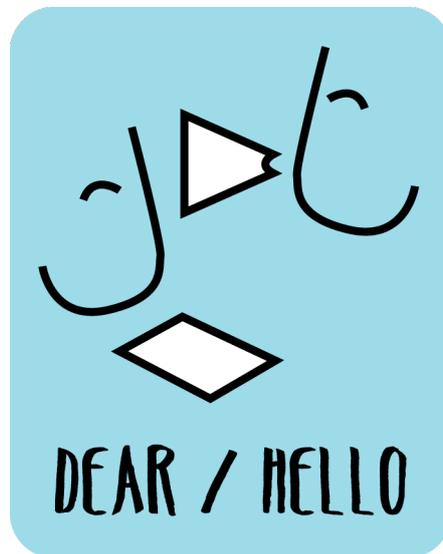




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## Dear, / Hello?

*Dear, / Hello?* is a series of raw, honest audio-stories produced with the intention of humanising issues that are often dehumanised in the mainstream media. These stories are told in the form of 'open letters', which are read aloud by a range of presenters, and cover a broad range of experiences. Real stories from real people about real issues – all with the intimacy that comes with letter-writing. This series features a diverse range of voices – some with previous experience in poetry and writing, and some who are being given a platform for the first time.

This series was produced by Josie Smart and Izzy Roberts-Orr. Big thanks to our home station Triple R 102.7 in Melbourne.

### 01 – Dear Tony

*What if I don't deserve all those things? - Flo Dacey-Cole*

The 'Great Australian Dream'. A white picket fence and income security; stability. Flo Dacey-Cole wants all these things. The prospect of Australia electing a leader who intended to destabilise welfare services and refuse to recognise the legitimacy of same-sex relationships was terrifying. On the eve of Abbott's election, Flo wrote him this letter.

### 02 – Dear Stranger

*Was I behind glass? Under a microscope? At a zoo, in an enclosure? - Andy Jackson*

What's in a look? Poet Andy Jackson writes about form and embodiment. His most recent collection of poetry 'Immune Systems' is about medical tourism in India, and was published earlier this year. He describes the moment when strangers lock eyes as being "full of potential" – potential for connection, or for distance and intrusion. Andy wrote this letter about [strangers, and the responsibility of being 'strange'](#).

### 03 – To the moment I stopped feeling safe

*It's my space, it's our space, it's everybody's space. – Josie Smart*

Women are constantly aware of 'the worst possible' outcome – that we may be abducted, raped, murdered – and our access to public space is limited because of this. However, this awareness can mean that we don't talk about the 'little things' that happen – that being harassed, followed, assaulted is not something to worry about because it 'could be worse'.

'Dear, / Hello' co-producer Josie Smart wrote this letter about the first moment she felt unsafe.

### 04 – Do you have sex in your wheelchair?

*You, my beautiful wheelchair, give me freedom as much as you define me – Jax Jacki Brown*

A wheelchair can be more than just a piece of equipment – it's a way of moving through the world. Jax Jacki Brown is a disability and queer rights activist, disability sex educator and performance artist. She wrote this letter to her wheelchair.

This piece contains some adult content; sexual references.

### 05 – Dear Norman

*Knowing I was different, I had a lot to lose – Yen Eriksen*

Negotiating identity and difference can be fraught. Whilst we cannot choose our background or context, we can choose how we decide to interact with differences. Yen Eriksen wrote this letter to 'Norman', a man she encountered whilst growing up and negotiating her identity as a young queer woman from a Chinese migrant background.

### 06 – Mother / Abai

*You had a wish, which you shared with me, to see a peaceful Afghanistan - Taqi Khan*

The Hazara ethnic group have long faced persecution and oppression. Violence, genocide and slavery have forced Hazara people from their homes in Afghanistan. Many flee to neighbouring Pakistan before some must make the perilous journey to Australia by boat.

Afghan-Hazara migrant Taqi Khan came to Australia as an asylum seeker. Afghanistan is still riddled with danger, and the Hazara people are still suffering. Taqi wrote this letter to his mother. This piece features an original piece sung in Hazaragi by Taqi Khan.

### 07 – Floodgates

*White boys playing at government without opposition? I'm on to you – Lia Incognita*

Forget facts and figures, forget human rights. Australia's refugee and immigration policies are still based on the myth of a 'white Australia'. Poet, performer and activist Lia Incognita performs this spoken word piece, addressed to the people in power.

This piece was originally published in text in the Right Now 'Poetic Justice' anthology in 2013.

## 08 – Life as a ‘gayby’

*It was then that I realised that my family was considered ‘different’ – Claudia Long*

“Think of the children!” is one of the central arguments put forth by those against legalising same-sex marriage. Life for ‘gaybies’ may present some unique challenges. Perhaps it’s not growing up with same-sex parents that’s difficult, but rather the attitudes of other people that make it hard. Claudia Long wrote this letter to a former high school classmate.

## 09 – Dear Lucy

*It gets easier. You realise you need to make a future for yourself, because you need to be in it – Lucy Hotchin*

Almost half of all Australians will experience some form of mental illness within their lifetime. Despite this, mental health issues are still widely stigmatised in many aspects of our society.

Five years ago, Lucy Hotchin was diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder. She wrote this letter to herself at 21, just before she was diagnosed.

## 10 – Nothing about us without us

*‘Thank you for reminding us that often listening is just as important as speaking.’ – Izzy Roberts-Orr*

Advocacy is about more than achieving set goals – it’s also about listening to voices that might not otherwise be heard. ‘Dear, / Hello’ co-producer Izzy Roberts-Orr wrote this letter about the importance of being heard, but also of listening. Izzy and Josie performed and produced this piece together.