King of the Castle
By Melissa Rasmussen

Dad
All knowing, all powerful, ordained by God
You were the one who taught me to hate
Hate them! (you ordered via your “unofficial” drivel) Nonmembers, Jack Mormons
Adulterers and fornicators
Hollywood democrats and hippies
Why can’t black people go to the temple?
Aren’t we all children of God?
Why are feminists bad?
YOU think men and women are equal don’t you?
Hate militant feminists! (you amended) The bra burners
Women who talked too much, who spoke up for themselves Donahue, and his wife Marlo Thomas (who said everyone was ok) Hate them the most! (you decreed)
The men who kiss men, women who caress women
Hate them! Despise them! Be disgusted by them! (you taught)
those native men in Africa had sex with monkeys, and then each other
So God cursed them! He gave them AIDS to purge the earth of their depravity
The news said that a little boy named Ryan White had AIDS
They wouldn’t let him go to school...Was that because he had sex with a monkey? All those people on TV were so sick, and no one knew how to cure them
Hate them! (you tutored)
I was confused
Aren’t we supposed to help the sick? Doesn’t Jesus love them?
Hate them! (you cried)
The wicked world glorifies their corrupt, immoral ways
Their twisted, revolting, repulsive behavior!!!
It seems you only talk about
Sex, sex, sex  bad, bad, bad
Hate them! (you commanded)
People we don’t even know... Who don’t tell us what to do with our lives... Why are you always so obsessed by what other people are doing anyway? Who other people are in love with?
Hate them! Hate them! Hate them! (you bellow, day in and day out) These men who caress men, women who kiss women
It’s unnatural! (you insist)
And insist, and insist
And then one day I have a thought
A calm... crystalline... rebellious inkling
You see, I can’t help but notice we all have lips
Any two lips on the planet can press to any other two lips on the planet
That’s how a kiss works... So exactly who’s to say one kiss is unnatural and another fine?
Hate them! (you shout)
YOU with your dogged oppression of anyone different
And your wrath... A blind fury towards women who love women, men who love men, I’m beginning to wonder why you obsess so much about this... What are you afraid of?
I know what I’m afraid of...
So from now on, every word you utter is suspect
You are not all knowing, all powerful
You aren’t even kind
You will teach me no more life lessons
I decide what to do, what to think, what to be
I will no longer lean into your hate
I choose love.