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## Teen Opinion

### The perfect li(f)e

By Lauren Kim

We sit in our homes, our charming little castles and look down onto the problems of our community. Most of the time, we choose to look away and ignore the victims on the ground. This is the colossal flaw in our world. We sit in our perfect little homes, with our perfect family, and our perfect life with our heads buried in the sand. We hope, and we pray that something will happen, but never take action. We shut our eyes and close our ears and hope that this situation will blow over. It's a beautiful lie that everyone's living. The lie that things will magically get better, that world peace will just happen, and bullying will somehow stop.

This superficial statement that hangs over our heads and blinds us from the real truth. And what created this shiny, beautiful lie? Society. Our society creates a world in which we are forced to keep our heads in the sand, and blindly ignore the problems that lie at our feet.

The fine print in our society dictates grotesque rules to be accepted, or deemed normal. Anyone who doesn't follow these rules is cast out, like defective toys. I used to follow these rules too. I would keep my head down in fear of being like the people that were being bullied everyday. I somewhat still do. I look at the people ridiculed at my school and I turn my head away sometimes in fear of standing out, and fearing what seemed different.

Our fellow human beings that we assume abnormal are persecuted every day because of their skin color, race, sexuality, gender, disability or religion. They go out into the world and are ridiculed by the "ordinary" people who fear anything different. They abhor it because it contrasts and challenges their own standards. The anomalous people are the victims of society, laid out for the persecutors to snicker and point at. The only solution to this crude knockoff we call society is the involvement of bystanders.

The bystanders who ignore the spiteful remarks, the horrifying incidents and think "at least it's not me" are the ones who can do the most. But the bystanders can choose to help those victims, to try and aid them.

The spectators who ignore the tormented could at least step up and speak for the ones who have no voice. They can rebel against the tormentors that rule with their superficial power, reconstructing this prison that we call society. But the simplest thing they could do, is to say plain, comforting words to heal the wounds that have been ripped open by the tormentors.

The smallest act of humanity could save someone's life. It would only take some empathy, or decent manners, or even a small smile to help the victims that have been brutalized by our artificial society. The famed writer George Orwell (Eric Blair) said "Being in a minority, even in a minority of one, did not make you mad. There was truth, and there was untruth, and if you clung to the truth even against the whole world, you were not mad."

We shut the doors and leave the radio blaring to keep ourselves in this beautiful, nurturing lie. We do this because we cannot handle the ugly truth of the flawed world we live in. The vile, frightful truth that our fellow human beings are being tormented daily because we look the other way.

Will you keep believing in the deception of our daily lives?

Lauren Kim is a freshman at Acalanes High School. She loves Batman and her dog, and enjoys reading and writing. Her favorite book is "Murder on the Orient Express" and her favorite movie is "Dunkirk."

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