Poems For Transgender Day of Remembrance Service 2025

Rosie Martin

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The 20th November was a day of remembrance for the many trans people who have either been murdered or have taken their own lives over the past 12 months. Three particular cases in the last couple of months affected Rosie so much that she wrote a poem in their memory and as a reminder of the way society treats trans people.

In October, a senior coroner ruled that the suicide of 17-year-old trans girl Leia Sampson-Grimbly could have been prevented if NHS gender clinic wait times were not "far too long".

American student Lia Purcell Smith died by suicide on October 18th at the age of 21. She was a member of a women's swimming and diving team in Vermont but left the team following the ban on trans women athletes in response to the Executive Order by the US President.

Earlier this month, a fatal accident inquiry found that the suicide of transgender prisoner Sarah Jane Riley could have been avoided if a suicide prevention strategy had been properly in place and staff were better trained to deal with complex cases. She died in solitary confinement in a male prison after being refused parole.

I wonder how many more like them and like me, who we never heard about?

PEOPLE LIKE THEM AND PEOPLE LIKE ME: A POEM FOR THE TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

People Like Them and People Like Me

They told us we don’t belong here,
that truth was a wound to conceal.
That our bodies were broken, our hearts were mistaken,
our love was something unreal.
But still, we walk with quiet grace—
alive, though we were never meant to be.
The world forgets how hard it is
for people like them and people like me.

They said our names with laughter,
they turned our faces away.
But our names are songs of courage,
our voices demand to stay.
Each letter carved from longing,
each word a small decree—
a declaration that we exist,
people like them and people like me.

Some were taken by cruel hands,
some by their own despair.
The weight of hatred—heavy, vast—
was more than a soul could bear.
The world grew quiet after each loss,
but silence is not peace, you see—
it’s absence, carved in memory
of people like them and people like me.

We've buried our dead with trembling hands,
and whispered their names to the sky.
Wondering how many candles must burn
before the world asks—*why?*
Why must truth invite such pain?
Why must freedom come with a plea?
How many lives must end before
it's safe for them and safe for me?

Yet even in sorrow, there's fire.
It burns in our tender pride—
in trans joy, trans love, trans living,
in the power we hold inside.
We rise like dawn through darkness,
we speak, we fight, we see—
we build a world with room for all,
for people like them and people like me.

Today, the candles flicker.
Each flame is a fragile song.
It hums of the ones we've lost before,
and the ones still moving along.
Our grief becomes a promise,
our love a legacy—
to make this world a kinder place
for people like them and people like me.

For people like them.
And people like me.

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Brianna Ghey a 16-year-old British transgender girl from Birchwood in Warrington, Cheshire, England, was killed in Culcheth Linear Park in Culcheth, Warrington. Two accused teenagers, both aged 15, are in police custody, having been charged with murder four days after the incident.

For Brianna

Just one death is a death too many.
Just one death is a life that is gone.
Just one life that brought love to many,
Care and compassion where all must belong.
Hate incurred for being transgender.
Stabbed in a park by those who knew her.
Teenage murder of a teenage girl.

Yet she's just one, one of the many.
How many more, will suffer or die.

With difference only in identity and role
Character trashed when being transgender.
Sees search for identity as sexual desire,
Rejected by those who think they know better,
How many others unknown will die?

Come Lord Jesus in this time to remember.
All those that we know but also unknown,
Identities lost by those who deny us,
For names we embrace bring life to our souls
Brianna in death, in death we have found you,
For you stand for all, as now we remember.
That all should be loved and find love in their souls.

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