

...For Good Men to Do Nothing

P.H. (November, 2014)

Every day that she walks into class, she is bubbly and full of energy. She radiates happiness, spilling her every thought into the ears of those around her. But today, she dragged her body as if her soul was trying to escape and ascend to a higher plane. She sat alone, isolating herself both mentally and physically. I glance at her when I think she is not looking. She is curled into a ball, making a cage of her delicate bones. We are friends, yet I do not ask what is wrong. I do not acknowledge her. I convince myself that it is not my problem. I decide that I will not be a hero today.

Wang Yue (2011, October)

Somewhere in China, a toddler is hit by a truck in the middle of a dirty street. The truck does not stop, and neither does the world. Eighteen people all step around the large puddle of blood – as if it is not her life essence, but water too dirty to stain the bottom of their shoes. When she is finally picked up, it is too late. The hands of passivity have already signed her death certificate. They decide that they will not be heroes today.

Axel Casian (2008, June)

On a California road, a crowd gathers to watch a father kick his two-year-old son to death. Excuses are made later, "...something in his pocket..." "...thought it was just a doll..." (dolls do not scream) but none of their justifications are so intricately woven as to cover the evil that seeped into their souls. They decided that they would not be heroes today.

You (Now)

We passively sit down and stand for nothing. We are convinced that we cannot whip the chaos around us into submission; we are lion-tamers with shaky hands. So, we ball up our insecure ligaments and turn them into excuses. We are people with good deeds to not do, homeless people to not feed, justice to not stand for. We are the people who forgot that allowing evil to prevail is, in fact, evil. We are the people who can do better. We are the people who can be heroes today.