

SAPPHICS

IN

LOCKDOWN

*Sapphic Writers Collective
Issue #1*

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A note from the editors...



Sapphic Writers is a collective of lesbians & bisexual womxn. Our message is simple: we want to connect up sapphics and spread the joys of sapphic writing! This is our first zine, and it's an honour that you're reading- so thank you!

In this zine, we have a collection of writings from people from our community group. This zine's theme is 50/50 Lockdown musings & 50/50 Pride (in celebration of Pride month), so we hope you like the mix. Each writer has submitted a wee bio about themselves too, so you'll get to find out about the type of people we publish!

If this is your first delve into our work, please check out the links on the back page. Clicking the icons will take you to the respective pages- we have an Instagram, a Facebook, a Twitter, and of course our online community. We're excited to keep growing our work and doing more.

We hope you like the zine!

Love,

The Sapphic Writers team





PART ONE:
LOCKDOWN

Rules for Self-Isolation

By Kirsty Anne Watters

1. Keep your room clean

If you are going to be stuck in here for the foreseeable future
you can at least be stuck in a pleasant space

2. Keep up your morning routine

Try to maintain some semblance of normalcy

Drink water.

Meditate

Eat Breakfast.

...maybe don't exercise

(you are sick after all)

Get changed

It will help maintain some line between day and night,

sleep and awake

3. All meals should be eaten at your desk

The bed you are confined to should remain a crumb free area

Plus, you read that its bad for your sleeping pattern to do anything in bed other than sleep (or fuck) in bed

4. Realise that you are only going to be in your bed for the next week, so if you don't do anything in bed, you will literally just sleep

(Fucking is out , for obvious reasons)

Also, your desk is a piece of shit

Eat toast in bed

Revel in the minor rebellion against rules you set for yourself

5. Do NOT watch the news

Do not read the news

Do not listen to the news

Do not go anywhere near the bloody news

It is just a cold.

It is probably just a cold...

6. Update your friends and family that you are fine

and that is probably just a cold....

Mute that one chat with your medic friend who paints a frighteningly stark reality of the situation

7. Start working your way through the pile of books on your bedside table

Thank God you work in a library and have 12 on standby

(just in case)

Feel a bit sad that won't be working the library for a while

Remember that libraries are extremely public spaces as well as a breeding ground for infection (what will all the touching shared books and what not)

Think that it's probably for the best you are off for a while

8. Keep busy

Start working your way through all of those boring tasks you have been putting off for ages

Seal the bath

Super glue that one knob that falls off every time you touch it

Hoover your room

Do it again the next day

Wonder why your room is so dusty and if it is always like this and you just haven't noticed because you have not spent this much time in here since your last depressive episode in which you wouldn't have noticed a hammer hitting you in the face you were so numb.

Finish your list and feel an overwhelming sense of anxiety and frustration that you still have four days left

9. Take care of your mental health

Eat well

Use your light box

Call your friends, your Mum, your Gran

Talk to anyone that will listen

(except your flatmate who is currently staying at his hypochondriac girlfriend's house and is clearly being influenced by her. Not the energy you need right now)

Try not to feel the overwhelming sense of loneliness lurking at the back of your mind, ready to cave in at any moment

Distract yourself

Look at memes

Avoid the corona virus ones, funny as they are

Watch way too many episodes of QI

Go to write in your journal and realise you have finished your last notebook, don't have any more paper and can't go to the shops to get another one

Buy an eye wateringly expensive notebook online to cheer yourself up

Wait by the door in anticipation of it showing up

(cause what else are you going to do?)

10. Try to write poetry

Write this stupid list instead

Kirsty Anne Watters is a 24-year-old poet and spoken word performer from Glasgow. She is relatively new to the scene, having only performed for the first time in January of this year. Her poems often explore mental health as she uses writing as a tool to cope with her illness. Other themes in her work include feminism, familial love, Scottish/Glaswegian pride, queer identity, love (or lack thereof) and loneliness. Kirsty's poetry has recently been featured in Gutter Voices and Winnow Magazine.



Diurnal Diphony

By Hayley Fox-Roberts

Every day a new concern, never feeling settled
Simple pleasures short uplift, list them in a litany
Every day a day of health, surely test my mettle

Strong and sure each day sets out; cry some tears or raise a shout;

Day comes in and night goes out:

Some diurnal diphony

Every night another dream, wishful or reflective
Sleep a while or sleep a day; Sleeping Beauty never lay
So long in shallows; depth deceptive.

Evening settles like a shawl; throat too full to croak or call;

Twilight mist will soften all and

Bring us to another day

Shape of world the shape of clay
Here we stand or here we lay
Each sharp moment one more way to
Bring us to another day

Haley Fox Roberts is a poet, activist and community rabble-rouser, femme dyke founder of Northwest Pride Ireland: she believes in the power of words to change the world.



Kiss Me In Quarantine

By Scarlett Mueller

Kiss me in quarantine, wrap your hands around my waist and hold me close as the world falls apart. Living in late stage capitalism, even ironically, means living with a future uncertain. Will we break the system or will the system destroy everything we hold dear and leave us in smoldering ruins of banks, football stadiums and the mansions of billionaires? We'll never know anything but now and so I beg you, kiss me in quarantine, intertwine your fingers with mine and hold me close as this system begins its inevitable breakdown. Stock market: crashing, Pandemic: global, capitalism: im Endstadium. Let's hope the only kind of currency we'll need in this brave New world is solidarity and not four ply toilet paper and hand sanitizer.



migratory birds

By Scarlett Mueller

And I hope the birds fly far and carry me to Melbourne or wherever the fuck I can live free, the song echoes through my basement room and I lay there with a future uncertain and panties a size too big because nobody ever taught me how to be a woman. The bra that belongs to the set won't even stay put with my lack of sizeable bahonkadonks, what a damn shame I was born like this and not a migratory bird of some sort or shape. A bird or a beaver, so that I could build a place to call home unbothered by the construct of private property, at least until the bulldozers and the cement and the tar came crashing into my huddled four walls to erase nature permanently and make space for the sixteen hundredth strip mall that will be closed and abandoned in less time than a tree takes to grow to size if one let it. If all dogs go to heaven then what about the degenerate bitches like me? Those that were shamed for merely trying to express themselves and soon enough learned to hate the very essence of their being, everything they were, are and will ever be, is the identity not shifting like the wind in December when we smoked secret cigarettes in between vineyards and countryside chapels? I lost the delusion that life might contain more than this when I was 16 and since then a host of therapists and medications have tried to catch and cage it once again, to place it in my brain, calmly yet firmly asking it to stay put. Birds again, what a classic metaphor, as if it's not overused and overburdened by all the wannabe poets.

Scarlett Mueller is a transfeminine nonbinary person living in southwestern Germany. She came out as transgender around 2016 and as nonbinary in 2019 but has been writing poetry, especially slam poetry since way before that. She identifies as a Butch Lesbian and is a strong believer in mutual aid and anarchist theory as well as neo-pagan spiritualism.



I wish

By Farrell Elliott

To see the sights
And climb the mountains
To discover every peak
And crevice
To dive deep
To wander
To wonder
I wish

Farrell Elliott is a professional artist, mom of 2, outdoor enthusiasts, cat snuggler and artisanal sourdough baker.





PART TWO: PRIDE

I'm Happy For You

By Alice Godber

You're overweight.

More men would find you attractive if you lost some weight.

But I'm happy for you.

If you're happy then so am I.

I wouldn't publicise it though.

Everyone should have their secrets.

You wouldn't want all of Beverley finding out would you?

But I'm happy for you.

I just think that "the gays" have a tendency to overshare.

They always try to shove it down your throat.

I don't see why.

In my day they didn't do that.

It's unnatural...

..well for you maybe it's more natural.

Oh I don't know... it's complicated.

But I'm happy for you.

If you're happy then so am I.

I've been dreading you telling me.

I just don't want you to get hurt.

People can be nasty.

You don't want people to talk behind your back.

Because they will.

But I'm happy for you.

If you're happy then so am I.

You're not going to put it everywhere are you?
Once you do that there's no going back.
Everyone will see you differently.
What if you change your mind?
Which one of you is the man?
I'm assuming you're the butch one.
What you need is a strong man.

But I'm happy for you, honestly.
This has been a really good chat don't you think?
If you're happy then so am I.

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Alice Godber is a 21 year old artist and poet from Beverley in East Yorkshire. She is the founder of the YADA YADA Spoken Word group which held open mic nights pre-lockdown and currently are producing podcasts during lockdown. A lot of her art and poetry focuses around her journey of grief, using creativity to heal and express emotions.



The Kiss

By Esther Femen

One of those nights I must have said nothing
Watching you smoke while I shivered
Too drunk to talk, long since tired
Of sweating and dancing
You closed your eyes and swayed
Your thin eyeliner chipped
Nothing to say, just watching
Another person be there
Inside the circle
Throw away the tab and bury yourself
In my arms, groaning from the headache
Now I'm swayingI feel you breathing with me
Laboured, exhausted from another evening
Living as much as possible
You hold me back
When we kissed
Every hour passed by
Higher than an angel
Brighter than all the suns
I knew you were smiling
All our world was a stage
Lit by neon and cigarette ends
The Lady Anne, she dances still.



Promise Me This Poem Will Always Be a Riot

By Julia DaSilva

I want this to be a poem you can give
to your beloved.

I want these words to demand
hand-printed paper with gold-fibered violets, I want
them to print gardens on any page
they touch, I want
every comma a red ribbon and every period
a glass vial in which you offer her
your heart.

I want the seams facing out,
when you give it, to make clear every line is tangled in borrowed
or stolen from others as
everything is. But I want
to make sure that the hinge those lines form opens
a door just unfamiliar enough
that it leaves the two
of you alone. I hope
she will read it the moment
you press it into her hands and taste it
the moment you brush it against her lips.
I hope it tastes like clementines and roses and
donuts with pink frosting, and I hope
that in the giving you will forget me
just long enough
to know you have created more than I could
in the writing.

I want these letters to capture and dissolve in that particular quality of sunlight, the one I must learn to forget.
The kind that reaches you at ground level, on the carpet at the stage when you are still afraid to sit too close.
The kind that goes stale as it reaches her because she is brighter.
The kind that films the second-story apartments of your memories and leaves its own dust, sunlight
you will keep coughing up when everything it lit has faded.
When I choke I want to know
you drift in it still.

(And just for the record:
should you be someone prepared to defend
the world as it is the world that locks
doors and decides what
sunlight reaches where then I do not want this poem
to be a love poem for you.
When you present it to her I want it
to be so potent it will burst into flame
under her glowing fingers and she
will aim it at a cop car or a grocery store mogul
bent to an email price-
fixing bread before she laughs and pulls
you into a kiss and if that
doesn't light "she's the one!" on your lips I want
its ashes rubbed into your
whitest shirt.
I want this poem to be a curse and a sweetening.
I want it to burn
with every future you long to give her.

And if you cannot give it to her,
yet,

I want this poem to be sturdy enough to fold
into your pocket and I want
you to keep it with you as you join
me in the coming fight.

And every now and then
—promise me—

you will pull it out and read it,
so that someday
when you want to sew her name into coloured
fabric as the only flag
to which you could be loyal,
you will have the words to ask her
to march beside you.

Julia DaSilva used to be the queen of a magical country, until she became an anarchist and set out to roam the worlds in search of a fairy commune that will accept her as one of their own. She writes fantasy as well as poetry, with a novel and a collection of short stories in progress and a particular interest in the politics of magic systems. She is a guest in Tkaronto/Toronto on Dish With One Spoon territory.

STOKE
WELL

TO HOMOSEXUAL
OUR PEOPLE TO
MAINTAIN RESPECT
CONDUCT ON THE
THE VILLAGE -

Sparks

By Alice Godber

I dreamt of a woman in a red leopard print dress
A very specific detail
But true
And we danced in the street
Surrounded by strangers
Honey, there's no time
And this isn't real
So don't stop dancing
Forget the strangers
They're not real either
Let's pretend
I don't usually dance
But it feels so right being close to you
I ask if you're happy
And you smile
Move in closer
I don't want this dream to end
Nothing can compare to these sparks
It feels so right



Out

By Esther Femen

Back then to be 'in' was safe, to hide and close
Doors and windows on a more vibrant life
Than the rigidly ordered, legally cloaked
America, where perfectly modest skirts and ties
And grey flannel oppression denied our lives

To be at the Inn, and others of the like
Was like exhaling, unloosening joints
To move in the ways we wanted, no left or right
Binaries cribbed from heterosexual life
Back then the first language for common points

In '69 the police came, and homophobic America went
About its way silencing sexual and gender dissent
Calling us diseased, incurable, natural crimes
Because their God, or whoever, since immemorial times
Answered difference with hate and pink sewn-on signs

But this time, they didn't stand fearfully aside
As Queer people were charged with living outside
What's 'acceptable', and the crowd, kindred alike
Struck up against the violent, persecuting tide
And out burst the first national declaration of pride

That earthquake trembled and we feel it still
Out, in the wild, where we still face hate
Bred down through homophobic churches, communities and states
But half a century has uncovered a ceaseless will
That has started us up to that shining hill

Where one day, sooner it lifts into view,
Love as love, plain and simple, will be
No longer knocked with the actions and speech
Of an ignorant world, for we are all of us too
Beautiful, strong, and full of love for you.

Esther Femen is a writer from Hull in the north east of England, finding a voice that can speak through writing and talk about all the important things I've never been able to talk about before. She came out as transgender in 2013, officially changing her name and gender in 2016, and now identifies as non-binary using feminine pronouns. IShe's a proud nerd, sex-positive, works as a manager and she believes everyone should be creative as much as possible. Stay smart and safe x



ABOUT THE TEAM

Emrys Mordin

Emrys is a community artist, writer and non binary lesbian from, Glasgow, Scotland. They bring writing and theatre experiences to communities, and particularly enjoy working with LGBTQ people and young people. When not working, they can be found curled up with a cat, a hot chocolate or a good book. Find out more about them at:

www.emrysmordin.co.uk



Alice Godber



Alice is an artist, poet and lesbian from, Beverley, East Yorkshire. She is the founder of the YADA YADA Spoken Word group which held open mic nights in Hull pre-lockdown.

She is currently producing spoken word podcasts along with proudly being one of the

Sapphic Writers founders. Alice wishes to continue building platforms for people to share their words, come together and find a sense of community with one another. A lot of her Art and poetry focuses on using her creativity to heal and express her emotions. Find out more

about her at: www.alicegodberart.com

ABOUT THE TEAM

Julia DaSilva

Julia is a writer and climate justice organizer whose poetry has appeared in *Eclectica*, *Rat's Ass Review*, *Lychee Rind* zine, the University of Toronto journals *The Spectatorial*, *The Strand*, *Hardwire*, and *The Voice*, as well as upcoming issues of *Storm of Blue Press Magazine*, and *Cathexis*. She writes fantasy as well as poetry, with a novel and a collection of short stories in progress and a particular interest in the politics of magic systems. She is a guest in Tkaronto/Toronto on Dish With One Spoon territory.



Courtney Marris



Courtney is an English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher hoping to move to South Korea in the near future. Her main genres of writing include novels, short stories, and monologues. Along with being a founding member of Sapphic Writers, she also enjoys making Sapphic themed art and enjoys a pint with friends when she's got some free time on her hands.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

LesFic Eclectic, Volume Two

LesFic Eclectic is about getting unheard voices out into the world for a whole raft of readers free of charge. If you're an unpublished writer who can't seem to get that break or a relatively new author trying to find their place in the published world, send us a story, wow us with your words, and introduce yourself to the amazing LesFic readership.

LesFic Collective are looking for submissions for their Winter 2020 publication, edited by Robyn Nyx. The theme is: short stories about women loving women.

Deadline: August 31st 2020

Word count: 2000-4000

Up to two submissions accepted per author

Contact:

lesfic.eclectic@globalwords.co.uk



SAPPHIC
WRITERS



A ZINE BY THE SAPPHIC
WRITERS COLLECTIVE

