

## Hope

Just a few weeks ago, I went to a school.

A school filled with students from different neighborhoods, different families, different cultures. Students who lived in cliques with their friends, who rarely emerged from their groups.

I remember walking through those halls in a sea of bodies, with everyone's face blank. There was no recognition for the struggles anyone was going through, no smiles for those we didn't know, no laughter that rang beyond small groups of friends. So many of us had known each other for years, without really knowing one another.

Our silence separated us, filling in the gaps of the unknown with our judgement.

Some were being judged for the mark they were given, while others were being judged for where they came from.

Some were suffering from not being picked for a sports team, while others had a parent in the hospital.

So few of us knew any of this about each other because of the separation.

The separation from our struggles, our differences, our judgements.

The separation from each other.

Invisible lines surrounded us everyday, a barrier that kept us safe in our groups.

Until the coronavirus swept those barriers away, sending us into a completely different world of uncertainty.

An ache of uncertainty.

More like a dread.

The dread of not knowing when this will end, when our lives will go back to normal.

A dread of not knowing what will happen to those that we love.

A dread of not knowing what will happen to our world that we love.

We all suffer from the loneliness, the dread, the anxiety. The nights when sleep will not come to us, and we're wondering, "what will happen next?"

But as much as it tears us apart, it brings us closer together.

Things like our appearance, who we are friends with, and where we come from, don't matter anymore.

Everything that was superficial which defined us before, has no worth.

Because a virus attacks without judgment, prejudice or praise.

The lines that have once separated us, have now drawn us together, like a rope we're all grasping for dear life.

And although we all fight different battles, we fight for the same thing everyday.

We fight for hope.