

Modern policing arose to protect people from a very different set of fears than what preoccupies us today. The world has changed, and so have our monsters: They now live in the mirror held up to our social institutions. Maybe they were always there. But the evil we can find in our own reflections, fortunately, is the evil over which we have the most control. We just have to change where we stand.

Police have long operated within a narrative in which they've played "the good guys". This narrative is under attack on fronts that extend far beyond policing and into the rest of politics. It's a narrative that doesn't feel like it has a protagonist anymore. Our "good guys" aren't advancing the plot in a direction that restores any hope to the audience. It's become perfectly, bizarrely normalized that superheroes aren't real in our story, but supervillains are.

The world is screaming for a character that stands up for, and in front of the weakest among us--not opposite them and behind a gun. All of us are moved when a weapon is laid down in the face of mutually assured destruction, rather than raised. We line up to idolize characters that wield shields, armour and intellect, calling them "hero", not "soldier", not "officer". These terms don't have to be mutually exclusive, but they will be if our own institutional "good guys" cling to their old ways and old weapons, even after the world has grown to identify them as the implements of the villain, not the hero.

We still need your resolve, your courage, your dedication, your idealism; we just need you to turn those things inwards--to put down the gun until you can hold up the mirror. I think we all want the same thing: hero-cops doing hero-cop stuff while being treated all heroic-like. We'll just have to collectively make sure you guys stay up to date on what heroics look like in a changing world. (HINT: It never looks like execution or excessive force).

And before you go saying "wait, what's this guys actual point", rest completely assured it's that I'm hella stoned. Which is allowed now. Because policing priorities are inherently changeable.