

Bianca Alessandra BANICA
“Sf. Sava” National College

Dear casually heroic teenagers,

To those who know it wasn't necessary for Adam to commit suicide in order to make the students at our high school acknowledge what disrespecting someone's rights can lead to.

This is to the unwavering bystander who speaks up whenever he notices that someone's rights are not being respected. To him, who isn't afraid to stand up for the person being attacked – a friend or a stranger – without any reason, although aware that he might thus become subject to being deprived of his own rights, to being bullied or shunned himself. To this young lad who courageously defends Aadila when she is teased because she is a muslim, who refuses to exclude Joseph from his project team merely because he is French and is an orphan, who asks his friend to stop mocking Jack because he loves Tommy, and refuses to keep talking to him unless he changes his behavior.

Just as a consequence of being human, we are entitled to a plethora of things that cannot be taken away from us. This is to that incredible part of the youth today who know this and protect our right to speak and think freely, to be a citizen of the country we inhabit, to express ourselves and to have our own beliefs – to live and be ourselves without fear. It takes a great leap of faith to believe that we can do that and give life a chance, before deciding that no one around us is willing to give us the freedom to make use of our rights and that it is better to put an end to our existence.

To the unquiet young lady who reaches out to a fellow student in her high school who fears telling others what his or her religion, ethnicity and sexual orientation are, due to previous situations in which he or she had to face with harsh criticism because of that. To her, who texts this pupil afterwards, reassuring them that they have the right to be whoever they want to be, and that no one else gets to define them, providing them with a supportive friend.

To all the young men and women who, instead of wasting time and energy trying to force their thoughts and beliefs on to someone else, struggle to prove that differences are, in fact, a wonderful thing from which we should all learn that without diversity, dullness would besiege every aspect of life.

This is to you. To all the teenagers out there who not only live and let live, but also do everything in their power to protect human rights: thank you. Thank you for making this world a better and safer place to live in; thank you for making life easier to live. Thank you for being the young everyday heroes who actively save our society from drowning in the abundant waves of ignorance, individual subjugation and perhaps even collective suicide.

Dearly,

The grateful friend of an everyday hero