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Verity Fibbs

Written by Cathy Brett

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Verity Fibbs

cathy brett

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teenmag



VERITY FIBBS

on being a famous daughter

“Mum’s my best friend. We talk about everything.”

10

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Interview

WEIRD 'N' WACKY WONDERFUL WARDROBES

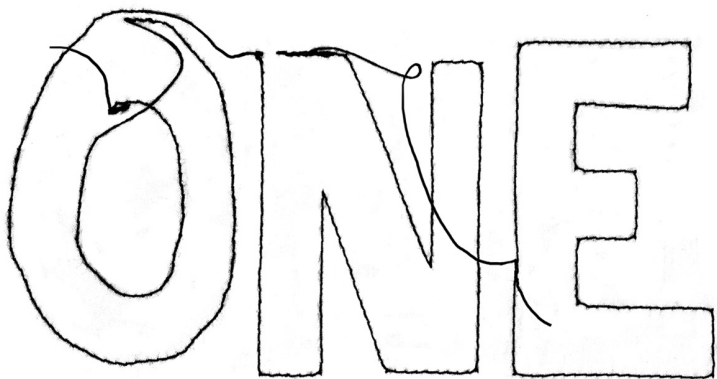
What does the teenage daughter of a famous fashion designer love, hate and dream about? More importantly, what does she wear? *Teenmag* spent an afternoon with Verity Fibbs in her fave London haunts, then was invited back to her eccentric bedroom to goss about her mum, school, friends, dating — and for a serious clothes-trying-on sesh.

TM: What's it like having a celeb for a mum? Is it totally cool or a total nightmare?

VF: Urgh! Really embarrassing sometimes. But pretty cool, too. She's a cool mum and kinda my best friend . . . second best friend. I mean, I can tell Mum anything and we talk all the time about different stuff. AND we're the same size so I get to borrow loads of her clothes.

TM: Wow! That is a-maz-ing!!





The Mole and Fat Pig Face

Something, or someone, shifted in the dark, just moving weight from one foot to the other. If she'd not been searching for it she wouldn't have noticed the slight twitch of the inky black shadow beneath the fire escape, but a twitch was all it took. OK. He was there, waiting for her. The Mole. She closed her fist a little tighter around the reassuringly smooth mother-of-pearl handle in her pocket and took a step into the alley. Away from the brash, neon-lit street, the darkness now closed around her, pressing against her body like a heavy coat.

The Mole turned his head. He'd heard the hesitant tip-tap of her boots. Part of his face was now visible in a letterbox slit between the collar of his raincoat and a black fedora tilted down to the bridge of his long, twitching nose.

'Maisie Malone?' the Mole growled, lifting a shovel-sized hand. He pushed the fedora back with the tip of a claw-like fingernail to reveal nervous, pale eyes. She was shocked.

She'd assumed his name, the Mole, was a joke, a nickname, that simply described this clandestine activity, but this man actually looked like he might live underground.

'Yes, that's me,' she said.

'Password?' The Mole blinked at her.

Password? What password? She didn't know she'd need one of those. She had brought the small suitcase full of cash and she had the pearl-handled gun in her pocket and the tiny stiletto blade, tucked into the top of her boot, just in case. But a password?

The Mole cleared his throat. He was already getting impatient and she'd been there less than a minute. She'd have to be quick and work it out or he might get twitchy and back out of the deal. He looked the twitchy type.

'Password,' the Mole demanded again. 'Or I take the goods elsssssewhere.' He hissed the last word through a gap in his teeth, then the dry skin of his cheeks creased up under his eyes like tissue paper. She couldn't tell if there was now a smile or an angry grimace behind his collar. *Creepy!* She shivered.

Password?

She stared in to the dark void of the alley behind him and tried to think. She mustn't let the Mole leave without handing over his package.

Password? Password?

Might he be asking for the password from Level 3? That was *Femme Fatale*, she remembered. But, no. That wasn't really a password, more the solution to a complicated riddle. And it had taken her *forever* to decipher.

Might it be *Black Orchid*? She'd used that password in

the Oyster Bar where she'd acquired the pearl-handled pistol from the barman. She'd been stupidly smug about guessing that one, but it had probably taken more luck than brainpower. The Oyster Bar had been busy and, while waiting to be served, her mind wandered. She had gazed at the flickering neon sign on the wall and noted that the shape bore an uncanny resemblance to the picture on a box in burlesque star Pamela Pout's bedroom on Level 5 – a fancy *Black Orchid* lingerie box. It wasn't uncanny, of course. It was a large, flashing, neon clue!

Should she try *Black Orchid* again? Or had she missed another clue? Might it have been something in the previous scene? What had been out of place? What didn't quite belong? Maybe it was that weird comment Veronica Vamp had made when she'd handed over the cash. She'd thought at the time that it was an odd thing for her to say: 'Go backwards into the alley.' Backwards? Get real! Walking backwards into a dark alley to meet an informant was a really stupid idea, so perhaps Veronica was referring to something less literal.

She looked around desperately for some inspiration. There would often be a hint in these situations – a discarded newspaper, a blood-stained banknote, a picture or a logo on the side of a pizza-delivery van. That's when she saw the sign, the name of the narrow street printed on a rusty metal panel, fixed high on the wall. *Murder Lane*. Murder.

'Redrum?' she blurted. 'Is the password Redrum?'

The Mole smiled and reached inside his coat. She flinched. Was he going for a gun? Had she got the password completely wrong?



+200 points
score: 7,700

Bonus Fact: Demons avoid
Oyster Bars because of their
Seafood Allergies

options

play

II

No, he was pulling out a small, brown package, thrusting it towards her, then making a 'hand it over' gesture with his other wide, flat hand. She relaxed a little, placed the suitcase on the ground and shoved it towards him with the toe of her boot.



crack!

-500 points
score: 7,200

options

play

II



Aahhh! What was that?

A brick behind the Mole's right ear shattered and sprayed grit and red dust all over him and the package.

We're being shot at!

Instinctively, she leapt sideways and crouched behind the fire escape, but the Mole didn't move quickly enough and the second bullet flew over her head and slammed into his chest with a sickening crunch – the sound of disintegrating flesh and bone. The Mole's body slumped against the wall and fell in a crumpled heap beside her, his startled lifeless eyes staring, straight up into hers. She turned, wrenched the pearl-handled pistol out of her pocket and waved it back down the alley.

Someone followed me.

As she peered into the gloom, a silhouette emerged through a cloud of neon-lit steam wafting from a restaurant kitchen vent. It walked towards her. She knew the dark shape instantly – the wide-brimmed hat, the sharp suit, the glowing red eyes. It was . . .

'Verity? Vee? VEE!'

'What?'

'So? What d'ya think?'

'Yeah.'

'You weren't listening, were you?'

'Yeah, I was.'

'Porky pies. You were playing that game again. You're addicted. You need help. Like, see a doctor or something . . . game addiction therapy . . . a support group.'

'Nah. I was only checking messages.'

'So what did I say then?'

'When?'

‘Just now.’

‘Um, something about jeans?’ Verity guessed, tapping the screen to log out of the *Demon Streets* game.

Her best friend was tugging at the waistband of a pair of dark denim jeans and admiring their fit in the mirror, trying not to look at the muffin bulge of white tummy flesh. ‘So? Mmm?’

‘Yeah, they suit you,’ Verity mumbled, ignoring the muffin top. She actually thought they were far too tight across her friend’s backside, too.

‘Ha! I *knew* you were fibbing, Fibbs. I asked if you could see my pants.’

‘Oh, right. Nope. You’re OK.’

‘Why don’t *you* try them on? They’re your size.’

Verity shoved the phone into her bag. She’d deal with the Mole murderer later. The jeans were almost identical to the ones Verity was wearing and, although she had a notoriously vast wardrobe, twelve pairs of jeans was probably sufficient. Her friend, however, had just tried on at least that many in her search for the perfect fit. Verity had tired of the search hours ago. She was much more interested in the hat she’d spotted on a mannequin just outside the changing room – a black fedora with a white ribbon band.

‘Meh!’ She yawned and waved a dismissive hand at the jeans, then leaned out of the changing room and grabbed the fedora. ‘Hey, Pye! I’m gonna get this. What d’ya think?’ Verity rammed the hat down and tilted it forward like the Mole had done. She half-closed her eyes, pulled up the collar of her jacket and posed in front of the mirror.

‘Not sure,’ said Pye. ‘I mean, what does the label say? You can’t be certain that hats and stuff haven’t been made by a starving child who lives on a rubbish heap and gets paid almost nothing.’

‘Uh?’

‘This recycled fashion malarkey is a fab idea and everything, but who made that hat *originally*?’

‘Oh, shut up! Who cares?’ said Verity. ‘Does it make me look fat?’

She’d asked a question that, for most girls, is both completely normal and stupidly perverse – a trick question. *Does it make me look fat?* Verity and her friends asked it all the time. It just fell out of their mouths without anxiety, because there was only one possible answer: No, of course not.

Verity’s friend Pye, however, answered without hesitation. ‘Yeah, I suppose it does . . . but you *are* a bit fat, aren’t you? Your face, I mean.’

‘PIIIIIIIIIIE! Oh my gaaawwwd!’

‘What?’

‘You can’t *say* that!’

‘Why not, if it’s true? You’ve got sorta podgy cheeks – like cute, squidgy dough balls.’

Verity rolled her eyes. ‘Pye, babe, you are terminally tactless!’

Verity and Pye, though the best of best friends and equally obsessed with fashion, in all other respects were chalk and cheese. Where Verity was exuberant, Pye was reserved. Where Verity was hare-brained and erratic, Pye was thoughtful and deliberate. Pye was an eco-obsessed vegan while Verity ate almost nothing but meat-feast pizza. Vee was a glossy brunette and Pye a frizzy blonde. But perhaps the most striking difference (and apt considering her name) was that Verity was pretty much a compulsive liar while Pye couldn’t help but tell the truth, even at the risk of causing offence.

‘Why *shouldn’t* I say it?’

‘Because it’s . . . because it’s . . . well, brutal and just a little bit mental, that’s why,’ said Verity.

‘Isn’t it worse to tell someone they’re pretty when they look like a pig?’ Pye reasoned.

‘Thanks a lot!’

‘No, not you! But I don’t like that hat.’ Pye folded her arms and glared at her friend.

Verity smirked, puffed out her cheeks then pressed her palms against her face making her lip-glossed mouth into a round pout. ‘Oinncchh!’

Pye collapsed on the floor with the giggles.

