

Don't Even Think It

HELEN ORME



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March 25th

It's the end of term. We are going on holiday tomorrow. I shan't take this with me 'cos there won't be anywhere to hide it.

We shall be away for April Fools' Day – Jimmy told me a joke to play. He said he did it to his mum and dad one year. He said you have to get a load of clingfilm and put it all over the loo – under the seat! He was creasing up laughing just telling me about it. He said it worked brilliantly – when his mum got up in the morning she didn't notice at all until her feet got wet! He said I should try it. Ali said it was OK, but Jimmy had got into a lot of trouble – his mum didn't see the joke – and he'd had to clean it all up! Jimmy said it was worth it just to hear what his mum said. I'm not sure I'll try that one, but I'll think of something else.

April 1st, April Fools' Day!

Didn't play any jokes on anyone – no one was in the mood.

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Back early – we should have stayed until tomorrow.

We went to Cornwall.

We had a cottage – it was quite small and Mel and I had to share a room. I thought she'd moan, but she seemed quite happy about it.

The first few days were great. Mel was in a good mood and she did things with me, even though she sometimes pulled faces when I suggested things.

It was really cold in the sea so Dad bought us both wet suits. Mum said it was a waste of money, but Dad said it would be good for us. They're funny things and you still feel cold at first, but you do get warmer after a bit.

Mum said she was having a *good rest*. She'd brought a load of books and sat and read a lot. Sometimes she stayed at the cottage while we went down to the beach with Dad.

Anyway, everything was going great until yesterday. Dad wanted to go for a long walk. Mum wanted to stay in and read and so did I, so Dad said Mel should go with him. She didn't really want to go, but he kept on at her until she said she would. They were gone quite a long time then Dad came in carrying Mel. She'd fallen down some rocks and hurt herself quite badly. The side of her face was all red and lumpy and she'd done something to her arm. Worst were her legs and back. She'd got deep scrapes where she'd been cut by the rock.

Mum wanted to take her to the doctor straight away, but Dad said it was too late. He said the best thing would be to come straight home. So we packed up and drove back overnight. They made up the back seat so it was like a sort of bed for me and Mel, and took it in turns to drive.

We got back in the middle of the night. They put us straight to bed.

This morning Mel stayed in bed. Dad went in to see her and kept saying he was

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sorry, over and over again. He told Mum he felt guilty and that it was his fault, but Mum said not to be daft. She said Mel was old enough to know better and that she should have been more careful. She still wanted to take Mel to the doctor, but Dad said he didn't think it was serious – she hadn't broken anything or hit her head. Mel didn't want to go either so Mum gave in.

April 2nd

Mel said she feels a bit better, but she still aches all over. I asked her what had happened. She said she just slipped on the rocks and fell down. She wouldn't tell me any more. She's gone back to being really miserable. She's been lying around all day. Dad is still making a big fuss over her.

April 3rd, Easter Sunday

I got three big eggs and a box of chocolates. Mel got one egg and a gold chain from Dad. I think he got it for her 'cos he still feels bad about her accident. She's still miserable.

Dad keeps on about how he still feels bad. He keeps going to find Mel and asking her how she is and saying he's sorry. He keeps trying to cuddle her but she says she hurts too much. Mum is getting a bit cross with him, I think. She asked Mel if she wanted to go to the hospital to be checked-up, but Mel said no – she *just doesn't want to be fussed at!*

April 4th, Bank Holiday

Some bank holiday! Mum and Dad both worked all day. Dad said *it's too busy on the roads to go out*. Mum said *I need to make a start on my work*. I wanted to go round to Ali but her family had all gone out for the day.

Mel shut herself in her room for most of the day. Dad locked himself in the study all day and worked on the computer. Mum went upstairs to *work in peace*. I couldn't even go to the library 'cos it's shut.

April 5th

Ali came round this morning. Mel went out. I don't think she was supposed to, but Dad

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had gone back to work and she got out while Mum was upstairs working.

Ali says Jimmy says we need to go and look at the old part of the graveyard. She says he went on his own while I was away and he found a bit where the baby might be buried. It's outside the main churchyard. There's a sort of shed there where they keep the mower and gardening tools. She said that Jimmy said that there are all sorts of lumps in the ground that are the graves of people who were buried outside the consecrated ground. That means not in the churchyard – like in the stuff Grandpa sent. He wants us all to go late at night again.

Mel came back at tea time. Mum had a bit of a moan, but she said she'd been with Gemma and told Mum to ring if she didn't believe her – **so Mum did!** How embarrassing can she be? I'd die if she checked-up on me like that. Anyway Gemma's mum said she'd been there all day, so Mum didn't go on too much. They've been nicer to Mel since her accident.

April 7th

Now I'm in **real** trouble. They said I was *as bad as Mel*. They said *I wasn't to be trusted* and they *don't know what to do with either of us*. **It's all Jimmy's fault!**

Yesterday he decided we needed to go back to the church at midnight. He had been looking around and said we could get into the shed. He said the baby was sure to be buried there, so it was our best chance of seeing the lady. Ali rang me to say they would be at the end of the road. It was quite hard to get out without Mum or Dad seeing, but I managed OK – I got out of the window again. It wasn't as dark in the street and not as scary as last time. We had to go right through all the graves and **that** was spooky. Jimmy showed us how to go into the shadows and run from one hiding place to another. He knew how to open the door and we all got into the shed. Jimmy said that he would keep watch through the door and we could look through the window.

I nearly died when it happened. Suddenly there was a bright light and the shed door

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came open with a crash. It was a man. Jimmy yelled **run!** and pushed him out of the way. He tried to grab Jimmy, but Jimmy was too fast. Then he grabbed at my arm, but I got away. Ali got out while he was trying to get me. Jimmy yelled to split up so we all ran different ways. I had to come home all by myself.

Ali came round this morning and told me what had happened to them. The man chased her – she is the slowest runner – and nearly caught her, but Jimmy got behind the man and pushed him so he fell over. They thought that they were going to escape, but he was a fast runner and he caught Ali again. Jimmy had to go back for her. The man was really cross and shouted all sorts of things at them. He made them tell him their names and where they lived.

The worst part was later this afternoon. Mel had been allowed out with Gemma again. (Mum had checked up to make sure.) I stayed in and read my book. Then there was someone at the door. Mum looked out and said *Now What?* It was a policeman. I

thought it was something about Mel – so did Mum – but it wasn't! It was about **ME!** The man who came to the shed last night had gone to the police. He said that there was a gang of kids who kept hanging around the church and that last night they had broken into the shed to steal things. Now I'm grounded and I'm not allowed to go round to Ali's until Mum has been to talk to her mum!

April 11th

Back to school today.

It was a horrible weekend. I wasn't allowed out at all. Mum is more stressed than ever. Dad's cool now – I told the police all about our club so Mum and Dad found out about it all. Dad said it's fine, but we shouldn't listen to everything Jimmy says. He says we should stick to finding out things in the library and stay away from the church for a bit. They both said *no more creeping out at night* so I had to promise. Dad said Mum will calm down in a bit. He said she's worried about Mel and I should try to *make things easier for her* and not get into any more trouble.

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At least the police believed what we told them. Ali says Jimmy is in the most trouble 'cos her mum and dad blame him. She told them it was our idea, but they still say Jimmy *should have had more sense!*

April 14th

Jimmy is cross with us. He says it's all Ali's fault! **Cheek!** He was the one who suggested the shed. Ali says he's not going to help us any more. Good job too. We didn't want him in the first place. **AND** he's taken over all our plans. We talked about what to do next. We are going to give up for a bit. We thought about the woods, but they are too far. Anyway, now it's the summer term there is going to be sports club after school.

April 16th

I heard our ghost late last night again. I wish it would stop. It's not fun any more.

April 17th

It's Mel's birthday next week. She wanted

a sleepover but Mum said she can't cope. She says she's too busy at school to organise anything, so Dad said that he would take Mel and Gemma and Luce bowling, then they could go somewhere posh to eat. I said I wanted to go too, but Dad said that it was Mel's birthday and it was going to be a grown-up thing now she's fourteen. I'm going to be allowed to go round to Ali's for the night – so long as I promise to **BE GOOD!**

Dad and Mum had a row. Mum says Dad is spending *too much time* on the Internet. She says *he knows how busy she is* and how he *should be supporting her*. She says she can't see why he has to *spend so much time shut away* and he *stays up too late at night*. He said he *doesn't know why she's moaning*. *He needs to work too* and anyway *she never knows when he's in bed or not because of her pills*. He said *she takes too many pills*, but she says she *can't cope without them*.

Then they both started having a go at Mel saying that the way she behaves makes things worse for them both. I got out before they could start on me.