

Jim Benton's Tales from Mackerel Middle School

DEAR DUMB DIARY,

my PANTS
ARE HAUNTED!

BY JAMIE KELLY

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ISBN-13: 978-0-439-62905-8

ISBN-10: 0-439-62905-5

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21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 8 9 10 11 12 13/0

Printed in the U.S.A.

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First printing, October 2004

THIS DIARY PROPERTY
OF

Jamie Kelly

SCHOOL: MACKEREL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Locker: 101

Best friend: Isabella

Pet: Stinker (beagle)

Occupation: Fashion expert and
makeover guru

WARNING



READ NO FURTHER

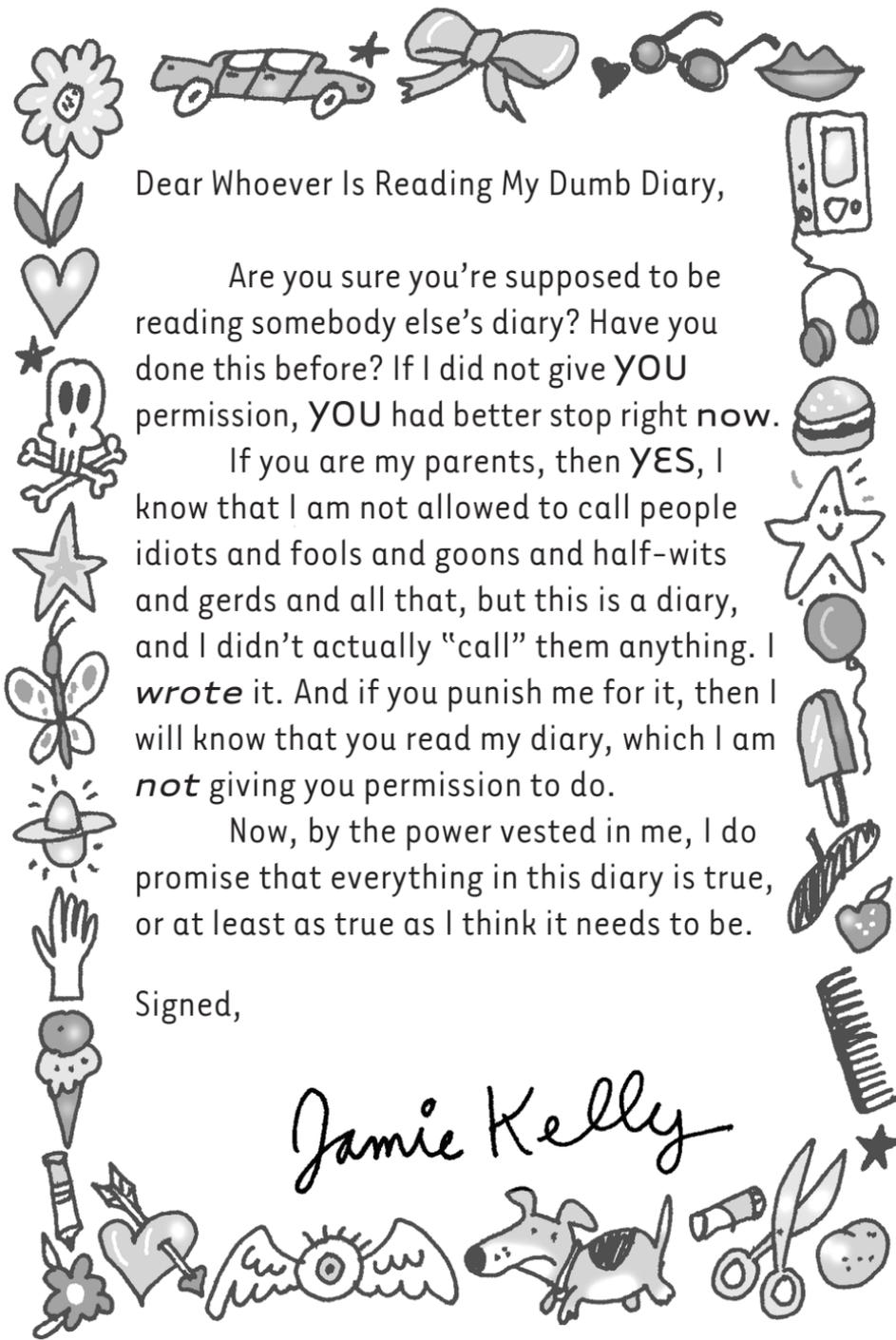
A hand-drawn cartoon illustration of a tombstone in a cemetery. The tombstone is a simple, rounded rectangular shape with a slightly curved top. It is set on a small mound of earth. In the background, there is a simple fence made of vertical and horizontal lines. The inscription on the tombstone is written in a simple, hand-drawn font. The text reads: "THE LAST PERSON WHO KEPT READING".

THE
LAST
PERSON
WHO KEPT
READING

UNLESS you
are me,

I command you to
Stop reading now.

if you are me,
sorry, it's cool



Dear Whoever Is Reading My Dumb Diary,

Are you sure you're supposed to be reading somebody else's diary? Have you done this before? If I did not give **YOU** permission, **YOU** had better stop right now.

If you are my parents, then **YES**, I know that I am not allowed to call people idiots and fools and goons and half-wits and gerds and all that, but this is a diary, and I didn't actually "call" them anything. I *wrote* it. And if you punish me for it, then I will know that you read my diary, which I am *not* giving you permission to do.

Now, by the power vested in me, I do promise that everything in this diary is true, or at least as true as I think it needs to be.

Signed,

Jamie Kelly

PS: If this is you, Angeline, reading this, then you are officially busted. I happen to have this entire room under hidden video surveillance. And, in just a moment, little doors will slide open and flesh-eating rats will stream into the room. And, like tiny venomous cowboys, scorpions will be riding the rats. So it's curtains for you, Angeline! Mwah-hah-hah-hah!



PSS: If this is you, Margaret or Sally, then HA-HA — you are also caught in my surveillance sting.



PSSS: If this is you, Isabella, don't you ever get tired of reading my diary? I mean, I've caught you doing it, like, nine or ten times, so just STOP IT. Seriously. Maybe you should see somebody about this.

Dear Jamie-
I am so sure. I
do NOT read your diary.
So get over yourself.

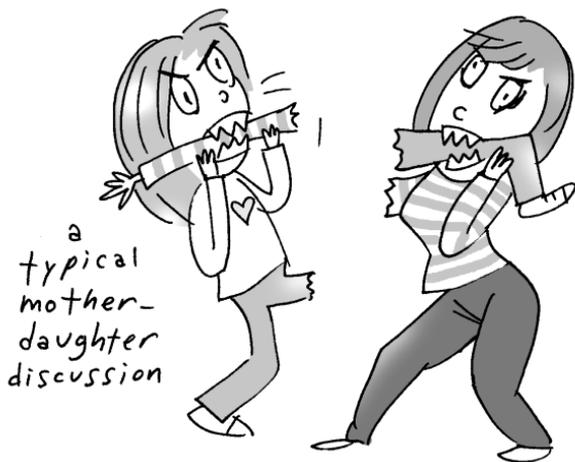
- Isabella

PS - I totally agree with
the stuff you said
about your mom.

Sunday 01

Dear Dumb Diary,

Mom and I got into a “discussion” about fashion after dinner tonight. Of course, she really has no idea what the trends are at my school. I told her that I think she can’t possibly know how important trends can be, and she said that clothes were just as important when she was in middle school. Then I said that I understood how she probably always tried her best to make a good impression on Fred and Wilma and Barney and the whole gang down at the tar pit, but times had changed.



And that's just part of the reason I'm here in my room way ahead of schedule for the evening. Here's the exchange that followed my Mom-Is-Old-As-Cavemen joke:

"Just how do you think that makes me feel?" Mom asked.

"Stupid?" I guessed.

MOST DANGEROUS THINGS ON EARTH



BEAR THAT CAN BURP UP HAND GRENADES



GIANT SHARK WITH LITTLE SHARKS FOR TEETH



MY MOM WHEN YOU'RE TRYING TO MAKE HER ANGRY

Turns out that Mom had a different answer in mind, and I'll have a little time to figure out what it was since I'm here in my bedroom about five hours earlier than usual.

I also think that Dad sitting there trying *not* to laugh might have made things worse.



You can always tell when Dad is trying not to laugh

Sometimes diaries can be so much easier to talk to than moms. I can't picture Mom letting me write on her face, and I imagine sliding a bookmark in somewhere would result in a major wrestling match.