



I WANNA BE A SUPERHERO

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Long before this generation's Transformers came into being, our generation had its own heroes. Danguard Ace, Mazing Z, Astro Boy, Star Rangers, Jak-Q, etc. ran the gamut of adventures on TV from animation to live action. Okay, so now you know approximately how old I am. Big deal! Anyway, Sentinel Prime had probably been still in diapers when Voltes V first aired. Our superheroes were Wonder Woman, Superman, Batman and the rest of the Justice Leaguers. We took great delight in knowing that these superheroes had all the problems in the world in their very capable hands, and the planet was safe.

Unfortunately, this wasn't and still isn't so. The world needs real heroes who can face real problems. Poverty, education, inequality, wars, famine, calamities. These are very real, non-imaginary world problems. There happen to be a lot more of troubles coming as the Earth continuously rotates on its axis. And there are no superheroes in sight. Don't you sometimes wish that the likes of Aung San Suu Kyi, she with the ageless Burmese elegance and the General Secretary for the National League for Democracy, would increase in number? That the tribes of people like the late Mother Teresa of Calcutta, India would grow in number? That the number of charismatic people like the late Pope John Paul II would swell?

Such people are worthy of emulation, for they have shown great courage despite the harshness that characterizes human life. They have shown exemplary courage to rise above the confines of their human frailty to let their love for humanity and society shine through. In their humanness, they have shown that it doesn't take a gun and a sword to show genuine affection for the world in general. All it takes is a heart filled with genuine love of fellowmen and a spirit of service, even when the spirit is down and the flesh is weak. These are flesh-and-blood heroes, with no superpowers and no mind-boggling abilities. There are many others like them in all of us.

Among us, there are fathers working for the family to survive. There are mothers holding up half of hearth and home. Children staying disciplined both in school and at home. Students burning the midnight oil because they believe they can be much more than what they are now. Teachers doing their best to mold the minds of those entrusted to them. There are doctors and nurses and allied health professionals working out ways to treat and help their patients. There are accountants trying to do their jobs well so the companies they work for stay afloat in good and bad times.

All of us are heroes. We may not show the patent courage of superheroes nor their seeming ability to use their superpowers. But we face life every day, despite the fact that life sometimes shows its ugly face. And that takes an immeasurable amount of courage.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Who's your favorite superhero? Why do you like him/her?
2. Do you have any real-life hero/es? Be able to elaborate on why you've chosen him/her/them.
3. How does having a superhero make children understand the concept of courage?
4. How can we as ordinary mortals show courage in certain situations?
5. Think of other real-life people (in your country) who have shown infinite courage in times of need/trials. Talk about them in class.