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The Letter Q: Queer Writers' Notes To Their Younger Selves



Synopsis

If you received a letter from your older self, what do you think it would say? What do you wish it would say? That the boy you were crushing on in History turns out to be gay too, and that you become boyfriends in college? That the bully who is making your life miserable will one day become so insignificant that you won't remember his name until he shows up at your book signing? In this anthology, sixty-three award-winning authors such as Michael Cunningham, Amy Bloom, Jacqueline Woodson, Gregory Maguire, David Levithan, and Armistead Maupin make imaginative journeys into their pasts, telling their younger selves what they would have liked to know then about their lives as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgendered people. Through stories, in pictures, with bracing honesty, these are words of love and understanding, reasons to hold on for the better future ahead. They will tell you things about your favorite authors that you never knew before. And they will tell you about yourself.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

‘The letter Q stands for ‘queer,’ of course, and in this lovely, often funny, and always heartfelt book, more than five dozen celebrated writers send letters to their teenage selves... Though similar in intent to Dan Savage and Terry Miller’s *It Gets Better* (2011), this collection offers its own uniquely personal promise to young readers. In any case, both are books that may save lives and we can never have too many of those. -- Booklist, starred review ‘A thoughtful, humorous, and moving collection of letters and comics; Read together, the letters become a powerful refrain. -- Publishers Weekly ‘With its repeated exhortations to relax more and worry less,

this book might be a life-saver for some–and could function as an author list, as well, for teens wanting to read more about People Like Us.â • -- Horn Book

Sarah Moon is a teacher, writer, and translator. She lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. James Lecesne is an actor, writer, and activist. His Academy Award-winning short film, "Trevor," inspired the founding of The Trevor Project (www.thetrevorproject.org).

This book is a great read that appeals to gay people of all ages. This book needs to be on the shelves of high school and public libraries everywhere. When I was struggling as a teenager I would have loved to have seen this book and hear how people, just like me, really turned out to be happy, healthy, and successful. This book is very easy to read as the letters are of reasonable length and interspersed are some great comics making the same point.

I really enjoyed this book as it was extremely uplifting to see a successful adult connecting with their younger self at a moment of desperation, sadness, loneliness and when they are still trying to find out who they are. This for me is a book about hope and whilst the sexuality of the author is a very important trigger, I just engaged with each letter one by one because every teenager has to find their own identity and sexuality. It was a very easy read. I laughed and had an occasional tear.....thanks for a great compilation and a fabulous read!

I loved this book. It is original, heartfelt and real. I have bought copies to give to friends as well. I highly recommend this book for anyone who is LGBT or who knows and loves someone who is.

loved these letters to self I found pieces of me in every one of them...

As Fats Waller wrote, I Want to sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter and I will. Thanks James and Sarah for this important book. Thanks Melanie and Michael for the way you think.

This anthology of letters didn't simply serve as a reminder that there is life after adolescence and you will have choices in your adult life that you might not have had as a child, but it's a really interesting read. I enjoyed each and every letter in this book. What a wonderful resource to pass along to young adults who may find exactly the words they needed to hear.

As a forty-something who was hoping for an uplifting read, I found this collection unexpectedly depressing. I feel like it was written by the ones who came out on top in life's arms race. Where are the writers whose prince or princess left them after 15 years and find themselves lonely? Or the ones shouldering all the responsibility for dying parents because their straight siblings have more important lives to live? Or the ones who are struggling professionally and financially? I feel that any smart teenager who reads this book will quickly see through the relentless whitewashing. The least one can do is to be honest. It boggles the mind that everybody's life in this book could really have turned out so great. Hasn't any of these writers ever regretted anything? Or struggled with illness or depression? Or indeed suffered any adversity after high school graduation? Reading this book just makes me feel even more of an outsider.

This review has been crossposted from my blog at [The Cosy Dragon.com](http://TheCosyDragon.com). Please head there for more in-depth reviews by me, which appear on a timely schedule. This isn't a novel at all. It's a collection of letters by queer authors to their younger selves. The book was produced because every young person identifying as queer has a right to know that their situation of feel lost, alone or misunderstood isn't unique - there's someone out there that can understand. I enjoyed it because it had so many emanations with my teenage years, and it's always pleasing to read about other success stories. Another thing is that I often read short story collections to find new authors whose writing style agrees with me. Those are just letters, but the authors hint enough about themselves that I can tentatively pick ones that I'd buy books to try. I initially picked up this novel because one of my favourite authors, Julie Anne Peters, has a contribution in it. I'd also already encountered Erika Moen from her comic, DAR. I had fun trying to pick whether the writer was male or female in each case where it wasn't immediately obvious. A weird thing to do when the authors are all queer and any sexuality or gender could be presented. I didn't do this in a judgemental way, just in an interested way. If you're queer, you're questioning, you just want to understand more about what queer people go through, this could be a good novel for you to read.

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