

A letter of intent

Alice.

As often as I may do otherwise, I will not insult your intelligence by naming this for what it is. Letters nowadays seem only to have three roles to play; the bill, the Christmas greeting and the paper cupid. As you owe me nothing, and it is currently March, there is no great mystery attached to my words. You owe me nothing, but I beg- if I have misunderstood or misinterpreted our last few months of interaction, disregard this letter completely. I would not wish for the progress we have made to be undone.

Six months ago, you told me you hated me. It was certainly not the only time this has happened in our histories, but it was the first time I was struck by the weight of what it would mean for those words to be truly sincere. The effect this had on me was probably not immediately obvious; I am not adept at conveying that sort of emotion, a fault of which you are intimately aware. In fact, I was most likely sharper towards you than usual. I wish my pride was tempered enough to allow me to sincerely apologise for my actions. However, it is not, and so you must content yourself with knowledge of the utter and secret relief I felt upon your continuing to goad me as normal.

Memories run deep between our hearts, and I am not so naive as to believe that they can be simply ignored or overwritten. However, I am so naive as to wish that we could manage to live on good terms long enough that these years spent feuding and plotting become only a small portion of our time together. It is hardly the most romantic of goals, but it is a start. Oh, this is a wretched second beginning indeed! I am already three paragraphs into a letter of intent, and yet I am still unsure as to what my intent is. As strange as it may sound, I do not know what I want us to be; I only know that I want more than this.

Six months ago, you told me you hated me, and I discovered how much I cared. It has taken me time to come to terms with this, along with the fact that our current state of cold war is no longer enough. I want to have conversations that aren't competitions; I want to be able to freely sit next to you; I want to explain my opinions instead of spitting them across the table. Please don't get the wrong idea here- I truly enjoy our little verbal sparring matches, and wouldn't lose them for the world. I just wish you would smile at me more, because when you smile at me, I feel like I am standing in the sun.

So, all things said and done, consider this a letter of my intent to try.

I am not brave enough to say this to your face; my preferred liquid courage has always been ink. Similarly, you must forgive me for breaking what I've always understood to be an unspoken agreement between us. I thought I could cheat it in pen.

Conceivably yours,

Amanda.

Well damn.

Alice stared blankly at the sheet of creamy white writing paper before reading it again, and then a *third* time, just to be sure. With a rather undignified 'eeeugh?'ing sound, she flumped down into her chair, a strangely calming mix of bewilderment and pensiveness rushing through her brain as she scabbled to get some kind of grasp on the situation.

Mandy had only gone and written her *a letter of intent*.

Alice had thought that people stopped writing those back in the age of corsets and man-tights-as-daywear; she hadn't even heard them mentioned outside of Samuel Richardson novels. (The thought of prim little Mandy reading Pamela was actually quite funny- Alice could almost hear her disapproving tuts at the lack of common sense.)

(Or maybe not so disapproving after all.)

(She *had* written...)

And that was the problem, wasn't it? Mandy had said to disregard the letter if she was mistaken, but that was an impossible dream, even if she was. This had changed them. Overdramatically and with a tone better suited to an epic romance, but it had changed them none the less.

Cheat it in pen, indeed... Mandy knew *perfectly* well what she was doing when she wrote those words.

And part of Alice didn't think that she *was* mistaken, and that maybe...

No. No, no, no. This was *Mandy*, Mandy who stole the smirk right off her face and slipped it neatly into an answering retort, Mandy who was not afraid to try every underhand trick in the book just to see if it worked, Mandy who, on one traumatic occasion, had dyed her eyebrows purple... To want more of her was inconsiderable...

'And yet I am considering it, aren't I?'

Mandy had spoken of her utter and secret relief; Alice had felt the counter to that, in her utter and secret guilt. At the time, she hadn't cared to search whether it was guilt for being rude or guilt for hurting a friend, but looking back, Alice could see that either way she hadn't wanted Mandy to be hurt. However, to be *romantically* involved would be...

Conceivably yours,

Amanda.

...Could be quite an easy shift, actually.

And if Mandy could reveal her inner romantic, (she'd quoted Pride and Prejudice, for Christ's sake!) then Alice bloody well could too.

Alice had made up her mind.

Initially, her hand reached for her phone. However, a change in its owner's mind lead it into an unexpected foray through the detritus of the desk, from which it emerged triumphantly claspng a set of special edition butterfly stamps that Alice had a feeling Mandy would love. Ten minutes and five pieces of paper later, the letter was ready to go, its message sealed tight inside.

If you want to try, then by all means Cariad...