

18 years.

I think I know you quite well.

I think I can see you right now, hunched over the light of your desk, playing with the corner of this sheet.

I can see your lips curve into that characteristic smile.

And now you're biting it back.

I can almost trace the curve of your eyebrow as you think back to the first time you read this letter.

You never thought you'd forget.

18 years ago, you celebrated your birthday, and received this letter as your gift.

And because you're not at all materialistic, you've kept this letter for 18 years.

18 years ago, you were dating a dimple-faced girl, with twinkling eyes.

She couldn't keep a grin off her face when you were around.

Let me be honest though, she wasn't naive enough to think that this would last.

All she asked was that you'd create memories that would.

Your intertwined fingers lead her through the map of her first love.

Your symphony of a voice wove a tapestry of dreams,

Your giggle was a call of hope.

And you.

You came tumbling in, like light through a broken glass,

Painting an array of patterns on her paned life.

She watched as you unbuttoned her vulnerability

And waited as you unzipped her insecurities.

It was the first time I'd felt love.

18 years ago, you were on the brink of adulthood, a smart young boy, waiting for his dreams to unfold.

And I, was a girl, with child-like fairytales in her head.

It all started that day when you texted me when we came back from class.

Love started to brew when our eyes locked when we met on our first date.

I knew love had come hidden in the folds of the umbrella that lay in your bag, the shield against the rain,

the savior against my laziness to carry one of my own.

Love was shadowed by my smile when I ordered mushrooms on pizza, even though I hated it.

Maybe you'd smile for a second longer?

I smelt love in your oversized hoodie, It often took the form of a damp tissue when the missing got too much.

Love hit me like a cannonball the first time you called me beautiful, as my eyes sparkled, as I watched the sky, knowing you were far away.

Love got lost in the ticking of 5 hour long video calls.

Love was 600 km apart.

18 years ago, you blew out the candles on your birthday.  
You might have left out the one burning in my heart.