

*Pandemic, by Camryn*

Pandemic.

The weight of this word will never be fully grasped.

this word, this single word, taints the lives of generations.

The blood of millions stains its hands as it stalks the earth.

It forces humanity apart, crushing us with its power.

It towers over us, leering at our powerlessness.

It hurts. It damages.

It kills.

We tried to fight.

We rose up against the sickness.

We injected poison into its veins.

We kicked and screamed and yelled profanities through our hysterical tears.

Yet all it took was a flick of its finger for us to be scattered, exhausted and afraid.

Pandemic.

When the powers of the world held up their hands in surrender, there was only one thing left to do.

We hid, cowering in our homes where the sickness couldn't reach us.

The streets became empty, an eerie silence echoed through the alleyways and abandoned buildings.

A new loneliness settled over the world like a weighted blanket.

The separation crushed our souls.

The loss of loved ones broke our hearts.

We tried to adapt, to connect.

We called, we messaged, trying to recreate the feeling of being loved.

Of being safe.

We talked through our screens, ignoring the faltering smiles and teary eyes.

And when news reached us of another loss, another life, we cried in the dark with only the garish light of technology as comfort.

As the pandemic slowed its tyrannic rampage, watching and waiting, we emerged.

Crawling out of our holes, we blinked in the light and breathed in the fresh air.

We looked with awe at the world outside.

We hardly recognised it.

The smog had lifted enough to see the beauty of the skyline.

Wildlife flourished, taking advantage of an abandoned world.

The waters had turned blue, a blue that had been long forgotten.

It was a haven, a stark contrast to the dystopian nightmare we'd been living in.

The world had healed, yet we were broken.

Broken by the fear of the unknown.

By the separation from the ones who love us.

By the opinions and choices that tore families apart.

By the suffering of others, fighting, hurting, dying.

And yet we found the strength to move on.

We listened to the sounds of a world awakening.

We took in the views that had once been taken for granted.

We tried to rescue our broken economy.

We mourned for the time we had lost.

We moved, we walked, we worked, trying to hold onto what made life worth living.

We carried those we had lost in our hearts, tried to remember them from all those years ago, when life was normal.

We covered our faces, hid our anxieties and smothered our pain.

We tried to survive.

We tried to fight.

A different fight.

The fight for normalcy.

For connection.

For love, peace, hope, joy and strength.

We fought for those who had been lost, for their deaths to be more than just a statistic, a number.

And we continue to fight.

We rise up against adversity.

We push for a better world.

We hold and comfort each other, whispering encouragement to those who need it.

All it took was a pandemic to remind us just how important life is to us. To remind us how we can overcome any challenge through love. To remind us how to love.