

Where to Find Power

By: Kayla Ling

“More love, less hate,” we chanted,
“More love, less hate,” we screamed.
We walked, and
walked, and
walked.
Everyone around me was smiling, their power radiating.
So, why did it feel like mine kept dissipating?

I was worried
that because our voices melded together,
my voice wouldn't / couldn't, be heard.
I was fearful
about how my individuality—the most sacred thing to me—
might've been lost.
I thought
that there was no power in people.
...

If danger, sickness, and dirt are what people see when
they “see” me,
Why will they bother “seeing” when there's a we?
If they're ignorant enough to hear nothing when they
“hear” me,
a thirteen-year-old girl with nothing against anyone in this
supposed “Land of the
Free,”
why would these hateful people bother “hearing” when
there's a we?
I feel voiceless. I don't / can't belong.
...

We live in a world that prizes optimism (“glass half full,”
“there's a bright side,”
etc).
But, let's not be optimistic
if all we can conjure up is an illusion of hope.
Yet, as we were walking, and
walking, and
walking,
optimism came to me without any force or rigidity.

Perhaps not everyone would look and see,
but I could. I would.
Around me, I saw / now see people who care for me,
and we, and I
am not as voiceless as I thought I was.

...

I was wrong.
It turns out, there is power in people.
The reality is, I'm not always heard when it's just me.
We're not always heard when it's all of we.
But at least we see—truly see—each other.
But at least we hear—truly hear—each other.
And at least we belong—truly belong—when together.