

## **Susan Cordova, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, Kenmore Middle School**

Since I was about 9 years old, I knew I liked both boys and girls. I knew that I was different somehow, and it scared me. I didn't know exactly what was happening, and looking around my world, I couldn't find anything or anyone to affirm my identity. By the time I hit 6<sup>th</sup> grade, my consciousness was raised. I found others like me, and we talked and bonded. I felt some freedom- but not as much as I thought it would. The irony is that, although I found outside of my family, I have never found it within.

Wow, my parents aren't overjoyed being seen

With their bisexual, anxiety-filled teen.

My parents aren't there for me to lean,

Oh, they have such unconscious minds –

*I'm not fine.*

I am holding my identity inside

I'm living in the shadows of such a lie,

I've been trying to find a light,

But at home I am closeted, in fright,

Another tearful fight,

Is staying silent my plight?

But silence is like death,

And I'm gasping for breath.