



Gemma's Desk

May 6, 2021

Hello!

I'm so glad you're digging this analog life I'm going for; I make some tea, light a candle, and write you a letter like it's 1812. I've been sewing and embroidering and playing piano too. Slap a bonnet on me and call me Kitty.

Oh, speaking of old-timey pastimes! I found some lovely fabric scraps in Georgiana's stuff and stitched up the coaster for you; it's in the package. Next time you make yourself tea (or coffee, or a hot toddy [no judgment] - whatever, something hot!), use that coaster. It should give you a subtle sensory surprise.

So, what do you think of this Georgiana character, huh? Wickham sounds like a real . . . well, word that it somehow feels wrong to write out long hand? I know you're picking up what I'm putting down, and I do mean "putting down."

There's always got to be a cad-type in a romcom, I guess, even a real-life one; maybe Wickham was just doing his job. I'm an expert here: I've been watching more than my fair share of romcoms, sweeping romances, tragic romances - my streaming algorithm right now is *All Longing, All the Time*. If Wickham was her Mr. Wrong, I really hope Georgiana's got a Mr. Right in her future.

I mean, maybe it's not the most psychologically healthy way to organize one's memories, but I've found myself thinking a lot about that while I make my 374th dinner-for-one. Who were my Mr. Wrongs? My Mr. Rights? Was I someone's Wrong, someone's Right, someone's Right Who Got Away? Whose will I be in the future? I want to be, but the idea of getting back out there is . . . a lot. I think I'll make it about 3 minutes on the apps again before my "computer dies" and my "phone number changes" and my cat "eats my Bumble profile."

Like, Sneezy the Bowler, right? Since our dads worked together, we'd see each other at all the company picnics, Christmas parties, etc., and (even despite the sneezes), it was always good to know another kid there, someone whose We're Seeing The Boss, Behave, clothes were just as itchy as mine,





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who was just as bored as I was, who I could conspire with to steal too many cookies from the buffet. I was always trying to be on my very best behavior, but he'd sneeze, I'd shriek, grown-ups would shush, we'd laugh, and I'd just feel a bit lighter.

My point is: Being home again, back where I grew up, I'm thinking a lot about my roots, and how the branches of my life grew and split. That's cheesy. But what's the timeline like where Sneezzy and I stayed in touch, you know? Or the one where I'd taken that fellowship in California. Or the timeline where I married charming, handsome, horrible Brad (I'm still mad I spent six years with him. World record for promise breaking!). Which timeline do I laugh the most in? Do you have these Sliding Doors moments? I wonder if Sneezzy the Bowler ever wonders. I wonder if that move ever worked. Or if he grew up and learned how to say "I like you, let's go out." Maybe he's been with someone all these months, making bread and doing puzzles and doomscrolling on the couch together, sneezes and all.

I remember he had a personalized bowling ball and his initials spelled HIS, which was so dumb. "Whose ball is this?" "Oh, it's HIS." "Whose??" etc.. It made me giggle, but I think the others gave him a hard time about it. He didn't seem to mind, though, which I always dug. Do you remember any of this? Have I ever told you any of this?

Anyway.

I'm queuing up another movie, because I'm yearning for some yearning. I've got some more letters and scraps to go through too - I'll send more for you to read soon! Like homework! A group project? YOU ARE WELCOME.

Love you friend,

Gemma

