

Imagine a time when the war is over...

1. This is a game for two people. You'll tell a story of **queer lovers**, writing to each other in a time of war. Choose a time and place in history to set your story.
2. Find out how queerness or homosexuality was seen at that time. What happened if someone was found out to be queer? Was homosexuality seen as a crime, a mental illness, a sign of weak character? If you can find them, read some queer love letters from the time. Whatever you read, remember that **it's not the whole story**: being queer has never been completely without danger or completely without joy.
3. Decide **who you will pretend to be**, as you write letters. You are queer lovers or friends who might become lovers. Decide who will write the first letter.
4. When you write a letter, **imagine what the person you are pretending to be would write**. Would they be cautious and vague, in case someone else finds the letter? Or would they be open, risking discovery?
5. **If you need inspiration** while writing a letter, check the table below. This gives suggestions of what to write about, depending on the date you are writing.
6. When you receive a letter, then when you see it for the first time, remember whether you see it with the address side **face up or face down**. (If you are writing electronically, look at the last digit of the time you receive each message: treat an even digit as "face up" and an odd one as "face down".)
7. **Reply to the letter**, imagining what the person you are pretending to be would write, unless...
8. If you both agree to **start a life together**, end your correspondence there, with fond anticipation of seeing each other.
9. If this is the third time you have seen a letter face down, pretend you are **someone who has intercepted the letter**. Tear it open, read it and decide whether there is evidence of wrongdoing. Do not reply. The game is over: wait a few days before telling the other player.
10. If this is the sixth letter you have received, reply as usual, imagining what the person you are pretending to be would write. But this is your last letter. **Say goodbye**, although you should find some happiness in the goodbye. Each of you, decide whether to keep the letters and risk discovery or destroy them. The game is over.

Inspiration

- 1st. I remember when I first saw you
- 2nd. The exact way you dressed
- 3rd. Your soft laugh
- 4th. The moment your eyes caught mine
- 5th. I remember when we were suddenly alone
- 6th. Our words were halting
- 7th. You were almost too beautiful to look at
- 8th. Our eyes fearfully glancing to the door
- 9th. Now I lie on this hard bed
- 10th. I look over this scented field
- 11th. I breathe the quiet air
- 12th. I think that is a rat
- 13th. My days are all alike
- 14th. I wake in the brittle dawn
- 15th. I feel the pain in my leg, burning like an ember
- 16th. The food is soft and comforting
- 17th. Your face is unclear in the mists of my memory
- 18th. The curl of your mouth, never cruel
- 19th. The curve of your cheek, like a statue
- 20th. I forget the colour of your hair
- 21st. I wonder what you look like now?
- 22nd. Has your hair faded to silver?
- 23rd. Is your skin scarred, like a muddy field?
- 24th. Are your cheekbones like razors?
- 25th. How has the war changed you inside?
- 26th. You were as carefree as a running stream
- 27th. You scattered smiles like a button reflecting the sun
- 28th. Imagine a time when the war is over
- 29th. Will you like who I have become?
- 30th. Will the times have forced us apart?
- 31st. Shall we live together?

Yours faithfully,
Countess Dillymore