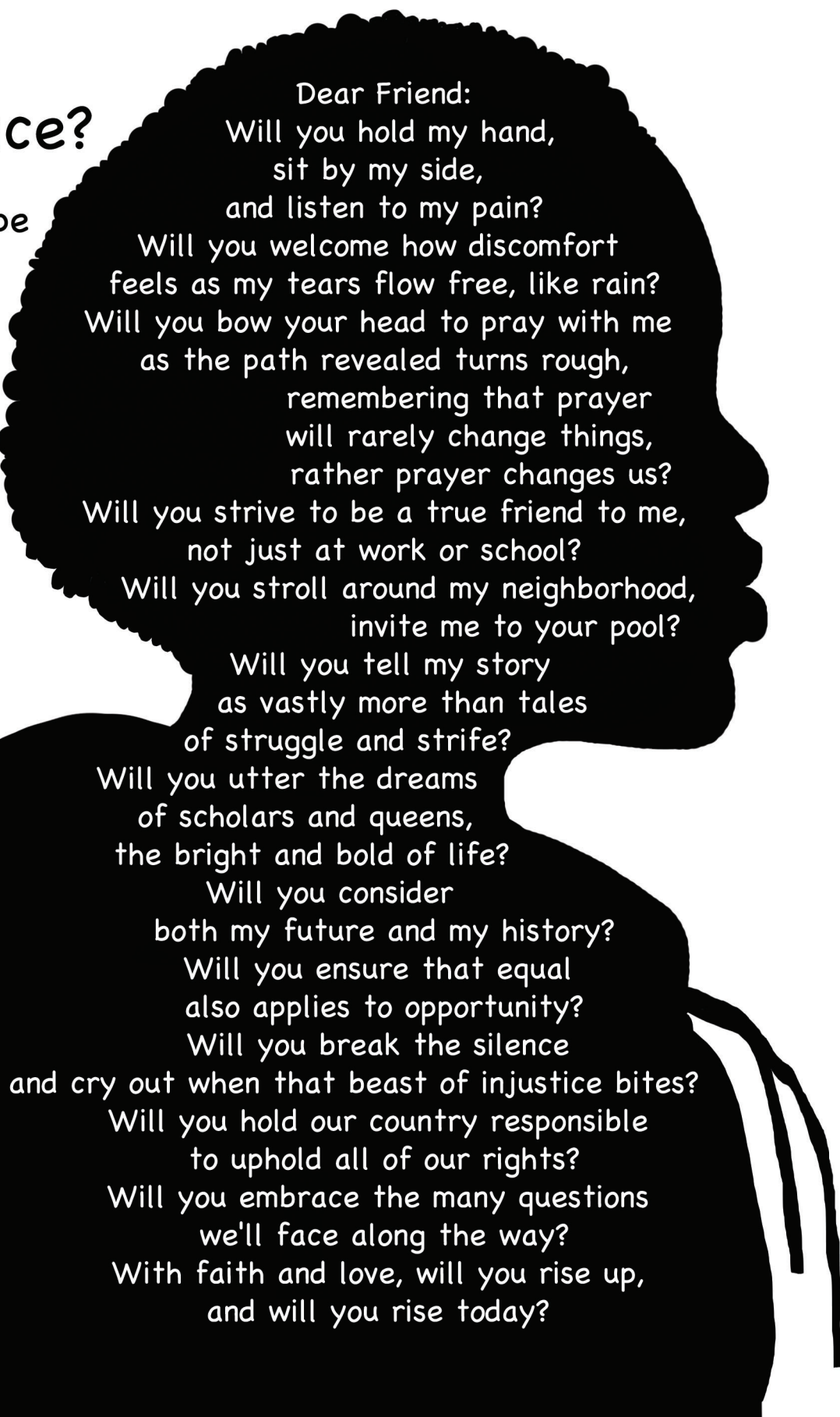


Will You Break the Silence?

by Andrea Hope



Dear Friend:

Will you hold my hand,
sit by my side,
and listen to my pain?

Will you welcome how discomfort
feels as my tears flow free, like rain?
Will you bow your head to pray with me
as the path revealed turns rough,
remembering that prayer
will rarely change things,
rather prayer changes us?

Will you strive to be a true friend to me,
not just at work or school?

Will you stroll around my neighborhood,
invite me to your pool?

Will you tell my story
as vastly more than tales
of struggle and strife?

Will you utter the dreams
of scholars and queens,
the bright and bold of life?

Will you consider
both my future and my history?

Will you ensure that equal
also applies to opportunity?

Will you break the silence
and cry out when that beast of injustice bites?

Will you hold our country responsible
to uphold all of our rights?

Will you embrace the many questions
we'll face along the way?

With faith and love, will you rise up,
and will you rise today?