



Only one person knew that Svetlana was gay when she wrote to Deti-404, a Russian support group for lesbian teenagers. In her letter, the 16-year-old described a life of hiding her sexuality in a small town in central Russia where a man had been killed for being a homosexual. "I am scared that they will find out about me and lynch me. Sometimes I want to cry out: 'Accept me for who I am! Or at least be tolerant of me'," she wrote.

Deti-404, which takes its name from the error page that appears when a website does not exist, was set up by Lena Klimova, 25, after she wrote an article about the plight of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) teenagers.

She had no plans to do anything further, but then she got a letter from Nadya, 15. "Nadya was hounded at school, her mother didn't support her," said Klimova in an interview with the Observer. "She decided to die, accidentally read my article and didn't do it."

After Klimova had spoken to Nadya by telephone and understood the depths of her despair, she asked herself: "Why does nobody ring alarm bells, not scream, not shout about it on every corner?" She added: "Many of them close in on themselves, they don't tell anyone. They are scared of parents and classmates. If they open up, parents sometimes beat them, insult them, throw them out, take away their phones, ban them from going on the internet and even lock them up in a psychiatric clinic."

**TVNL Comment:☐ This evil is the work of the religious bigots who had no power under the Communists. It's ugly, it's disgraceful, and totally outrageous.**

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