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# The body and the politics of standing in the street

Anonymous

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States love one thing: to make us invisible. Each of us separately, in separate houses, with separate pains until we imagine that we are “alone,” that we imagine that we are “insufficient,” that we think that “there is no one like me.” This is precisely what the oppressor feeds on: to make each body a case, each case a fear, and each fear a daily obedience.

But politics is not just slogans, fists, and stones. Politics, long before that, is bodies occupying space, who has the right to be seen in the city square, and who must hide behind the curtain. Here, those who, for whatever reason, have illness, old age, disability, or any other wound that this country has inflicted on people’s bodies, can “stand up” to the baton, can still stand up to invisibility.

Sometimes the greatest help is not “heroism”; It is the making of the truth visible. Your quiet standing on the busy streets—your simple, unassuming presence—can be a small stud in the tire of a car of lies. Because it tells other people: “You are not alone.” And that statement, in our case, is more revolutionary than many things.

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The power of the oppressor does not come only from weapons; it comes from telling ourselves, a thousand times a day, “It can’t be done,” and then living the life that it really can’t be done. Your presence loosens this chain. When people see ordinary faces in public places—old people, sick people, women, men, workers, teachers—protest becomes a “news” and a daily reality. Protest is no longer a distant image; it is a “shared present.”

And one more thing: the oppressor is also afraid of the “quiet crowd.” Because the quiet crowd means protest is only the work of the “energetic youth.” That is, a community speaks. That is, the issue is not the issue of a particular group; it is the issue of the imposed order itself. Your presence takes the protest from a monophonic state and gives it a human polyphony—the very thing authoritarianism fears.

If you can’t run, you don’t have to. If you can’t shout, you don’t have to. Sometimes it’s enough to take your body out of the closet and say, “I am here.” This “being” itself says a kind of “no”: not to private fear, not to the lie of loneliness, not to the unwritten contract that the city belongs only to the obedient.

The anarchist doesn’t write prescriptions; no one has the right to spend your body on politics. But if someone asks, “What can I do if I can’t fight like the others?” the anarchist’s answer is: you don’t have to fight to be useful. You just have to stand in the city’s eyes so it remembers that its owners are still alive.