

The Invader Without Direction

I usually can not think of many major obstacles in my life but one invader comes to mind. The invader in my life did not need any validation for coming, no threatening words or shrieks. It came like a thief in the night and tried to steal every non tangible thing from me, my friends, my freedom, my sanity. It was lifeless, cold, it did not have time for a frown or a grimace toward me. It is only known through the lips of others, through hatred, confusion, and chaos. It is ubiquitous, seemingly everywhere in people's lives no matter how hard they may try to escape. It claims the life of thousands and the souls of many more without so much as a sound. This mystery invader is without direction, destroying everything in its path. This is my story. This is how I survived.

I have concealed my threat but will announce myself, my name is Kieshawn Elliott, one of many victims spared by this horrendous invader. The invader spared my life, but it left me in torment and agony, leaving a remnant of itself behind. Preceding the invasion, I was preparing for a musical, one element that helped me break through my daily restrictions. Once the invader came this event disappeared, and emotions of misery and acrimony coursed through me like venom. I had nothing but my family to walk me through this catastrophe. Usually summer break is the calm before the storm before school commences, at least in Lorain, where I reside. In 2020 summer break was the eye of the storm. My mind was racing, going berserk waiting for this tragedy to end, but it

never did. I had a brief thought, maybe the clear and present danger shouldn't change, but I should.

When the next school year began, I wondered what my junior year would be like, and I was uneasy. As the year went on, the fear of the invader creating unfortunate predicaments grew less and less. As a matter of fact, online school seemed easier for me. It still didn't make up for the feverous chatter in the school hallways or the frigid air-conditioning in the building. My place of employment seems to be the only way I could establish a camaraderie with people again. My teachers and professors still anticipate the day when this event is over and normality will start to take form. For me, hope used to mean waiting, pain, and suffering while no day is clear. However, with more and more of my life in the rear view, I can not help but hope with them.

Now it has been almost one year since the invasion started, and the next year is even more uncertain than the present one. The invader is still at large, and has managed to elude even the most complicated government agencies. The news reports claim that scientists may finally have the invader in their grasp but this seems unlikely. Through this long year I have learned not to look out of the window but how fortunate I am to be in a room at all. So many have had their souls and livelihoods taken by the invader, but my family and friends gave me strength to carry on. I now look at my situation in a new light compared to other unfortunate people that have higher hurdles to jump.

As my story comes to a close, I will reveal the name of this mysterious invader that you have been anticipating. The invader is not the corona virus that I had come to expect, but fear. It is fear that nonchalantly played with my emotions when a physical threat appeared. It is fear that keeps people miserable and afraid to leave their homes, and it is fear of losing control that people disregard their safety. Ironically, the biggest invader that came wasn't the knock at my door, but the crumbling of my mind. Through the interactions I have left, my strength, and my faith, I have overcome this obstacle and moved on. To conclude, my invader is not present for now, but when it comes again, I will be ready.