Don’t Put Your Labels On Me
By Katie Oswald

I am not a California peach—
So please, don’t put your labels on me!
What you get is what you see,
Bisexual, oddball, opinionated know-it-all
I own all of these things,
But don’t put YOUR labels on me.

Believe me, I won’t always agree but
That doesn’t mean I’m racist,
Queerphobic, transgender hater.
I promise you I do not give a fuck
Who you’re sleeping with later.

I won’t say I am color blind—
Because our world is blinded by color, by gender, by race,
But I care less about the color of your face
And more about the way you occupy your space,
We all have to be accountable for what we do
I’ll tell you what—
I’ll do me and
You do you.

In America we have this prevalent disease
It’s everywhere you look
In everything you see.
It’s called ignorance.
But ignorance is something we endure
Because ignorance has a cure
Education and tolerance.

But when you use your words as swords
To subdue, abuse, confuse—antagonize
You lose all chance that they will see things from your eyes.
Don’t use anger to fight hate
Because screaming at a stranger
Won’t change their mind, instead—
Use your words as swords
To change their view of world.

It just takes one moment to change a mind
One moment to do something kind,
We cannot fight hate with anger
That won’t change the mind of a stranger,
But maybe words of wisdom can
Or a positive example.
And if not, at least you tried.
A bona fide attempt—
And if they look at you in contempt
All you have to say is:
I am not a California Peach,
So please, don’t put your labels on me.