

SENDER: FUTURE D_____

Dear Past D_____,

I found your old letter as I was cleaning the attic. It brought a smile to my face, so I thought to write back. You ask whether writing still helps me calm down. I wish I could tell you I'm a researcher for the department of Psychology now, with a few published papers already under my belt! I wonder how you'd react to knowing that, as we looked for some inner peace, we found a way to help others as well.

You wrote about A_____, B_____ and C_____, about how we all met. To be honest, I barely remember our life without them. They have been a constant presence, ever since that beautiful summer you were so afraid of.

I am still close to C_____, but instead of having a senior watch over me at school, now I get to take care of an old friend through a hard time. Alcohol problems. I guess I'd want to forget too, if I saw my mother die and my father get stuck to a wheelchair in the same car crash. I've seen C_____ reject job offers and give up on dreams to be there for the family. Always the caring one. You saw it yourself. I'm glad to say things haven't changed.

A_____ of course had the opposite reaction, like any younger sibling would. Fixating on the idea of getting a boating licence, constantly talking about seeing the world. I remember how I admired that restless energy as a teen, and I still do, but I also know that C_____ is greatest fear is to see A_____ leave, to be left alone in Hell. I can see it in my friend's eyes, despite every loud display of approval for A_____ choices and every encouragement to chase after happiness.

And what should I say of B_____? As expected, the cool one always gets what the cool one wants: E_____. They are a nice couple, and B_____ alone isn't so bad either. Certainly better than you know. Sometimes the band jokes around, asking when they plan to get married, and you should see the serious face B_____ pull! Everything needs to be just right. B_____ would never stop going on about wedding plans if it weren't for C_____, always rushing to change the subject. I see a bit of jealousy there. You'll soon discover the poor thing had a crush on E_____ as well, but I have no doubt my guardian angel is happy for our friend.

What else can I add? There's a great summer ahead of you, perhaps the best of your life. I am a bit jealous too. Jealous of my teenage self. Can you believe that? You'll learn to smile, you'll see. You'll make me proud of you, and I think you can be proud of me as well.

D_____

