

FOR YOUNG VICTIMS OF HATE  
(Killed by Christians)

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*For Trevor (14 years old)*

Wings close,  
the swallow falls  
    among  
    abandoned avenues.  
Glass cavern walls  
    mirror him  
swift on  
shocks of air,  
    hard pavement  
    and a garden wall  
cries of the heart  
greater than any pain  
    echo through the empty city  
    invoking  
the vanished  
sun.

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*Barry (16 years old)*

In death across  
    water  
in the wide sun  
of crystal fields  
    silence sings the speech  
of  
unjust  
banishment  
    drawing him;  
    howling voice  
    of  
intolerant words  
heated language,  
    burns in his heart,  
Diving, he dies,  
    seeking silence  
    seeking peace,  
    seeking paradise,  
    seeking love.

*Bruce (13 years old)*

His  
figure  
by the stream  
    through the branched  
    window of  
    bruised willows,  
rope suspended  
from drooping limb  
    Lifts him above murky  
water  
    making earth  
    of nothing,  
of unborn dreams,  
of silent screams  
    of bitter heart  
    soul burned by  
Christian words.  
    Swayed by the gentle breeze,  
    kinder than human minds.  
Hopes and dreams of youth  
extinguished,  
    tears from lifeless eyes  
    join the murky stream.

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*Charlotte (17 years old)*

“God hates you;  
You do not deserve to be alive,”  
    the man of God proclaims.  
Her love  
    carries  
her singular grief,  
    sorrow  
beyond heaven  
    in the  
    dark departure  
of her  
hopeless wings.

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TO THE "THROW-AWAY KIDS"  
GAY KIDS CAST OUT ON THE STREET  
BECAUSE THEIR PARENTS ARE CHRISTIANS

**{1. Dispair}**

(a kid who looked to be about 14)

Winter's  
first snow  
    flaked from a loose ceiling of low cloud  
a ladder's  
reach above him,  
    through street light  
    on the telephone pole  
    at the triangle of  
    crossroads  
    below the pub:  
one  
Christmas crystal ball  
life-size.  
    in folds  
    of intimate night  
    heart tied with cold strings;  
For him, no sleigh,  
no reindeer,  
no magi, nor kings,  
    nor lord's of mystic rings,  
    in winter's  
    first snow,  
flurrying  
furiously.

## **{2. Lonliness}**

(16 year old street prostitute)

Collar up  
on SallyAnn coat,  
    hat brim  
shading his eyes,  
hands cupped,  
head bent  
    face to the flame,  
    lost in smoke  
on a corner  
in pools  
    of streetlight  
    past midnight:  
a camphor cameo  
in worn out shoes.

## **{3. Unthouched}**

(Not interviewed, about 16 years old)

In summer eyes  
weathered cap,  
tugged over battered brow.  
    Ragged coat,  
    worn, filthy trousers,  
dutifully sheltering  
the threadbare body;  
    like rusted armour  
    on a vanquished knight  
halting strides  
    in half melted snow  
    bring him to the road's last bend  
where trembling planks  
form a half-hearted bridge  
    on the ridge above the town,  
a stone's throw above the chimneys,  
bathed in light that he cannot share.  
    He sits crosslegged  
    in haunted memories  
    or vacant coma,  
lost in the past,  
or in endless nothing,  
    the burning incense of his soul  
    melts the webbed tallow of his heart.