



## Jodie Makara

"I am a third-year nonbinary medical student at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. Whatever free time I have goes into exercising, spending time with friends, and writing. I started writing spoken word poetry my junior year of college after seeing Andrea Gibson perform live and realizing I was living someone else's life. Sarah Kay's TEDtalk gave me a place to start and it's been lifesaving ever since. Before and during medical school, I've used poetry to cope with loss, frustration, uncertainty, even academic failure, giving me a way to process my thoughts before I could vocalize them. Poetry has been my comfort food and voice of reason, allowing me to stay resilient time after time. Even more rewarding, poetry has given me a new way to connect with others. My hope is to continue sharing my stories in a way that anyone can relate to, but especially other queer folk. I want to see others like me pursuing medicine and being visible, having mentors and not feeling alone in whatever path they choose to pursue. Being vulnerable with people is one of the greatest gifts you can give and encouraging others to express themselves through poetry will continue to be a passion of mine as we all try to navigate our overlapping lives."





# Jodie Makara

## Clarification

Will someone just slap me already?  
Then I'd have a reason  
To be upset. Right?  
Or is the way they look at me,  
The way they talk about me,  
Enough?

"I prefer only a female physician."  
"There's a man in the room"  
"Well she's a med student"  
No. Ze's a med student.  
I'm used to it.  
Or not.

Where did she go?  
He said he'd be right back.  
Ze never left.  
I'm right here.  
I've always been here.  
I'm still here.

I sense those piercing eyes  
Boring into my skin.  
I feel that a lot in gendered spaces.  
Them, thinking they know better  
Where I belong.  
What did I do to them?  
Just because they can't tell?  
Maybe I'm not making it easy?

People look through me.  
Have you seen her?  
I never saw him.  
No one sees zir.  
Invisible.  
Give me a chance.

Labor and delivery  
People bearing children  
A personal choice.  
Their choice.  
Not zirs choice.  
I feel both gratitude and regret.

That's her patient.  
That's his patient.  
Actually,  
That's zirs patient.  
I'm running out of patience,  
But they are my patients.  
Does my existence offend?

To those who do not understand:  
I've worked to get here.  
I'm not sorry for who I am.  
I've arrived in this space.  
Doing everything I can to  
Bring good health  
To all types of people.  
Give me two more years  
Then I'll tell you:  
Just call me  
Doctor.