

Every once in awhile I get one of those moments, those 'I'm-actually-a-human-being-and-I'm-living' moments. For some reason, none of my friends get them. They call them my 'Larissa' moments – where I go off on a tangent and start wondering about the world.

My latest one was scary. Yes, I'm a human being, but I've been living under the pretence that I live in a really lucky country. I mean, sure, I do. I'm sixteen years old and the world is practically mine. I can shield myself from the horrors of the world by turning off my television and closing a newspaper. A large number of Indigenous kids can't.

I find it amazing that I can sit at my computer safely, simply because of how I look and where I live. I can sit here, while children in Indigenous communities suffer day after day, just plain scared of things that children should never have to face. The statistics are shocking. 178 700 Indigenous children, aged 14 and younger, have been neglected or abused or both. This could be happening to them this very instant. In one report, 708 children under 14 had been found to have been affected by Chlamydia and gonorrhoea, things I have only ever heard about in dodgy videos in PD/H/PE lessons. These words mean nothing to me. A reality to these kids is nothing to me. I recognise the unfairness, but why doesn't anyone else?

What's worse is that of these statistics, 19 of these children were toddlers and preschoolers under the age of four. And what was the reaction to this? Clare Martin, the Territory's Indigenous Affairs, a person who is supposedly meant to have power, responded to this evidence by announcing an inquiry. Something that will not change a single thing. Come on, Ms. Martin, I could do a better job and I'm pretty much failing general maths. 30 years of inquiries have not brought Aboriginal incomes and education, health and home ownership anywhere near the levels that everyone I know manages to enjoy.

If supposedly the health of Indigenous babies is at the same level as third world countries like Nigeria and Ethiopia, why are people still closing their eyes? I mean, you let these children grow up this way, then complain when they turn into common criminals. Regardless of skin colour or facial features, we are all human. We all breathe. We all feel the same emotions.

I could ask these questions over and over, but it won't make a difference. I know that people realise that there is a problem. Yes, that is the first step, to admit that there is a problem. A bright idea might be to actually take the next step and come up with a way to fix the problem. I know that it is much easier said than done and that I'm a naïve schoolgirl to think that everything can be fixed with the wave of a wand. But, you'd think that government officials with money and power at their disposal would start thinking of the minority groups.

My life has been changed since my last one of these moments. I go about my day without fear, because I've realised that I've never really experienced fear before. I've had no real reason to. I live happily in my safe little world, kilometres away from these children, and I have the government looking after me. Indigenous children have this new 'National Action Plan for Indigenous Community Responses to Child Abuse', a fancy name for an even fancier plan –

to ensure that all Australians have the confidence to report crimes and abuse.  
Well done. Give yourself a pat on the back.

The damage has been done. Maybe one day those who have grown up in these communities will rise above it all and become Ministers for Indigenous Affairs...

Sorry. I slipped into my dream world again. I have a tendency to do that.