

2020 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category – Honorable Mention]

Dream it, be it!

(Original)

Cristiana Gălățeanu

(Age 14, Romania)

National Collage „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Galați

Dear past self,

I am writing to you from my balcony, as I am watching the rain and as I'm drinking my already cold coffee. I have no idea how many coffees I have drunken so far, nor what the time is. But there is one aspect that I am sure of. You would never have guessed how happy and fulfilled you are going to be.

Fortunately, things did not go on as you assumed they would. I did not give up, as you thought I would; bad people and bad things had no influence upon me, I did not give up on my dreams, nor did I let other people's wishes become mine.

I have gained experience and strength. The strength of holding on, of going further, of fighting. I am aware that you may be confused and unsettled due to not knowing what path to choose in life. But hear me out, you should not waste time by adding more worries on your list.

I have no intention of spoiling the surprise, but all that I can give away is that, at the very end, you have reached your dream college, graduated and started working out of love. As to your home, let us just say that you are constantly surrounded by wonderful people, and that you have not lost contact with the wonderful people from your past.

Don't get me wrong, life is not always just rainbows and unicorns and there are tons of toxic people, trying to pull you down, while getting rid of every inch of humanity left within themselves. But fortunately, such people are no longer an influence. You have learned to distinguish who is important to you, or isn't, and also, to protect yourself.

I can look back at you, at me, 10 years ago, and it makes my very soul shiver. I remember how much you were craving for other people's love and attention, and how your self-esteem was one with the ground. I even remember how a random stranger's words used to keep you awake at night, and also, how aware you were that a major change was

supposed to take place, and how frightening that seemed to you, the word itself sending chills down your spine. But there is nothing that I regret, and neither should you. Because, after all, every day of self-doubt, every moment of feeling the universe is going to fall apart, every second in which other people's words mattered more than yours have led to a slow building process, the result of which has created the person that I am today. And the Cristiana from 2030 is just another good reason to keep going, for it all is going to be alright.

I have changed a lot and if we ever had the chance to meet, you would find nothing familiar about me. Despite that, it is the essence of my soul that I have been constantly holding onto. It still is the same you, in there. But if I were to keep any more of you in it, I would not have made it thus far.

In 10 years, you will hear and see many things, meet many different people, some of which will knock you down while others will help you rise. You will wish to have given up or to start all over again, at which point everything will seem out of place and pointless, as if nothing that you do is right. But trust me when I say that everything has a purpose, and that purpose being you becoming that person that you are meant to be, despite not even dreaming about it.

Do what matters the most, have fun with the people who are worth it, and allow time to heal whatever seems unhealable. Trust me, trust yourself, and keep on dreaming, because, my darling, in 10 years you will turn them into reality, for you will be stronger and you will allow yourself to be yourself.

I am writing this letter from a place of power, happiness and contentment. Be safe in the knowledge that you are growing towards this.

Sincerely, an older and more mature me.