



The Gay Saint

JAN 2022
— VOLUME 5 ISSUE 2 —

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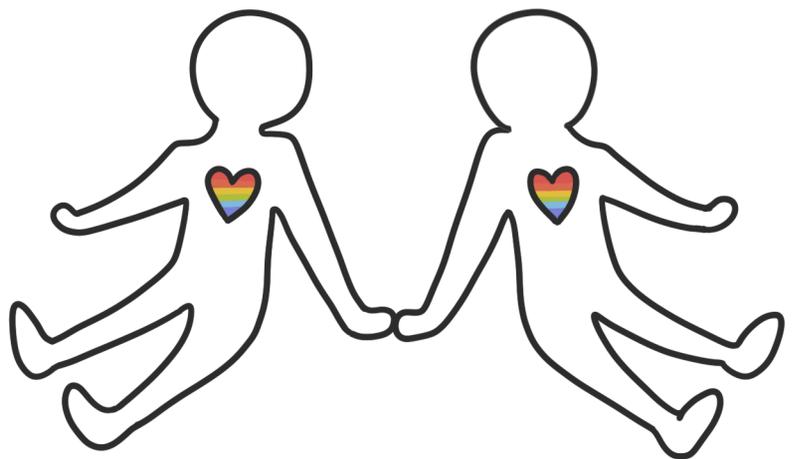
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love is love.



QUEERFEST BLURB

Hello and thank you for reading this special Queerfest edition of *The Gay Saint!* I'm Becca (she/her) and it has been my absolute honour to be your Queerfest Coordinator.

Queerfest is first and foremost a celebration of queer culture, but it is important to always remember our roots and those who fought so we can have events like Queerfest. I hope you enjoy the many events we have planned this week (and then Drag Walk on 4 March), celebrating your unique queerness while honouring and acknowledging those who came before us. And of course, none of this could have been possible without my wonderful subcommittee, so a big shout-out to Alex, Audrey, Jack, Martin, Sydney, and Taryn, and the Saints LGBT+ committee that have been so incredibly helpful and supportive.

I truly hope that Queerfest is as magical for y'all as it's been for me! For more information on Queerfest, see the News section.

Becca Hain, Queerfest Coordinator.

LGBT+ NEWS

Queerfest

Brigid Rawdon.

This January, Saints LGBT+ is once again hosting its annual Queerfest, a week full of celebrations highlighting LGBT+ culture at St Andrews. This year's Queerfest will begin on Monday 31 January with a collaborative event with *The Gay Saint* (that's us!). This event will be a launch party that celebrates *The Gay Saint* and the writers, editors, and designers that work on the publication. The next day, 1 February, will be a panel of faculty members discussing the topic of queer inclusion and exclusion at St Andrews and previous institutions. Many students come from areas where LGBT+ history is not taught in school and, as a result, do not possess much knowledge about all of the LGBT+

activists, writers, and other figures that came before them. Queerfest Coordinator Becca Hain believes that ensuring the inclusion of LGBT+ history in our curriculum is crucial because 'queer inclusion in the way teachers frame the world is vital as when we aren't talked about in education, it's easy to forget we exist.' The goal of this panel is to conceptualise actionable ways to increase the inclusion of LGBT+ people and their stories in the curriculum of St Andrews.

On Wednesday 2 February there will be an Arts Bash celebrating queer creativity and expression in which students will be able to create art in many different forms. One idea that Queerfest aims to promote is that being a member of the LGBT+ community is something to be cherished, not to be ashamed of. The Arts Bash will provide a safe and inviting space for students to express

themselves artistically and share what LGBT+ culture is to them. Another event celebrating queer expression and joy will be the Glitterball Launch Party and Queer Rock Night with RockSoc that will occur on Thursday 3 February. Glitterball is a student-organised formal ball for LGBT+ students and allies that will be held on the 26 March in the Spanish Gardens of St Andrews. This ball is a great opportunity for students to celebrate their differences while enjoying entertainment from popular drag queens and dancing to excellent music!

On Friday 4 February, Queerfest will host a gallery with student submissions, Inklight's *Queering The Home*, and the launch of the second instalment of the Memory Project. Inklight is the University of St Andrews' creative writing society and *Queering the Home* is a collaborative zine published by both Inklight and Saints LGBT+.

It features creative writing by LGBT+ students at St Andrews. The Memory Project, which was started as a part of Queerfest in 2020, includes a series of portraits and interviews of students detailing their experiences navigating their identities, their relationships and finding their place at the University of St Andrews. As the theme of this year's Queerfest is history, Becca Hain believes that 'it is important to honor those who came before us and the work they put in to allow us to celebrate the queer experience as fully as we are doing now.'

Along with highlighting the experiences of LGBT+ faculty at the panel on Monday, it is crucial to showcase the experiences of LGBT+ students to let others know that they are not alone. In particular, Queerfest coordinators want the Memory Project to show students that 'it gets better' and that, as LGBT+ students, we face many challenges but all will be okay down the road. More information about the Memory Project can be found on the Saints

LGBT+ website including stories from previous students.

On Saturday 5 February, there will be a collaborative event with Dog Walking Society so we encourage all dog lovers to come along for some dog walking and make some furry friends. The next day, Sunday 6 February, Queerfest will be hosting a movie night and, as a newspaper that greatly values promoting LGBT+ arts and culture, we hope that you will join us at the showing!

Last but certainly not least, Drag Walk, which normally takes place on the Friday of Queerfest, this year will take place on Friday 4 March. Any student, regardless of experience level with drag performance, was able to apply to take part in this year's Drag Walk. The format of Drag Walk is similar to the popular drag show *Rupaul's Drag Race* as students will be competing in front of an audience and a panel of judges - professional drag queens that either

currently attend or previously attended the University of St Andrews and Drag Walk itself. This is an excellent opportunity for students to showcase their creativity and celebrate a wide range of gender expressions. It is the great hope of the creators of Queerfest that a delayed Drag Walk will allow for the current COVID-19 outbreak to settle down and allow for all interested students to enjoy Drag Walk, as well as all other Queerfest events together in-person.



CREATIVE WRITING

Sepia Toned Visions

Lucien Newton.

There is a haunting kind of beauty in standing at the doors to magnificent, monumental buildings once considered homes by those with lifestyles decadent and lavish enough to allow for life in the lap of luxury. The grounds themselves are enough to astound my humble eyes, landscapes of vastness and seemingly unlimited potential. With each step along the path up to the age old oak doors, fine grit clings to my clothes, a lingering gift that will only be lost to gentle whispers and winds. It is easy to be swept away in fantasies of flowing Victorian gowns, puff pink to match the season, and perfectly tailored suits adorned with a fresh-picked flower taking pride of place in a button hole. Sepia toned visions of high tea and riverside picnics come to mind as though

they are but memories from a former life. If I allow myself a moment to stop and turn my face to the morning sun, close my eyes and breathe in the freshly cut grass and fragrant blooms, I swear that I hear the soft and delighted echoes of the stable hand's voice, crying out melodic "welcome"s to his just-returned master. I envision the poor boy stumbling over his own feet in his enthusiasm as he runs to greet his lover, who simply offers a grin, amused and fond as the familiar often are.

I am brought back to Earth only by the soft caw of a garden bird flying overhead, and I follow it with the breeze, all the way back to wide open doors. Inside, my breath is stolen by the beauty laid out before me. Every wall a soft duck egg blue, embellished with gold and perfectly complimenting imported Persian carpet. A chaise longue, floral by design, brings to mind the

master of the house draped with decadence and decorum across the upholstery. Always a phantom call, the breeze through a cracked window carries the calm melody of long since forgotten music from a piano in the corner. It is easy to be lost in the sway of bodies as all around me I see ghosts of party guests, or perhaps a much adored gentleman caller, comfortable with a warming brandy in hand and a winning set of cards in the other. I know with certainty that there is love left lingering in faded wallpaper panels.

In a testament to wealth, and to commemorate a deep love of others, wall after wall in this house is covered with rich tapestries and timeless oil paintings, all encased in the finest golden frames. As I wander through the drawing room, I gaze up at these faces, each magnificent in their beauty, and I find my romantic heart filled with

the longing to know every patron and passer-by who is presented here. I close my eyes and commit every face to memory, holding conversations and courting as though it comes naturally. I find that I am captivated by a lifestyle so out of date

in these modern days, and I long for it much like I long for a lover. The future is welcome to pass me by if I am granted

the opportunity to travel through time and embrace past days as though they were my own.

Guilty Pleasures

Charlotte Grønbech.

The first time I drank saltwater it was only because I knew I shouldn't. I bent down on all fours and eagerly submerged my head beneath the surface of the water, breaking through the ripples as I went lower. Curiosity beating rationality. This reverse baptism breathed life into a troubling offbeat obsession.

The 2nd time I drank saltwater it was my thirst that would not be quenched. My throat was a bleeding wound waiting for an unorthodox treatment. Greed conquered pride, and soon my insides were suspended in a bath of shame.

The 7th time I drank saltwater I stumbled to the edge of the ocean in the disguise of darkness. Hidden behind boulders, the moon watched my back as I snuck another taste.

The 15th time I drank saltwater my knees sank sombre into the ground, quicksand. My face eagerly greeted the surface, Narcissus searching for fulfilment.

The 42nd time I drank saltwater I tried bottled water in between sips. It did nothing.

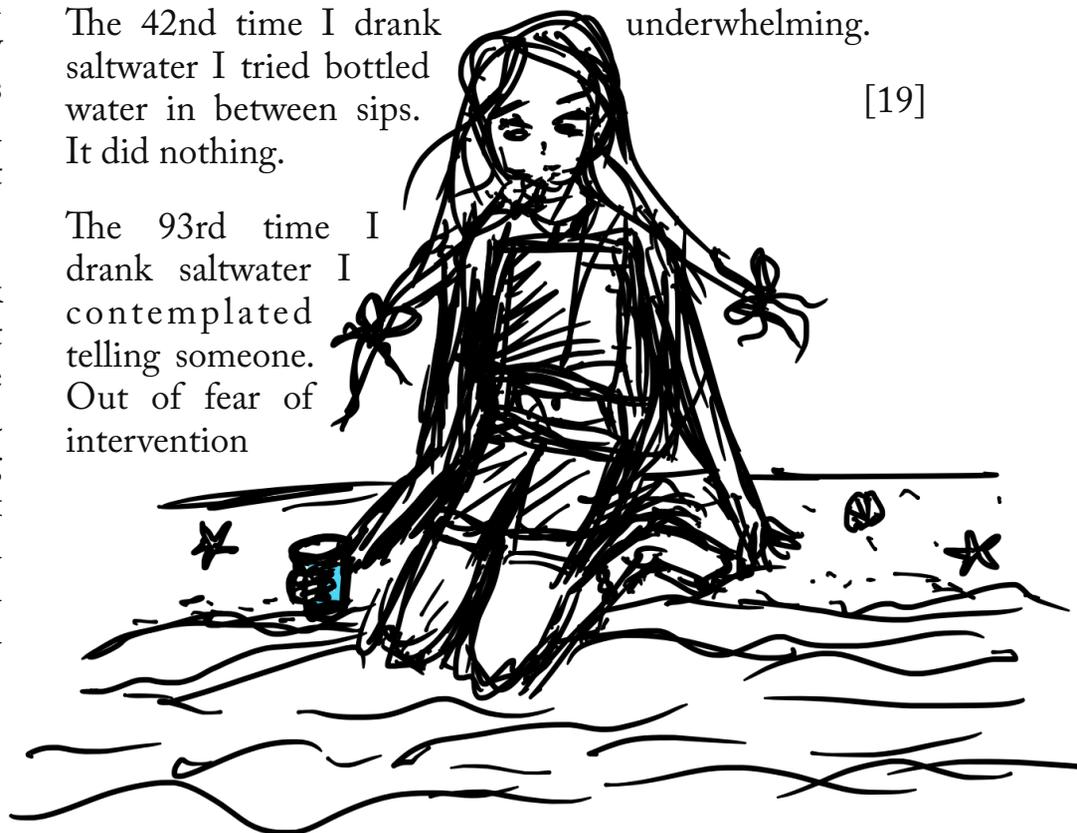
The 93rd time I drank saltwater I contemplated telling someone. Out of fear of intervention

I stayed quiet, the moon my sole companion.

The 157th time I drank saltwater I tried not to. I drew lines in the sand, reorganised each grain by shade, tried to catch fish with my feet, but eventually I made my way down to the shoreline yet again.

The 208th time I drank saltwater I accepted my fate. Because tap water tastes stale and underwhelming.

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The In-Between Places.

Cate Bone.

It just slipped out last night,

I saw the amber tint of our golden eyes reflecting,

And golden breath, chiming in unison,

and I had to say it.

I did not think it unusual, no, I'd said it

A thousand times before. Had you not heard

The whispers in your ear at dusk,

The whispers in your hair at dawn?

An amber yawn, rehearsed accidentally but

I don't regret a single one, often as I'd said it.

And make no mistake, it was often.

I did not mean to drop it so openly in my fear

And hear it clatter off the grey tiled floor,

I will choose to think it chose to fall

And accompany me as I tumbled downwards.

I'd carried it with me for too many weeks,

It was gathered from black lint and hair left so brazenly

And yet I feared it was as yet too ambiguous.

Although I had hoped you'd stolen the same from me,

But now I hear the whispers too, I hear the deep bass thunder,

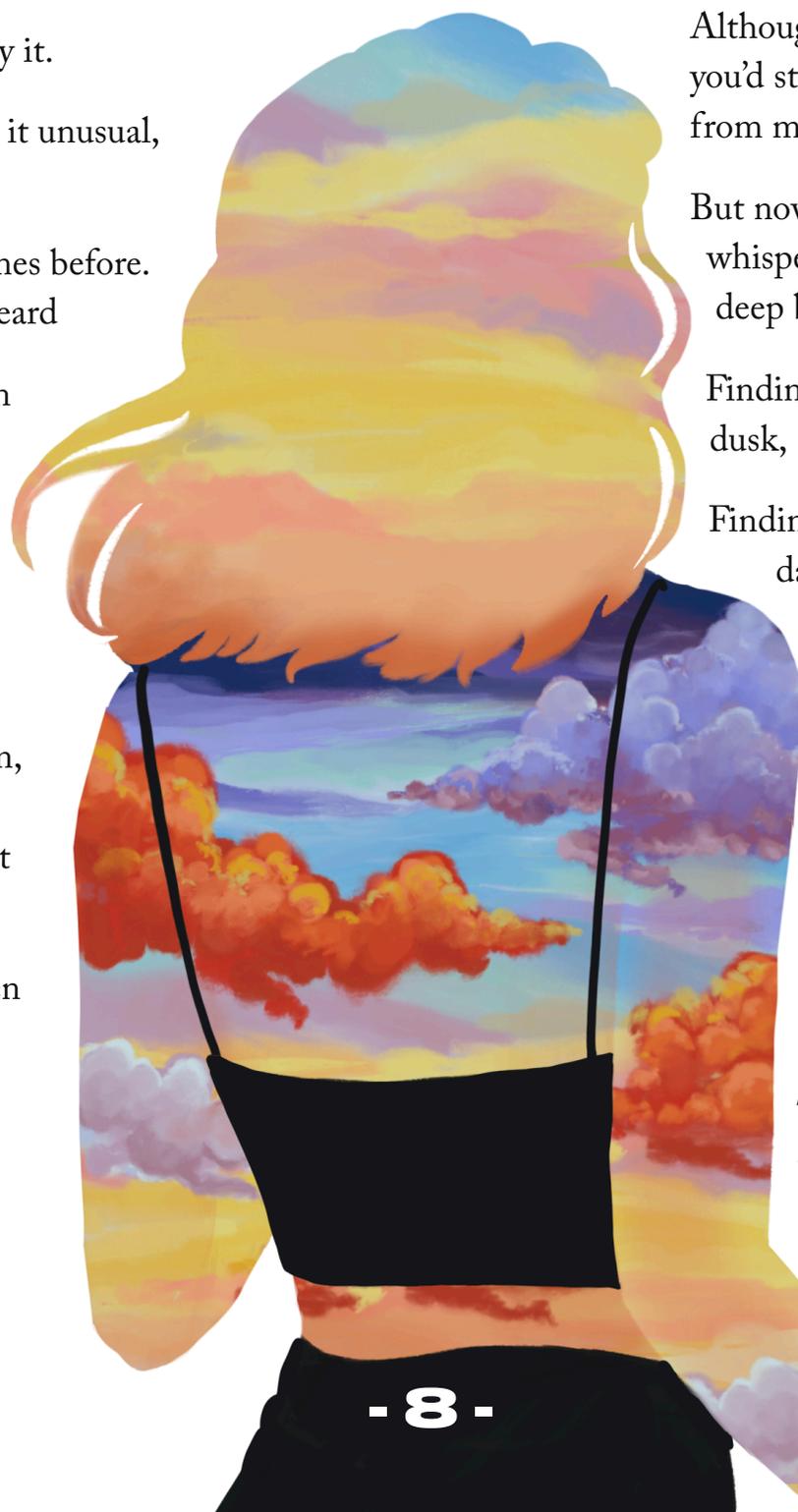
Finding me in russet dusk,

Finding me in scarlet dawn,

I choose to have no reservations in the repeated psalms of evening

And from the temporal limbo I choose again

To push onwards to night.



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