When we watch a sunrise unfold, we do not see everything, rather, just a little part of the world. A golden light on the horizon illuminating the sky. The rest shrouded in shadow. We see beauty, something marvelous, but not all. We know that there's something more, a hidden treasure, the hidden richness of the world. We want to see more, but there's no speeding up the process.

We're forced to wait and keep watching.

The same thing happens with people. At first glance, we just see the outside, the external. We see looks, talents, achievements. We give them labels and decide whether we like them or not. Make friends, choose enemies. In a matter of moments, we categorize them and move on.

But from this brief glance do we really know the person deep down inside? Of course not. You can't categorize people. Everyone is different. Yet why do we still do so?

I have friends and I have FRIENDS.

I care about all of them, but I see the inner richness and value in the latter group to a greater degree. It took time. A lot of it. I had to spend hours listening, understanding, and getting to know them in order to get to that level. I had to wait for the sun to rise to see more of the whole picture, to see their questions, their longings, their desires, their fears, and even then, I still only see a glimpse of the depth inside.

I'm a person who takes a long time opening up. It takes me a while to make friends. I can meet and greet and say hi and smile, do the works, but it's not me. At least not the whole me.

I'm guarded and hidden often afraid to make myself known, to be vulnerable. I need time, and I wish others would have the patience to discover who I really am before making a decision on me based on my title, age, talents, successes, or failures. These aren't me.

I want someone to see me for who I am. To see beyond the darkness surrounding the sunrise and to see the light. To see beyond the hazy first impression of a morning. To see the real me.

And I realized that I'm not alone in that. Each of us wants to be seen and understood as we are. We want to be accepted for ourselves, with all the good and bad, the triumphs and the failures, the dignity and the brokenness. We want others to see us as deserving of love and acceptance for who we are: people just like them.

Think about closest people in your life, be it family, friends, or spouse. Why are they so important to you? Is it because they're perfect? Probably not. Because they always agree with you? Think again. Because they are talented or have good looks? They may be so, but that's not why you love them. Think. Think deeply.

Isn't it because you recognize their inner beauty even if you don't understand it fully? That you value them as people? That you cherish them with all their quirks and ticks because they are who they are?

A person is like a picture of a sunrise: mysterious, unknown, infinitely deep. To really see its beauty takes patience, time, and seeing beyond the externals.

And when one discovers it, how truly breathtaking it is.