

# IN MEMORIAM

Harlow Macdonald

When I was 5

I remember holding hands

Openly

With my best friend

Tripping and laughing

Stumbling over our uncoordinated limbs

Liberated.

When I was 11

I remember linking little fingers

With my 'friend'

Living in a world which was ours.

A couple of older women

Scoffed in disgust

Called us fags

And crossed the street like we were contagious

As they walked to the local market.

Their words scarred my flesh as they were branded on my skin.

I can still feel them burn.



When I was 12  
I had a crush on a girl  
I told my friends in confidence  
They looked utterly  
Disgusted.  
It was like I was a disease  
That needed to be contained.  
Exterminated.

When I was 12  
I was getting ready for class  
Trying desperately to look  
Normal.  
An older girl pushed me  
I pushed back.  
I was dragged to the ground roughly by my hair  
Slurs tumbling out of her mouth like shattered glass  
As I clawed at her legs desperately for her to stop.



When I was 13

I was walking with my band mates to grab lunch

We trudged along the Palmy Square

Proud of ourselves and who we were.

Until

Boys on bikes came tumbling past

Crashing through the autumn leaves

Shooting loud, fake guns

Yelling at us to die

That we did not belong in a world

That belonged to the homophobic, white man.

I am now 14.

I don't know who I am

If I am a person

Or a broken shadow of the woman I could have been.

I don't love anymore.

It's too dangerous.

Because now the only person that I struggle to love

Or even barely like

Is myself.

