

*O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;*

*But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.*

*O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;*

*Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.*

*My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;*

*Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.*

Walt Whitman was one Elias had heard of before. However, Elias had not known he was a poet. His father spoke about Walt Whitman a lot, how he was "the pinnacle of masculinity". Apparently the pinnacle of masculinity was a man who looked like he didn't know what shaving was. Or bathing. Elias doubted his father knew Whitman was a poet too, or else he probably

wouldn't have said that thing about him being "the pinnacle of masculinity". His father didn't have a problem with poetry, per say, but he did seem to think that male poets were on the more... flamboyant side. His father had used a different word, but Elias didn't want to repeat it.

Elias also doubted his father would continue to call Walt Whitman what he did if he knew about Whitman's sexuality speculation. Elias had been a bit happy to learn that Whitman may have been gay, he'd never seen a depiction of a gay man on the more macho side. That joy was then immediately squashed after learning that one of Whitman's speculated relationships was with a fifteen year old. His father probably would have *loved* that little detail. Elias heard what his father said about queer people, one thing he was adamant about was that they only adopted children for their "ulterior motives". Whatever. Elias never planned on telling his father about his feelings anyway.

His mom wasn't an option either. Elias saw how she looked at a grocery store employee that had her pronouns written on her name tag (which was only she/her). He heard the little clicks of her tongue when the news spoke of a trans girl, who was on the other side of the country, playing on the girls soccer team. Elias loved his mother, but he also knew this was one of those things that did not fall under her "you can tell me anything" umbrella.

There wasn't a chance in hell Elias would tell his brother, either. Theo was just as bad as his dad. His little sister, Amelia, was four, and a bit too young to understand that Elias didn't want her sharing this information with everyone she knew.

If his family was out, he only had one option, outside of Scott of course. Their friend Janet, who was currently on vacation in some tropical place at the moment. The only problems were the aforementioned vacation she was on, and that Elias was fairly certain all her information on the subject would come from a more... unusual source. If Elias went to her, he could trust her to not tell anyone. She'd even take it to her grave if she had to, he knew that for certain. However, he valued the cleanliness of his browser history too much to bother looking into any of the sources she may provide for him. Janet would be a much better option than his family, and there was no way in hell he was going to the school counselor. She'd texted not too long ago that her vacation would be over soon. Elias just had to wait, and what was a few more days?