I do not have a Muslim name. I also do not wear hijab. In fact, I could pass for a Hindu Indian girl. I tend to confuse a lot of people. But at least I do not have to live in fear of being discriminated against right? Although I may not be wearing a nikab (the traditional Arab dress that reveals only the eyes), I feel as if I am always wearing a mask. Being Muslim is a huge part of my identity. Due to the fear of what the public might say, I wear this mask instead of hijab. This is what 9/11 means to many Muslim women. The 9/11 incident was the start of an era of islamaphobia.

A child that is born to parents that believe in Islam is labeled as a Muslim. The label is nothing more than a lineage that is passed down. A Believer is someone who actually believes in Allah and practices Islam. People can be Muslims without being believers. The Qur'an says, "You may fight in the cause of God against those who attack you, but do not aggress. God does not love the aggressors." [2:190] This verse dismisses any form of terrorism. How could the 9/11 attackers be a representation of Islam if they do not even follow the religion? This misconception has created discrimination against innocent believers for over fourteen years now. Adolf Hitler claimed to be a Christian, yet anyone who says they are Christian are not deemed as the mass murderer that he was. Why then, is anyone who wears a hijab, a nikab, or a thick beard, considered a terrorist? There are good Christians and bad Christians. There are good Muslims and bad Muslims. In general, there are good people and bad people. An entirety of a religion and its people cannot be written off because of the acts of a few bad people fourteen years ago.

There will always be bad people. For example, on December 15, 2014, a sheikh held hostages in Sydney, Australia. This man was an aggressor, not a believer. The hostages were temporary victims in the crisis. In the aftermath of the incidence, the real victims have been Muslim believers. Luckily, there will always be good people as well. An Australian woman named Rachel Jacobs saw a Muslim woman on the train take her hijab off in fear of being attacked by the Australian crowd out of revenge for the sheikh's actions. Jacobs told her to put it back on and that she would walk with her. The woman cried and hugged Jacobs, but ended up walking off alone. This inspired Jacobs to create the

#illridewithyou campaign where people arrange to meet Muslims on their commute so they do not have to live in the shadows of islamaphobia. The 9/11 attack created islamaphobia, but if people join together like in this campaign, Muslims could wear their hijabs or thick beards proudly instead of the mask that I too hide behind.