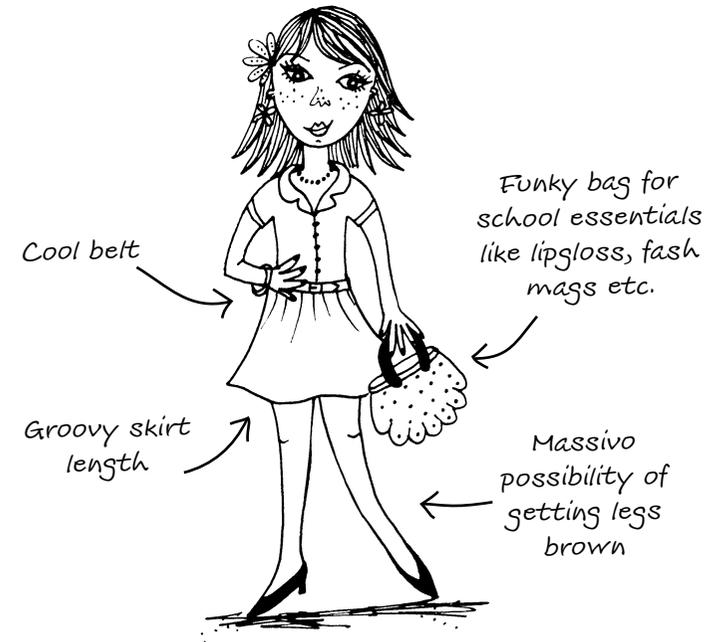


holiday camp. Sports cap drinking bottles are not to be used as water pistols. Sunglasses are not to be worn in the classroom as there have been several accidents. Correct summer uniform *only*. Rolled-up skirts, tied-up shirts and flip-flops are not acceptable.”

For our correct summer uniform, we have the choice of wearing these gross tent dresses – oh goody, **NOT!** – instead of our skirts and jumpers. They look like this:



I wish we could have a cool summer uniform made of all the things Mr. Cain doesn't want us to wear. Like, **MY** idea of summer uniform would be:



If we all wore *that* Mr. Cain would go absolutely the colour of livid and *spontaneous Human Combustion* would probably happen, which is where you just suddenly burst into flames for no reason. I know that sounds crazy but it honestly is a real thing and not made-up.



I had to avoid Mr. Cain a bit at the end of term, actually, because people had got inspired by the way I changed my school uniform to make it totally cool for the Charity Fayre and he was a tiny bit annoyed with me (i.e. his feet were boiling in his Sergeant Major boots every time he saw me and he was looking for any tiny excuse to tell me off, like me just quickly mentioning something to Jules in assembly when we were meant to be silent, or having the teeniest weeniest bit of eyeliner on when it is meant to be *No Make-up*, at least for the lower school). So I had to do a lot of crouching down behind the Multi-Cultural Celebration displays in the corridor so he didn't spot me.

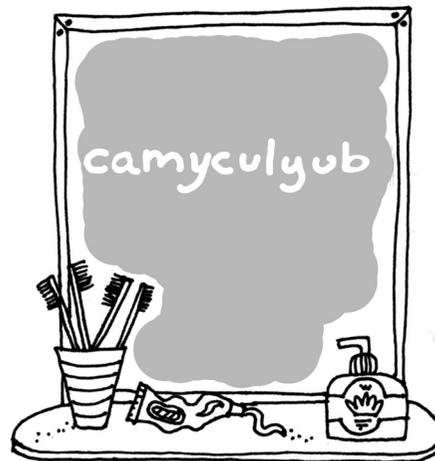
Some lunchtimes I was even forced to hang round in the computer room with Simon Driscott, as a way of Mr. Cain not spotting me (that is the last place he would expect to find me – *hee hee!*). SD is a total ~~computer geek~~ – sorry, I mean computer *wizard*. I did in fact used to call him the Prince of Pillockdom, but now I have found out that he is

quite funny and okay, and we are sort of friends, but with no fancying going on whatsoever.

Anyway, to go back to the exciting topic of **MY BIRTHDAY**, which is now in just 28 hours and 35 minutes, I have been doing subtle hints about what I want for the last few days – like writing things on bits of the phone pad:



Also, when Mum came in to check I'd put my light out one night last week I pretended to be talking in my sleep by going, "MAC make-up set...birthday...best present ever...best Mum in world." I even wrote a code on the mirror when it steamed up after I had a bath, saying:



so that it would reappear after Mum had been in for her shower and she would get the hint.

Oh, I am *sooooo* excited. I just can't wait for Exciting Things A) and B) to happen!

I'm off to sort out my holiday clothes now!

Byeeeeee!!!!!!

