

SHAPING OUR FUTURE

Gay & Lesbian Youth Services (GLYS) of Western New York

> Buffalo, New York 2019 Anthology

Hours after midnight on June 28, 1969 The Stonewall Inn, a gay-bar on Christopher Street in Greenwich Village, New York City was raided by police. This unexpected event turned into an uprising when patrons of the bar refused to be victimized by police officers. This uprising quickly turned into a riot that proceeded for three days and is now commemorated as "Stonewall", one of the most prominent moments in LGBTQ+ Rights history.

However, just because the riots ended after three days did not mean that the activists involved were done with their mission. Someone suggested having a protest march in order to keep the energy alive and annually commemorate the event, which is how the first Christopher Street Liberation Day March came to be. The Christopher Street Liberation Day March was only held for a few years before it was viewed as a Gay Pride Parade.

The Stonewall Inn Riots changed the trajectory of the LGBTQ+ Rights Movement from an assimilation standpoint during the Homophile Movement to a more radical reformation of institutionalized oppression with Gay Liberation. Stonewall is inaccurately assumed to be the birth of the LGBTQ+ Rights Movement, but while that assumption is false, it is not entirely fabricated. Stonewall 50 is an opportunity for LGBTQ+ youth and allies alike to learn the history of the movement and their community.

GLYS dedicates this year's anthology in honor of the 50th anniversary of Stonewall in hopes that our youth will be inspired to learn more about their history. We want to honor those activists and leaders who laid the groundwork for what has become the world's largest and one of its most prominent human rights demonstrations.

Any young person, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression is welcome to submit work for our 2020 Anthology!

Submissions can include, but are not limited to:

poems

short stories

photographs

drawings

Submitted artwork cannot be returned. Send a copy via email below or to our website (www.glyswny.org)

Submissions for the 2020 GLYS Anthology can be emailed to:

stournour@glyswny.org

(please put "for anthology" as the subject line)

If your email is not acknowledged within 5 business days, please resend.

or

Mail to

GLYS of WNY, 393 Delaware Avenue/Buffalo, NY 14202

Please tell us how you want to be listed:

full name, first name only, initials, or pseudonym & any other info such as school, town of residence, age, etc.

If you want to us to mail you a copy, please provide an address!

Gay & Lesbian Youth Services (GLYS) of WNY provides a safe space, health and wellness activities, development, cultural and leadership opportunities and much more for any youth, regardless of gender identity and/or sexual orientation, between the ages of 5-21.

GLYS serves youth through its Drop-In Center, support of Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) in WNY middle schools and high schools, Youth-In-Care groups, Transgender & Gender Expansive Groups for youth and parents/guardians, annual events including the GLYS GSA Conference, Diveristy Prom, and marching as part of Buffalo's Gay Pride Parade. Staff are available for support and referrals via phone, emails and visits by appointment from LGBTQ+ youth from all 8 counties of WNY, as well as members of their support system.

GLYS is a not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1983 as Gay & Lesbian Youth of Buffalo (GLYB). In 1994 the name was changed to Gay & Lesbian Youth Services of WNY. GLYS is funded by grants, donor choice options of the United Way/S.E.F.A./C.F.C., as well as individual and corporate donations.

This anthology, **SHAPING OUR FUTURE**, was compiled from work created during our 2019 GSA Conference and youth who visit our Drop-In Center.

We are grateful to Martyn Printing

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for the printing of **SHAPING OUR FUTURE**

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Worried Love

"He's going to leave."

That is what my mind tells me,

But he assures me "no, no! That's not how it will be."

I tell him "but how can I believe

When that is what my brain tells me?"

But still he assures me with glee,

"Because I still love you" his voice ringing with that melody.

-Louie

Death and Art

Does life imitate art?

Does art imitate life?

Or is it death

Cold, sad, painful death

That despite the suffering births something so beautiful.

Life and death both bring suffering,

But death brings change.

Embrace your pain

And let something beautiful come from it.

-Alexis Holzman

Cream and teal with orange slices, Divided in three, Past. Present, Future, Stability against cool water splashing, Strength of Taurus holding still, Sighting waves to find self, A work in progress As limbs stroke against current, Against kids shouting slurs in hallway with soft chuckles, Against the threat of getting the shit kicked out of me In bathrooms, Against all the hate rising in the tides, I am made of cream stone with orange slices, The past, present, and future Are mine to command, I am the limbs pushing against the current, The ground on which I stand -Flliott

Waves

Waves
Is how I want
My life to be
Softened lines
Smooth curves
Splashes in a
Darkened night
I've spent too long
Huddled in boxes
Sharp corners
And now I'm ready
To be submerged
In happiness

-Anna Nilsson

Please

I want nights
On a beach
Lying on a towel
We brought from home
We have a home
And we call it home
I bake cookies
Every weekend
And make too sweet
Coffee in the morning
I want it all to be
Too much
Too sweet
Too happy
For just a little
While
-Anna Nilsson

What Story Books Have

Domestic

Bliss

Tidy kitchen
No crumbs
On the stove
Little bedroom
With a big window
Framing
The moon
Perfectly
And a chair
Against a wall
For stories
That we tell
Together
For ones
That we made
Together
Domestic
Bliss
-Anna Nilsson

The Universe

Is a garden

And I am the fly

Small and insignificant

Dwarfed by the magnitude of the surroundings

Hidden by fallen leaves

Blown by the wind.

Watch me spread my wings

This fly will soar through the ocean

Paper wings lined with gold

Each beat sends waves through the plants

And I will nurture the dandelion that

Blooms through the cracks

The blink I embody will not diminish

The force I project

The will of the small alters

The ways of the giants

So fly on.

-Cassie



"The Tower"

The Tower you built for your Protection

You built it out of fear

The fear of being Judged

The fear of betrayed

The fear of being left behind

One floor locked with all the fears

Locked so no one can unlock

And discover your fears

The Tower you built for your Protection

You built it out of Sadness

The Sadness of a loved one leaving you

The Sadness of being heartbroken

The Sadness of crying yourself to sleep

The Sadness of feeling never enough

Second floor locked with all the Sadness

Locked so no one can unlock

And discover your Sadness

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Each floor of my Tower hides my emotions
It hides the Pretty emotions and
The not so pretty ones
My Tower hides my emotions

So no one can take on my burden

My Tower is my Protection

For me and to keep out the

World.

-Sarah T.

"Why Tiger, Why?" I love him He loves me We can't be together Hove her She loves someone else I don't know what we are I'm scared I'll be alone forever Forever is a long time But it feels longer When you're alone I want change I want to not feel this way I want Death I'm sad No one knows

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No one can know
It could hurt him
It will hurt me

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No one notices

No one cares

No one believes

No one understands

Tiger, Tiger burning bright, doesn't shine so bright

Anymore

-Arabella Della

"Inside my head"

My head hurts

There is so many thoughts in my head

I want to get them out

But I can't

There's a big hole in my heart

I'm too young

It feels like I don't have part of my soul

I don't know where it went

Maybe it is with an old part of me

When I was younger, more carefree

Now I think of how wrong things could go

I put others needs before my own

It just comes natural

I don't trust anymore

I don't know why

It just happened one day

Now I think the worst of people

I've been hurt so much

By so many people

Most of them don't know they hurt me

They are oblivious that they still are

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It's killing me inside

But I don't want to lose them

They are all I have left

And I'll continue to hurt

If it means that I'm not alone anymore

Please forgive me, I don't know how to control my emotions

I don't let them out anymore, they just bottle inside

Always ready to burst

I need help

But I don't know how to ask for it.

-Arabella Della

Change and Death

You want to change
But you don't know how

I want to die

But I'm afraid to drown

I feel so sad

I don't want to let you down

If you knew

You would leave

Like wind in the fall

Blow away the leaves

They pick at me

Like the weeds

I want to be alone

But I don't want to be lonely

-Arabella Della

Unspoken Truths

I've never been different on the outside

Only in myself I will confide

That I like him

While I try every day

To be seen as a boy in the perfect way

How can I boast in any sorts

My brown hair and love of sports?

If I'm to really pass

I should seem like the norm

And suffer through the storm

No, I won't do it anymore!

There's too little time before we wash up on shore

And reach the beach of the end of our lives

So while I have the chance

I'll say, with him, I'd love to dance

I'm given the gift

To live and see

That I like him

And I love me



The Hanged Man

Caught with rope in a trap

I sit, I wait, I nap

I'm stuck on this tree

With no one but me

Since I am stuck to the sap

Hanged

Oh how fortune favors the bold

Yet Lam stuck

In those words untold

I get use to it all

The dirt and the muck

It's nice to not have to fall

Yet I stay here and wait

Which does indeed suck

Since alas I fall for the bait

I was always too eager

Like a young buck

But how could I resist her

I'll be the fool for long

I'll stay a sitting duck

Cause I'm in love... the siren's song

-Nick Grand

Me

The me I want to see is not the

Me I want to be.

The person people see is not

Me.

The me I want to

Be is far from reach

The me I will be

Is clear to see.

-Ryleigh Hoclomen

Today I take back my mind

Today I take back my body

Today I take back my heart

Today I take back my soul

Today I learn to love myself 5 feet and 10 inches tall

Today I go back to what I love in myself

Today I am going to learn that this mind isn't his card game

Today I grow into my body knowing that it is not the same he gets to wake

Today I open my heart to inform him I am very much unbroken

Today I breathe in with my soul letting him know that I am not his yoga mat at home

-Jessica

Lust

I feel as though lust describes me.

A beautiful woman with no fear.

I sit on top of a golden throne, and nobody can touch me here.

I hold the power in my hands.

Underground, where no one can see,

I wonder alone about what life could be.

The sadness and sorrow is not what it seems to be.

Royalty and desire, they complete me.

But, the lurking behind will always bring a fire.

Now, here I stand, proud and inspired.

-Kaitlyn

Rose

These days have been long and I miss you

Some days have been endless nights where it seems the sun just doesn't shine

These days I get stuck on the time because I'm just waiting for it to pass

These days however I realize it takes rain sometimes to grow

These days I know that I have to keep my head up so the sun can shine on me too

These days will bring me happiness because I must go on, and see more beautiful flowers as I grow old

These days you are my biggest inspiration and my sunshine to my rainy days

These days I want you to know that you are my favorite Rose ♥

-Jessica Young



-anonymous

Relationships in 2018 Are

After an up and down 2017

Of mixed emotions I realize

Very few relationships last long

And after you and that person

Come out of the relationship

Neither person comes out the same

At the end and that's not even half the battle

Regaining who you used to be

-Anonymous

What scares me honestly, is being left alone.

I push away to see who fights harder to keep me in their life.

If they just leave I know no to trust and later I won't be alone, but I always end up being alone in the end.

Me and my thoughts.

Maybe it's my thoughts that scare me, the endless, shaking nights alone, then it comes back to being alone.

I'm not afraid of the dark, or spiders or snakes, I'm afraid of being alone, growing old alone, being left alone with my own devilish thoughts telling me I'm alone.

Dying alone, no recovering and the thing that kills me...

My anxiety filled thoughts.

-Zhariah



To be or not
To be, like saying
That death is hollow
Like a ghost with
No soul, vampire
With no heart,
Clown without
Its balloons.
What scares?
Is it yourself
Or someone near?
Is it the future or
Past? What scares you?
Tell me your fear

-Xiyon Moore

Miss D.

My 6^{th} grade teacher wasn't my mother, but was my mother at the same time.

She was like a second mother.

She would always yell at me for things, but nothing a teacher should be yelling at your for, more like a mother.

"Boy fix your collar!" "Tuck in your shirt!" "Finish your food!"

I used to hate her for that, but as time went on I realized she taught me a lot.

-Shawn Parsons

January

The cold memories

Of my past brings

The hot burning passion

Of the future

Which pushes me to be stronger.

Life is short and you only live once.

The future holds the confidence of me and my strong mind.

The air I breathe is cold, but my mind is warmer.

-Shawn Parsons

Dark

No one at all to talk to

All the lights are off

All your thoughts are roaming

You start to sweat

Your anxiety kicks in and

You maybe even cry.

You start to think you're not good enough

You see a bible on the table

And contemplate on reading it.

You rock back and forth in the corner

And your breath gets heavier and heavier

Until you can breathe no more.

-Shawn Parsons

Something that scares me.

Spiders – creepy crawlers.

Bite you in your sleep

Walk over you.

Sometimes small, sometimes big.

Spiders, I hate you.

-Megan Dorman

I would change the way I look at things
I would try to look at things more positive
To push past my limits to become a better me
One that's happy with himself
Learning to treat people kindly
Not letting people get to me so easily
And protect the people that are important to me.

-Malik London

Whenever I come to this place, I always feel safe knowing she is here.

She gives the best hugs and always makes me happy no matter what she does.

She is cool and I am proud to call her my friend.

She accepts me as me even though she doesn't know a lot about me.

Thank you for letting me be in your life.

-Haven Woods



The past year of life has been fun.

I graduated high school and succeeded my goal of going to college.

I made progress and really understood things well.

I managed to keep my cool and make it through all the hard times in life.

College started off fun, but I wish it stays that easy and I succeed in my future.

I want to be a nurse and help the world as much as I can and I need to...

-Haven

The last year of my life has been impacted by the love of my life,

My old friends,

And my new female best friend, Sarah, who has really been a huge help to my life

In such a huge way.

All and all, my year was impacted by my friend.

-Gordon

Wake

Pull out your phones and your cameras because this is not a regular spoken word piece, this is a cry for action.

You see, we are being pinned down by a system of government that is corrupt by financial greed, but claim to say this is the land of the free

But we are supporting thieves not only of money, but equality and education.

Why is it that suburban schools are seen to get the same education as public schools, but whenever a scholarship is handed out, a select few of public school students are awarded with the prize?

Why is it that we are claiming to be unified when in every small town I pass by on a Greyhound I see a flag of a confederate as repetitive as I see the false acclaim that our president will make America great again?

Yet, he seems to be pissing off every single ally that helped build the greatest super power in the world.

Why is it that a boy has to learn how to become a man on his own in this day and age?

Why is it that love is only based on how fast a woman is going to give it up to a guy and how quick a man is going to drop a dime on her?

Why is it that a marriage seems to be so nonexistent, but building a broken family is more common?

Why is it that every time I walk into a store I am followed closely and analyzed as if I am a thief?

Yes, I am black, but this is not a robbery. I just want some skittles and iced tea, or are you going to shoot me too?

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You see this is not poetry. This is real life and I am pleading you to stop the madness, roll your film and press record because racism is alive, hate crimes are alive, and fraud is alive.

But chivalry and equality are dying...now tell me, are we really free or is it just a dream if it is waking me up?

-Dwight Coleman

Who I Am

Where I can't be who I want to be.

When I push against the wall they crank and crumble

And I can see who I truly am,

A proud and strong lesbian.

-CeCe Martin

The Closet

I'm afraid of the closet which I just walked out of.

The dark, damp quiet with my feet stuck in concrete,

But now I look up,

And I can see the sun and I can hear the world and I can walk out in the safe open

-CeCe Martin

My strong woman is my mother because she takes care of me every day. She feeds me, clothes me, and shelters me every day. She tells me every day she loves me and that learning is power. That is why my mother is my strongest woman. My mother also gives advice about life so when I'm ready to go to get my first house she will always be there for any troubles.

-Armon Adams

Joy Cookies

Take 2 pinches of happy

3 tablespoons of joy

4 cups of love

-Armon Adams

In blackest day in brightest
Love is blue my heart is shining
Let's bring the fun to life
May friends bring joy to you
Let those worship to the love of your life
And the joy and love and happiness give me strength

-Armon Adamns

Ink of Joy

Ink is blue

Ink is colorful

Ink is wonderful to love and joy

To everything let the colorful ink make everyone happy, smile.

Let the colorful ink bring joy

Ink can bring so many people joy and others colorful ink make colors and love too

-Armon Adams



Directions to My Soul

My soul isn't in one place

It's been tossed around like a rag doll

By people trying to win a race

To find my real place, you might to crawl

Out of all the places I've been

My soul is in an odd spot

Down in this old small town

Where oil could rot

You go down a hill

Try not to fall

I find it pretty chill

But many people fall

I go under a bridge

Above there's a road

Where people are clueless about the kid under the bridge

You may even find a toad

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It's a river

Where my soul is actually at

-Alyssa

Follow the sound of classic rock music

Walk to the quiet peaceful woods

Hear the birds in the trees and the wind in the leaves

Close your eyes, wait.

You will feel a rush of energy when you're close

And finally when you've found it

There is nothing

-Anonymous

Curiosity

You ask questions about things you don't understand
Let me guide you, take my hand
Assumptions are made at a glance
I express myself, but you won't give me a chance
Don't look at my apparel, look at who I am
Hate and negativity I can't withstand
Religion causes you to judge who I am
You claim that my sexuality is not God's plan
But I will be fine as long as I have family and friends

-Arrielle

Stardust

You are made of stardust
From the calcium in your bones
To the iron in your blood
Look to the stars
Recognize your importance
Leave your mark on this world
You are a part of the universe

Leave the past behind

And look to the stars

Know there is more to come

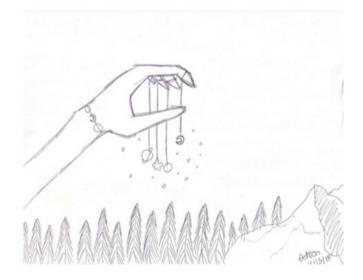
The lies you've told yourself

The lives you've let yourself become

Let it all go and remember

You are made of stardust

-Ashton



I don't know what to write about. This is super distracting, I miss my pets. I think we should consider painting our rental beige. That's super neat that we can paint at our rental and that we have somewhere to live. I think pink skies are cool too. I miss them. I hope things are more eventful, but like there's always something. There are fish here. I never got a pet fish. My bunny is turning 2 soon. That's neat. I am waiting to go home and I feel like being here is limiting my productivity. I miss my pals too. I'm missing a lot? It's fairly loud here!!! I am not materialistic and I don't ask for much, but it'd be pretty neat to get another salt lamp. Heck yeah. I'll probably bus somewhere and get one!! Going on a mission. I'm antsy. There's a lot I want to do when I go home and I cannot pay attention to one thing. I am so sorry.

-Chloe

In the darkness of despair, lives the sadness of no return.

There is a sci-fi geek

With the brightest smile

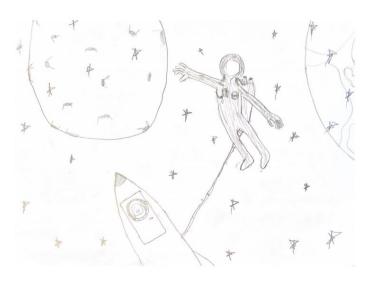
Though broken beyond measures

She is learning to love herself

Though shy and reserved she has an amazing personality

And finally you have reached your Destyne-ation

-Destyne







The Way It Should Be

This is for the boy who sits alone because he's afraid of the weight of hello.

This is for the boy who likes other boys,

The masculine mystery of his somewhat feminine mystique.

This is for the girl who likes other girls,

The girl who dresses in things other than crop tops and high waisted jeans.

The girl who started her symphony as a boy,

But you damn sure better respect the girl she came to be.

This is for me as I get the strength from my allies to be myself because I am beautiful.

Being called a faggot, dyke, fairy means nothing to me.

I am a fairy pickled in faggots with a dyke aesthetic.

Bow to me as I make a change because the battle was a lot, but the war shall be won even if it is over my dead body.

When it comes to your words I think I left them on a shelf along with the ***** I never gave for you or your religion.

-Frica Vandamn

It's Not Home

Home					
A four letter word packed with a meaning of safety,					
But is it safe?					
Home with four letters should have four walls,					
Right?					
Home doesn't have four walls to me,					
Does yours?					
Mine holds 2 chairs and a table that's falling apart.					
Rain hits the tin roof with force while the warm breeze whistles through the tree in front of us along with the 7/11 being emptied of snacks					
We sit and talk about everything.					
We question our love in life while laughing at the fears we ignore for the night. $ \\$					
This is home.					
-Eric H.					

Help the girl that's quiet with glossy eyes Help the boy that's dying inside Help

-Gabrielle C. Serpents



-anonymous

My soul resides in the tall, snowy mountains

Beyond the rivers and villages you will find it;

Deep in the green valleys

Among the grazing sheep

Their bells softly singing

The farmer fast asleep in their villas

-Ilse

My life is not yours to question

My life is not yours to hate

My life is not yours to choose

My life is not about your happiness

My life is content without your presence

-Jazzy Mendez

Kinder

I would love more
Nature in this world.
I would love more
Acceptance in this world.
I would love more
Art in this world.
I would love more
Beauty in this world.
I would love more
Color in this world.
I would love more

Humanity in this world.

-Kaelyn

Down a dark and lonely street

You'll find my soul.

First you'll see butterflies

Then as you go further you'll see a little boy who is scared of his own shadow.

If you go even farther you'll see an unhappy person who never smiles.

Then you'll see a person that is scared to express his feelings.

Next you'll see a boy running away from his problems.

That boy somehow seems to still come out on top of it all.

-Kaiden

Directions to My Soul

Follow the broken heart to the garden of thoughts where you'll find dead flowers and beautiful butterflies.

Only if you keep going you will find a broken, but beautiful girl who is scared, but brave

She tried not to show it, but sometimes it's hard to hide it.

Make a right at the zoo of feelings, where not only will you find the bright personality, but the amazing laugh and wonderful smile.

Keep going to where you'll reach your destination of my brave, bold soul.

-Katelyn



Directions to My Soul

Follow the red carpet to a dark, dark place

First there will be sparkles and butterflies and unicorns,

But really it is a scared, scared little girl with a big personality and a lot of sass

I am a wonderful, nice person with a lot of glam

But you will find a tiny light at the end of the road where an angel waiting for me to find my way to the light and to realize where I could be me and just dance and sign with not knowing anyone is watching me

This is the path to my soul.

-Madelina

I ripped my chest up and off

Replaced it with something else that's missing

Fill my heart, overflow out the sorrow

I won't miss you oh godly chest

You were never meant to be a part of me

I'll sign off on you immediately

Replace me, fix me for I am not myself

I'm stuck here

Find me a new atmosphere

I need air

Oh my chest don't drown me

-Parker

Hidden in reality

Tucked quietly away in fantasy

No one is sure where I am

They don't even look mostly, they don't notice

I try to find myself but I feel empty

I don't know how to pick myself up

I'm in so many pieces

So instead I read

My hands flip through the pages of books

This is how I find the bits of me

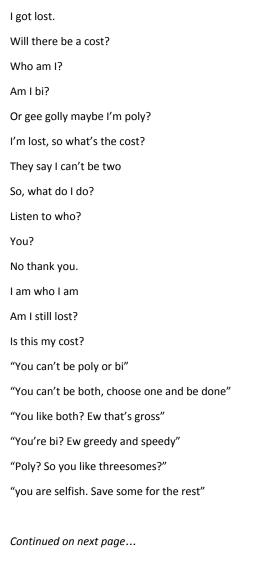
In made-up characters

I find their shiny pieces

And see if they fit into the puzzle of my soul

-Tea

Where Did You Get Lost?



Continued from previous page...

This is my cost

I feel lost, again

What do I choose?

No! I am who I am

I won't let this hate get to me

Let me be...

Let me introduce myself

Hi, I'm bi and oh gee golly I'm also poly ©

-Wolf-Adventure

On The Ire

On the ire the ire,

My situation is dire,

For my heart is on fire,

Nowhere is dryer,

Than the sounds of love where I have to be a liar

Lady or Sire,

Which way is higher than the road set a pyre

It is unholy or is it choir?

Who will save me from the mire?

-Tim L.

Kinder

You are beautiful
You are unique
You are special
You are wanted
You are supported
You are loved
You are human
You are creative
You are YOU!

-Kaelyn



Her eyes sparkle in the sunlight

Two beautiful colors of maple

Her voice sounds like heaven as she whispers my name

How could my personal heaven send me to hell?

My father says people like me are a myth

I can't help how I feel when she is the only thing that makes me happy

Quiet afternoons listening to our favorite songs

Close enough to touch, but much too far away

I wish things could be different

That I could finally be happy

But my personal heaven truly did become my personal hell.

-Jill

Diversity Prom
June 7th, 2019
Tonight,
I won't be afraid
To hold her hand
In front of them,
And I'll dance with her
And tell her she
Looks beautiful.
I won't worry.
Tonight,
The future
That looks bright
From here will shine,
And I'll know
We did it:

Tonight

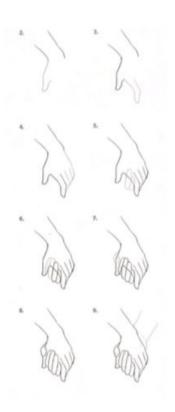
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Everyone in high school
Will be all grown up.
We'll make everything
Better, so that her and I
Can dance in the streets,
And we won't be afraid.

And now, they say
We are the future,
But in the future,
We'll be the present,
And we'll bring
Our gifts with us,
And make this
A better place,
And I won't worry.

-Trinity



Act Loved

And this is just another sad poem

When they laugh at me and I try and throw it back at 'em

But I can't 'cause my back is broken, and I can't focus.

Life is kinda like my math homework,

Cause I can't solve it and everyone else has the answers,

But won't hand them over.

I guess my head checked out

I gotta big mouth but everyone's telling me to sit down and shut up

Or sit down and upchuck and rip pounds and have fun and act loved and chase after that buzz and trash clubs and act loved and act loved and act loved and that sucks

-Jashton Perry

Youth Designed GLYS Logos



