



# Pride In Love

By Cristian Florian, '18

I didn't know how to say it in words that my parents would understand.

"Soy gay," *I am gay.* or, "Me gustan las mujeres," *I like women.* or, "No me gustan los hombres," *I do not like men.* or these three sentences altogether.

My parents were not like the normal American culture which are sometimes loving and accepting when it comes to coming out. They were, what we call, Hispanic. They have there number one priority, which is God first than anything. Because of this, I really shouldn't say what I feel or they would grab something worse than the chancleta *sandal.*

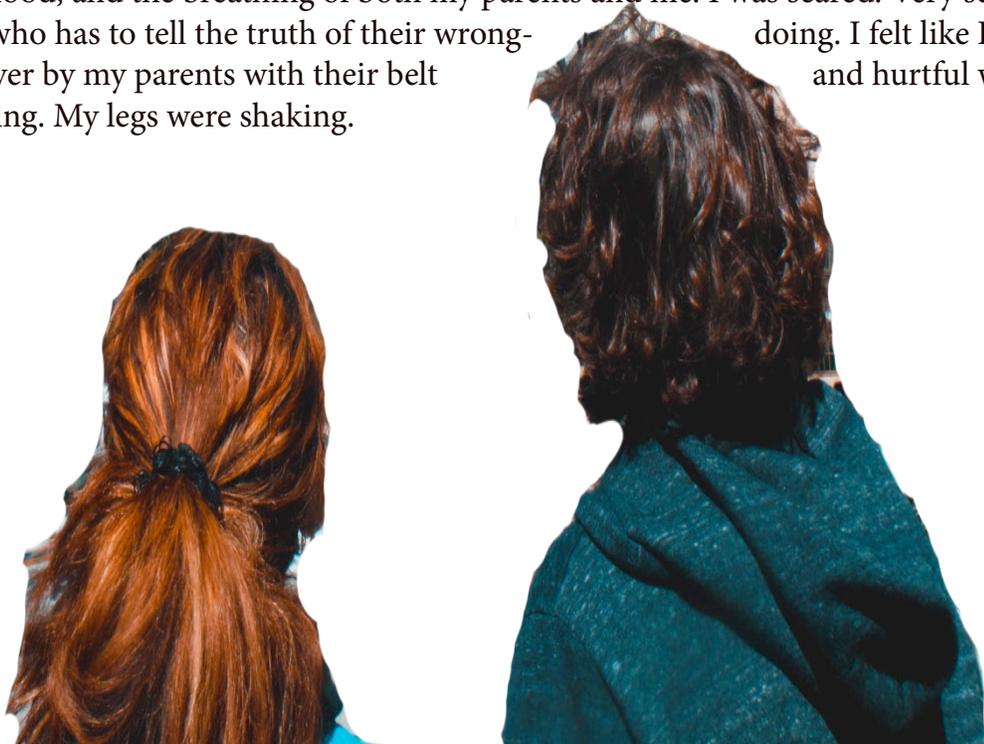
The thing was, I didn't like keeping secrets from them. I loved my family and I always told them what I wanted, felt, and did. I wanted them to know that I am gay! I didn't want any surprises to come. I didn't want them to be shocked by the fact that I enjoy being touched by a woman. I wanted them to know that I am the same person that they know, just with a hint of pride. Because of this feeling of pride and burst of emotion, I went to my parents and asked them to talk.

"¿Que pasa, hija?" *What's going on, daughter?* My mother said as she took a sip of café con leche *coffee with milk.*

"¿Te sientes mal?" *Are you feeling bad?* My father questioned.

"No, necesito decirte algo," *No, I need to tell you something.* I replied. At this point the house felt silent. It was very quiet with the birds chirping outside our backyard, the cars coming and going on our neighborhood, and the breathing of both my parents and me. I was scared. Very scared. I felt like a child who has to tell the truth of their wrong-  
going to be ran over by my parents with their belt  
My heart was racing. My legs were shaking.

doing. I felt like I was  
and hurtful words.





Unity, Lucianne Vivas, '19, Digital Photography

“Me gustan las mujeres mas que los hombres.” *I like girls more than guys.*

I said it. I finally said it. My heart threw out the feeling inside of me. It threw out what I always want to say to them for the last five years. It threw out what I was holding for so long, since the day I realized I like my best friend more than just a friend.

There still hasn't been a response. It was dead quiet. The silence was killing me on the inside. It was terrible. Then I saw them stand up in unison.

I thought it would turn out to be fine and dandy. My mother hugging me, my father hugging me but sadly, this was all a day dream. I was still at the moment of the dead silence. I was still awaiting my parents response.

It was in an instant that my head started to hurt. Hurt from the slap of my father. Hurt from my mother pulling my hair.

“No, no, no! Tú no eres gay. Tú no estás pensando racionalmente. Estúpida. Estúpida!” *No, no, no! You are not gay. You are not thinking right. Stupid. Stupid girl!* My mother screamed as she kept pulling my hair, trying to rip it out.

My father got his belt and tried to hit me with the buckle. It missed me and my mother let go of my hair. I ran to the bathroom, locked it and just stayed there thinking.

“Wow. I have made the biggest mistake in my life.”

I sat on the floor crying, thinking on how I would take care of tomorrow.

## Pride In Culture

By Ariadne Herrera, '20

For the child who sat silently by every averted eye, bag clutch, or screamed street slur:

When you lay down a lily on a worn Cuban flag, or when you link the soft lilt of an accent to Mama's constant worry, you tell yourself that everyone else already sees the importance in the way you sway to overplayed bachata, that they already know that the slight sprinkle of salt on Papa's arroz con pollo is of the most utmost significance.

And for the young-adult who begins to second-guess every single little intricacy in a second-skin culture: you must learn that the hardest thing becomes understanding why other people cannot see that there is pride in every piece of patronized street slang, and that will always be history on streets like Calle Ocho in Little Havana.

But for the grown adult  
who is shaped by tragedy  
on home-like streets that can no  
longer protect them:  
gunshots, unfortunately,  
do not give time  
for the translation of “Para!”  
to settle into the head of  
the person behind the trigger,  
and our culture will sometimes be  
the very thing that won’t be  
able to protect us.

*\*Bachata: Spanish dance music*

*\*Arroz con Pollo: Hispanic dish*

*\*Calle Ocho: Little Havana’s  
historic mainstreet*

*\*Para: Stop*

*\*Orgullo: Pride*

*\*Cultura: Culture*

However, those who have grown  
old and somehow learned  
that our culture, our orgullo,  
gives us life, but  
takes it without hesitation,  
know that pride, for us, means  
that we must look in the eye-of-death  
and roll our Rs, use our slang, make  
our riots, break our habits,  
we must look in the eye of authority  
and speak in a language they  
cannot understand;  
because our pride,  
nuestra cultura, doesn’t care  
for those who cannot meet  
our eyes when we mispronounce  
our English or respect the fact that  
we live by the traditions  
that follow us down from home.

Our pride, our orgullo, and  
our cultura is understood by us,  
and as we grow older we have to understand  
that it should only matter what we  
have to say about our own  
culture;  
that it should only matter  
what we have to say about  
our own home.

Looking At Each Other, Ariadne  
Herrera,  
‘20, Digital Photography

