

LETTERS FROM FRANKIE AND BELIAL

LETTER TO DOXING EMPLOYED BY FASCISTS

Greetings, to you Doxing Employed by Fascists (DEBF), in all your maliciousness, You're probably already aware, because you're the gossippiest one on the block, but Belial and I caught up the other day to talk about you, and the kind of poison you've been spreading. We're probably not the only ones catching up with your troublemaking. Right now, at any minute, anti-racists, justice-doing activists, and those that stand against fascism in all its forms, are catching onto your modus operandi. We are exposing your toxic tactics. We are shining a light on how you work. So, watch out. You're not so untouchable as you think you are.

We'd just like to let you know that we know where you came from, what your intention is, and how you get your strength. You came from the early internet days, where anonymity used to be sacred. A bunch of hackers feuded with each other and started "dropping docs" on their rivals. You've somehow recruited Nazis, fascists, and their allies into perpetrating the most heinous and harmful acts on those who they think are "morally wrong" or "oppose their view". Right now, your biggest and most powerful employee is Fascism. What a farce.

Did you know, you were almost successful in having Belial, highly skilled drag performer and creative genius Belial B'Zarr, disappeared? Did you know you caused intimidation and had Belial and the people around them constantly on their toes?

You're also a coward. You got other people to do your dirty work for you. You had Belial black out their windows and improvise flame throwers. To protect the safety of themselves and their partners, Belial had people sleeping downstairs in case your violence arrived on their doorstep.

Luckily, there's people out there who won't stand for this.

Belial had figured out that you become more effective by recruiting more and more people into your poisonous cause. You gather your strength by travelling fast. Belial knows how to undermine your chaos. This includes not confirming any of your claims, keeping you and your employee, Fascism, guessing by never responding, and by using your own game against you.

Did you know, DEBF, that it took an intense amount of mental and physical effort and collective organising for Belial to continue on in the face of your unrelenting bullshit? Belial organised an almost militarist response. They were ready to go to jail defending who and what they love. They continued existing as a queer. They took their queerness underground and didn't let go of their beloved community of drag and cabaret creatives. They continue to try to find points of connection and social cohesion. And see, here is where you are the weakest, DEBF. Where you try to isolate and disappear people, connection and community stand strong. And we are not about to give up now.

With not one ounce of respect,
Frankie and Belial in solidarity against fascist doxing

A LETTER TO BELIAL'S SUPPORT PEOPLE TO JOIN IN APPRECIATION OF BELIAL'S CONTRIBUTION TO YOUR LIFE

To dear Belial's Supportive People, Beloveds, Kin, Chosen Family,
Fellow Creatives and Mischief Makers,

I am writing on behalf of Belial. My name is Frankie Hanman-Siegersma (they/them), and I am a narrative therapist and counsellor working with the Aftercare program at Mind Australia. The Aftercare program provides support to people who are LGBTQIA+ identifying and have experienced recent suicidal ideation or a suicide attempt. I have been working alongside Belial since October 2023.

When I first met Belial in October 2023, they had for some months been under the siege of a targeted attack from Nazis. Their close beloveds, Tarren and Cell, were also recipients of violent threats, resulting in grave fears for their safety. Suicidal thoughts had talked Belial into thinking that they would be better off gone. This attack on drag performers and queer and trans people rippled out to others. For a long time, Belial made to efforts ensure that others were not the targets of violence. Belial never wanted anyone to experience what had happened to them. As soon as they heard they were doxed, they immediately called another friend who was a drag performer to warn them.

Throughout their journey with Aftercare, Belial shared about their perseverance to continue on in the face of fascist doxing, threats, harassment, targeted violence, stalking and genuinely fearing for their life. We spoke about what it would mean to keep trying at staying alive. Belial looked at me and said, "It would be showing my 15-year-old self, and other young people like me, that you can survive, that you don't have to kill yourself". After we finished talking, Belial took a piece of rose quartz from the bowl of crystals we give out to community members. They mentioned this would be a reminder of staying alive to prove people wrong.

As people who care for Belial, what do you think it's taken for them to continue on?
Is there a story that comes to mind that really sums up Belial's skills in "staying alive to prove them all wrong"? It would be great to hear about this.

Recently, Belial came to one of our sessions and said, "What is life worth if I can't do drag?" We spoke about the effects of having to go underground for their own and their partners' safety. They also mentioned walking into a Dangerfield store and being recognised for their work as a drag performer, their shows for children and young people. The employee said, "I really appreciate everything you do". As people who can vouch for Belial's steadfast love for the queer, trans and drag community, what do think this means about their impact on others? That even though they've been forced underground by Nazis, their important work is reverberating out to folks around them?

You might have noticed that I am someone with a lot of questions! This is because I really want to find ways to include you, Belial supporters, into the rich and sustaining conversations we've had over the past few months. I know that we all have something in common: our unwavering love of and solidarity with Belial. If you wouldn't mind, it would be great if you could write, draw or record a voice note in reply to this letter. Perhaps you could include the following:

- your appreciation for Belial, and who they are as a person;
this could include their talents in drag, other creative pursuits
or caring for those around them
- what future you imagine for them if they stay connected
with these endeavours and with perseverance to survive
- any stories from your own life that might be similar to Belial's
and what helped you through.

I really look forward to hearing from you. Please let me know if you have any questions for me.

In solidarity with queer and trans community, and staying alive to prove them all wrong,
Frankie and Belial

RESPONSES TO OUR LETTER OF REQUEST

This letter is from Lee (they/she) who slept downstairs for multiple nights when the house was under siege. Weirdly, I have very good memories of Lee, friends and I dancing downstairs at 3am playing music through a phone speaker (softly so we could still hear if Nazis rocked up).

LETTER FROM LEE

I was suicidal during the period I was married (I was 22 years old for this story). When I stopped being a christian, I lost my whole worldview and my whole sense of meaning and purpose for living. The world was terrifying and unknown, and I didn't see much point in being in it. I had no idea what I wanted my future to look like. I remember clearly one moment.

I was on holiday with my wife in a beach location. We were walking on the beach but had quite some distance between us. I was numb, anxious, and in great emotional pain. I had been ideating for a couple months by this point and the idea was getting much more serious in my mind. During my walk I stopped by a rocky area on the beach and just knelt down to have a look. I found I was really interested in the nature of the rocks and little bits of life nestled amongst them.

I sat there for a while, letting the feelings come at me and crying slowly from the general despair I was feeling. I had picked up a small brown pebble and was holding it in my hands, feeling its water-weathered smoothness. I don't recall how long I was there. It was probably only a minute or two at most, but I had a lot of thoughts in that time. I knew I was on an edge with my ideation. I think it was a combination of my interest in the nature in front of me and me holding on to some shred of hope that things might make sense again one day that pushed me into making a decision to stick around for a bit longer.

I decided to wait and see if things would get better again, and I could at least acknowledge that some things were interesting. I decided to keep the pebble I was holding in that moment (I don't normally take things from beaches! This was an exception). Eventually things did get better. After a year of some solid counselling, I found good reasons to stay alive. I found out how to live life as an atheist, and the world started to seem less confusing and less scary than it did when I first lost my faith. I've still had occasional moments of ideation since I kicked the main bout, and every time I'm there, I get out my pebble and hold it in my hands. I look at it and run my fingers along it and repeat the promise to myself that I'll stick around a bit longer and just see if it gets better (and it always has).

I'm glad you took a crystal, maybe it can share a similar function to my pebble.

This response is from Elle (she/they) who I've been friends with for years now. She saw this unfold from the beginning, was with me at the protest and she was part of the cancelled drag series which we're bringing back in a community-funded capacity.

This is something we're still actively working towards with many changing considerations as the landscape develops. We all need to be in a good place to put ourselves out there, handle the inevitable backlash, keep attendees safe, and have solid plans.

LETTER FROM ELLE

1. I appreciate that you speak my language as a neurodivergent person. It's easy to talk to you since you're so good at communicating. You're incredibly professional, punctual and calming – so it's great to spend time with you whatever the occasion may be. I love to work with you and just be your friend, and there's very few people I enjoy that dynamic with. Beyond being calming, great at communicating and really great at listening to people who do not experience the same experience that you do (you've been incredibly affirming being on my side as a white person when I have my rants about racism etc.), you're also incredibly talented. One of the only people I know who does drag and whose style is not incestuous(?) like many other drag performers who are inspired by other drag performers. You're a total original, and I don't know of any other Belial B'Zarrs out there – there's no one like you as an artist who also happens to be a wonderful person.
2. I see us curating all-ages spaces and general drag spaces that are bigger, more accommodating and free of the fuckwits who made life so hard for you and many of our friends. I see systems put in place to protect us and make our community able to celebrate each other without fear. We've seen all-ages events work well before, and this will only get better as time goes on. I see you on Dragula! I see OA [Belial's brand: Offworld Aesthetic] being featured on Drag Race! I can see OA becoming an incredibly unstoppable brand and branching out to even more collaborators. I see Belial's unique spin of drag on Dragula representing down under and the neurospicy drag weirdos – I know that you have a lot of skills under your belt to compete at a calibre that Dragula contestants do.
3. You of all people know how scared I've been for my career, my reputation and my safety. When some salty characters in the scene made my life hell or had taken work from me, you'd be one of the first people to hear it. First time it happened with [redacted], I completely crumbled, and life was so incredibly scary. I felt I had no choice but to leave and pursue burlesque. When I saw how much they embraced me, I never looked back. When I saw how easy it was simply to BE, I never accepted less. I now walk with my head high because at every turn, where I've put my foot in my mouth as a young person or just simply had some hateful white people come for me, I've had an insurmountable amount of love from my community. At every turn I have been reminded that I have people willing to go to war for me. You also have people willing to set worlds on fire for you. There will come a time where you can hold your head high knowing people have your back at every turn.

This is from RR (he/him) who is a drag king I'm good friends with. He started a drag night inspired by me "dooting" the Nazis at a protest [this refers to Belial playing a jazz solo on melodica], and now people who saw this come to the show. People have started taking melodicas to protests too, which is an interesting twist.

I'd also like to note that RR was one of the people who I initially contacted when Nazis crashed that very first event.

Funnily enough, he thought the banners held by Nazis reading "Belial B'Zarr Demon Flesh" and "Drag pedos groom kids" might be a shitty photoshop or a meme, but he was uncertain. I then recall sending a video, and he drove right over to where everything was kicking off.

He stood by, took me back to his house for chats and took me seriously.

LETTER FROM RR

- 1) I think the memory that stands out to me the most about you is you dooting your doot at the protest, surrounded by the queer community. I think, to me, there is activism in rage against the people who have hurt us, but there's also activism in finding joy when there are people actively trying to take that away from you. I think your drag is inherently so full of joy, in the sense that joy is a big old "fuck you". Aside from drag, something that I really admire about you is your ability to hold your space for whatever you need it for. You speak up when you need to and are able, I've seen you ask for help when it's needed, I've seen you make yourself unavailable when you no longer have the facilities to engage. I appreciate and admire your straightforwardness, how easy you are to talk to, your honesty, and your integrity and lack of ego in your work.

For me personally, having your autistic ass in the community has been a real comfort to me, and has helped me be more confident and straightforward in holding space for myself. This is also why I believe that you'll continue find ways to express yourself, whatever that might look like. Because drag for you has always been in pursuit of expression, the sharing of stories and the sharing of community. I think your drag is so compelling to me because you are able to just do whatever the fuck YOU want to do with it without feeling like you have to fit a specific mould.

- 2) I think the future is hard to imagine with any sort of specificity, but I think you have a big old chunk of support from the community here behind you who are willing to follow you and support you no matter which direction you want to go in. I also think that drag and queer art in general was made to break rules, and so much like the rest of your artistic endeavours, I think whatever future I can imagine for you will be something we've never seen before.
- 3) I come from an abusive household and before I was able to access therapy, one of the things that kept me going through a lot of that shit was just pure spite. The knowledge that me living my life in a totally harmless manner was going to make someone So Mad felt weirdly powerful to me. I am also, unfortunately, still extremely motivated by spite. My existence is gonna make a bigot mad, so I'm gonna just keep doing that.