

## Twitter thread by @queerbt, August 2019

Translated by Reuben Woolley. Original thread:

<https://twitter.com/queerbt/status/1159785216560513024>

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Aug 9

I'm gonna talk about how I revealed to my family that I'm gay.

- + the backstory
- + what happened after and what's happening now

I'm writing it in the hope that this story helps someone else breathe more easily, and beat themselves up less — knowing about the experience of other people usually helps with fear, I hope it helps you guys.

114 replies 580 retweets 4k likes

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Aug 9

until i was 17 i lived and grew up in a kinda urban village in the north of the Irkutsk region. Right up until i was 15 i didn't sexualise anything or anyone at all, didn't understand why sex was necessary and bc of that i didn't realise my homosexuality for a long time, and when i did eventually realise, i understood that if anyone found out, i was fucked.

2 replies 2 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 9

we had a wooden rocking-rocket toy in preschool, i sat on it with this boy, he sat in front and i held his waist. I asked: "Where are we flying to?", and he said: "To Mars!" and started to rock the rocket, i held on to him and that's the moment i first felt it.

1 reply 6 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 9

i had always been gay, since a long time before i'd ever thought about sex or relationships. People don't understand that their sexuality doesn't just define who they sleep with or love, it defines everything in their lives. Aesthetic tastes, likes and dislikes, their conception of themselves and those around them.

2 replies 18 retweets 1.2k likes

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Aug 9

4. once i'd understood that i didn't just like this boy because he was cool, but that i wanted to kiss him, i felt like a dirty piece of shit, and the mindset that everyone i knew lived by (that people like me should be imprisoned) suddenly chewed me up and shat me out. i decided to burn it out of myself, without a trace

1 reply 4 retweets 1k likes

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Aug 9

5. I approached the task with a great sense of responsibility. One time i noticed that i'd started swaying my hips, and spent a few months walking back and forth across my room, correcting my gait, i lowered my high-pitched voice, joked about fucking and lifted up girl's skirts

3 replies 3 retweets 1k likes

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Aug 9

6. My family had enough problems going on besides me. A piss-drunk stepdad+little sister+grandma+aunt with a brain tumor+mum+me. There was always a lot to do+on top of school i would have to help grandma with my aunt, drive my sister to preschool, get through my stepdad's drunken rages. overall ladies, it was a real Leviathan, let me tell you

1 reply 2 retweets 1.2k likes

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Aug 9

7. In the end i decided that i would hide it my whole life, well ok then, you think you like guys. Some like having sex in trainers, licking toes, no big deal. That's how i decided to see it. I thought i'd get a wife, but no kids, become a famous journalist, and that's all i ever really dreamed of.

1 reply 1 retweet 996 likes

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Aug 9

8. The backstory's been slightly drawn out, so we can jump forward a bit in my life now, no need to relive it, let's go Morty, in and out, 5 minute adventure.

1 reply 3 retweets 1.2k likes

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Aug 9

9. At uni this girl appeared who stuck to me like glue and all my social circle liked her, she was conventionally beautiful, popular and smart. She appreciated the fact that i saw a person in her, not just "a fuck-object like other guys".

2 replies 2 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 9

9.1. I broke up with her because i just didn't care about her that much. it wasn't important to me that things were good or bad for her, that she was happy or sad. I started to suspect that i couldn't keep living my life pretending to be another person, and i was getting sick of myself besides.

1 reply 3 retweets 993 likes

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Aug 9

10. Six months later i ended up in a youth project whose only aim was doing PR for Putin (what? yep!), in Irkutsk there weren't many options for personal growth. It was there that I first fell in love with a guy (the fucking irony), and that love pretty much fucked up my entire life

4 replies 7 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 9

11. At uni i kept interactions with mum and grandma to a minimum, and i'd always hated my stepdad so we hadn't had a single deep conversation my whole life. It's thanks to this that they didn't know about my throwing things and my attempts to drown myself in the bath. I dropped some pretty strong hints, but they didn't get it.

2 replies 3 retweets 997 likes

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Aug 9

12. The object of my love was a very good manipulator, and had me round his little finger for a year and a half, nothing was ever said out loud, we just hung out "as friends", it was my personal calvary, i died every damn day.

4 replies 11 retweets 1.2k likes

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Aug 9

13. After i had pushed what seemed like the last of my suffering soul out of my body, i started to lose the will to fucking live. I thought that this was the point of my life, nothing's ever going to come of it, i found being myself repulsive, i dreamed of being a girl, just so he wouldn't be against the idea of talking to me.

2 replies 6 retweets 993 likes

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Aug 9

13.1 But nobody noticed it, because thanks to years of practice i'd learned to say fuck it and hide absolutely everything. Everyone who hides their sexuality is a fucking snake and an actor, we have no choice, if we didn't learn to hide we'd be fucked, it's a question of survival.

2 replies 109 retweets 1.6k likes

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Aug 9

14. I finished uni and moved to Peter(sburg). I was 22 years old and i decided that i would finally come out to my family, because i truly loved them and i thought: "they don't know me, when they say they love me, they're really loving the plastic doll i'm showing them"

3 replies 4 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 9

14.1. The extent of my family's homophobia was huge, they thought imprisonment was the only option. If i had told them when i was still at school, grandma would have sent me to conversion therapy, prepaid the doctors, like she had done with our drug-addict relatives. And they would have honestly thought that they were doing the right thing.

2 replies 4 retweets 993 likes

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Aug 9

15. In Peter i felt like Uma Thurman in "Kill Bill". Like i'd been clawing myself out of a grave my whole life, and now i was sitting like her in a diner covered in the dirt and dust of the past, ordering a water.



2 replies 29 retweets 1.6k likes

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Aug 9

16. And then for the 2017-2018 new year holidays my grandma and sister (13 years old) came to stay with me. I took grandma to the theatre, my sister to Starbucks like she asked, she didn't suspect what i was planning to do. I didn't want to tell her over the phone, it seemed cowardly.

1 reply, 2 retweets, 923 likes

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Aug 9

17. We went to the Kazan cathedral, grandma shouted: "LYOSHA IT COSTS 500RUBLES TO REQUEST A PRAYER!" and ran off to the queue for the cashier. So i said to my sister:

- I want to tell you something
- Go on then, but i can guess
- I'm gay
- I know
- How come?
- Well you're pretty and don't have a girlfriend, I'm not an idiot.

6 replies 13 retweets 1.7k likes

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Aug 9

18. Just so you understand, saying "i'm gay" out loud was catastrophically difficult, i'd only previously said it to myself, quietly when i was alone, before i managed to say it to my sister, i choked for several minutes, my throat was paralysed with a huge lump in it, it was like when you're underwater trying to speak, but no sound comes out

6 replies 19 retweets 1.3k likes

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Aug 9

19. My sister asked me when i was planning to tell grandma, i said in the next few days. Sonya rolled her eyes and said it'd be a trainwreck. We went back to grandma, who was placing all her candles and hitting her forehead against every icon that was within reach for her to do so. She finished and we headed home

2 replies 5 retweets 1.2k likes

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Aug 9

20. That evening me and my sister were lying in bed in the flat i rented, and watching cartoons. Grandma came up to me and started to tickle my foot. I asked her to stop, and she said "What, you're scared of being tickled? Your wife is going to be a commandress, she'll be the boss of you!"

1 reply 2 retweets 954 likes

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Aug 9

21.

- Gran, i'm not going to have a bossy wife, i'm pretty sure of that
- How do you reckon that then?
- Because i'm gay
- What does that mean?
- It means i'm gay — i'm not joking, and i won't have a wife to boss me around!

2 replies 8 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 9

21.1. I told you it would be a funny story, remember? 😊

4 replies 8 retweets 941 likes

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Aug 9

22. Grandma looked at me as if i'd called her the dirtiest names under the sun, as if, instead of saying that i'm gay, i'd said something like "you're a stupid filthy monstrous toad and i'd rather look at a dead carcass than you", that's how she looked at me, as if deeply insulted

7 replies 7 retweets 1.2k likes

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Aug 10

23. Grandma stood as if she'd been put under a Confundus 🌟 and just kept looking at me. Then i said: "Think carefully about what you want to say to me right now, because what you're about to say will define the rest of our lives and my interactions with you, or their absence"

5 replies 6 retweets 1.2k likes

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Aug 10

24. She spluttered something about not understanding anything and went out to smoke, and me and my sister caught each others' eyes, Sonya looked at me and started giggling. Grandma smoked for a long time, and when she came back we'd already gone to bed. We didn't speak until the next morning.

1 reply 1 retweet 910 likes

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Aug 10

25. In the morning we woke up in silence, i got dressed and went out to the supermarket for some bread, my shaking fingers grabbed my phone and selected mum, this was the hard bit. She hadn't come up with the others and i would never be able to tell her personally, so i had no options left. She picked up immediately.

1 reply 1 retweet 853 likes

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Aug 10

26.

— Lyosha, what's going on over there? Grandma phoned me and said to change the plane tickets, she wants to fly right back today!

— What else did she tell you?

— Nothing, i can't understand any of it, she says she doesn't want to stay there anymore, did you fight? What's happened?

5 replies 1 retweet 982 likes

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Aug 10

27.

— I told her that i'm \*my voice suddenly breaks, i choke, instead of words i just roar hoarsely\*, that i'm... \*kckkkraaaakkckkkakckkak\* gay.

— And why did you tell her that?

— Because it's true

— ... right.

and she hung up

12 replies 1 retweet 1.2k likes

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Aug 10

28. I called her back, she didn't pick up immediately. I said that i'd wanted to tell her for ages and that i wanted her to think about what she wanted to say, because my interactions with her in the future were hanging off this. She said that "i'd knocked her into next christmas" and that she really had no idea what to say.

4 replies 6 retweets 1k likes

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Aug 10

29. We agreed that she'd have a think and we'd call again, it was only 6 months later that i found out that my coming out coincided with the beginning of one of my stepdad's drunken rampages, during which he turns into a real animal, mum always used to hide his outbursts from me. There's never a suitable moment.

1 reply 2 retweets 931 likes

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Aug 10

30. I went back home, and grandma flew at me, screaming "You've done this to spite us all!", she was holding the phone to her ear. She listened to the voice on the other end, glanced at me and said: "You've brought your mother to tears, are you happy?" My sister stood at the other end of the room with the most sick-to-death face on the fucking planet.

2 replies 1 retweet 990 likes

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Aug 11

31. I told grandma to calm down, that the worst thing she could do right now is scream. She said: "Oh go away" and moved to another room. I said that if she didn't stop i was leaving, she sprayed me with curses, so i picked up my bag and went home to my boyfriend, who i'd met by this point.

1 reply 1 retweet 927 likes

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Aug 11

32. Once i'd left, grandma called me and said:

"Come now Lyoshenka, everything's clear to me, how could you think i don't understand anything, you're just ill, it's nothing serious, you have a genetic disorder, wires crossed in the brain, psychologists say they have a treatment for it"

2 replies 5 retweets 974 likes

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Aug 11

32. 1

-Gran, you're not thinking at all about what you're saying, i might as well be talking particle physics to you, i'll give you some good articles and materials to read and you'll get it all, nothing bad's happened.

- I'm not going to read anything, you don't know who's written that

1 reply 1 retweet 959 likes

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Aug 11

32.2

...you've obviously read all that and now you're telling everyone you're this and that, maybe that's not it at all? You really must go to a priest, i can hear there's a devil sitting in you, you've got to chase him out quickly

5 replies 3 retweets 1k likes

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Aug 11

33. That really fucking did it, i screamed into the phone: "WHAT YOU'VE LIVED IN FUCKOFF ZHELEZNOGORSK YOUR ENTIRE FUCKING LIFE AND NOW YOU'RE A SMART ARSE WHO KNOWS EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT LIFE? YOUR LIFE IS JUST ONE MISTAKE AFTER ANOTHER. I'M ILL, YEAH? SATAN IS INSIDE ME? YOU CAN FUCK RIGHT OFF, VERA VLADIMIROVNA!"

1 reply 7 retweets 1.2k likes

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Aug 11

34. "WHY DID I BOTHER ASKING YOU TO THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID? HOW AM I MEANT TO TALK TO YOU AFTER THIS? THIS IS THE END OF OUR RELATIONSHIP, GET IT? DO YOU THINK I'M JOKING? AFTER SAYING SHIT LIKE THIS PEOPLE DON'T JUST KEEP TALKING TO EACH OTHER I'M FUCKING DONE", I hung up, leaned my face on a traffic light and started sobbing

2 replies 2 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 11

35. 20 minutes later mum called me, i was more or less calm, the winter cold outside had helped me come back to myself. Me and her talked nicely, she said that she still didn't understand anything, she needed time to get used to it, but she loved me very much and there would be no damage to our relationship at all, of course not, she wouldn't let there be.

2 replies 5 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 11

36. ...the most important thing to her was that I was ok. I didn't believe her. I knew her too well, i'd heard her lies. I really wanted to believe her, so much i wanted to scream, so much i was it drove me to hysterics, but i could hear the vibrations in her throat, in her word choice, that this was a script for the returning of chaos to order. My mother hates chaos.

2 replies 7 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 11

37. I wanted to tell her that i didn't believe a word of it, but at the end of the conversation she suddenly sighed, and whimpered with a piercing desperation. So i reassured her that everything was ok, i said thank you for her understanding and support.

That's how our relationship ended  
Not with a bang, but with a whimper.

13 replies 5 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 11

38. Me, grandma and my sister spent NYE separately, they flew back on the 2nd of January so i came to take them to the airport, a second round of talking with grandma came to nothing, she worked as a manager for years, no matter how stupid the thoughts she voiced were, she never doubted what she said.

1 reply 1 retweet 926 likes

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Aug 11

39. At the airport grandma tried to slip me some cash, began to act as if nothing had happened, asked when i was planning on coming to Zheleznogorsk. I said to her: "You're not listening to me. This is the last time we're seeing each other. I'm not calling you anymore, I'm not coming to see you anymore. Full stop.", she didn't believe me

2 replies 2 retweets 867 likes

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Aug 11

40. I hugged my sister, and apologised for ruining her holiday. Grandma dashed ahead to security, not understanding that once she'd crossed that line, she wasn't going to be allowed back. Then i saw her for the last time, watching through the glass of the security area, unable to come over and say her last words to me.

2 replies 3 retweets 872 likes

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Aug 11

41. A couple of months later my sister told me that grandma was pouring dirt on me name every time Sonya came to see her. She was saying that i'd become a gay to make money, to understand how gay sex works, who goes where, who climbs up on who, who puts what where and who and what i was supposed to suck

6 replies 3 retweets 960 likes

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Aug 11

42. I wrote grandma a huge, angry message, and warned that if this didn't stop, i wouldn't be responsible for my actions. It was a bluff and it didn't work very well. This incident salted the earth of our scorched relationship, i realised that i wasn't even going to go to her funeral.

1 reply 1 retweet 871 likes

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Aug 11

43. Me and mum kept calling one another, after half a year i reckoned we had a great relationship, that everything i'd given her to read had really had an impact on her and that she didn't have any homophobia left in her. She came to Peter for my birthday a year ago, it was a wonderful week.

1 reply 1 retweet 858 likes

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Aug 11

44. In march of this year mum came to visit again. We were living as the three of us, me her and my boyfriend, Yan. That's when she finally cracked. It was evident that while i had been gay in words alone, she hadn't completely got it, but now she was seeing our relationship, our kisses, hugs, and a homophobic Kraken spat itself out of her subconscious.

7 replies 1 retweet 965 likes

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Aug 11

45. She had something to drink and started spouting a pile of shit at us, i didn't want to believe it, that it was all real, i thought you'd just been fucking around. But the reality wouldn't change under her sheer willpower. She flew home, and i knew that it was time to ask some heavy questions and bring everything out in the open.

1 reply 1 retweet 891 likes

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Aug 11

46. I called her and we pulled apart and reordered the bones of our relationship. It was as if you had been standing in a dark room for ages, then all of a sudden the lights came on and you saw that it was full of the remains of half-decayed corpses. It all went to shit, in short. But it did at least help to be able to assess the situation soberly.

3 replies 4 retweets 1k likes

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Aug 11

47. I felt it as my iron will cracked, as i became all the more embittered, like a dumb Cersei Lannister for life. I closed my eyes, collected all the people from my past in the sept of Baelor and blew them all to shit. It was the only way to keep my psyche from crumbling to pieces.

1 reply 9 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 11

48. Now i live like a person with no past, just a present and a future. I'm not interested in what's happening out in Zheleznogorsk, i talk to my sister, said to her that if there was ever a risk of death or something serious with her health, to call me at once. As far as I'm concerned, that's the end of the story. Now for an afterword.

4 replies 8 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 11

49. Will your coming out be an emotional apocalypse? Most likely yes. Does it have any greater meaning? None whatsoever. But every day you put it off poisons you, and kills your future. Any path that doesn't involve coming out leaves you losing the ability to live your life as a person.

6 replies 26 retweets 1.1k likes

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Aug 11

50. Do you have to tell your story publicly? Yes. If i had read this thread at 15, it would have saved me years of rotting from the inside out. Is it scary to tell it? Very. Do we really have to be the first to throw ourselves at the battlements? Yes.

9 replies 34 retweets 1.2k likes

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Aug 11

51. After you and me, there's going to be a thousand-thousand more Lyoshas from Zheleznogorsk, certain that they're alone in this, and they're going to go through hell over and over again and they're not all gonna make it. Increase the visibility of queer people by every available method. It really will help.

24 replies 48 retweets 1.7k likes

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