

Whoopie Lee

ALMOST FAMOUS

ADELINE FOO

Best-selling Author of
The Diary of Amos Lee



Illustrated by
Stephanie Wong



Also by Adeline Foo

- ★ THE DIARY OF AMOS LEE
I Sit, I Write, I Flush!
- ★ THE DIARY OF AMOS LEE
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- ★ THE DIARY OF AMOS LEE
I'm Twelve, I'm Tough, I Tweet!

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I'm nine. I'm a middle child. My mother named me Whoopie. What can be worse than that? What is a Whoopie anyway? If you Google it, you will find Whoopi Goldberg, the American actress, the Whoopee cushion and the Whoopie pie.

No, my name wasn't inspired by any of the movies that my mother had seen Whoopi Goldberg in. Neither was it induced by the fart sound produced by the Whoopee cushion when you sit on it.

Yes, that's right, my name was inspired by the Whoopie pie! My mother ate her first Whoopie pie when she was

pregnant with me. And the name stuck. If you think that's weird, wait till you hear what my older brother is called. He's named Amos, after the cookies! My kid brother is named after a mountain: Everest!

Being a middle child is tough. It means you're the last to get noticed. Amos always gets what he wants because he is the oldest. He gets to choose the first chocolate in the box, and if there's only one Oreo doughnut in a box of six, he will get it, because he's the Big Brother. As for Everest, the youngest, he gets all the attention in the family. When Dad or Mum comes home, the first thing they ask is, "Where's the baby?" or "Ooh-coochie-coochie-coo... how's baby today?" No one remembers to ask about me.

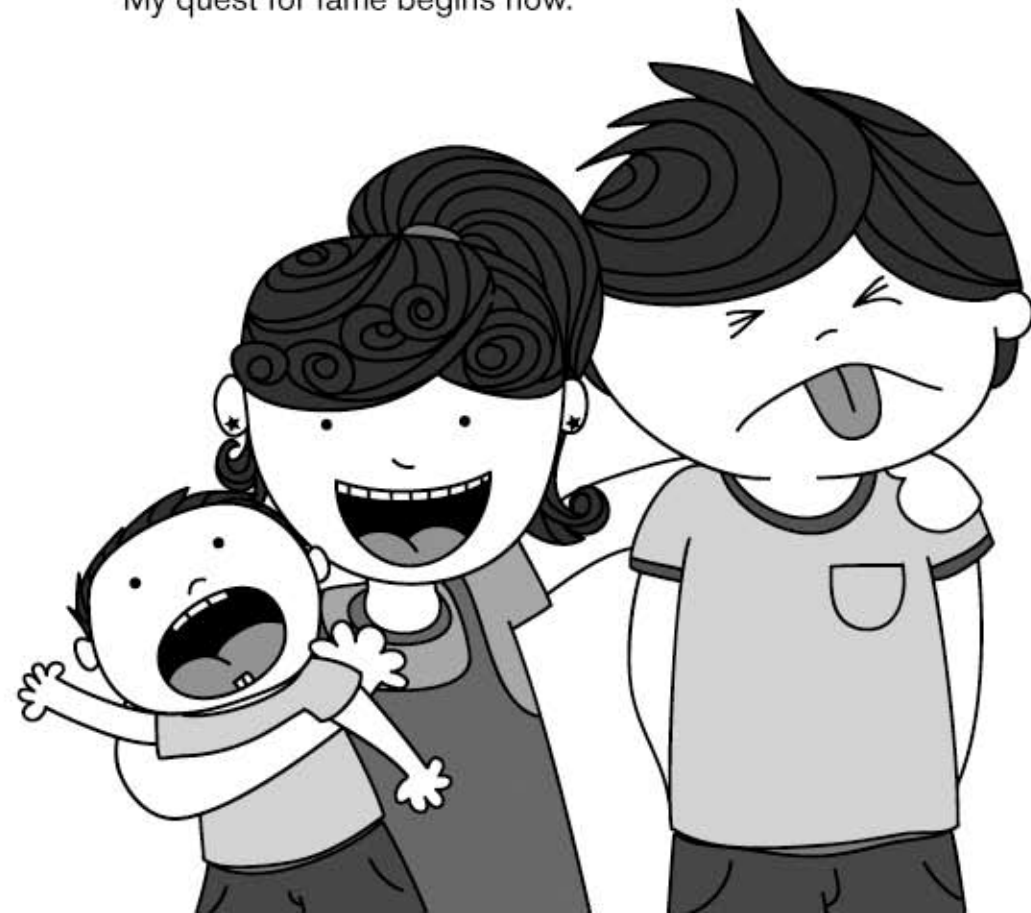
When I was younger, I had to whine to get my way. Amos coined the acronym WPI from Whoopie. Amos says it stands for "Witty, Pretty and Intelligent". But I know he's lying. I've read his diary. He meant it to be "Whiny, Pesky and Irritating".

Once, I told Dad I'd like to change my name. He just laughed and said I have the sweetest name in the world. "Whoopie, the Big Oreo Pie. You're the sweet, creamy vanilla frosting!" That's the nicest thing anyone has said about my name.

I am the middle child stuck between two brothers. I am the centre – the sticky part that holds the two pies together. I guess Dad's right; my brothers would be plain boring without me. They had better not forget that!

Guess I'm stuck with it. Whoopie Lee, that's my name. Whiny, Pesky and Irritating? Never! I'm going to prove that I'm better than Amos. The Whoopie pie definitely tastes better than a Famous Amos cookie.

One day, I will be even more famous than my brother. My quest for fame begins now.



a new beginning

Amos, at thirteen, is in secondary school. He didn't make it to Raffles Institution after his PSLE. Raffles Institution is one of the oldest and most prestigious schools in Singapore. It is named after Sir Stamford Raffles who founded Singapore in 1819. I know Mum cried when she realised that Amos was nowhere near the cut-off mark to get into Raffles Institution.

Really, what was she thinking?

I knew that he wouldn't make it! He had been spending too much time on computer games and shooting stupid pigs with angry birds on his iPhone. Besides, he's just not smart enough.

Hasn't mum heard the saying before? There's always a black sheep in the family. In ours, there are two. The cookie and the mountain. As for me? I'm the shepherd. I'm always the one who has to look out for my brothers, like getting Amos' school uniform ironed, his tube of toothpaste replaced when it's finished or top up Everest's drawer of pull-up pants when they're out. But I know my brothers will never admit I'm important.

Anyway, over dinner last night, Mum suddenly asked me if I wanted to write a book. A book! She said I could



start by recording events in my life, in the form of weekly chapters. Hmm... I like that. Only important people keep diaries, right? I know Amos became very famous in school because of his toilet diary. He even created "Poop Fiction" for the school magazine, gaining a huge following on Twitter. I wonder if that will make me famous, carrying on his legacy?

But I'm **DEFINITELY NOT** writing in the toilet. Yes, my brother does a lot of writing in the toilet. He says he can only find his creative spark when doing his big business.

Let's see how this sounds...

The Diary of Whoopie Lee

Better than the Diary of Amos Lee!

Guaranteed to keep you longer in the toilet.

I love it.

Mum, I know you're reading this. I've looked up the words in the dictionary.

FROM THE DICTIONARY

★ **Acronym:** [ak-ruh-nim]

*A word formed from the initial letters of other words.
(Oh I get it, like KISS – Keep It Simple, Stupid!)*

Legacy: [leg-uh-see]

Something that is passed on.

That's good! And no, I did NOT cry when Amos failed to get into Raffles Institution, my eyes were tearing from frying eggs and onions.

Some things just never change.

Mum used to read Amos' diary too.

THE DIARY OF WHOOPIE LEE

Mum calls this the biography section.

(The dictionary says it's a description of a person's life.)



ABOUT ME

HEIGHT: 1.3 m

WEIGHT: 25 kg

HAIR: Long

COLOUR: Black

WHAT I LOVE TO DO:

Reading and watching television.

FAVOURITE BOOKS:

Junie B. Jones by Barbara Park, St. Clare's by Enid Blyton, Science Encyclopaedia, The Dictionary.

FAVOURITE TV SHOWS:

Hannah Montana, Fighting Spiders.

FAVOURITE CARTOONS:

Winx Club, SpongeBob SquarePants, Mr. Bean and Go, Diego, Go (only because I have to babysit Everest).

FAVOURITE MOVIES:

Despicable Me, Megamind, all the Shrek movies!
And of course, Toy Story too.

FAVOURITE HOBBIES:

Collecting Pokemon cards (the ones Amos doesn't want),
drawing, singing, thinking of ways to be famous!

FAVOURITE FOODS:

1 **The French Macaron** – Made with egg whites, icing sugar, sugar and ground almonds. The English call it a macaroon; the French call it a macaron. It looks like mini “burgers” with buttercream or jam sandwiched in between. When you bite into it, it's so light that it simply melts in your mouth! Ummm...

2 **The Japanese Dorayaki** – Two small pancakes sandwiched with a filling of red bean paste. It's really soft and sponge-like. I eat it for breakfast and supper!

3 **The Ming Jiang Kueh** – A local peanut-filled pancake! It's sold at coffeeshops and wet markets, made fresh on the spot. When cooked, ground peanuts and sugar are spread over the pancake, then it's folded in half and cut into slices. Other types of fillings include peanut butter and red bean paste.

(See, every culture has a Whoopie pie. It just comes in a different form. And remember this – the centre is always the best part! The sweet, creamy filling.)

FAVOURITE MUSIC:

Baby by Justin Bieber (Ohh wooaah...), Nobody Nobody But You by The Wonder Girls, and Home (the song that the school made us learn for the National Day celebration).

There is a new, awesome remake of Home! I've just heard it on www.thisishome.sg. Check it out!

MY BEST FRIEND:

Morticia Phui. She's in Primary Three like me. I've known her since we were seven! She's really cute and funny. But she's not very bright. It's ok. I can think for two.



MY FAMILY:



Grandpa and Grandma are retirees.

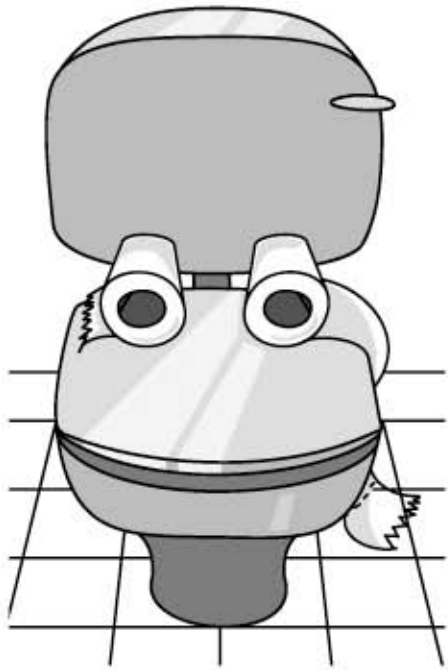
Dad works at the airport.

Mum's a blogger.

Everest (The BIG FAT MOUNTAIN baby.)

Me, WPI Witty, Pretty and Intelligent.

Amos (Who's not too smart. Cookies get eaten, don't they?)



WEEK
01

THE HAPPY TOILET PROJECT

Our class got involved in a project to make the school toilets user-friendly. My teachers called it the Happy Toilet assignment. I didn't have any idea of what to do, until Amos started calling me a Fart Queen. See, I had been farting really badly. All thanks to Mum's latest craze with onion and garlic. She puts them into everything! So when Amos called me a Fart Queen, I decided to get back at him.

I used Mum's plastic Tupperware box to trap all the gas I released. It took me two hours to make five collections. When Amos was asleep, I released the Tupperware of gas into his bedroom. Too bad my brother's a pig, he slept through all that smell.

I couldn't sleep after what I did, so I stayed up and read all the newspapers in the flat. I came across some funny articles related to poop and I got really excited! I found the answer for my Happy Toilet assignment! Maybe this would make me famous... producing posters for the school toilets! Bet the English teachers will be grateful to me for making kids read. Every minute of reading helps with improving your English, even when bombing.

I asked Mum if she would help me design my posters. She said she was happy to. She created a template for a poster using Microsoft Office Publisher. It was so cool!

Here's a list of what I could do:

★ **1 Poop Art**

All about poop-inspired art.

★ **2 Potty Training for Babe**

Pigs in Taiwan are being trained to poop in the right places. This will be funny!

★ **3 Gourmet Coffee from the Palm Civet Cat's Poop**

Coffee cherries eaten by this cat are collected from its poop and used to prepare one of the world's best coffees.

Ta-da! Am I clever or what? Mum even promised that she would put up my poster on her blog. But when I asked to be paid, she said, "You're nine! Why do you need so much money?" It's so unfair! I know Amos used to get paid when he contributed to her blog. Why can't I get paid?

What's even worse, I got a note from Amos after school. He wrote:



How did he know what I did?



If you love anything pink, sleep with a bedtime bear, and brush your teeth every time after a meal, you should seriously skip reading this. But if you have an older brother you want to kill for always getting you into trouble, **MEMORISE THIS ENTIRE ARTICLE!**

Step 1 When you find your brother digging his nose, notice where he discards his pickings. Run a piece of scotch tape over them when he has left the room. Tape the evidence on a piece of paper and note the date they have been picked up. There'll come a day when this gross behaviour of his will come in useful, like when he starts bringing girls to the flat. You can use this and threaten to show his friends! He will do anything that you ask him to.

Step 2 The next time your brother fails to put away his smelly socks, collect them with a pair of disposable gloves. Hide them till night time. Slip the socks into his pillow case just before he gets into bed. When he finds the socks, he would be disgusted beyond words. If he doesn't, you can always remind him to wash his hair before school.

Step 3 Download a photo of a beautiful movie star or a famous model. Someone like Emma Watson (a.k.a. Hermione in Harry Potter) is perfect! Be sure to find a picture where she's wearing a sleeveless dress. Use a fine-tip black marker to draw lots of hair in her underarm. Stick it up beside his bed when he falls asleep at night. You'll be amazed at how loud he can scream when he sees it in the morning.

I showed it to the teacher-in-charge of Happy Toilet, but she told me it was "totally irrelevant". Humph!

**WEEK
02**

HOW TO BE FAMOUS



What is the best way to gain fame? Mum said if I study hard enough and become the top pupil in school, that's the fastest way to become famous. Dad said if I appear on TV, like if I'm being interviewed as the top PSLE student in Singapore, that's a great way to become famous. Really, so unimaginative!

Amos said if I win money in 4D or Toto, I will be famous. I don't trust him. I may be nine but I'm not stupid. I know it's against the law for children to buy lottery!

But, I've figured this out on my own. If I keep an unusual pet, I can be famous!

I have ruled out the usual suspects. Forget dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs or terrapins. I'm thinking of:

- 1 A Tarantula
- 2 A Rat, or
- 3 A Cockroach



You will NOT keep any of these in our flat!

I'm **CRBT**
(Crying Really Big Tears!)

Just use 'sad', please!

You can never win with Mum.

**WEEK
03**

BECOMING a PLAYWRIGHT



I guess I have to find fame another way. Mum suggested I could write a play and have it staged. Wow, I guess that will make me the youngest playwright in Singapore? This sounds like a good idea. Hmm... maybe I could borrow one of Grandpa's old kampong tales... let's see, what about The Tale of the Headless Chicken?

A Play by Whoopie Lee, the Genius Playwright

SCENE ONE

A forest setting. A fowl, with red-orange feathers and white skinny legs, is pecking at earthworms in the ground. An old man enters the stage.

(Old Man pretends to be scared. He thinks for a bit. He sneaks up behind Red Fowl and grabs it by the neck, strangling it as it screeches madly.)

OLD MAN Hey, chicken! I'm looking for meat to cook in my wife's stew!



RED FOWL Help! Murder!

OLD MAN Stop that screeching!

(Red Fowl springs up and cackles in shock.)

(Old Man whips out an axe and chops off Red Fowl's head. It rolls to the ground. The headless Red Fowl runs around for a minute, frightening the old man. Before the old man can react, Red Fowl cackles madly before dashing off stage.)

RED FOWL No! You can't eat me! I'm the Guardian of the Ancient Spirit. If you kill me, it would take its revenge on you!

(Red Fowl does a fierce chicken dance to mean business.)

OLD MAN What just happened?

OLD MAN What is the Ancient Spirit?



(Old Man picks up the head of Red Fowl.)

RED FOWL It's a FIERCE animal spirit! It will rip you into pieces! Raarr!

OLD MAN The missus will just have to cook with this little piece.

(Old Man exits the stage.)

End of scene.

CASTING CALL FOR ACTORS – ONE OLD MAN & A CHICKEN

Mum read my play. She said it's funny! She helped me post a casting call for actors on Yahoo! I was so excited when I received eleven replies!

Nine people asked if they needed to put on a chicken suit. I replied immediately. I said I didn't know where to get one. I suggested that they could just stick feathers on their head.

Two e-mails were from volunteers who worked for the Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. They said I was "displaying blatant disregard for animal rights". They said I should be banished to Malaysia to clean out chicken coops. I wrote back and told them I was only nine. Then they replied to say that they would excuse me, but I have to promise not to use a real chicken on stage.

They said that this particular chicken is known as the "red junglefowl" and is an endangered species. I looked up the word in the dictionary. I wrote them back a reply: "GAL!"

What does "GAL" mean?

Get a life.

★ FROM THE DICTIONARY

Blatant Disregard: [bleyt-nt] [dis-ri-gahrd]

Outright or rude lack of attention for something.

Banish: [ban-ish]

To be sent away.

Endangered Species: [en-deyn-jerd] [spee-sheez]

Group of animals at risk of becoming extinct.

(Like the dinosaurs? Awesome!)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adeline Foo, the best-selling author of *The Diary of Amos Lee*, is a graduate of New York University Tisch School of the Arts Asia. She lives in Singapore with her husband and three children.

Adeline is yet to get listed in the Singapore Book of Records. The closest she got was when she talked her mother, who is sixty-eight years old, into twirling the hula hoop for an hour! But as there were no other witnesses to support the claim, the feat wasn't accepted.

Meanwhile, if you have an idea for an incredible feat that will get you listed in the Singapore Book of Records, do write to her. You can reach her through her website www.amoslee.com.sg. Please include your name, age, and school in your e-mails. Hopefully it's something that no one has thought of, like building The Biggest Whoopie Pie in Singapore.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Stephanie is a senior designer at Epigram, an independent publishing house dedicated to producing well designed and thought-provoking books.

For other "adorkable" stuff that Stephanie has done, visit www.steffatplay.blogspot.com.

With Amos struggling to keep up with studies in secondary school, he has less time to serve as a toilet-diarist.

That's where his sister Whoopie (infamously known as WPI) steps in. Her diary is different. She doesn't follow any rule of thumb. She writes what she wants, when she wants, how she wants. From dabbling in playwriting to training the World's First Human Poodle, Whoopie Lee will stop at nothing to prove that she is more talented than her brother!

What did Amos call her – Whiny, Pesky and Irritating? No, never, she's going to set the record straight.



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