

**LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY IN
THE DOMINICAN
REPUBLIC INTEGRATED
WITH MY STORY**



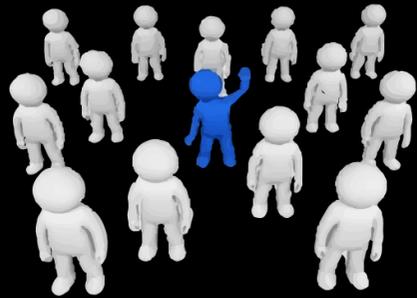
LGBTQ RIGHTS IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

In January 24, 2007, **homosexuality** was legalized in the Dominican Republic. However, there are no laws that protect LGBT members from discrimination in housing and places of employment.



Same-sex marriages are not legally recognized.

Law 285-66 prohibits police officers from engaging in sodomy. This is punishable by up to two years in prison. The law essentially prohibits LGBT people from serving as members of the police force.



Where are my rights?

There is no law in the Dominican Republic that comprehensively prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

People with HIV/AIDS also regularly experience employment discrimination.



45% of queer people in Santo Domingo have been rejected by schools or universities, or have experienced other discrimination in education.

While transgender people are particularly vulnerable to violence, gay men, lesbians, and bisexual individuals have also been the victims of hate crimes. Their own family members may react with violence when they learn of the persons sexual orientation.



Lesbians have experienced harrassment, violence, death threats, and rape, the rape intended to correct their sexual orientation.



So overall, even though homosexuality is legal in the Dominican Republic, members of the LGBTQ+ community have no rights whatsoever and are not protected under the law.

RELIGION IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Roman Catholicism is the dominant religion in the Dominican Republic. 52% of the population identify as Roman Catholic.

Religion is a really important aspect of the Dominican lifestyle. Dominicans tend to be very religious and usually say prayers before they eat, and consistently grant blessings to those they care about. They also attend church regularly.

That being said, religion plays an important role in shaping people's perspective on the LGBTQ community.

Roman Catholicism does not support same sex relationships, stating that "homosexual acts are intrinsically immoral and contrary to the natural law."



GAY PUNTA CANA

Punta Cana is known as the Caribbean's most gay-friendly destination - and for good reason! This hotspot boasts incredible beaches, laid-back bars and restaurants, and exciting cultural events all year round.

There are many great water sports and activities you can do while in Punta Cana, such as snorkeling, swimming, scuba diving, or taking in the beauty of the many majestic beaches. Besides some gay-friendly bars and nightclubs in Downtown Punta Cana, most of the gay scene is really at the resorts which cater to LGBTQ couples and romantic get-aways. The other nearby towns to Punta Cana are not really very welcoming for LGBTQ travelers.



HOW THIS RELATES TO MY STORY

I am Dominican and Puerto Rican. My dad was born and raised in Santo Domingo, and my mom was born in Puerto Rico, but also raised in Santo Domingo. I have a lot of close family currently living in the Dominican Republic. I am bisexual and I came out only about a year ago. I came out to my parents, my sister, and my friends. Some accepted me with open arms, and with others it still is a work in progress.

I have not come out to my family that lives in the Dominican Republic out of fear that they won't accept me. Part of the reason why I decided to research about the LGBTQ community in DR is because I wanted to know what my chances were of coming out and being accepted by my family. The chances are not very high because my family is very religious and from what I've seen, some are slightly homophobic.



POEMS

I wrote some poems expressing how I don't feel like myself when I'm with my family, and I expressed my emotions in regards to potentially coming out to my family from the Dominican Republic. I also wrote a poem about how I felt when I came out to my parents.



The Mask

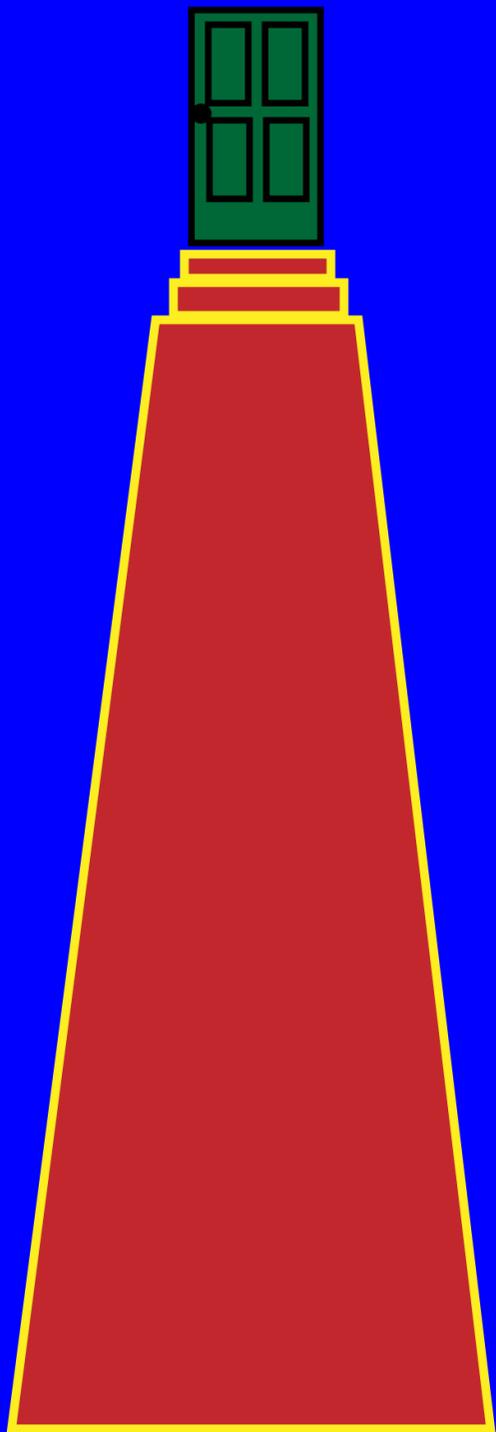
*I feel like I'm wearing a mask,
Is being myself too much to ask,
I just pretend to sit there and laugh,
All the while my heart aches and cracks.*

*I'm scared, I'm terrified,
That you'll reject me as I put my heart on the line,
Nonetheless I will seek approval and put on a mighty fight,
Because I am done living this big fat lie.*



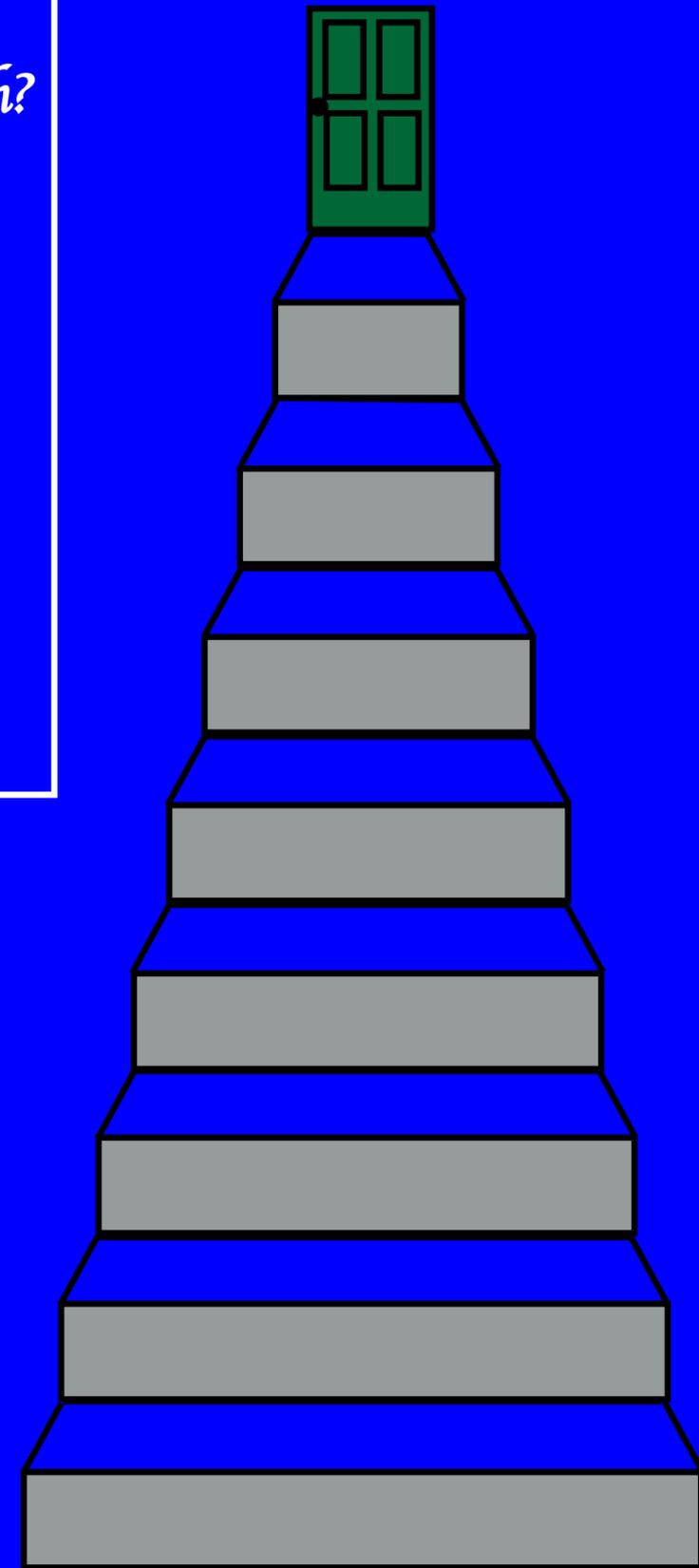
Will You Accept Me?

REJECTION

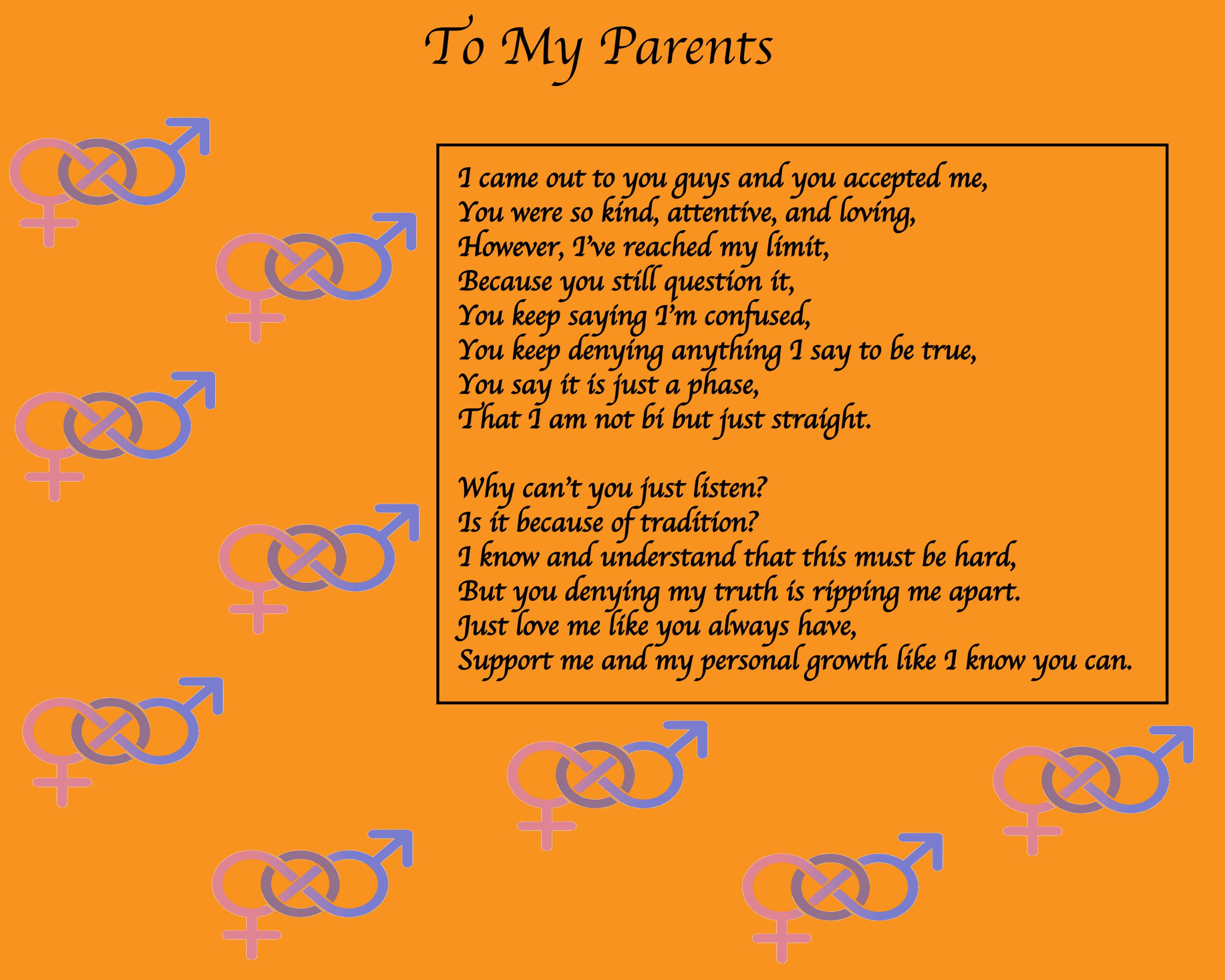


*I have no doubt that you love me with all your heart,
But will you love me the same when you find out the truth?
Will you still love me when you find out I like girls too?
Will your perspective of me change?
It shouldn't because I'm still the same,
The same girl you've always known,
except I'm authentically myself and it shows.
If you can't accept me that's okay,
That'll be that and I'll go my own way,
But I hope that you do,
So that I can show my real self to you.*

ACCEPTANCE

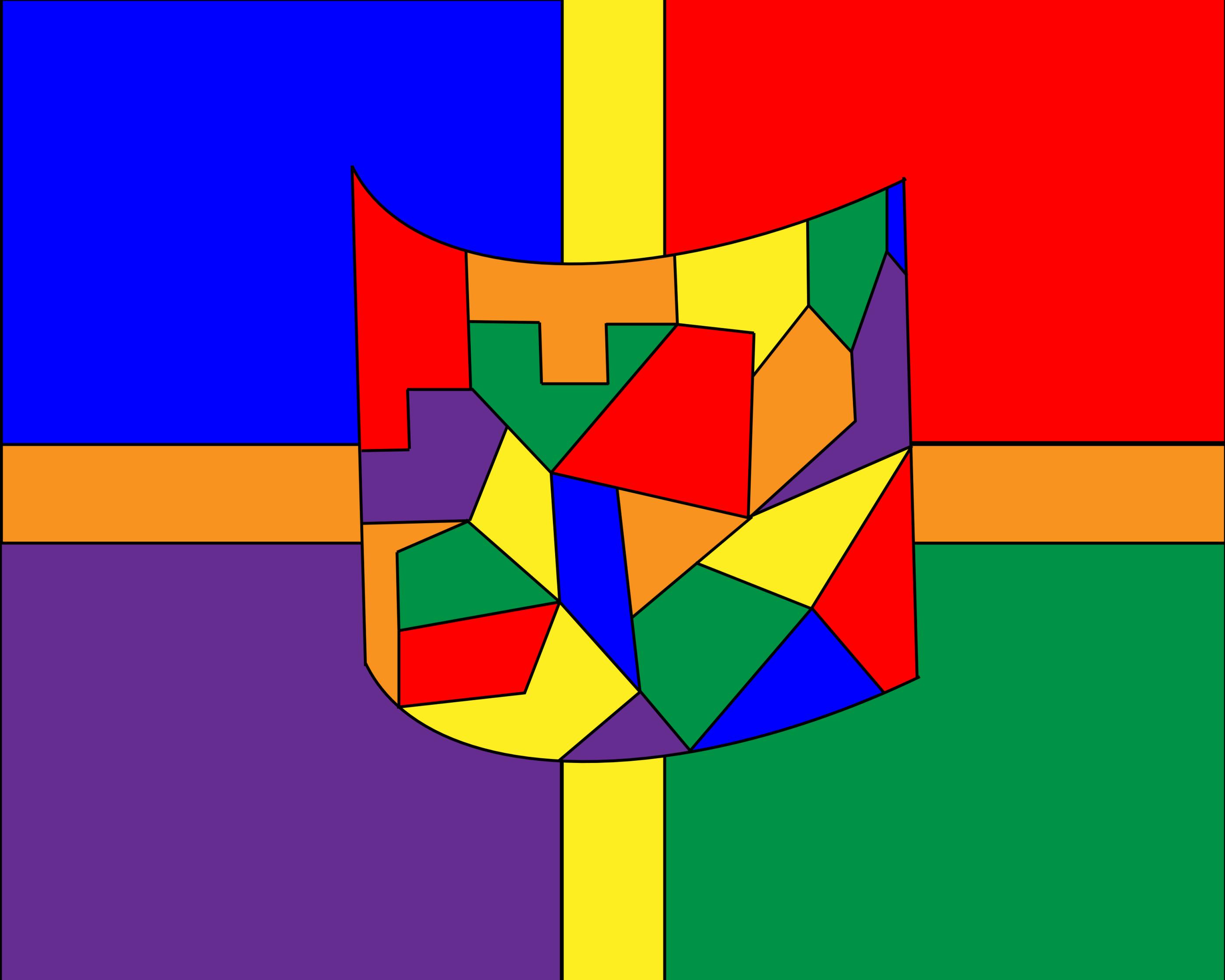


To My Parents



*I came out to you guys and you accepted me,
You were so kind, attentive, and loving,
However, I've reached my limit,
Because you still question it,
You keep saying I'm confused,
You keep denying anything I say to be true,
You say it is just a phase,
That I am not bi but just straight.*

*Why can't you just listen?
Is it because of tradition?
I know and understand that this must be hard,
But you denying my truth is ripping me apart.
Just love me like you always have,
Support me and my personal growth like I know you can.*



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