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Prayers for Bobby

By Katie Ford

O God I need you too.
I want to see your face.
It is this love I have
It makes me search for you.
I need you to listen,
I need you to answer.
I need you to listen,
I need you to answer.
Do not avoid my eyes
or let me anger you.
Do not toss me aside.
O God, do not drop me.
Alright you two.
That's enough.
I like her.
I think she likes you.
What tells you that Mum?
Here you go Mum.
This is such a nice day.
Who knows this?
May those who love you,
be like the sun when it rises in its strength.
Corinthians?

Judges 5:

So grandma, how old are you again?
Never mind.
You know you shouldn't ask for the age...
That's very nice!
Save some for me, will you?
That's very nice!
Who's that from?
From you and Mary!
Well correct!
I was just testing.
Remember Mum?
We were at the mall
and you said you liked that.
So I went back and I got it for you.
Nancy honey, get me my purse.
Why am I always the one harrassed to get the purse?
Youngest Griffith girl's the purse mule.
O Grandma.
Open mine.

Why do I have to be the purse mule?
Ok. Fine.
Yes, I think it suits me.
What do you guys think?
Grandma, that is a lovely shade of lipstick.
Beautiful!
O Ed stop it.
Why? What's wrong Mum?
It's disgusting.
If you ask me,
queers should all be
lined up and shot.
Didn't you say that last year
about the Giants?
What did you say?
Never mind.
What is this?
It's a journal.
Like a diary.
I don't need any more stuff.
Mum!!
- What?
- I'll go.
It's a good thing we didn't
get you the pen.
You can't take it personal.
It's grandma.
You know the rules. Sh'es mean sometimes.
Then we get a free pass to make fun of her.
Bobby, she picks at me.
Nobody ever picks on you. You're the favorite.
So what's it like to be perfect?
I'm perfect?
You think I'm perfect?
Have you looked in a mirror lately?
You're Charlie's next angel, ok?
Can I have it?
You don't want it.
Well, I'm taking it.
I'm gonna fill this up in a week.
Come on. Let's go celebrate grandmas'
I am ready.
What?
I wanna go further.

Is... Is something wrong?
I thought you'd want to...
Here? I mean, this isn't really
what I had in mind.
It doesn't have to be here.
I should go. I have to
get up early tomorrow.
Is something wrong?
I don't think this is gonna work.
I think we should break up.
I thought you liked me... I came
to meet your family.
I just don't want to get that serious.
Well, it doesn't have to be serious, ok?
It's not you, it's me.
I'm sorry.
Hey.
You wanna watch with me?
I'm tired.
Oh come on!
Who else can I get to watch
an old black and white movie?
You know if it's not John Wayne,
your dad's not interested.
It's really scary.
You know this scene's famous?
Really?
You know they got that glass of milk to glow?
How?
Well Hitchcock put a lightbulb inside
the glass so the audience would know
the milk was poisonous.
No kidding.
That's clever.
How do you know that?
Cause I'm brilliant.
You are brilliant!
Take it away; I'm eating too much.
I think there's something wrong with me.
That's for sure.
What you think Mum would do if she found out
one of us was a psychopath?
What you mean "if"?
You know she's always saying...

the whole family's gonna be
together in the afterlife?
Well...
What if one of us is a sinner?
Have you sinned with Michelle ?
I promise I won't tell.
It's not that.
I'm just...
thinking about stuff, you know?
You think too much.
It's dangerous.
That's why I avoid it
at all cost.
Yeah?
I'm glad we talked.
Seriously, something... something wrong?
No.
Relax, cause I'm your big bro.
I'm just looking out for you.
What's up Bobby?
Ready to go?
Hey Bobby.
Cheryl.
She's not your type.
Too much eye shadow.
What's wrong with Michelle?
We broke up.
Talk to you guys later.
Not telling the truth...
sometimes I feel like I'm at
the edge of a cliff,
looking down at the crashing surf
with nowhere to go but down.
I used to have these fun dreams
when I was so free.
But now, as I fly,
I'm afraid.
They are telephone lines and
electrical wires.
How painful it would be to run into one.
I wonder if I'll ever be free again.
Hello?
Bobby? Bobby?
Hey! Bobby? What did you do? Ha?

Did you take these?
Answer me!
No!
Is that the truth?
I couldn't do it, ok?
Get off me.
I wanted to but I couldn't.
What's wrong with you?
Why I couldn't do it?
Because it's a sin.
Bobby, what are you talking about?
I didn't wanna go to hell, but...
I am.
Cause this is worse.
Bobby, you're scaring me.
What's going on?
You'd all hate me.
I know it. I know that if you guys
knew the truth, you'd hate me.
No.
Whatever it is...
we'll tell Mum...
No!
No. Mum wouldn't understand. OK?
She can't know.
Then you have to tell me right now.
I'm not like you Ed.
So what?
I keep trying.
I keep telling myself that one day
I'm gonna wake up and it's gonna
be different. But it's not.
I don't dream...
about girls, like you do.
I dream about guys.
You're gay?!
See?
You even say it like you hate me.
Bob, gimme a break.
I don't know what to do!
-We'll tell Mum and dad.
-No!
No.
They can help, Bobby. They always

want us to come to them.
They can help.
I can't! Ok?
And you're not gonna say
anything either.
Promise me.
Promise me you're not gonna
say anything.
Ed, promise!
Ok.
I promise.
Mum, if there was something wrong
with one of your kids, you always
said that we should come to you...
What did you do?
It's not me, it's Bobby.
What is it?
I didn't want to tell you but he was...
in such a bad shape, I'm really
worried about him.
He thinks...
he might be homosexual.
He's not.
He didn't want me to tell you. He was
gonna take a bunch of aspirins.
Ok?
You know... he trusted me, you
can't go too hard on him.
Ok, good. It's good.
I'm glad you told me.
There's no doubt in my mind that
God can handle this.
He'll help us.
He'll heal Bobby.
In order for all of us to be together
in the kingdom of heaven,
we cannot stray.
We can't sin like that.
That is a terrible sin.
The bible calls it an abomination.
In Leviticus, if a man lies with
another man,
they should both be put to death.
I will not raise my family not

being together in the next life.
Mary. Can we please worry about this life
before we worry about the next life?
Hey. What's going on?
Isn't there a problem you need to
tell us about?
-No...
-Bobby
If there is something wrong, you
need to share it with your family.
-How could you?
-Bobby...
I'm gonna kill you!
No!
Ok, ok. Enough!
I was worried about you!
I trusted you!
Calm down!
Hey, Ed. Go find some room.
Bobby, we're your family.
We can get through this.
I know that if we trust in God,
we can get through this.
It's curable with his help.
I'm sorry.
I can't help it.
I don't even want it Mum!
What do I do?
Bobby, you're not gay.
You're probably just...
you haven't met a girl that you're
really attracted to.
Please...
Mum, please don't tell anyone please...
- Mum, please don't tell anyone.
- It's all right.
It's gonna be fine.
I was worried about you.
What was I supposed to do?
I'm out of here.
Thank you again for joining us
I'm pastor Raymond
and we'll take another call,
this is from Melissa in Concord.

Thank you reverend,
I'm a little nervous
My sister made a terrible mistake
she sinned...
I advise you to live according to
your new life in the holy spirit
Then you won't be doing...
what your sinful nature craves.
When the holy spirit controls your life,
it will produce love, joy and kindness,
goodness and self-control.
Does everyone have to know?
We're your family.
We love you.
I am pure of hearts.
I am of god's goodness.
We still love you, Bobby.
Yes, thanks. Can I get some privacy?
Hi Mary!
Everything you always wanted to
know about sex
If a homosexual who wants to renounce to
homosexuality...
finds a psychiastrist who knows
how to cure homosexuality...
he has every chance of becoming...
a happy well adjusted heterosexual.
Do you hear any voices?
No.
Do you ever hear any ringing sounds?
No.
Is that the phone?
It was a joke.
So you think you're a homosexual?
Bobby, how many girls have you
been with?
I don't know. Two.
Had sexual relations with?
Then how do you know for sure?
I just...
have these feelings, you know?
I don't mean you know. I mean...
I have these feelings.
Do you want to be homosexual?

I just wanna be close with my
family again.
I feel like I slipped up and now
I can't...
get back.
I'm not gonna be able to help you...
if you don't answer my questions.
No, I don't wanna be this way.
I'm gonna talk with your mother
alone for a minute, ok?
She wants to talk to you.
He can be cured. Right?
He has to be willing to really put
the work in.
O, he is. I know he is.
And I think it would be good, it would
be important to have your husband come
join us in therapy.
Right...
How did it go?
She said we should spend some more time
together.
Maybe the two of you could spend
some quality time together.
Yes, sure.
That's all she said for 60\$ an hour?
She also wants the 3 of us to go to
a few sessions together.
What? So it's our fault?
No no... I don't know about it but
it's fine if he goes.
Bob, I want you to be a part of this.
I can't do it alone, ok?
I read that homosexuals have sex
in public bathrooms,
and that they recruit children.
What are you saying?
Do you think Bobby was recruited?
Come on Mary, you're going overboard.
You got to do something about this.
I won't lose him.
Dear lord, we ask that you keep
Bobby safe from temptation.
Please help him return to a pure heart.

Do you think this will heal me?
You have to trust the God will heal you.
And that Satan will try to discourage
you.
Do you trust in god?
Yeah.
Now let me go to sleep.
When temptation is all around you,
faith is not enough.
It requires discipline
Not just mental, but physical.
Who would like to share their story?
I used to be so unhappy.
I stayed out all night,
I talked back to my mother.
Since coming here and accepting Jesus
as my savior,
I've changed..
My Mum and I are like best friends now.
That's great Kerry.
The power of prayer and hard work.
Bobby what about you?
How are you coming along?
Good...
Well, you feel better. Don't you?
I can see it in your eyes.
Your hard works' paid off. Hasn't it?
Yeah...
Let's sing, shall we?
Nothing I do seems to make a difference.
I try to act like them but
it feels impossible.
It's an awful feeling to believe you can
be headed straight for the fires of hell.
Even worse is everyone telling you
how simple the solution is.
They don't know what it is to be
in my shoes.
I'm running, I'm not eating junk food.
Good, good!
Yeah, that's good but...
I don't know the point of it.
I mean, my face has cleared up but
everything else feels the same.

Well you have to stick with it.
Do you like the people in your group?
They're ok.
This one girl, she...
You know, I hope you're taking this seriously.
I mean that I hope you are trying with all your might.
I cannot lose you to this.
You won't.
Have faith!
Well this is gonna be fun.
When was the last time all the Griffith men went hiking together?
So how's school?
Good.
You thought about your plans?
Well college...
No, I mean...
life plans.
Well, I'm still thinking of becoming a writer.
Listen Bobby, you always had a strong imagination.
and we've always been alright with that.
But you're getting to the age where you're gonna have to get practical.
Alright, dreams...
they're great when you're young, but...
they don't really have...
really have a place in the real world.
Yeah.
You hear what I'm saying to you?
-Yeah.
-Alright, alright. Le'ts go, let's move.
Alright.
How did it go?
I'm "healed".
It was fine.
Did you two talk?
Yeah, we talked.
What did you talk about?
Mary, it was fine.
No, but this is important.

This could make him or break him.

I did the best I could.

Is that alright with you?

A lot of times, confusions like Bobby's can be caused by a distant father or an overbearing mother.

Well, I had both but I'm fine.

-Bob?

-Yes?

You need to participate in this.

I'm right here Mary. I'm in the room.

I think...

I've been a very good father.

And maybe you don't know this but

Bobby. I mean he was never into...

stuff that his brother and other boys were into. He's just not interested.

So I'm not gonna force him.

Hi Bobby I'm Sheila.

Mum, who's that?

Sheila is a student in my Sunday school class.

You got me a date?

You need to go out with lots of girls.

And your dad thinks so too.

Can I at least pick my own?

I donnot think that you are.

Have fun.

You look nifty. Do you want a brownie for energy?

-No

-Take them up! No?!

Hello. Who's this?

That's my brother Ed.

-Hi.

-Hi, I'm Sheila.

-Nice to meet you.

-Nice to meet you too.

-Hi.

-Are you up to see my friends?

-Yeah!

So you're never gonna talk to me again?

???

What if she wants me

to kiss her goodnight?

Tell her you're gay.
Watch out fag.
Did you tell your friends?
Bobby, that's not my friend.
You told everyone I'm gay?
I haven't told anyone. Stop being
so paranoid.
You all hate me for it.
I know you don't think I see it but I do.
I gotta go.
Bobby...
It's 3 in the morning!
Sorry I lost track of time.
Where were you?
Bobby...
You weren't with homosexuals, were you?
This is not you.
This is temptation working its ways.
You have to pray harder if you're going to get well.
Good night, Mum.
Pray for forgiveness right away.
If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer. Matthew
21:22
It was fine, girls. But I gotta go.
Ok.
Bobby! Hey!
Where's Joy?
She's at work so she asked me to pick you up.
You're welcome.
- What's with you?
- What?
You think I didn't notice that?
You don't want your friends to see me.
Some people wouldn't understand.
And now it's so obvious...
What did you tell them?
Well look the way you're wearing.
And I told you time after time not to do that thing with your arm.
Makes you look like a girl and you continue to do it.
- I'm always dressed this way.
- No, you haven't. It's gotten worse.
Why you're doing this?
I'm trying to help you.
No, you're not.

You're trying to help YOU!
It's not about me. It's about what people think about you.
Imagine if they thought your son
was some big queer.
What's wrong with you?
Stop that!
Nite Mum. Great.
Le'ts go home!
- I'm walking.
- No!
Where are you going?
I've never seen you around here before.
You are really beautiful.
I gotta go.
Can I call you?
No.
Metropolitan Community Church
celebrates gay pride.
All are welcome
Bobby...
Don't worry. I was at church.
-Hi Cousin
-I have a name. It's gorgeous cousin.
So, how long you're here for?
Just a day, I'm driving home tonight.
I came to see my dad. But I couldn't resist stopping by.
Maybe it's not a choice.
Maybe I just can't help it.
So you say that stealing's not a choice.
What?
Aunt Mary, lunch is delicious.
Joy's right Bobby.

The bible says:

Men committed shameless acts with men
and received in their own's person the due penalty for their error.
You just won't change, will you?
I can't erase what's in the bible.
Personnally, I think people should be able to love whoever they want.
Did I mention how good lunch is?
Even animals know what to do it with.
Actually, our dog does it with a pillow...
Can we please find something different to discuss?
Ed, why don't you tell us about college?

I dropped school last week.

You what?

Well, what about college?

I'm not going.

Great!

What's next?

You wanna ruin your life?

Yeah well it's my life to ruin.

Is it like this at every meal?

Pretty much.

You should come up and visit me in Portland. It's so great!

I used to envy you..

When I came here with Mum and Dad, I always wished your parents were my parents.

You all seemed so close.

Well that's over with.

I think they love the sinners. Not the sin.

They should love the son no matter what the sin.

Hey that's good.

I'm gonna start my own bible.

Think about coming to Portland?

Hi Mrs. Griffith!

Is Bobby here?

Bobby!

You know it's enough you go God knows where at night.

But now you're bringing these deviants into my house.

It's my house too.

And they're my friends.

Is that what that boy is?

Is it a sin to have friends now too Mum?

We have a good time, ok?

We go to the rocky chore together.

Does it mean we're all gonna get strucked down?

They're gay, aren't they?

I thought you were getting better.

When?

When I was miserable?

That looked like I was getting better?

You're right Mum!

I'm doomed just to roast in hell!

Don't say that.

That's what your bible says!

The bible also says a person can change.

I tried Mum. I can't!

Why do you keep choosing this?
Why would I choose this?
Why would I choose to have my entire family hate me?
No we love you. Can't you see that's why we're doing this?
Really Mum? Is that what love feels like?
Have fun in Portland.
Here's an issue for your vacation.
I hope you like it.
Promise me you'll write and call all the time?
It's two months.
Drive carefully.
Don't worry Madam.
You call me when you get to Portland.
I had this engraved with your initials.
I love you guys.
Bye Bobby.
Already I'm glad to be away from Walnut Creek.
This feels like a new life.
A new day.
I'm gonna be a success in every way I can.
It's my goal to achieve,
a sense of pride,
and worth as a human being.
Gorgeous cousin.
Welcome to Portland!
Trust me...
You don't find clubs like this back home.
I'll see.
Welcome to London House cousin.
This is amazing!
Let's go boogie.
David!
Janette!
This is my cousin Bobby.
Nice to finally meet you Bobby!
So Janette tells me your Mum wants to cure you of your gayness.
Yeah, well...
My parents don't really understand it.
Do yours?
They didn't first.
But, they eventually came around.
How did you get them to change?
Well, one day,
I told them Accept me as I am, or forget me!

I know my Mum means well but I don't know if she'll ever accept me.
Just don't stop trying.
Now that you know
What every parent should know about homosexuality
Have a great trip.
Don't let her get to you.
And don't be afraid to stand up to her.
Too much flew by fast.
I'll call you when I get home.
You'd better.
Well. Look who's home.
-Hey Dad.
-Hey, come here, come here.
Just in time for dinner. Come on in.
That's funny.
So how was Portland?
Yeah...
Portland was great.
Good!
I'm thinking of maybe moving there for a little bit.
Moving there?
I met someone...
A guy.
Girls...
Give me a hand with this.
We're supposed to pretend we didn't hear that?
Yes.
Bobby...
This might not have been the right time.
I know.
I'm sorry..
You should start thinking about college for next fall.
You need to get your GED first.
I mean...
it's ok to take some time off but...
Did you hear me?
I don't wanna know.
I want you to know.
His name's David.
We always start at the beginning every time and if we're not getting any
more different let's just not go there.
When I'm with him,
it feels so...
good!

He treats me well...
he's funny and he's smart...
Stop. I mean it. I don't wanna hear it.
And you know I don't.
I spent the last year listening to you and you're gonna listen to me for
once.
It feels good when I'm with David.
But if he touches me in public,
or God forbids, kisses me,
I pull away.
I feel ashamed.
Because you know it's wrong.
-Because YOU told me it's wrong.
-It's not me. It's the bible.
It's not the bible. It's you!
Why can't you admit that?
Why can't you admit that you can't stand what I am?
What you've become!
What I am!
I'm sorry. I'm not the perfect little Bobby you always wanted.
But I can't keep apologizing for it Mum.
Accept me as I am or forget it.
I won't have a gay son.
Then Mum you don't have a son.
Fine.
Bobby...
Did you really think she'd change, Bobby?
She meant it.
She meant that.
I really want you to be happy.
And I'm sure that guy's really nice.
No matter what. She'll never accept it.
It's gonna be a lonely life because he'll never be welcome here.
And for Christmas, Thanksgiving, anything.
Don't worry about Mum too much. She'll come around.
I'm not gonna hold my breath.
Here you go.
The parachute pants!
Thanks.
I'll send you my first novel when I write it.
Bye Buck-Tooth!
Take care, ok?
Drive safe.
... most of the new cases up to 5 a day seem to be settled in the

homosexual community...

The AIDS becoming known as the gay disease.

Well...

your Mum went alot for your birthday.

No card.

A sweater and "AIDS - The Wrath of God".

Whoah.

Happy birthday!

You can't expect anything different from her, Bobby.

She's not gonna change.

Birthdays were always a big deal for all of us.

I'm just not in the all of us anymore.

Can't get that throughout my head.

There's David.

Talk to you later.

You sure this is ok?

They're gonna love you.

Let's go.

Dad, do you have to tell that story?

Hey, I felt I had to.

Yes. And I've got about a dozen more where that came from if you're interested.

Oh, oh no thanks.

So Bobby...

tell us more about you.

You grew up in Walnut Creek, right?

David says you're very close to your family.

Yeah.

So how are your parents with you being gay?

Not good.

Well...

Maybe it's hard for them at first.

They'll come around.

You seem like a wonderful young man.

I'm sure they love you.

Hey!

- Cheers to that!

- Cheers to that!

It's great to meet you Bobby.

So how did you guys meet?

You know Janette?...

It's a sin.

It's not natural.

He'll never be welcome here.

Why do you keep choosing this?
Sometimes I hurt so bad...
And I'm scared and I'm alone.
I'm sure they love you.
I'm damned.
I'm slowly sinking in a vast lake of quick sand.
A bottomless pool.
I wish I could crawl under a rock and sleep forever.
You've reached David.
I'm not here right now but if you leave a message after the beep, I'll get
right back to you.
Have a good one...
Hey David it's Bobby.
I thought you'd be there.
Look I'm...
I really need someone to talk to and I was hoping you'd be there.
Please,
dear lord, continue to convict Bobby's heart off sin.
That he may find his way
The way of purity,
the way of the righteous.
It's a sin.
It's not natural.
I won't have a gay son.
You're gonna be late for school.
You're the one who slept in.
Ok, then we're both gonna be late for school.
Meet you in the car.
- OK!
- Hello?
Janette, what's wrong?
No...
What's wrong?
No...
What's wrong?
Nancy, get out of here!
Dad!
Daddy...
Hello.
Hi. Hi, Janette...
Mary, you've been called up front and he said to bring your purse.
Probably one of the kids that needs money again.
I need a break anyway.
Bye.

What is it?
Bobby killed himself.
He jumped off a bridge.
He... He's gone.
Help me!
Help me!!
My son is dead!
Let me out!
Let me out!
My son is dead!
Let me out!
Joy, slow down. What's wrong?
Thank you.
Death of a loved one is always tragic
But the death of a young person can be particularly painful.
Because that person had his whole life ahead of him.
Bobby was only 20 years old.
We'll never know who he could have been. Or what he could have
accomplished.
Bobby was a good young man but he was lost.
By giving into temptation, he strayed.
Then disillusioned,
he chose to end his life.
Now we know to condemn the sin,
not the sinner,
it was this sin that Bobby succumbed to.
It led to his unhappiness.
And it led him
to take his own life.
As goodness begets goodness,
so does sin begets sin.
They're ok with this?
They're running low on sandwiches.
Mum, do you think Bobby got salvation?
I don't know.
Suicide is a sin.
But maybe God knows that Bobby wasn't in his right mind?.
I mean...
Why would God allow Bobby to go to hell if it was in his power to cure him?
I don't know Mary!
Clear yourself together.
People are uncomfortable enough.
Thank for coming.
I'm so sorry for your loss.

Mrs Griffith. Mr. Griffith..

I'm David.

I was a friend of Bobby's.

I wanna offer my condolences.

He was an amazing young man.

I'm so sorry.

Aunt Mary...

David is a good person.

All of Bobby's friends were.

When Bobby was here, he was under control.

Then he moves to Portland and someone puts all these ideas into his head.

It wasn't like that.

David cared for Bobby.

We're his family.

We know how to help me,

he wanted to change, to be closer to god.

To be closer to YOU!

Then he went further and further into that life style and he couldn't get out.

Do you believe everything they tell you in church?

I know you and uncle Bob meant with that serment...

Bobby knew the repercussions about homosexual lifestyle.

Bobby was good, descent and kind.

Someone who didn't even know Bobby stood up there and condemned him, and you let him.

Bobby did everything he could to make himself acceptable to you.

He was so good, and bright, and funny. He should be praised.

I'm sorry you can't see it that way.

Maybe you should go.

Fine.

I left Bobby's things in his room.

Bobby!

Hey Mum!

Don't you ever do that again!

I knew it wasn't true.

I knew God would bring you back to me.

Mum, you worry too much.

I'm slowly sinking in a vast lake of quick sands.

A bottomless pool.

I wish I could crawl under a rock and sleep forever.

Noone understands me.

Noone in this house can accept my side of the story.

I can feel god's eyes looking down on me with pity.

I can't never let anyone find out I'm not straight.

It would be so humiliating...
My friends would hate me.
and my family...
Mum.
I've overheard them.
Thank you.
They've said that they hate gays.
And even God hates gays.
It really scares me when they talk that way because now they are talking
about me.
I don't wanna choose sin.
I don't.
I'm so mad and frustrated god...
I seem to be at the end of the road.
Why do you remain silent?
May 30th.
Memorial Day Barbecue.
Had fun.
Mum was sweet and funny self.
Like the old Mum...
For a second it felt like the old days.
She smiled at something I said,
and I saw on her eyes that for a second she forgot what she really thinks
of me.
The anger never erupts.
My timid nature would never allow a full fledged thunderstorm to occur.
But it's there, on the horizon.
I can feel god's eyes looking down on me with such pity.
He can't help me though.
Because I've chosen sin over righteousness.
Excuse me.
You alright Ed?
Oh yeah, I'm fantastic.
I think we all are. Isn't that obvious?
Ed. We have to deal with this as a family.
That was your answer for Bobby too but it didn't work.
Damned!
I'll go. I'll go.
Excuse me.
Come, Nancy.
You wanna get out of here, maybe go for a beer?
Did he even think about what he would do to us?
He could have called...
or something but...

not just screw us, right?

Ed...

Nothing no! No goodbye, no note, nothing. Just...

I'm sorry Bobby.

I'm sorry.

Are you happy now?

I'm sorry Bobby.

Are you happy now?

Ed...

It's not your fault.

There must be other Bobbys out there.

Other young gay people who may be thinking of taking their lives.

Does the church reach out to them?

They are other churches that do that.

Reverend Joseph asked us to tell you how sorry he is for your loss.

- We can come back in a couple of weeks and check in on your f...

- You don't understand, are you...

I don't know what to do.

I need to make peace with this and I can't.

The lord says the impure will be thrown into the lake of fire.

Bobby...

sinned!

But he was pure of heart.

He'd never knowingly hurt anyone.

Is that enough?

Is it?

Dear god,

my relationship to you leaves something to be desired.

I have never asked of you,

only given, as I was told.

Your holy spirit has taught me so much...

But now there's more I need to know.

Hey!

I can't.

Ok.

I think I'm gonna sleep in the living room.

Reverend?

Mary Griffith.

Nice to have you with us, Mary.

The bible...

it says that homosexuality is a sin punishable by death. Do you believe that?

There are other interpretations of the bible, Mrs Griffith.

My son...

was gay...
and he killed himself.
Is there an other interpretation of that?
I'm sorry.
What was his name?
Bobby.
Bobby Griffith.
I saw him here a couple of times.
My Bobby?
He always sat way in the back.
He stopped coming.
I am so sorry.
You must be...
I need answers.
I need to know where he is.
Is homosexuality an unforgivable sin?

Leviticus, 18:

If a man lies with another man, it is an abomination.
An abomination, in that time, didn't mean sin. It meant unclean.
Leviticus also goes on to
say eating shellfish is an abomination.
Or mixing fabrics...

Leviticus 20:

If a man lies with another man, they both should be put to death.
And then he says the same thing about an adulterer, or a child that disobeys
their parents.
And we certainly don't interpret that scripture literally.
In Deuteronomy 22,
If a woman is not a virgin on her wedding day,
she should be taken to her father's house and stoned to death.
So what do you tell people who come here?
Gay people...
That homosexuality is ok?
That it is permissible in god's eyes?
I tell them what I believe to be the truth:
that God loves them as they are.
God's vengeance is great.
So is his compassion.
You shouldn't teach them
that homosexuality is ok.
That's not what the bible says.
It just confuses them more.

Mrs Griffith,
if you'd like to come back during the week and talk,
my door is open,
but not to be blamed.

ok?

I think that we got
a pretty good one,
nice and full.

A couple of balls like your dear old dad.
Or grandma...

Yeah...

Mum, can we hang this one on the tree?

I remember when he made this.

Second grade.

Mrs Towns' class, I think.

He was so proud of himself.

Where do you want to put it?

Up high.

So he can look out.

Hey, they work.

I'm gonna go check on my cookies.

I found the passage you talked about.

About stoning to death

Deuteronomy, 22.

But what about Sodom and Gommorah?

God punishes the sin of homosexuality. How do you explain that?

It's nice to see you too, Mary.

What's this for?

It's a roomish sale.

All gay people have roomish too.

So...

What about Sodom and Gommorah?

Many scholars think this sin was greed and not homosexuality.

And it wasn't labeled homosexuality until years after it was written.

Do you have answers for all these things just to justify being that way?

You have answers to justify that it's wrong.

I guess we're in an impass here.

So you think it's ok to interpret the bible any way you want?

No, of course not. But the bible was written and interpreted by mortal men.

And many of those interpretations were reflections of the time and what they lived.

So you feel completely free to question it?

Because...

I think it's blasphemous.

I don't think God minds questions.
He might not be thrilled with all our answers.
I think blind faith is just as dangerous as none at all.
I've never questioned my faith. I...
I've never had reasons to.
Sometimes to question it...
helps you find a deeper faith.
Bobby stopped coming here.
I think the reason was...
he couldn't never allow himself to feel worthy of God's love.
And we didn't help.
Mary...
Have you ever heard about P-FLAG?
It's a national organisation.
It's Parents and friend of lesbians and gays.
No, that's not for me.
They can help.
You'd be able to see you're not so alone in this.
Bye reverend.
No.
There's a woman in Concord, Betty Lambert.
You'll love her.
She has a gay son in his 30s.
I just had a few questions.
I don't need anything else.
Just in case.
It's true. There's a passage that says if children are disobedient they
should be put to death.
And I mean noone interprets that litteraly.
What I'm saying is...
if the church no longer interprets that litteraly,
maybe homosexuality is also on that list.
Well, maybe.
Well, don't you think that's important?
Mary, I wasn't that keen with the first interpretation of the bible.
Well, it could mean that Bobby's in heaven.
Yeah, well, he's not here.
Right?
Why isn't that enough for you?
Is it enough for you?!
Does it make it any better?
Everything you're doing?
What do you want me to do?
Just forget about him? I can't do that. Maybe you can.

I don't want to forget about him, Mary.
I want to remember him. Then I want to move on.
But I can't!
Nobody can...
Just walk away. Like you always do.
You never deal with anything.
Oh, I see...
Maybe if I did, Bobby would still be alive today?
Is that what you're saying? Is that what you think?
You can answer me!
Listen Mary, we both made mistakes. We all made mistakes. But it's done,
he's gone.
We're not gonna bring him back.
I know that!!!
Don't you know I know that?!

Mary?
I'm Betty.
Hello.
Betty Lambert.
I'm so glad you called.
Please, come in.
Reverend Whitsell told me what happened to Bobby.
I can't imagine what it must feel like to lose a child like that...
How long has it been?
Six months...
Six months and a few days.
Our son was 14 when he came out to us.
Isn't that a little young?
I knew before then.
We, mothers, we always know. Don't we?
And you were ok with it?
Oh god, no.
I don't think any parent hears the news and thinks Oh Goodie!
Goodie wasn't the first word that came to my mind.
Mary...
Why don't you come to a P-FLAG meeting with me?
No, I'm...
I'm not good at talking in groups.
So don't talk.
Just come and listen.
I think you'll be shocked
at how many people think they were the All-American-Family.
I'll think about it.
Eric was taunted in school all the time.

Mary, you came.
I can't stay long.
That's great. Come on in.
I was so furious, I went to the principal.
But he didn't do a thing to the boys who did it.
I was shocked by that.
I called them fruits, and ferries.
I didn't know.
It took me a long time to accept my Sam.
I think I always knew.
I mean...
He asked for a pink Lacoste shirt for his birthday.
He was always different.
So he tells me he's gay...
What do I do?
I take him hunting.
There he is in his pink Lacoste shirt, he saw a deer
and yaled Run, Bambi, run
I always knew I could love my son
I never thought I could accept him. For who he is.
Well, when Gil told me she was gay. I insisted she see a psychiatrist.
But when that man suggested shock therapy,
I looked at my baby and, the hurt in her eyes.
I thought This is crazy!
Ah, hello reverend!
Please, come sit down.
Hi guys!
Hi reverend!
Glad to see you're all here tonight.
As you may know, reverend Whitsell is a pastor of the Metropolitan
Community Church,
and he's proposing a gay freedom day to the Walnut Creek city council.
The city council vote happens in about a month.
and I would love all your support.
Mary!
Mary?
Mary, what are you doing out here?
You're soak. Come inside.
I didn't know where else to go.
I was sitting there,
listening to all their stories.
About how they...
always just knew...
their kid was different.

And then I had this dream tonight...
Bobby was a baby.
My son was always different.
His difference began at conception.
I knew that.
I felt it.
I know now...
why God didn't heal Bobby
He didn't heal him because...
there was nothing wrong with him.
I did this!
I killed my son!
You did not kill your son.
Bobby killed himself.
How could God forgive me?
How could Bobby forgive me?
God has already done the forgiving.
You have to forgive yourself.
I'm so sorry!
I'm so sorry!
Dear god.
Give us something we can live with
and pass on to others whose lives will never be the same because of a loved
one's death.
I did not decide on brown eyes for myself.
And I now realize that Bobby didn't decide to be gay.
If you say in your word
that it is evil and wicked to be born with no arms,
and a child is born with no arms,
What is that child to think?
Our first order business is a proposal for a gay freeddeom day in Walnut
Creek.
Attention, please.
We have a select group to debate the issue.
I don't see her.
...it's reverend Whitsell.
For one day,
for one day, people can celebrate their difference rather than feel shame.
They should be ashamed!
There are so many other people who need our time and our attention.
Why are we wasting it on this?
Alright, alright. Let's have some order here please.
They spit in the face of decency and morality.
We cannot allow the fabric of our society to be torn apart.

Right?

I heard he tries to run for the Human Relations commission,
they picked that limped Whitsell instead.

They sent him a letter.

I said, 'We sing hymns at our church'.

What do you do with the hymns at your church?

So unless anyone else has anything else to add,
we'll adjourn to make our decision.

Mary?

Hey Dad!

Dad, get in here!

Dad hurry up! Mum's on TV.

Homosexuality is a sin.

Homosexuals are dommed to spend eternity in hell.

If they wanted to change,
they could be healed of their evil ways.

If they would turn away from temptation,
they could be normal again.

If only they would try and try harder,
if it doesn't work.

These are all the things I said to my son Bobby when I found out he was
gay.

When he told me he was homosexual,
my world fell apart.

I did everything I could
to cure him of his sickness.

jumped off a bridge and killed himself.

I deeply regret my lack of knowledge about gay and lesbian people.

I see that everything I was taught and told was bigotry and dehumanizing
slender.

If I had investigated, beyond what I was told,
if I had just,

listened to my son,

when he poured his heart out to me...

I would not be standing here today with you
filled with regrets.

I believe

that God was pleased with Bobby's kind and loving spirit.

In god's eyes

kindness and love are what it's all about.

I didn't know that each time that I echoed eternal damnation for gay
people...

each time I referred to Bobby as sick and perverted and a danger to our
children...

his self-esteem,
his sense of worth, were being destroyed.
and finally,
his spirit broke beyond repair.
It was not god's will that Bobby climbed over the side of a freeway
overpass
and jumped directly into the path
of an 18 wheel truck which killed him instantly.
Bobby's death
was the direct result of his parents' ignorance and fear of the word gay.
He wanted to be a writer.
His hopes and dreams should not have been taken from him but they were.
They are children
like Bobby,
sitting in your congregations,
unknown to you,
they will be listening,
as you echo Amen.
And that will soon silence their prayers.
Their prayers to god,
for understanding,
and acceptance,
and for your love.
But your hatred, and fear,
and ignorance of the word gay will silence those prayers
So...
before you echo Amen
in your home and place of worship.
Think!
Think and remember.
A child is listening.
Oh, Mum...
Should be good.
He lost.
They voted the order install.
Well, he'll try again next year, right?
So, we're really going to San Francisco?
I think we have to.
I don't think that's a choice.
Well...
that's ironic.
Ok.
Are we late?
Just in time!

Jacky, is this everyone?

Oh! honey, no...

Come with me.

We have a special place for you.

Ok .

To all the Bobby and Janes out there...

I say these words to you as I would with my own precious children.

Please don't give up hope on life.

Or yourselves.

You're very special to me.

I'm working very hard to make this world a better and safer place for you to live in.

Promise me you'll keep trying.

Bobby gave up on love.

I hope you won't.

You're always in my gods.

My name is Bobby Griffith.

I write this in hope that one day,

many years from now,

I would be able to go back

and remember what my life was like,

when I was a young and confused adolescent,

desperately trying to understand myself in the world I live in

The other reason I write this,

so long after I died,

others may have a chance to read about me,

and see what my life as a young person was like.

On December 6th 1995, Mary Griffith testified before members of the Congress of the United States.

Her tireless work protecting the rights of gay and lesbian youth has established her as a major force in the fight for human rights.

Before you echo Amen in your home or place of worship, think and remember.

A child is listening. - Mary Griffith

In loving memory of

Bobby Griffith and Leroy Aarons