**Black and White Photo**

I walked past the playground. The pigeons swarmed around the crumbs of food dropped by children and made a cloud filled with feathers, dust, and leaves. Admiring the day with every step, I continued to walk through Central Park. I strode out of the park and onto the sidewalk. As I walked a few blocks, I picked out the tourists from the crowds. Most of them were stopping by every table to buy either an “I love NY” shirt or a postcard.

Finally, I saw the fountains and the big stone columns that protected the Metropolitan Museum. I ran up the endless steps, dodging the people and cameras. I entered the cavernous halls, donated my dollar, and was directed through stairways, exhibits, and halls. After I walked through the Greek pottery section, I entered the exhibit of Richard Avedon. It was my first time seeing his photographs, and I was fascinated. Some photos were being blocked off, from the amount of people crowding around them, while other photos were lonely. I felt badly for those photos and made sure I stopped to look at them. Each photograph was in black and white but was able to capture the persons emotions and personality.

About three quarters of the way through the exhibit, I came across a lonely photo. I immediately walked over to it, and then, when I was two feet away, I realized that the man in the photo must have been upset and lost. The man’s face was round but hollow. His eyes were sunken in a he had dark bags surrounding them. He was beginning to go bald and his hair was worn and messy. He looked as if he hadn’t bothered to shave for a week, and little black prickles were starting to grow in where his beard should be. He appeared crushed and broken. Small tears gathered at the bottom of each eye; the type of tears that hadn’t fallen yet but made the world around you look blurry. His mind seemed chained to a memory that he couldn’t escape. I felt awful, sorry, and shocked.

Blinking my eyes, I looked at the bottom left hand corner of the portrait. His name was Colonel Paul Tibbets. I had never heard his name before. Then I noticed the words under his name. He was titled as the pilot of the B-29 Enola Gay. He was titled as the man who dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. As my lips repeated these words to myself, I felt even more sorry and even more shocked. I sensed from the photograph that when he dropped the bomb, he didn’t know what he was doing. The photo told me he regretted it, and I sensed that he felt guilty and responsible for the 200,000 lives lost that day.

He was a man who made a huge impact on World War II. He opened our eyes by dropping a monster who could not be tamed. Things like this happen during wars. People are killed. Not just the phony actors who spill their fake blood and fire their fake guns with fake smoke. Real people are killed. Nearly every person sees movies on wars. Before seeing this photograph, I was like other people who thought war was a bunch of GI Joe’s dressed in camouflage and dying or surviving bravely. But after seeing this photo, I realized that war was just pain and misery. It made me wake up to the real world and learn that everyone is affected by war, both those who are killed and injured and those who kill and injure them. Both sides of people are innocent. By looking into Colonel Paul Tibbets’ watered eyes, I was awakened to what had happened and what could happen in war. In war, those who are bombed, hurt and killed are victims, but those who are instructed to perform terrible acts in war are victims too.

War affects everyone. Everyone is innocent. Everyone is a victim.

I wish that people could see this photograph before making opinions on war today. I wish that Colonel Paul Tibbets’ lonely picture was surrounded by crowds at the Met. I wish that he had the opportunity to teach more people from his huge mistake rather than us learning by another being made.