

LIBERATE

2021 Channel Island LGBTQ+ Writing Awards

Regardless by Josh Lewis

It sure came as a surprise to step
Into the closet, to finally know
What I am and who I want, to
Find at last that missing glow

That sits within so I shine without.
In here I can dream the dreams I've dreamt before,
Of heavy breath and wandering hands, with boys
I've known but never dared search for more.

I wish these doors would open, that
I could simply step back out. But I find
Them chained by how you might react.
You'll love me or loathe me, will hate how I've hidden behind

This half-inch screen of plywood lies.
Yet I push through the cracks, seek help from a friend,
A hand with which to rewrite the Song of Myself. I feel
I've become Schrodinger's boy, two lives, one truth to send.

Sometimes I feel like the lock is breaking and I'm
Ready to step out, just how I've planned,
But what will you think,
Will you even understand?

I don't know why there's so much to
Say. I've been 'hers' before so why can't I be 'his'?
You know how I fell for Hero,
All I want now is to be falling for Adonis.

There are four words that lock me in,
That keep the door shut tight and keep the handles chained.
How will you see me and the light through my prism?
What if you hear my story and then help me write? What if you say
'I love you regardless.'

Trojan support and hollow words,
Blind love blindly scrabbling for meaning.
You know me now and I have not changed
So why do you choke and go about cleaning
Your child confused and standing before you.
Tell me, what stain is it that you see?
Because I've shown you the blessings you
Want your god to absolve. Now my wrists are free

But the flesh has been broken by the
Weight of your shackles. Outside the door
That's what I see waiting through the cracks:
It's a marked life in the light, not the same as before.

When I step out the closet, I don't know
What you'll say; be compassionate or heartless,
Be proud or ashamed. This is who I am and it's who
I've been. Accept it. Reject it. But don't love it regardless.