

Jim Benton's Tales from Mackerel Middle School

DEAR DUMB DIARY,

OKAY, SO MAYBE I DO
HAVE SUPERPOWERS

BY JAMIE KELLY

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*No actual clowns were harmed in
the making of this diary. Much.*

*Superhuman thanks to Kristen LeClerc
and my Scholastic partners in crime:
Steve Scott, Elizabeth Krych, Susan Jeffers,
Anna Bloom, and Shannon Penney.*

This Diary
Property of
Jamie Kelly

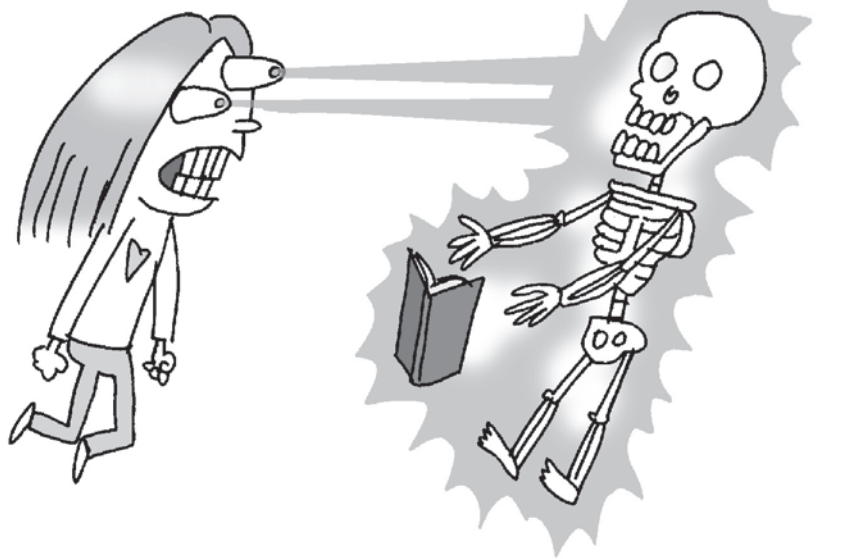
SCHOOL: Mackerel Middle School

Friends: ISABELLA, EMMILY
STINKETTE, ANGELINE, STINKER

Special Abilities: Writing, Dancing,
Glitterization, Drawing, Ant care

DON'T READ
MY DIARY!!

OR ELSE MAYBE
I'LL USE MY
LASER VISION
AGAINST YOU!!!



OR MY
ICE VISION
OR SMOKE VISION
OR STINK VISION
OR BEAGLE VISION



And YES, There
IS SUCH A THING
AS BEAGLE VISION

SO JUST WATCH IT.



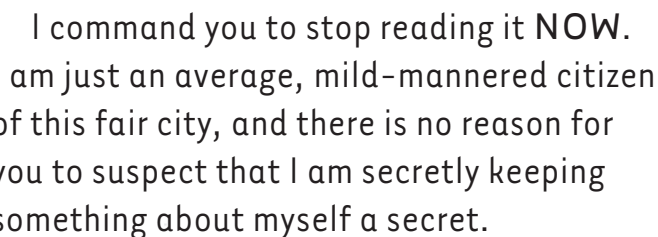
Dear Whoever Is Reading My Dumb Diary,

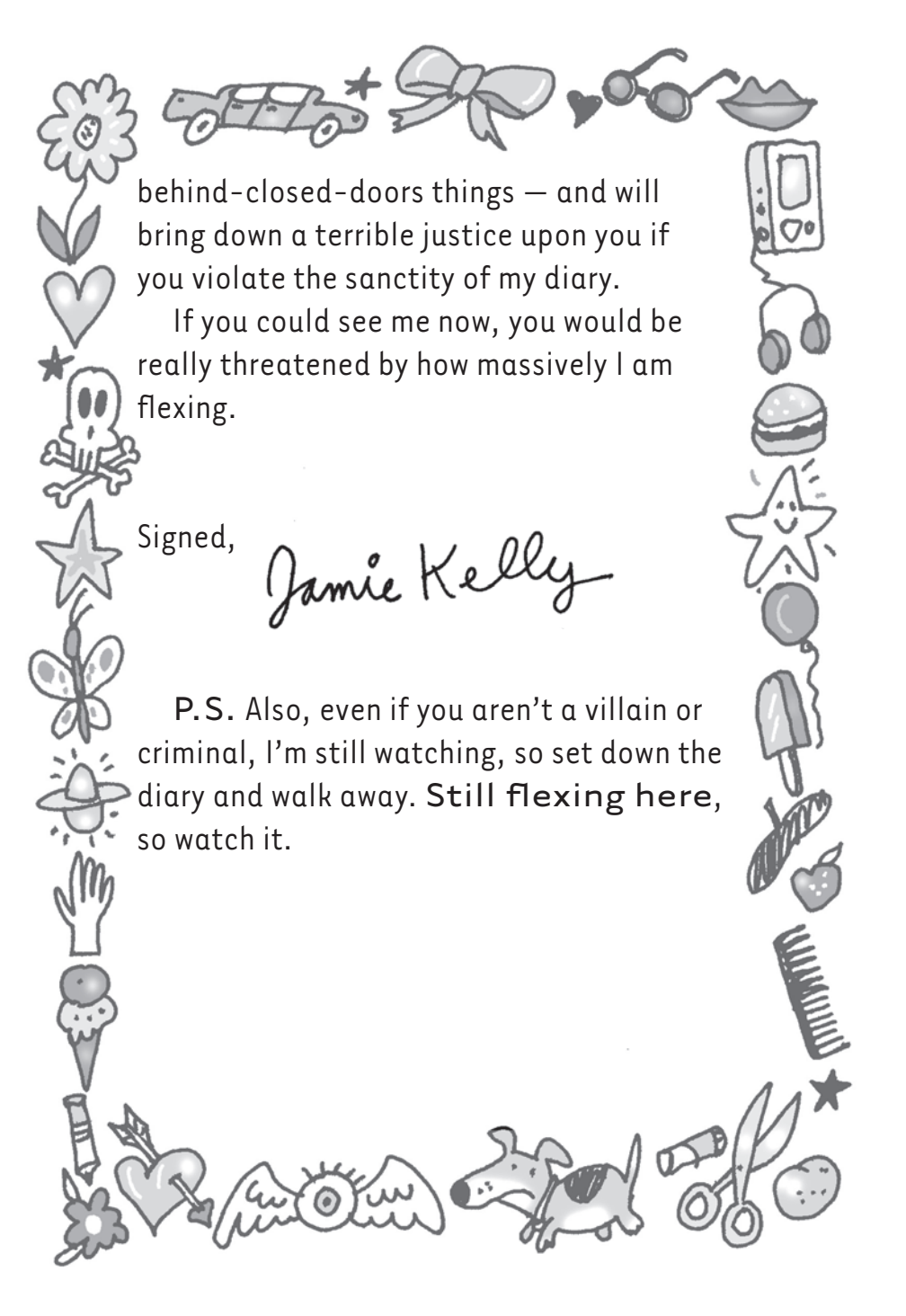
I command you to stop reading it **NOW**. I am just an average, mild-mannered citizen of this fair city, and there is no reason for you to suspect that I am secretly keeping something about myself a secret.

If you are my parents, I know that I am not allowed to call people names or point out their weaknesses or stuff like that. But I am allowed to write it. And, if you accuse me of doing anything that I've written in this diary, I will know that you read it, which I do **not** give you permission to do.

(Although perhaps you used **mutated mental powers** to read my mind. If so, you're just going to have to knock that off, too.)

All other criminals, villains, misfits, and mutants **be warned**, for I am watching your every move — except gross, private,





behind-closed-doors things — and will bring down a terrible justice upon you if you violate the sanctity of my diary.

If you could see me now, you would be really threatened by how massively I am flexing.

Signed,

Jamie Kelly

P.S. Also, even if you aren't a villain or criminal, I'm still watching, so set down the diary and walk away. Still flexing here, so watch it.

Sunday 01

Dear Dumb Diary,

If somebody ever asks you to kick her in the face, the first thing she will do is forget that she asked you to do it.

Isabella was over today, and we were working on my hair. I cut my hair really short over the summer and thought that it might grow back **beautiful** and **luxurious** because that's what would have happened in a fairy tale, and I believe that sooner or later I'm entitled to a fairy tale.

But it grew in thicker. **SO** thick, in fact, that I think that maybe each of my hair holes now has two hairs crowding out through the space that used to have only one.

Angeline also cut her hair really short, and of course hers **DID** grow back silkier and more spectacular, but I sort of expected that. I'm almost surprised that money didn't grow out of her head as well.



also my
hairs
seem
meaner

We actually had some fun with Angeline over the summer: going to an amusement park, going to the zoo, sitting quietly and listening to her hair grow. (You really can hear it. Her nails, too.)

At some point during the summer, I started to think that it was **wrong** of me to hate Angeline because of how she looked. And smelled. And laughed. And smiled. And blinked. And sat.

When I finally saw past the gorgeousness, when I peered deep into the essence of Angeline, when I tried not to see the cascading waterfall of glimmering blond satin spilling over her shoulders and puddling in the hearts of every boy nearby, I saw a person who was kind, and generous, and honest, and good. And I realized that I shouldn't hate her for her looks.

There's just **so, so, so much more** to hate her for.



And yet, I really don't think I **do** hate her anymore. While it's true that she won the looks lottery, and the personality lottery, and the soul lottery, and all of the other lotteries, none of that is really *her* fault.

So, if anything, I suppose I should pity Angeline for being born so hatable.

I know, Dumb Diary. It's hard to understand how excellent that makes me — to *not* hate somebody who seems to be asking for it — but let me clear it up for you: It makes me **PURE** excellent. As excellent as an angel with the power to shoot frosting out her eyes.

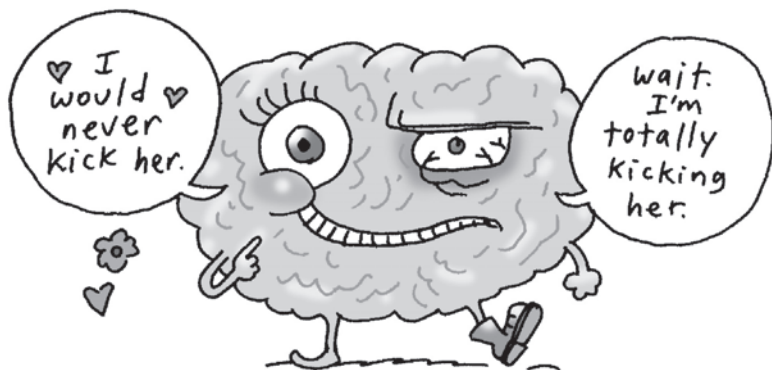
Now, back to my foot and the relationship it recently had with Isabella's face.



We were watching one of those super-stupid superhero movies after we gave up on my hair (there's really nothing to be done), and I noticed that there was a lot of face kicking — like, more than you normally see in a day. So, I commented on how fake it was. I mean: You don't have to *kick* a person's face — if somebody just *stepped* on your face a couple times, you'd go into total meltdown. (I know what I'm talking about: In fourth grade, Isabella saw an ant on my cheek while I was lying on the couch.)

Isabella said that getting kicked in the face isn't that big of a deal and that I could kick her in the face just to prove it, and I said no way I would never do that and then I kicked her in the face anyway, because I guess I **changed my mind** really quick.

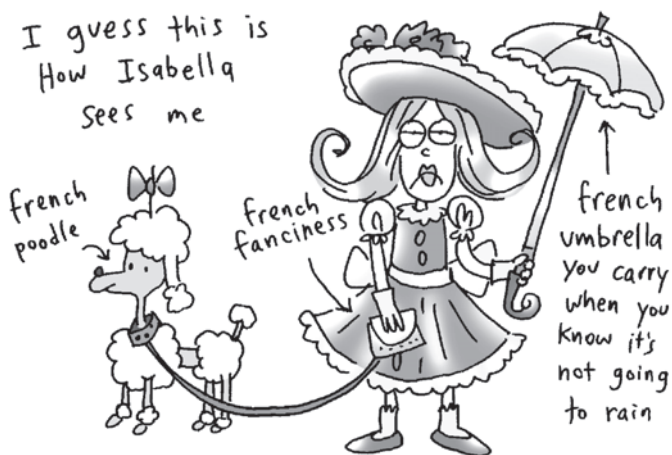
Minds are so silly.



Isabella stayed on the floor for about five minutes saying things that probably could only be understood by others recently kicked in the face. I explained what happened and helped her up. In her daze, she didn't believe that she had asked me to kick her, but mostly she didn't believe that I had **done** it.

Fortunately, I've watched a lot of crime shows and so provided a smear of her lip balm on the bottom of my sock as evidence. (Also, I pointed out that her glasses were on top of the bookshelf.)

Isabella was having a hard time with this, because her mean older brothers have made her into a good fighter. She couldn't accept that a "huge, girly, sissy girl" like me could ever land a kick on her.



Later on, as I was wiping her saliva off a wall, I apologized, but Isabella still seemed a little dazed. I feel bad now, but I think I proved my point about how dumb superhero movies are — and in particular, how much more significant face-kickery actually is than it seems in movies.

