

# Being There

by Geri Q

“We convince by our presence.” — Walt Whitman

We live  
by our essence  
our core spirits  
seizing precedence  
overruling socializing  
moreover primary teaching.  
That constant of conscience  
over peer pressure —  
in light of, despite of  
those splits and self-appointed watchers  
seeking solid evidence of deviance —  
the slightest variance sniffed out.

We strive  
to pace our own stride  
to embody our own selves  
our own unique identities  
— pressed against the obstacles  
of obligatory uniformity  
of compulsive conformity

— until we come  
empowered - bloom  
as bright flowers.  
Standing tall —  
solid as flowers  
to stand fast  
against these powers  
to shine light  
like first stars  
in the night  
skies — expanses  
of velvet darkness draped  
to envelope and exploit  
our slightest weakness  
the merest hint of meekness  
to pursue prey past breathless

But few conflicts  
so passionate  
play out bloodless — less  
to count those left loveless  
Us faceless, oft  
voiceless and marginalized  
— yet still in place

Struggling to  
find some grace  
to excavate safe  
foxholes — shunning  
the traps of pigeonholes  
they would slot us in  
which would rein us in  
would spread us thin  
and light on these battlegrounds

— or worse fates  
of settling, safe feeling  
yet stagnating in our  
cozy Queer spaces  
with forward progress  
no trace of —  
no taste of victory  
to hunger and lunge for  
to yearn, bleed  
and maybe die for.

Us very few who  
will pop in  
the most hostile faces  
to carve and stake out  
slots of our own — amidst their spaces  
their sacred places  
— 'till one day  
no one can tell  
of ours and theirs.

to devour our lost dreams for breakfast.

No time, nor place  
to behave reckless — yet  
to stride forth regardless —  
the bounties of freedom priceless.

A legacy built with our lives  
— left for heirs.

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## “Dandi”

By Dandi Lion

My early muse proxy  
Prince — sag smoothly, praises  
for darling Niki, but positively  
she don't have anything  
to compare with me.

I'm dandi, my name spelled  
with a 'D' and an 'I'.  
A scribe fine and reaching  
for high skies — flying

—penning tight lines and  
performing profound verses.  
Modern poetry as contemporary  
circus style advocacy.  
Preaching, while entertaining  
the ranks and files.  
Now and again —  
sparking sweet smiles.

I am a transwomyn born  
— sparked from anarchy,  
equality and fighting  
the heteropatriarchy.  
Never to rest or weary  
'til victory speeds —

Seeds destined to bloom  
in Universal Equality.  
Where all are free —  
without need to ask leave  
without needs to say: “Please, Sir.”  
Without any of my sisters  
forced to provide pleasure.  
That, is the dream I treasure  
that drives me to ply  
these forms and measures  
— now and forever.