

In shadows cast by glowing street lamps
A figure stands alone and cold
Their face **obscured** by darkness
Their story left untold

They hold a crumpled piece of paper
With words that seem to haunt
And tears that stain the **parchment**
Show the pain they daunt

What secrets do they carry
What burdens do they bear
What choices have they made
What led them to this **despair**

We can only **speculate**
And guess at their story's end
But in their eyes we see a glimmer
Of hope, of strength, of mend

For in this moment of **solitude**
They choose to stand alone and fight
And though we may not know the reasons
We stand with them tonight

Together we face the unknown
With courage, with faith, with grace
And through our shared humanity
We find a common place

So let us not judge or **condemn**
But extend a hand to hold
For in our darkest moments
We all need to be told

That even in the shadows
There's a light that shines within
And with each step we take forward
A new chapter can begin.

Name: _____

Fill out the chart below to determine the words' meanings in the poem you read.

<u>Word</u>	<u>What I Think It Means</u>	<u>Context Clues from the Text that Helped Me</u>
obscured		
parchment		
despair		
speculate		

What do you think the author means by saying "So let us not judge or condemn, but extend a hand to hold" in the poem? Write your ideas and use evidence to support them.
