

# Variations on a Theme: Cher gets to me sometimes

written by Guest Contributor | April 17, 2019



nothin like being lonely at  
the gay club, and dancing anyway

so alive so alive so alive, and  
I can feel all the ways I'm dying.  
but I dance dance dance

this night  
this body  
this breath

*Do you believe in life after love?*

Do you believe in love after love?  
Do you believe in life after life?

yeah I know I still got the wounds  
time can't heal,  
but doesn't the glitter hide  
our blood so well? two-step  
your regrets next to me  
it's like looking in a mirror,  
the words of a late night prayer

being here tonight, being here when  
the world's saying / *I really don't think you're strong enough*

hands in the air  
everything's pointing up up  
and we get down  
we get down

sweat becomes my back  
in the salvation of strobe lights

I live in all the dark spaces in between  
and I hold it together  
we're all just holding ourselves  
together

*I can feel something inside me say*

it's nothing it's nothing  
said I'm something  
I'm nothing

*Do you believe in life after love / Do you believe in life / Do you believe  
in / Do you believe / Do  
you*

---

*Music can hold enormous power in memories and experiences, transporting us instantly to an age, location, or person. What sonic joys, mysteries, disbelief, and clarity have you experienced? Identify songs of influence in your life and explore them like variations on a theme, melding syntax and song structure, recalling the seriousness or levity that accompanies. Whether it's an account of when a specific song first entered your life, the process of learning to play a song, teaching someone a song, experiencing the same song in different places as it weaves through your life, unbelievable radio timing, sharing songs with those in need, tracking the passing down of songs, creative song analysis, music as politics, etc, I am interested in those ineffable moments and welcoming submissions of your own variations on a theme, as drawn from your life's soundtrack. Please email submissions to [meganentropy@gmail.com](mailto:meganentropy@gmail.com) and keep an eye out for others' [Variations](#).*

*\*\*("song" is a broad phrase: could be a pop song, a traditional tune, a symphony, commercial jingles, a hummed lullaby, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade recorder class horror stories, etc)\*\**

---



**Marissa Layne Johnson** is a poet, educator, and activist living in Boston, Massachusetts. Her work has been published in Bustle Magazine, One Billion Rising, The Voices Project, Impossible Archetype, HYSTERIA Magazine, Dirty Paws Poetry Review, OFI Press, The Broke Bohemian (where she was selected as Editor's Choice for the edition), HASHTAG QUEER VOL. 2, ImageOutWrite literary journal, and The Hunger. Marissa has been nominated for a 2018 Pushcart Prize in Poetry, and she recently completed the Iowa Writer's Workshop 2018 Summer Session. You can follow her work on Instagram at [@marissalaynepoetry](https://www.instagram.com/marissalaynepoetry)