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**Opening Extract from...**

# **Bridget and Joan's Diary**

Written by Bridget Golightly  
and Joan Hardcastle

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**Bridget Golightly** is eighty-nine years old. She won the 100 m, 800 m, triple jump and solo synchronised swimming events in the 1968 Mexico Olympic Games. Highlights of her sparkling stage and film career include two Academy Awards as Best Supporting Actress for *Little Dorrit* and *Rocky V*, and her much-lauded Titania against Sir John Gielgud's Bottom. Bridget is also a Nobel Prize-winning mathematician, renowned poet and international peace-keeper, and represented the United Kingdom in the 1959 Eurovision Song Contest with 'Boom-bang-a-ting-a-ling on a String'. When she's not busy bringing joy to the world, she likes to relax by drinking a nice cup of tea.

**Joan Hardcastle** is eighty-six years old, comes from Yorkshire and doesn't believe a word Bridget says. Except the bit about the tea.

*Bridget Golightly &  
Joan Hardcastle*

**BRIDGET &  
JOAN'S  
DIARY**

*Mad about  
The Toy Boy*



ONE WORLD

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*For Harry and Adrian –  
our two favourite toy boys.*

# NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Bridget 

## I will not:

- Drink sherry before eleven in the morning (except on Sundays. Fine to drink Tia Maria as it's essentially coffee).
- Spend all of my pension on the morning I get it.
- Be quite so talkative. Will instead be quiet, like the mysterious screen goddess I am.
- Waste money on: anti-ageing creams, bust-firming creams, books with no pictures, pregnancy tests, trousers you can't pull on, push-up bras, temporary tattoos (as getting real one), deposits on 18–30 holidays.
- Be quite so experimental with my hair colour (may put gentlemen off).
- Pretend to collapse in post office in order to push to front of queue.
- Fantasise about Father O'Brien (or his choirboys).

## BRIDGET AND JOAN'S DIARY

- Sing during bingo (seems to make people angry – no idea why).
- Order large items from Shopping Channel just so I can flirt with postman.

### **I will:**

- Embrace the feminine glory of my sixty-five-year-old womanhood.
- Appear on stage one last time (to draw the curtain on my sparkling theatrical career with one final, unforgettable performance).
- Meet the love of my life. (No intention of spending another Valentine's Day with Joan.)
- Fly in a hot-air balloon.
- Swim with dolphins.
- Get one of those marvellous pink-rabbit hand blenders. Like the ones I've seen on the late-night shopping channel.
- See the Northern Lights.
- Get a tattoo (something tasteful and subtle, like small white rose. Or Julio Iglesias).
- Go on a road trip.
- Spend less time with Joan (she really needs to stand on her own two feet).

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Joan 

### **I will not:**

- Talk to Bridget if she's drunk at breakfast.
- Lend money to Bridget when she's frittered away her pension.
- Roll my eyes every time Bridget tells one of her 'true stories' about her past. Not every time, at least.

### **I will:**

- Complete my fifty-thousand-piece Serial Killers Through the Ages jigsaw.
- Set aside morning to organise my wardrobe.
- Set aside month to organise Bridget's wardrobe.
- Be more tolerant of Bridget's singing.
- Be more tolerant of Bridget's dancing.
- Be more tolerant of Bridget (although I've no intention of spending Valentine's Day with her again).
- Check Bridget is wearing her incontinence pants every morning.
- Organise sponsored bridge evening to raise money for new dining-room carpet (see above).

## BRIDGET AND JOAN'S DIARY

- Remind Bridget that she's eighty-nine. On a daily basis.
- If all of above fail, take up smoking or hard drugs.

# JANUARY

## Tuesday 1st

Cups of tea drunk – 23 (v bad)

Teabags used – 4 (v good)

Trips to toilet – 12 (average)

Well, this is a new experience! Starting the New Year writing in a diary. (And not having a hangover – not for the want of trying, mind you. I swear that new care-home manager, Mrs Sharples, waters down the advocaat.) I haven't kept a diary since I was a little girl. It was a present from Joan. Still, I suppose it's better than last year's diary. That was already filled in by a couple called Anne and Frank. A bit weird, two people writing in the same diary, if you ask me. I wouldn't have minded but it's not as if they did anything worth writing about. As far as I could tell they just spent all their time in their loft conversion, keeping really quiet so they didn't annoy their neighbours. Although Germans can be terrible complainers.

## BRIDGET AND JOAN'S DIARY



Pleased to see that Bridget's actually using the diary I got her for Christmas. I knew it was a good idea. Time she got her thoughts and her life in order. Don't know where I'd be without this one of mine. Though she shouldn't leave it just lying around for anyone to read. I always keep mine securely locked in my bedside cabinet. I should tell Bridget to do the same... although, actually, I might not. Just in case. Suppose I should be glad she's using it at all. I don't think she even looked at that copy of Anne Frank's *Diary* that I got her last year.

### Wednesday 2nd

What a lovely time at the day centre with Joan. Had a little sing-song and fish and chips for tea. My favourite! Shame I lost my teeth.



Awful time at the day centre with Bridget. She insisted on singing. Had to turn my hearing aid off. Cheered myself up by hiding her teeth.

## JANUARY

### Thursday 3rd

I think I'll make a nice cup of tea for me and Joan. I just need to find the sugar. And the milk. And the cups. I like my tea like I like my men. Strong, sweet and dark.



I like my tea like I like my men too. Still warm.

### Friday 4th

Went to the January sales today! It was lovely, just like the Blitz all over again. Sat around for hours, me entertaining everyone with my specially extended wartime medley. For once, Joan encouraged me. She reckoned my singing was making the queue shorter. When the doors finally opened, I rushed straight in. Joan says you need a strategy for these kinds of things – she reckons it's best to make a list of the things you need and stick to it. I say, where's the fun in that? Life's for living as far as I'm concerned. I like to take in the atmosphere and really enjoy myself. Plus, as I keep reminding her, you can use one of those little plastic cards these days so you're not actually spending any money. I've got loads of them.



That's it. That's the last time I go to the sales with Bridget. It was like the Blitz all over again. Bridget was like a doodlebug, whizzing around the place causing mayhem and destruction. I told her that you have to approach these things with a clear plan but does she listen to me? Goodness only knows what she's bought. And how much it all cost! I, on the other hand, restricted myself to just the one purchase: a nice, sensible cardigan like the one Gloria Hunniford wears in the life-insurance commercial. But without the free pen.

### **Saturday 5th**

Twelfth Night tonight. Everyone else insists it's tomorrow – something to do with Jesus – but we always took the decorations down on the fifth when I was a little girl and you can't take any chances with this kind of thing. Well, if nobody's going to help I suppose I'll just have to do it on my own. And if I have to eat all the remaining chocolate baubles myself, that's just the price I'll have to pay.

## JANUARY



6.30 p.m. Bridget got it into her head that we had to take down all the Christmas decorations tonight or we'd go to hell. There's no arguing with her when she's in that mood so, for a quiet life, I went off to borrow Mr Gooch's telescopic ladder. I'm not entirely sure why he's got a telescopic ladder. Or those night-vision goggles, for that matter. He claims he's in the local neighbourhood watch but I have it on good authority that he was suspended last year for being 'a little too observant'. Anyway, my back was turned for just five minutes and Bridget was there on the windowsill in her chiffon nightdress and tartan slippers, trying to grab the end of a crêpe-paper garland and wobbling like a bowlful of jelly. Luckily, Father O'Brien was in giving the last rites to Mrs Mountjoy, so I got him to keep an eye on Bridget while I fetched a duvet to catch her in. Eventually I managed to find a king-size one and braced myself...

### **Sunday 6th**

Went to visit Joan in hospital today. Took a few things to cheer her up.

Grapes – 1 bunch

Lucozade – 1 bottle

## BRIDGET AND JOAN'S DIARY

*Take a Break* magazine – 1

Thanks from Joan for the above – zero



Things Bridget brought into hospital to ‘cheer me up’:

Grapes – zero (Bridget ate them all)

Lucozade – 1 sip (Bridget drank the rest)

*Take a Break* magazine – 1 (I prefer the *Racing Post*)

Bridget’s flirts with doctor – 5

### **Monday 7th**

Joan came out of hospital today so I created a special ‘welcome home’ dance especially for her. I based it loosely on Gypsy Rose Lee. She was so overcome she had to go for a lie down.



The other residents didn’t seem to enjoy Bridget dancing around the lounge in her knickers but I thought she was hysterical. That’s why I slapped her.

## JANUARY

### Tuesday 8th

I woke up this morning to a magical winter wonderland! I was so excited that I dashed straight out into the garden after breakfast. I'm going to build a special snow sculpture of Joan to show her how much her friendship means to me.

Temperature – invigorating!

Vest – lacy

Cardigans – zero (so frumpy)

Fun level – 10/10 (v good)



Bridget just tramped slush all over my carpet. She said she wanted to make a 'Snowjoan' but there wasn't enough snow. I said she'd make a good snow angel. All she needed to do was lie down and wait for hypothermia to set in.

Temperature – -2 degrees Celsius (28.4 degrees Fahrenheit)

Vest – thermal

Cardigans – several

Fun level – -2