



“Diary of an Erotomaniac”

by Rebecca Pinder

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Tuesday 13th July

Dear Diary

I sometimes think that I'm invisible at work, no one ever seems to pay me the slightest bit of attention, unless I've done something wrong. Today when I asked if anyone wanted to go to McDonalds for lunch they all ignored me and pretended to be listening to the radio through their computer on headphones, yet minutes later they all heard Jane saying she was feeling ill and sympathised with her when she had to go home early. I don't know how I can make myself more popular and I don't know that I can be bothered.

Friday 16th July

Dear Diary

I think I might have made a slight error of judgement today, I was just so sick of Jane teasing me about not having a boyfriend, that when she asked me what I was doing this weekend I blurted out that I had a date. I thought that would be the end of it, but she asked me who I was going out with. I was forced to admit “no-one” except she wouldn't accept the truth as an answer, and thought I was being coy. So I just made someone up, his name is "Paul", he sat down next to me on the bus on Tuesday, I caught him reading my paper over my shoulder, when I confronted him about this he didn't apologise he just laughed and asked me if I wanted to go for a drink. Some of this was actually based in truth, the man I sat next to on the bus today did read the paper over my shoulder, but he didn't ask me out and if he had I would have refused as he was over 50 and smelt of stale sweat. Of course by this point the other girls had heard that I had a date, amazingly none of them suspected I

was lying, not even Kerry and she suspicious of everything, including how computers work. So then the next thing I knew I was inventing a person, not just a person, I was inventing a boyfriend, it was fairly easy as I had supposedly only had a 10 minute conversation with him on the bus, so I just said he worked in a Travel Agent and lived in Finsbury Park. It was a relief at the end of the day to go home and forget it all.

Monday 19th July

Dear Diary

I spent the best part of this weekend trying to imagine a plausible first date, just in case the girls asked me any awkward questions this morning. It was lucky that I did, as within minutes of sitting down at my desk the barrage of questions began, I say barrage, it was just Kerry asking me if I'd had a nice weekend out of politeness and then Jane remembering that I'd had a date on Saturday Night, but it was good to know my prep was not for nothing. I told the girls what I had planned, "Paul" and I met for drinks on Saturday Night in Covent Garden, we weren't sure where to go at first and ended up at the Porterhouse (I know gross and not my choice, someone at his work had recommended it) and then we went for dinner and that seemed to be enough, they didn't care where we went for dinner, Wagamama, or what we had to eat, Chicken Katsu for him and Amai Udon for me, or what we did after the dinner, another drink at Jewel bar. They did ask what happened at the end of the date and so I shyly admitted that we had a little kiss at the tube station and that was it no one asked any further questions for the rest of the day.

Thursday 22nd July

Dear Diary

I did it again, Jane asked me today if I heard from "Paul" and instead of saying no and it ending there, I found myself saying yes and that I was seeing him again tonight. I know that I shouldn't have, it just since I've had a love interest I've become a lot more popular at work even when we are just talking about last night's TV, people care about my opinions now, it's like I've had a second chance to make a first

impression with everyone and I like the attention. So now I'm sitting in the cinema about to watch Eclipse just in case tomorrow someone asks me if I enjoyed the film. I didn't buy two tickets though as I thought that was taking things too far.

Wednesday 28th July

Dear Diary

Today at work I've spent almost 2 hours creating a Facebook page for "Paul", earlier on in our "relationship" I'd created an email account for him, so that I could send myself cute emails just in case anyone was monitoring my work email. However I discovered today that if you are clever with the privacy settings on Facebook, no one would see that the only friend "Paul" has is me, his wall, photos and interests are all hidden, if anyone clicks on his profile only his personal info is visible, I've got a picture of him, it's a blurry one I took of a random tourist wearing a Superman T Shirt. When I was finished I posted a suitable romantic comment on my wall and sat back proud of my handiwork. It slightly backfired as my sister was surprised to see I was listed as being in a relationship with someone she'd never heard of, luckily she chose the medium of phone to register her surprise and not my FB wall so the girls at work were still oblivious to my deceit.

Saturday 7th August

Dear Diary

"Paul" and I have been dating for 3 weeks now, so far we have been to out for drinks and dinner 4 times, we've been to the cinema twice and we also went to the Tate Modern, which was a mistake as we had our first fight in front of a David Hockney. We haven't had sex yet, as (a) I always like to wait a month and (b) he's imaginary, although I confided in Kerry that I have spent the night at his and we did everything but and it was like being a teenager again. I can't believe that I am actually getting away with this, although there is a Summer Party coming up at work and I am being pressed into buying a ticket for "Paul" so I'll have to end it soon so I don't have to worry about finding someone to be "Paul" or come up with an excuse for why he doesn't turn up on the night.

Friday 13th August

Dear Diary

Tonight is the night, as Kerry pointed out this morning today is mine and "Paul" 1 month anniversary and therefore the night I drop my knickers as she so elegantly put it. I've already let slip in a separate conversation that my flatmate has gone to visit her parents this weekend, so all day long the girls have been suggesting how I can turn my flat into a den of passion. I know it's been a while, diary, but it's not like I haven't done this before and I find the other girls interest in my love life a little intrusive and I'm slightly insulted that the girls don't think I can get this right, at lunch time Jane actually bought me some massage oil to use. For once I'm actually glad "Paul" is imaginary as there is no way any sex has ever lived up to this expectation

Monday 16th August

Dear Diary

I thought the worst had come this morning when Jane cornered me in the toilets and demanded details about Friday Night's shenanigans, I managed to fob her off with a bare minimum of details and was spared further blushes when our boss emerged from one of the cubicles and gave us both a frosty look. But no the worst was yet to come and came in the form of Kerry standing over my desk and demanding money for "Paul's" ticket to the Summer Party, so rather than admit I'd been lying all this time, I handed over £30 and then went back to the toilets and had a little cry.

Thursday 19th August

Dear Diary

I really don't know what to do about the Summer Party, I've considered asking my gay friend Tom to pretend to be "Paul", but if he'd had too many drinks his campness might show through. I've considered joining an internet dating site and then ask all single guys called Paul if they'd like to come to my work party and pretend we met on

a bus as I'm a little ashamed of the whole internet thing - if it was only that it would be fine, but I don't know how I can get someone I've just met online to pretend we've been going out for a month. So I'm just going to pretend to be sick when the day comes. I've never taken a day sick before and am a little too proud of my 100% attendance record, but surely this is worth breaking merely to save face, or maybe I should get rid of Paul once and for all.

Thursday 26th August

Dear Diary

I think it is all over between me and "Paul", tomorrow is the work Summer Party, however today at lunchtime we got into a huge fight about the fact that since we have started sleeping together, he's been staying at my flat constantly, choosing what we watch on TV, eating my food and not contributing anything except the odd orgasms. Kerry thinks I am being unreasonable, but Jane is on my side and agrees that I do need my space, I cried quite a lot during the afternoon. No one thought it odd that "Paul" and I have been communicating solely over Facebook, for the entire world to see. I thought a one sided phone call might have worked well, but I was too scared my mobile would ring mid rant to risk it. Unfortunately we won't reconcile our differences tonight and therefore his absence tomorrow night will be easily explained. Depending on how popular I remain at work without a boyfriend I may even phase him out completely over the next few days.

Tuesday 31st August

Dear Diary

The girls are being really understanding, it was almost worth making up a fake boyfriend and then breaking up with him to get all this attention. We are planning a night out to cheer me up and help me rebound as we all agree I am not ready for a new long term thing just yet. "Paul" is trying to win me back over Facebook, but I keep deleting his wall posts (after I've made sure everyone has seen them) I even sent myself a conciliatory bunch of flowers, although that slightly backfired as Jane thought I should take him back moments after they arrived. I'm not sure how much

longer I can milk this for though as I don't want to start irritating everyone, I think I'll keep this up for two or three more days and then insist that we never mention "Paul" again.

Friday 3rd September

Dear Diary

I can sense their sympathy is definitely waning. Jane has just announced her pregnancy and stolen what little is left of my emotional thunder. Now most of our spare time at work is spent discussing babies and as a single childless woman I'm finding it's increasingly hard to join in all their conversation. On top of that Kerry doesn't think I'm trying hard enough, she told me today that it's been a week since I broke up with "Paul" and I've not gotten a new man. She doesn't understand when I say I am not ready. When I try and change the subject away from all our personal lives and try to talk about a neutral subject like a play I've just seen at the theatre or the songs that are playing on the radio no one seems very interested. Even the big night out has now been postponed as Jane cannot drink.

Thursday 16th September

Dear Diary

I'm really not looking forward to work tomorrow, as at some point during the day I am going to have to hand in my notice. I'm so upset about it, as I love my job and I also haven't got any where else to go, apart from the dole queue. The problem is Paul and I are now back together, in fact we are getting married, I have a ring and everything. Karen bought me a wedding magazine when she found out and Jane suggested her unborn child could be bridesmaid. All the attention at work has been overwhelming and as much as it breaks my heart to turn my back on them, at this stage it seems easier to say goodbye than end my relationship with Paul. Hopefully I'll be able to just start over somewhere else where nobody know who I am and more importantly nobody knows about Paul.