

## LIAM HENDERSON

By Samantha Saavedra

Dear Mom,

I have a problem- a blond, obnoxious, problem. The problem is named Liam Henderson, the school's 'bad boy'. I think that calling Liam that gives him power, just as invoking the Devil's name gives the thing power over a person. I don't need Liam Henderson having power over me.

A month ago I was leaving my Science class when Liam Henderson stuck his foot right in my path. I went sprawling. My face smacked against the cold linoleum floor. I felt as if I should have said something to Liam Henderson, but the boy had run off, leaving me alone in the hallway. This is where my great hatred for Liam Henderson started.

Needless to say, I have a reason to dislike the other boy, I'm not being irrational. I'm irrational about other things, like my need to have foods separate on my plate, or the way my things need to smell like lemons or they aren't mine. I know none of those things make sense, nor will they ever make sense, they just exist, you know, in the way we all just exist.

Back to the point, which is Liam Henderson. Liam Henderson is the point. The point of this letter is Liam Henderson.

Liam Henderson joined the school football team, which is weird considering that I've never seen him play sports. I watched the other day as he ran out of the boy's locker room. You should have seen him. He looked as if some sort of demon was chasing him.

I'm glad I don't play football. It seems like a huge waste of time. I could be finishing my homework, or starting that new book I found on the shelf of *Kilmer's Books*. Liam Henderson seems to like it though, football not the book.

I was just thinking about what I would have done if Liam Henderson were to ask me to be his friend. I think I would have said something like this, 'I'm sorry Liam Henderson, but I hate you, so I won't be your friend.'

Maybe that's a mean thing to say, but it's Liam Henderson, he doesn't care about anyone or anything. Maybe he cares about his mom or something, but I don't think so. He's too cold to care about anyone.

You may ask yourself, "Owen, why would you say that about someone?"

I would then say, in response, "Mom, have you even read this letter? It's Liam Henderson, he pushed a kid down the stairs last week and laughed as they tumbled to the ground."

I think that maybe Liam Henderson likes books. I followed him into the library the other day. Well, I went into the library and he just happened to be in front of me. He went to the fiction section, which I usually frequent. I had to make do with the book in my backpack, it was terribly boring, a history book, but it made me look like I was studying and people left me alone.

Later, I went to see what he was reading, not for any particular reason, I was just wondering if maybe we had some common ground. It was a JAMES PATTERSON book, Mom. JAMES PATTERSON.

James Patterson isn't terrible, but he's written so many books that you have to wonder if a single one of them is a good piece of modern literature. You like books, Mom. What is your stance on James Patterson?

Anyway, back to Liam Henderson. Liam Henderson might have been expelled today, which is why I'm writing this.

Excuse my french here but, shit went down, Mom.

I was there and, to be perfectly honest, I'm surprised Liam Henderson didn't punch me in the face during the incident.

We were in English (Liam Henderson is in my English class (have I mentioned that yet?)) and Ms Hathaway split us up into groups to discuss the poem, *The Second Coming* by *W. B. Yeates*.

I sat quiet, I wasn't going to talk to Liam Henderson if I didn't have to. I remember his platinum locks glowing in the light from the big windows. His blue eyes looked like small gems set into his smooth, dark, chocolatey, skin. When he opened his mouth to talk to me his voice sounded deep and strong, like a river that was spiralling out of control, crashing against the shore, seeking release from its puny confines.

God, I hate Liam Henderson.

We read through the poem a few times, making notes about the Devil and such. After a few minutes, Liam Henderson finally spoke, "Did you actually want to discuss this or are we going to pretend that the assignment is to take notes in the general vicinity of each other?" He said this. To me.

"Do you actually want to do the work or do you want me to do it for you?" I remember shooting back.

The shark grin he shot me made me feel as if he was about to murder me. I hope you realize how close to death I was at that moment. "Let's talk, Owen. What the hell does '*Spiritus Mundi*' mean?"

We went back and forth like that and, for a moment, I thought that we might just be compatible. We could be good friends and we could talk about our feelings or something, converse on the important things in our lives, then IT happened. Not the clown, something much, much worse.

Liam Henderson walked me out of English class. Liam Henderson, Liam 'I-don't-care-about-anyone-or-anything' Henderson walked me, Owen Kan, to lunch. From the class, to my locker, and then to the tree I sit under for lunch in the California sun.

Liam Henderson sat next to me for lunch and I couldn't bear to tell him that I don't actually want to talk to him, hang out with him, or be anywhere near him. He just seemed happy to sit next to me and play on his phone.

The incident hasn't happened yet if you were wondering.

This, here is a transcript, from memory, of the incident.

Liam Henderson: So what do you do?

Owen Kan: What do you mean?

Liam Henderson: Like, what's your thing? Mine is beating up freshmen and playing *football*.

Owen Kan: You don't like football?

Liam Henderson: That's not what I asked, is it?

Owen Kan: No, it isn't.

*Enter Jack Gornsky (quarterback, bully, and senior)*

Jack Gornsky: Yo, Liam, do you want to come over tonight, my parents are out of town and I'm throwing a rager.

Liam Henderson: Yeah, sure.

Jack Gornsky: You can bring your little bitch if you want? (gesturing to Owen Kan)

Owen Kan (offended): What?

Liam Henderson (somehow more offended than Owen Kan): What did you just call him?

Jack Gornsky: Isn't that what he is? Your nerdy little bitch?

*Liam Henderson throws a punch at Jack Gornsky*

*They fight*

Owen Kan: What? Guys, don't fight! Stop it!

So that's how Liam Henderson got expelled for sticking up for scrawny old me. I feel like it was kind of my fault. It would never have happened if I hadn't opened my mouth and rambled about Yeates for five minutes.

Anyway, Liam Henderson got expelled so I'm writing you this letter.

I don't know what to do about this, Mom. It isn't as if I can apologize to Liam Henderson, I have no clue where he lives or where he works.

I think he might have been kicked off the football team, which might be a good thing if he doesn't like it, but a bad thing if he did. I asked Dad what I should do about this, he tried to do one of his patented, 'bullies are wrong, Owen' talks, but it turned into a 'Liam Henderson was right to punch that guy because Jack whatever wasn't a nice person' talk.

Dad then suggested that I write this letter to you. So, Mom, what do you think about Liam Henderson?

I think this is the point in the letter when I'm going to apologize for the letter. I know it was long-winded and awkward, but I think it conveys exactly what I needed to say.

~~I miss you, Mom~~

~~Sincerely,~~

~~Much love, from Owen~~

~~I want you to come home, Mom. Please.~~

~~Liam Henderson can die in a ditch for making me feel so goddamn sad about him getting expelled, even though it was his own fault.~~

~~Love you,~~

~~Owen Kan~~