

29th October 1989

Dear You,

(I'm not addressing this to "Future Me" because I'm not any version of you.)

You go to all the trouble of writing to me from the future about "that boy" but you don't tell me who he is. Is he someone I already know? Someone I already like? Someone I have already lost? Someone I'm yet to meet?

And what the hell do you mean by "be patient because you will end up with him despite thinking it's all lost"? How do I end up with him and when? This week? (Is that why I got the letter now?) Or next week? Next month? Next year? Or is this about the formal? If so, that's bogus because that's like two years away?

I hate you so much because now there's this huge expectation hanging over my head. And I so quit expectations after the last school dance. If you were (are?) me you would know that. You would know how I was just setting myself up to be hurt because I expected a particular thing to happen. Built it up in my head to be big and wonderful and absolutely possible. And how I decided that if I expected nothing and nothing happened I couldn't be disappointed. On the other hand, if something happened it would be a pleasant surprise.

You've stuffed everything by telling me to expect this thing with this boy. You probably thought the letter was an ace idea, but it's not. God, I hate you.

What did you really hope to achieve with the letter? I'll tell you what I think you thought was going to happen. You probably got it all wrong when you were at high school with "that boy" and thought you could somehow get it right by sending your stupid letter. This has nothing to do with me or hope or him, like you say it has in your letter. It's got everything to do with you and how you messed up.

Mum calls stuff like this "self indulgent" and I'm so not indulging you. You don't get to live your life through me. I'm taking your letter and burning it in the BBQ and forgetting I ever read it.

Thanks for nothing.

Me

PS: I'm not going to grow up to be a dead shit like you. If I ever get a chance to write me a letter from the future, I'm going to do the grown up thing and choose not to. I'm going to spare me from what you've done.

About the writer:

Jodi Cleghorn (@jodicleghorn) is a Brisbane-based author, poet, editor and small press owner with a penchant for the dark vein of humanity. She has been writing letters since the dawn of time. Her love affair with letters culminated in the epistolary serial/novel *Post Marked: Piper's Reach*, co-written with Adam Byatt.