



Changing life stories

# Dutch Diaries – chapter 5

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

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***2.16 a.m. Home. Curtains open. Wide awake. Katniss purring like a motorbike. Starry starry night outside.***

I went to bed last night DETERMINED that I was not going on the school trip. I didn't want to have to put up with Anya and all that STUFF. But I lay there until 11, then midnight, then one in the morning and I COULD. NOT. SLEEEEEEP!

First, because I'd been watching the Johanna Konta match all evening and I was buzzing that we've got a woman Wimbledon semi-finalist for the first time in YEARS!

But, also, even with that, my mind was going over and over and over and over all the things I couldn't stop thinking about. Too many of them. Anne Frank. Ellen White. Mo. Anya. Mum's book. Those poor people on the Mediterranean Sea. Especially them. How lucky was I to have time to worry in my nice warm bed?

I stared up at the stars and knew that, if anyone was on that sea tonight, they'd be looking at those stars. And that maybe, when Anne Frank looked out of her secret annex hideaway window, she would have seen them too.

I feel like I know Anne Frank now. I know it's stupid to say that, but I do. I feel like she is in my head, like a friend. The way the diary is written is like she is writing to a friend. And I like to think I am that friend. So, I *sort of* asked her what I should do.

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And she *sort of* laughed and said I should go on the school trip to Holland. What was one irritating girl (Anya) compared to coming to see her house and all the other stuff we're going to do?

I nodded, even though she wasn't there and I was in the dark on my own. Then she reminded me of my promise. That I'd learn about her so that I could use her memory to know more about those people crossing the Mediterranean Sea.

I'm going.

***10.42 a.m. On the bus to somewhere called Harwich, where we're getting a ferry to Amsterdam, the Netherlands, the Dutch capital city.***

I can't write much. I'm on the coach. Not next to Mo. I texted him at 2.18 a.m. last night to say I'd like to sit next to him on the bus. He texted back at 2.19 a.m. to say he'd love to. And I was happy. *THEN*.

But *NOW*... the teachers have made us sit in alphabetical order of surname. *HOW ANNOYING IS THAT? And how STUPID IS THAT!*

*WHAT. IS. THE. POINT. OF. THAT?*

I bet if the teachers were put in alphabetical order they'd be annoyed. I'm next to Danny Harte. He's okay. A bit *INTENSE!* He looked at my England top with *WHITE* on the back. He smiled. 'Ellen White?' he said. 'That's good.' So I have Danny Harte's approval!

At the back of the bus, Mo, being Mohammed Zafir is with the other Z in our year: Anya Zabrowski.



I was annoyed at first. But Mo texted me from the back of the bus to say he'll see me on the ferry, that Anya was ignoring him. I feel better about that now. (Yes, I'm selfish. I admit it.)

**3.31 p.m. In a queue on the motorway. Boring.**

I've been asleep for ages. I looked at Danny Harte as soon as I woke up. He was asleep. Desperately hope no one took a photo of us asleep on the coach together!!!! Not something I want on Instagram.

We're in the middle lane of the motorway queue to the ferry. Charlie Black, in the seat in front of me, is making rude gestures to the cars in the inside lane. Some of them are making rude gestures back.

I'm bored. But I can't read. Reading on buses makes me feel sick. Danny Harte is reading now. Some weird crime novel.

**4.21 p.m. Still in the queue.**

Mrs Mahal is a genius. She's hooked her phone up to the coach TV. We're watching Andy Murray playing in the Wimbledon Quarter final. He's winning. The commentator is going on about how exciting it will be to have a semi-finalist from the UK. Ahem... didn't he watch Johanna last night?

**8.40 p.m. On the ferry. Sitting in the café bit. With Mo. And Danny.**

This time last night I wasn't coming to Holland. This time tonight I am in the café with Mo and Danny Harte. We're having hot chocolates. And watching the lights of England fade into the night. It's kind of beautiful. We're on the ferry. I've never been on a ferry. It's a bit



frightening when you think of the deep water below and if we sunk. But it's exciting too.  
We're sailing over the SEA!!!

I texted Mum and Dad before we left land. Mrs Mahal said we'd lose reception while we're at sea, so to say good night now. Everyone pretended not to. But I reckon they all did it.

Me and Mo are good now. We had a two-line conversation about all that stuff on Monday.

I said: 'Mo. I never thought you took the book. I was just shocked to see it there. And then I was upset that you might think that I thought you took it.'

Mo said: 'I know you wouldn't think that. I was upset that you thought I thought you thought... you know.'

Then we laughed. And now it's okay.

### ***8.59 p.m. In my cabin with Ella and Bella and Nadiya.***

I just heard Anya boasting to Bella Francis that she took my mum's book off the bus when we went to see the England players training. She read it overnight. She put it in Mo's bag the next morning. I heard it. It's true. Full stop. Bella saw me listening.

That explains it all. When Bella came into our cabin, she avoided my eyes. She knew I knew. She saw me listening. But she didn't tell Anya I knew. She's scared of her. Who'd want an enemy like Anya?

Me. I would. I do.

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

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***1.47 a.m. In a four-bunk cabin. With Bella, Ella and Nadiya. In the middle of the North Sea.***

Can't sleep again. What Anya said is doing my head in. I texted Mo, but I've got no reception, of course. D'oh! I need to talk to him about it.

Because BECAUSE **because** I have this stupid nasty terrible plan that I'm going to take revenge on Anya and show her up in front of everyone else in the school and I'm going to do it in the queue at Anne Frank's house to make it worse for her... and I know that is mean and nasty, but thinking about doing that is the only thing that is stopping me doing something even more crazy.

I miss Katniss.

**Thank you for reading this far. The next episode will be published on Friday morning before 8 a.m. Next week's episodes will be published early on the mornings of Monday 17, Wednesday 19 and Thursday 20. All live from Holland, where our author Tom will be visiting Anne Frank's house and going to watch England play Scotland.**

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