

A Woman of the United States Marines

As I walk through the town hidden with debris and bullet holes

I see the children peak from behind walls and doors, clueless of what is happening

I look around and notice a ball and two makeshift goals.

I retrieve the ball and walk to the first goal, thinking to myself this will bring them out for sure.

They slowly start to show themselves from behind their cover

One young boy comes up to me and kicks the ball my way.

This small act intrigues all the others, we play for a short while, just me and the boy.

I ask him "What do you want to be one day?"

He looks up at me with big brown eyes and says "I want to be a doctor or an astronaut".

I smile and look around as his friends begin to join in.

Telling me stories, future plans, dreams, and hopes for a life I will defend to give them.

It's good to see that these children haven't lost hope within the war that's being fought.

And as more children start to join in, he asks "Can we play again?"

I say yes with a smile and begin to kick the ball around.

To myself I think "It's amazing how these kids can smile in the face of adversity".

But our time is cut short as my commander says there is enemy on ground.

My only hope is that I will defend that precious astronaut, or doctor to be, so that he can continue to play on solid ground.

I look back at the child as I have to go on command and think about how his struggle with adversity reminds me of me, a woman of the United States Marines.