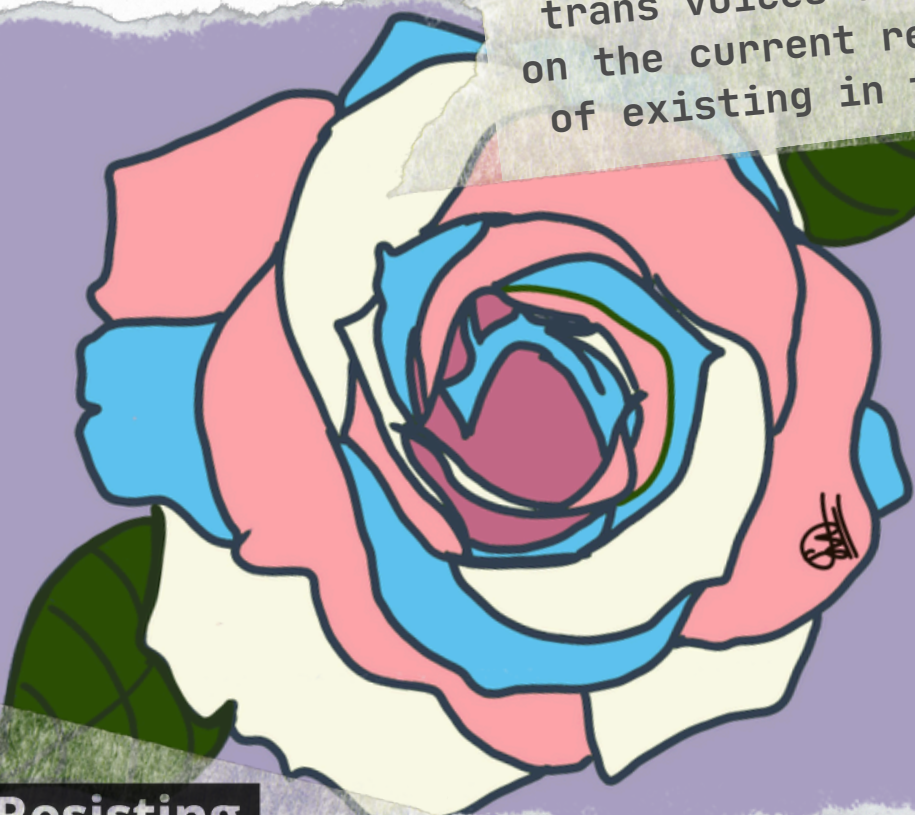


TALES (TRANS)CRIBED

trans voices under 25
on the current reality
of existing in the UK



**Resisting
Transphobia
in Edinburgh**

June 2024

MESSAGES FROM TRANS YOUTH

when asked, "What do you need from your teachers/school?" and "What would you like your teachers/school to know?"

"People need to learn how to use the right pronouns and understand without me the trans child having to educate them.

School doesn't feel safe right now. It feels like it isn't recognised how stressful it is to be trans right now and that it's actually a problem. It's always described that transphobia could be a problem somewhere rather than addressed directly in the school community. We need schools to tackle that truthfully to feel safe." **(Age 11)**

"In my school you get bullied for being out and trans. It would be amazing to be in a school where it's OK to be out and trans, like it's OK to be out and gay in most places. I stay quiet and that keeps me safe from bullying." **(Age 13)**

"You need to do more than "make people respect trans people".

There is no way to make schools safe for trans children because schools are fundamentally unsafe for anyone outside of "the norm".

All teachers need to be educated on gender.

Staff need to be not only trained on trans issues but also on tackling bullying, because trans kids reporting bullying and abuse to adults are not being helped and protected. This in turn leads to trans kids who won't report because they lack trustworthy adults.

Give trans kids self defence classes.

Include gender in sex ed from the very start, including that if you're trans, only tell people you trust because you could be putting yourself in danger.

Be allowed to talk about trans people, but there should also be trans representation throughout an education.

Teach that gender looks different in different cultures and teach examples of it.

Schools are still segregated by gender. Desegregate classes and coursework. PE is an obvious example, but there should be no schoolwork that is segregated by gender (teams, etc.)." **(Age 17)**

"Supporting Transgender Young People in Schools was better than my family could have hoped for when I came out and the school was really supportive in following the guidance.

There is a concern with Cass that Scottish guidance will go backwards more akin to the English system. Teachers are

worried about not being able to support trans and non-binary students appropriately and it is dangerous for a child to be forcibly outed to potentially unsupportive family.

Every young person should be allowed to have their gender respected and appropriate pronouns and name used at school, regardless of whether they are out at home or not. Respect the kid if they don't want their parent to be told something and ask them what they want and need." (Age 15)

"Equality and stuff... but no trans people are the same. A lot of people assume stuff that just isn't true. More awareness of what the labels actually mean (eg trans doesn't mean you've gone through a surgical transition.) More general awareness."

"Just because we're trans doesn't mean we want to be treated differently. It doesn't have to be a big deal, treat it discreetly and if you have any questions ask the child instead of assuming.

Don't do seating plans according to gender.

Don't give the child any special treatment because they are trans and the same goes with singling them out for being trans. All we want is to be the same as everyone else and to be perceived as such." (Age 16)

"It feels like the whole education system sacrifices trans people's comfort and prioritises cis heterosexuals IE bathroom

issues, instead of listening to trans voices and talking about the bigotry etc they say you just have to conform etc. which makes us feel we are the issue. Instead of saying to transphobic kids if you don't like trans kids in toilets you use the staff toilets they tell trans kids to do that. Which makes you the issue and doesn't help mental health or feeling like you belong in school. School should be a safe space but actually a lot of school actions mean school isn't safe.

Also I shouldn't have to answer for the entire trans population or have my decisions publicly questioned when I'm also a child. Don't force trans kids to do the teachers work, all the emphasis on educating people is placed at trans kids doors." **(Age 16)**



rail tickets of a rural queer youth (R)

TH' GOVERNMENT WANTS ME DEID.

a poem by R

Th' government wants me deid.

He wants tae shuve me in a casket 'n' tak' a' ma history wi' me.

He winna murther me wi' a bomb nor a militar occupation.

He'll murther me by seelence instead.

He'll lat me suffer in a classroom, lat me be yelled at in th' street,
oan a scotrail train, in a cludgie.

'n' if A try tae escape or struggle free,

he'll mind tae pit his foot oan me.

Whiles it feels like A am awready deid.

But there's a fire in ma saul 'n' a voice in ma heid.

I'm 20 'n' i'm here.

Bit i'm aw th' pre-teen queer.

A don't mind th' age, but ah mind th' moment. Th' moment ah
tried tae rid masel o' ma chest wi' a pair o' kids' scissors -
scissors A still awn.

That's th' moment that keeps me gaun. Or mebbe it's th' verbal
abuiss A teuk at schuil, or th' harassment oan th' scotrail train last
november or th' trauma- na maiter, it aw remeens in ma brain.

Th' government wants me deid.

But A willnae lie doun in ma grave.

I winna allou th' government tae murther ma younger sel,
A winna allow him tae rob us o' oor bodies, oor minds.

If th' government wants us deid,
He's gaun'ae hiv tae git throu' me first.



119 : what it feels like

a piece by ramiel.

I wish

a poem by RainbowMothman

I wish

I wish being trans and queer wasn't a magician's art of
Disappearing, a slippery act of self-preservation
ingrained and inherited deep within our bones,
Every beat of our hyper-vigilant hearts
pounding, resounding deeply
In our chests
whispering danger and yearning for safety.

I wish learning to be ourselves wasn't so difficult,
I wish that loving ourselves wasn't an art of sacrificial suffering,
I wish that we could simply exist without the knives of
Prejudice hovering poised before our ribcage,
Shedding garnet tears down our skin
as we breathe.

I worry,
and I breathe.

Breathing is so much harder when you're
Being entombed alive by the suffocating weight of oppression,
When your past, present, and future are dictated by lawmakers
and legislators
who use your life as a pawn in the political scheme
a chess board but each square is not black and white,

It's red, red, red.

I wish. I yearn. I grieve. And every day,
We get up and we breathe, we get up and we choose hope,
we get up and we choose love; we push aside the weight of
being and
seek out safety, joy, and exhilaration.
Each day, we fight with broken nails through the
Shroud smothering us, fighting, screaming, bleeding, breathing
Until we find solace in the arms of each other
and we manage to carry the burden
Of other people's hatred together so that
the weight disappears.

I love our resilience, but it is born from an eternal war.
I love our community, but it is born from an eternal grief.
I love our brilliance, but it is born from an eternal darkness.
I love. Despite the pain, the blood, the tombstones, the headlines,
the absences, the fear, the anxiety, the nightmares, the weight,
I love that we love all the harder.

Maybe it's not an act of disappearing, but resistance.



a piece by max.ninja

im so angry

a poem by luna

They exist and they're mad I exist
They're out there wishing I wasn't
And I want to kick and scream and taunt and laugh at their
miserable lives but I can't cus that will only fuel them
but I'm so angry
I'm so angry
I'm so fucking angry
IM SO FUCKING ANGRY
But what can I do
They're everywhere and I'm just 14
I'm a 14 year old with no power or money
I want to fix the world I want to make everyone happy all the
time I want me to be happy all the time
But I'm 14
What could I fucking do?

MY QUEERNESS AS THE MEDICINE THE DOCTOR DID NOT PRESCRIBE

a poem by Ruby

The blood, the endomorphins
rushing through my veins
into the heart of me.

Reviving, resuscitating
emptying the toxins of a society half formed; deformations
twisting the headlines, clogging my throat.

Queer balm soothes aching limbs
calms racing hearts:
a silent march, a soft protest
deep in my underbelly, pulsing with each heartbeat.

This was not what the doctor said. The doctor said,
"Mild depression. Thinks she has no gender."
The doctor said, "No sex drive. Hormones, perhaps?"
Not knowing that this false malady was in fact the bandage
wrapped
over wounds left festering, once infected.
The salve, the remedy, savior of a life left unprotected.



Classical Resilience - it is a symbolic representation of both the lives lost to transphobic violence and the survival of the trans people fighting to live (the mantle around the hips is a Classical symbol given to heroes who died). The reference is an actual Julio-Claudian statue in the Met.

Love/Hate Letter to Society

a poem by RainbowMothman

I love you but
I hate that you're leaving,
The society that
Strangled me
Then told me it was
Grieving,
You looked in my eyes
And crushed me
into boxes,
Trying to breathe
And escape
Your paradoxes

So is it worth it?
That cruel, cold joy of
being right?
Your
Superior exterior
Nurturing
Your selfish pride?
You hold onto
your privilege,
Perfecting it,
Inspecting it,

Unaware of
Its carnage.

Is it worth it?
All of our lives?
And still after
All this endless
Fighting,
The struggling,
The breaking,
And all your endless
Smiting,
Why is it my fault?
That who I am
Is yours
for the taking?
When you are
The ones who are
blind to the
world you
Are making?

I am not your spoils
I am not a

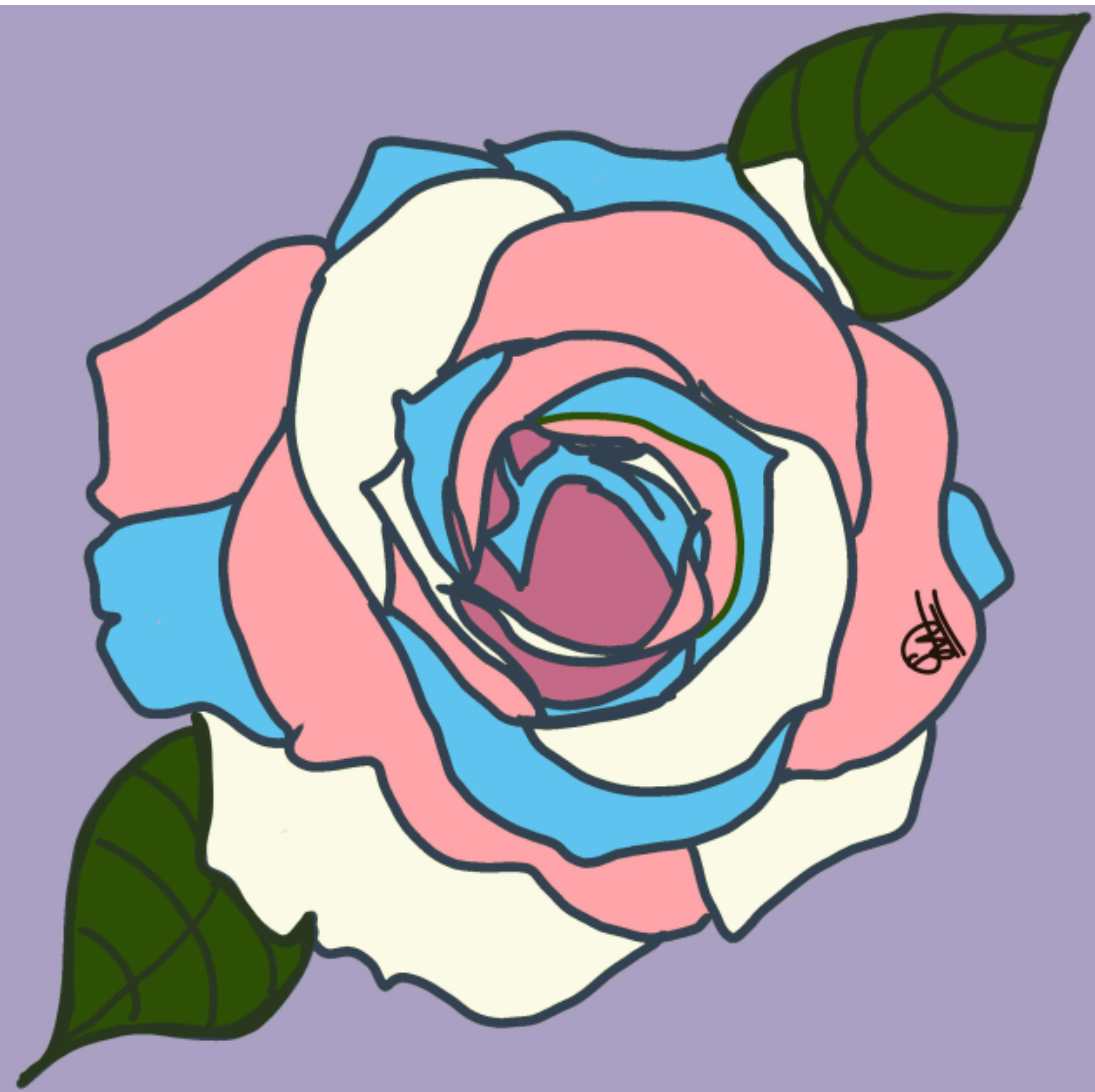
Consolation prize,
I am not succumbing,
And I will be meeting
your eyes,
My identity is not
Yours, and
I am not a
sacrifice.
This is not my problem,
And I'm done
Being polite.

We're not disappearing,
We won't be your
Acolytes
Of violence and oppression.

It's time to look
in the mirror
And confront
Your obsession.

In the epicenter
Of your destruction,
If it's any concession?

I love you but I hate
Your instruction.



a piece by RainbowMothman

ON THE NIGHT I BIRTHED GOD

a poem by Ruby

The midwife said,
Do not let the dark get to you.
What you do not know cannot hurt you.
What the nightmare said cannot follow you.

Do not let the dark get to you. This hollow emptiness,
it cannot last forever. This silent party,
it will not riot forever.

Do not let the dark get to you.
Gather your wits about you, son. Put your insides together
and push. push. push.

(eventually the morning will get shoved over the horizon)

Turning 12

August will mark 5 years since I announced I no longer wanted to be a girl. That's half a decade. When I lie awake each night I think about how much has changed since I turned 12.

Why would you want to be a man? My best friend would say, listing me reason after reason why I should reconsider. But I didn't care, because I wanted to live my truth. I didn't have a crisis about who I was, or spend a long time denying myself happiness. I knew who I was the moment I discovered the word itself, and that's who I became. There was no fear and no worries about what my new high school friends would say. I was only 12, I didn't understand.

I got an appointment for trans healthcare with the hopes that maybe, I'd see puberty blockers before the age of 15.

At 13, I was nervous to be alone. I grew out my hair, and let the rest of the school catch onto what I was.

My clearest memory being the heinous chanting of my old peers. So called 'friends' of my primary school days, putting our similarities aside to focus on our one big difference. They'd shout slurs. Over and over. What could I do? The giggling in the halls never ceased.

My mother would sulk at the waiting list. How many months has

it been now? I never had high expectations. She didn't understand, but I did.

My 14th birthday came around and I opened my gifts alone, in the comfort of my own bed. I dyed my hair and ventured back to school in the hopes things would change. I made a friend, and that friend had other friends, and soon I had a community. A community that had drinks thrown their way. We'd lurk under the stairs and did nothing but squeeze inwards as liquids poured down the cracks between the wall and stairwell. But still, it felt good to have more connections to people like myself.

My friend would talk about testosterone, and how excited he was to start the second he turned 16. That got me excited. Maybe, by that point, I'd be atop that waiting list.

15 felt like 12 again. My friends kept me safe. You're at a much higher risk alone than you are in a pack. Not to say life was peaceful, however much more than before. My hair was still vibrant, but I walked past the snickering faces with shameless pride. I knew the people that mattered didn't care.

How many years has it been now? Trust me I'm counting. But I always knew. My mother complains and tallies the passing days as if there was ever a chance I'd see the support I needed.

My 16th grew closer and closer, and I forced the elephant into the room. After many awkward conversations, we went private.

Talking about hormones as a concept seemed easy, but getting me them somehow became a difficult conversation. It made me wonder, for the past four years, just how many people actually saw the real me? Or did they feel comfortable pretending I was still a girl?

16, and I was alone again. My body would tense at the sound of teenage laughter. My hair would change each month, desperate to keep my individuality yet sick to death of the constant cruelty. Was it worth being myself even if it meant I'd never see a moment of peace? Was it ever just my hair? Or was it another aspect of my identity? Four years of change, growth and people yet my brain still knew the same. Those I used to take comfort in suddenly walked past me with their hair grown out past their shoulders and a skirt above the knees. The people I thought could understand shed their phase like a snake sheds its skin, leaving their past behind for a brighter future. But where does that leave me?

Progress is being made, my prescription is coming through. £140. My mother says, dropping my gel on the table. This is it, four and a half years have led to this moment.

An email comes through. After all this time, my wait is over. No more payments in our future.

16½. Pushing through each day, knowing it's a step closer to my truth. The truth I had known from the

beginning, that I had dreamed about for years, was within reach. Slowly but surely, the bullying began to fade. From my mind, at least. Little by little each interaction fell further from my attention as I stopped caring about what the world had to say.

My mum walks into my room. Bad news. She says. My heart sinks. Not for myself. But for the trans children across the country who counted on public healthcare. The children without access to private care who waited four and a half years, just to be told at the last very second that they would need to wait until they were 18. The world is so focused on what might go wrong they seldom notice what will go right.

17 in one month. I feel like an animal, covered with hair and sweat. Each time I open my mouth a different voice escapes me. To the average boy, hitting puberty is a miserable experience. Nobody enjoys being a disgusting monster. But I do. I've waited five extra years to experience what other boys do when they turn 12.



a zine by
Resisting Transphobia in Edinburgh
and 15 young trans people

collation and design: Ruby, Emerson +
Daph

**Resisting
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