

Natalie

November 3rd, 2017

Remembering Natalie Nguyen

I saw the Facebook page and faltered

Nat messaged me

Jai

Natalie...

Is she...

My gosh..

Natalie,

There is a photo of our trans triad

Close together, all smiling,

You donned black eyeliner and red lipstick

I grinned wide, holding a peace sign

Juni smiled subtly

I wrote below it,

"I learned how to keep being unapologetically femme from you."

One and a half years ago

When you were my cuddlebuddy

And Juni was my partner

This was the photo I chose to display

At Resilient Realities: Revolutionizing the QTPOC Narrative

It had been seven months since we last talked on Facebook

I wish I didn't vent about our past mutual friend

I wrote, "I can either visit you or you can visit me"

Gone were the days

We gushed over magical girls

You loved pairing them together

I shared how I found my queerness

Through *Sailor Moon* and *Cardcaptor Sakura*

Like Sailor Moon,

I imagined myself a pretty soldier

"In the name of the moon, I'll punish you!"

Clad and ready to fight in the name of love and justice

But I never quite felt like a magical girl

I could admit to you

I am a nonbinary femme Crystal Gem

Just like the gems in *Steven Universe*

We could adorn ourselves in makeup and dresses together
in and out of our homes

When you told me
I was the only friend you let touch your boobs during your gender transition,
I gushed and internally screamed
The kind of thing I can't post on the Facebook page
That is now your personal memorial

On that page I learned
What one-to-one friendship meant
I was never in any of your friendship circles
So when I turned off notifications
To stop seeing sad posts from strangers about you
I never received an invitation to your memorial
I saw the post three days later
I never got to say my last words
And lay our photo by your casket
Nor any recognition for the intimacy
That existed between us,
Two femmes bonded in friendship