

Don't Hate. Respect and Love

(Original)

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Three years ago, I left HongKong, my hometown, and moved to Beijing with my parents. New city, new school, in the first two months, I felt like a camel in the desert, lost and lonely, unable to find my way. Fortunately, soon I found the direction of water source in the desert: basketball.

I was chosen as a member of the basketball varsity team represents the school in basketball leagues. Soon in the team, I made a lot of new friends: Ethan, Andy, Samuel, Kai. On the field, we are each other's spiritual support. However, the biggest driving force that supports us to move forward is Petro: our team coach.

Coach Petro is from Ukraine, yes, the place where people are dying and losing their homes because of the war. The first time I met him was in 2020, when I went to the gym to have a try out for the basketball team. As soon as I entered the door, I saw Petro at first glance. He is tall, about 1 meter 90.

"You must be Henry." He walked straight toward me.

"Yes, coach." My voice wavered as I spoke.

"Show me your shooting skills." He threw the ball to me.

The try out lasted for an hour, two days later, as expected, my mom got the email notifying that I was accepted by the team.

Petro is strict, on the game field, when we don't follow the tactics he made, he would yell at us from the sideline. However, Petro is also nice, when we get injured, he would immediately come over to have a check. Petro always makes fun of the way we passing the ball, while we laugh at his English accent.

But gradually, we found Petro no longer made the jokes on us, and the smiles on his face became less and less. One day, at the break time of training, Petro sat on the bench, silently, and soon, we were surprised to find that he sat there wiping tears, not only his sweat. Petro took out his phone and showed us a video, in which lots of Ukraine people were sitting in a basement, Petro said that since the war started, his mom and sisters had to move into a basement of a local school, it was so cramped, people had no place to sleep, he's worry about his mom. Ethan and I are from HongKong, Andy is from Canada, Kai is from Australia, for that moment, we all didn't know what to say.

Recently, I read a book called "The boy in the stripped pajamas", where it explains a German boy named Bruno made friends with Shmuel, a Jewish. At the end of the story, both the boys were killed in the gas chamber, and Bruno's last words to Shmuel were "My best friend for life". The story proves no matter what wars may be going on in this world, the power of love cannot be destroyed.

What does a peaceful world look like to me? Well, I believe a peaceful world should be no wars, no conflicts, people respect each other, accept the differences.

People always say that we are too young to contribute for the world peace, but I don't think so. As youth, we could be the hope for the future peace.

My school is an international school, which has the students coming from different countries. I believe as long as we respect each other, our school life will be harmonious.

Jaden is from Vietnam, he calls the conflicts happened in Vietnam "American War", while Serena, who is from the U.S.A, calls the conflicts "Vietnam War", we accept the two names.

Last Christmas, we filmed and produced a video, in which all the classmates wearing their traditional clothes and saying "Merry Christmas" in their own languages, we put the video on school's website, received many praises from teachers and schoolmates.

April 15 is coach Petro's birthday. After the training, as usual, Petro was about to leave the gym, suddenly, lights off, we held out the birthday cake, singing the song and walked toward him. He received the blessings from us, people coming from other countries and places on this planet.