

YEAR 10 WINNER Amelia N

Today is the June 28th 1969, the first day of the Stonewall riots, I have been marginalised and harassed my entire life, forced into a heterosexual marriage. I have been tormented, harassed and plagued with hatred my entire life and finally someone has fought back and for that I am proud.

Last night I escaped my home, it was around 11pm, my wife asleep upstairs and my two kids lay in bed dreaming of childish delights whilst I felt like I was living a nightmare in which I wished to escape. Sneaking down the stairs, with each creak I felt my heart stop for a second, praying I didn't wake anyone up and luckily I didn't. I began to drive, I didn't know where but I knew I had to escape from the secrets I was imprisoning inside myself, terrified that at any moments they would slip through the silver bars and I'd be banished from society.

Eventually I reached the end of a road, noticing a small staircase which erupted with music, there were people canoodling yet something was different, these people weren't average couples. They were the same gender, and when I saw these inhumane monsters of society in love, I knew exactly what I needed to do.

Entering the room, the beat pulsated on my chest while the air thumped as the bass changed. A young man caught my attention, dark almond skin, beautiful sunken eyes and lips of gold, I was instantly attracted, I had to speak to them even though being in their presence was simply enough. With each step, before this I had convinced myself that I was just having irrational thoughts but with every footprint that marked the floor I realised that love was real, and that I could not hide in distress. I could only be happy if I express myself to the greatest extent, and I now knew exactly how to do that.

Suddenly, cops ran in, the distant sound of screams and gunshots ricocheted in my ears, I had been caught. My greatest fear was a reality and I had nothing but a glance at a possible soulmate, yet as I began to run towards the exit. I heard a brick crash on the ground, the riots had begun. Five hours of torment and anger, I had fought with all my strength. I had finally had a taste of freedom and I would not let it escape. We were so close until I got shoved to the ground, as if my liberty was an animal that had escaped from captivity. Handcuffs crunching together as I got carried into a cop car, my only wish was that they were safe.

As blurry as the night last night was, I remember this person as if they had imprinted on my brain, and even in a cold, damp prison cell. I will wish for a day that I can hold them in my arms, a day of peace and equality.