

# ROMEO@ JULIETTE

Manu Causse

Illustré par Sylvie Serprix

*Pour Geo.  
Pour la 5B et toutes les autres.*



**Juliette Crosne**

Classe de 4<sup>e</sup>1 – Collège Jacques Prévert  
Villeneuve-de-Lauragais, le 7 octobre

Bonjour,

Je m'appelle Juliette et j'ai 13 ans. Je suis fille unique. J'ai un chien, Félix. Je suis en classe de 4<sup>e</sup>\* au collège Jacques Prévert de Villeneuve-de-Lauragais. J'habite dans un petit village. Avant, je vivais en ville, à Toulouse, qui est à une cinquantaine de kilomètres d'ici, mais mes parents viennent de déménager. Je suis donc nouvelle dans ce collège.

Cette année, mon professeur d'anglais s'appelle M. Servier. Il organise cet échange de lettres entre nos deux écoles. Il parle aussi d'un voyage en Angleterre, mais cela n'est pas vraiment sûr. De toute façon, je n'ai pas très envie de visiter votre pays. M. Servier a dit que chaque élève de votre classe choisira son correspondant. Donc, je souhaiterais correspondre avec une fille qui, comme moi, aime la danse, la musique et la lecture.

Je n'ai pas grand-chose d'autre à dire. Je ne suis pas timide, mais je n'aime pas parler de moi à quelqu'un que je ne connais pas. C'est aussi pour cela que je préfère ne pas envoyer de photographie.

Au revoir

Juliette

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**Mark Hempton**

Year 10 – Ash Close High School  
London, November 3<sup>rd</sup>

Hi Juliette,

My name is Mark, and I'm 14. I'll be your pen-pal\* for this year.

I'm in Year 10, and my French teacher is called Ms Da Silva (I don't think that's a French name...).

It's my first term in Ash Close High School. Last year, I lived in the country near a small town called Bakewell – and I attended school there – so I'm new at my school too. Now, I live with my mother in East Finchley, a district of London. I have an elder sister, Eileen. She's 23 and lives in Scotland.

I like playing the guitar and football (I'm enclosing a picture of myself with my favourite team shirt on).

My French is really poor, so you'll have to write simple things. Ms Da Silva says we are going to use email instead of postal mail. So you can write to me at [mark.hempton@ashclose\\_school.gov.uk](mailto:mark.hempton@ashclose_school.gov.uk) or to my home email address: [markhemp@netmail.co.uk](mailto:markhemp@netmail.co.uk).

The teacher asked us to write 15 lines, so I'm done.

Bye

Mark



**Juliette Crosne**

Collège Jacques Prévert  
Le 27 novembre

Cher Mark,

Je ne peux pas encore t'écrire par mail. Je n'ai pas d'ordinateur\* à la maison (ni de téléphone d'ailleurs !) et le réseau du collège ne fonctionne pas encore très bien.

De toute façon, tu n'as pas l'air d'avoir très envie de correspondre\* avec moi. Je me demande bien pourquoi tu m'as choisie, d'ailleurs, alors que j'avais expliqué que je voulais une fille. J'ai demandé au professeur de changer de correspondant\*, mais il m'a répondu que ce serait impossible pour cette année. En revanche, si nous faisons réellement un voyage d'échange, je serai certainement avec une fille – que je ne connaîtrai pas, évidemment. Mais quelle importance ? De toute façon, je ne connais presque personne dans ma classe, toutes mes amies sont restées à Toulouse.

Le professeur nous demande de vous poser des questions sur votre vie quotidienne et de vous expliquer comment fonctionne un collège en France.

C'est simple : je prends le car le matin vers 7 h 10, et j'arrive au collège vers 7 h 45. Nous avons cours le matin de 8h15 à 12h05 et l'après-midi de 13h ou 14h à 17 h.



**Mark Hempton**

Ash Close High School

Tuesday Dec. 7th

Je reste en étude jusqu'à 18 h en faisant mes devoirs, puis je reprends le car, et je suis chez moi entre 18h30 et 19h. Quand j'arrive à la maison, il fait nuit, et mes parents sont fatigués car ils travaillent toute la journée. Nous mangeons et, comme nous n'avons pas la télé (la nôtre est tombée en panne avant le déménagement et mes parents ne trouvent jamais le temps d'aller en acheter une neuve), nous lisons ou nous allons nous coucher. Et le lendemain, ça recommence.

Est-ce que cela te semble une vie ennuyeuse ? À moi, oui. Terriblement.

Avant, quand je vivais à Toulouse, tout était différent. J'avais des amies. Nous pouvions aller au cinéma ou à la piscine, ou encore surfer\* sur Internet à la médiathèque.

Tu as bien de la chance d'habiter en ville. À moins que ça te soit égal, vu que, comme tous les garçons, tu ne t'intéresses qu'au foot...

Je me demande bien pourquoi je te parle de ça. Tu vas probablement me répondre en comptant le nombre de lignes ; et puis je dois me contenter de dire des choses simples, vu que tu es mauvais en français... Décidément, je ne crois pas que cette correspondance\* nous apporte grand-chose.

Voilà pour cette fois. À toi.

Juliette

Hi,

First, let me say that I'm embarrassed to have a girl pen-pal too. You have to understand that I started school a bit late this term\* and when I got to French class, you were the only pen-pal left. No offence meant, of course.

So, my first letter was very short, because I didn't really know what to say. Plus, I had to write it fast, because the rest of the group had already finished. I suppose I should apologize.

You don't like football or living in the country, and I don't like dancing or living in the city. That's a starting point. We can make lists, can't we?

OTHER THINGS I LIKE THAT YOU PROBABLY DON'T: rock music (I like the White Stripes, Bloc Party and the Strokes); cycling (I used to spend a lot of time mountain-biking with my friends when I lived in Bakewell); science fiction and heroic fantasy. I've read all the *Lord of the Rings* books, and I enjoy Terry Pratchett's *Discworld* novels. Do you know him?

THINGS THAT I DISLIKE AS MUCH AS YOU DO: school, of course. I mean, I enjoyed being at school when I was a kid, learning science and arts and all;

but now, I feel like it's pretty useless. I can't see the point in staying at school for so long when you could be out there in real life. And yet I can't complain, because you wrote me that French people spend up to 12 hours a day at school, including transport... You're right, that's really awful!

My mother's flat is in East Finchley, only 10 minutes walk from my school. We go to school from 8:45 to 1:30 and from 2:30 to 3:30. After that, we can practise sports, music or acting, or simply go to the school library to do our homework. I take guitar lessons on Mondays and Thursdays, and attend drama\* class on Wednesdays – actually, we're supposed to put on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* this year (funny coincidence!).

I could be playing football and hockey with the school team on Tuesday and Friday, but I broke my ankle last term in Bakewell and am still recovering from it. It's not so bad, because it leaves me some spare time, but most of my schoolmates are in those teams, and they think music and theatre are for chicks (that's girls, in slang), so they tend to look down on me. So what? You and I have at least one thing in common: we don't care for people that don't think about anything besides football.

Back to my list:

THINGS WE SEEM TO HAVE IN COMMON: not being very popular at school – although I dislike that word. Last year, in Bakewell, there was no such thing as

being “popular”. We all knew each other pretty much since nursery school. Actually, my best friend Alan used to say that “we had been mates since we were old enough to remember”.

Another thing we have in common, then: we miss our friends. Alan was really funny, clever and always in a good mood. We had even formed a rock band, and I think we were great... I know I should look for new friends here, but I just can't be bothered.

In the beginning of the term, I used to phone Alan every few days; now, we just e-mail from time to time. I thought I might see him when I went back to my Dad's in Bakewell for second-term\* holidays but then my father told me we wouldn't be there: he's moving now to Scotland. He's a photographer, and he says he wants to discover new landscapes. He's considering buying an old farm in the countryside, with no electricity or phone, and living there. I'd go to his place on holidays. Later on, he'll rent a flat in London so that he can come and see me every other weekend.

Why am I telling you all this? Oh, yes, the list of things in common: we don't have a home phone (at least, for me, not all the time). The good thing is, my parents finally bought me a mobile phone... although I don't know if it will work in Scotland! So, if you ever want to call me, my number is + 44 (that's the country code for Britain that you must dial from France) 7803165770.

I'm just kidding, of course... I don't know why you'd call me.

This letter is getting rather long, isn't it? I hope you don't have to look in the dictionary four or five times per sentence – like I had to do with your last letter, you know... but, then, it would just be another thing in common!

The last item of the list would be called “Things we both like”; but I don't know what you like – actually, sometimes I feel like I don't even know what I like anymore...

Last year, I used to like... well, everything about my life, as a matter of fact. It seems like there were no questions, no problems at all. Everything was just fine.

You probably know that old song by the Beatles, *Yesterday*: Mum complains that I never stop playing it on my guitar (actually, it's an exercise, and quite a difficult one). But whenever I think of the words of that song, they seem to fit my feelings perfectly. So, what do I like in my current life? Walking, I guess. There's a beautiful park called Hampstead Heath close to my mother's place ; you can see all of London from there, and still feel like you're in the country. I like to go there on my own, and just sit for a while.

OK, there are loads of other things I like to do, of course. It's just that they aren't coming to mind right now.

This is a good place to end this letter, isn't it? I actually spent most of my afternoon writing it. It's pouring rain outside, and for once I'm quite happy not to be able to play football with the others.

I hope you're starting to think I might be something more than a stupid football guy. Now it's your turn to do the list.

Bye,

Mark