

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

TRISTAN COLE

To whom it may concern,

We are not human.

Our constructs of race, sex, religion, general background, sexual preference, they define us. We have fought wars over religion we still do. Everyone wants to be right in a world full of wrong. Truth is, we are all wrong. We see color and religions. We see sins. We pass laws to say that we can't separate others, but we make laws that say we must have a ratio of members different from each other. A recipe of races. Why does this matter? It's because we made it matter. We have decided to separate ourselves, to make ourselves unique. And while yes, we are unique, we hate others for being unique. And therefore:

We are not human.

Why do we separate ourselves, why do we stand and fight to be different? Take away the color, take away the names, take away the religion, then what are we? Are we nothing? Are we bland? Are we lacking substance? No, if we understood, truly understood. Beneath the beliefs, the want to be different, the want to be right:

We are human.

We as humans want to survive, we choose to fight the hardships and be better. We choose to rise to comfort because any farther then we'd be subject of hateful envy. You see, we are raised pessimistic, the reality being that we envy and are jealous. I understand, ; for that, we are only human. It is when we deprive others of

their humanity that we have lost ours. That man sitting near you, he is your brother.

Look past the tattoos, the piercings, the religious items, the clothes, look past everything. We are bound by spirit, a bond that every human should feel. Ask his story, he may tell you, and if he doesn't, do not judge, for he is human too. Everyone looks different on the outside, but our story is the same. We all feel hatred, happiness, sadness, grief, and wonder. We all know what it's like to have someone leave. We all know what it's like to have someone come into our life. We all know what it is like to not feel enough.

We are human.

Before we look at someone and judge, look past the outside, look past the evils, look past the things that make them different from you. Lay down your arms, drop your walls, and talk to each other. Everyone has a story; nobody truly knows each other.

We are human. That is reason enough.

With honor, love, and acceptance,
—[REDACTED]

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Tristan Cole is a military kid who has fought genetic hypertension and essential tremors. He graduated with honors and end of pathway experience from Junction City High School. He aspires to earn his M.D. and specialize as a Cardiologist. He enjoys exercising, playing video games, drawing, shower singing, writing, and athletic competition. Instead of conventional sports, he attends Spartan races and previously competed with a Raider Team (JROTC) in national competitions. For those who know, he is Alpharius.