

## #CivilCourage, by Julia Reiser

### Part 3

"I am bleeding", she said, lying on the ground and staring at her blood-red hands she had tried to cover her bullet wound with. "I am sorry", I whispered, looking at Jake who was standing next to me. He was shocked. I was still holding the gun in my hand, unsure what I should do next. The girl – I didn't even remember her name – grabbed my shirt. Anna or Annika, I believe. She was taking deep breaths as if that could keep her alive. I wondered, what she was thinking in this moment. I mean, what do you think when you're about to die? Did her whole life go by her or did she maybe already see the light or God or something? Well, I could ask her. Not that it would be important but I really wanted to know and it wasn't too late yet. "Help me", Anna or Annika muttered. Jake didn't say a word but I could tell what he was thinking. We never wanted to kill anyone, honestly. "We gotta do something", he said. "I know". I cleaned the gun with the sleeve of my jacket, before I put it in the girl's hand. "She did it herself. Come on, let's get away from here."

### Part 2

I pointed the gun on her. I didn't want to but I had no choice. I know that some people say 'you always have a choice' but sometimes you just don't. "Stop it!", Jake ordered with a silent voice though. Did he think this was *easy* for me? Did he seriously think I *liked* it? "You'll go to jail if you kill her", he tried it one more time. "No, we are gonna go to jail! She's gonna tell the police everything! This is our only chance, Jake", I screamed. I looked at him; he wouldn't survive too long in jail anyway. "Please don't! I won't tell anyone about what you did, I promise!", the girl begged. I didn't believe her. "My... my name is Anna Smith. I'm just an ordinary girl... please let me go!" "You already called the cops, didn't you?", I asked her, looking in her beautiful blue eyes. She shook her head and attempted to hold the tears back. "Yes you did!" She started crying.

### Part 1

On a rainy Tuesday evening I was walking home from a shopping trip with a friend. Of course, as a girl it was dangerous to walk alone especially when you had to pass a dark forest but I wasn't a little kid anymore. Just a few lights and the moon lightened the small path, I was taking, up. It was pretty quiet, just a few voices and some other noises that I couldn't identify were audible. Suddenly I heard a scream. "HELP! Anyone... Please help me!", some kid shouted. I tried to locate the voice and decided it had to be somewhere to my right. I kept walking until finally I saw three guys on a meadow. Two older boys were punching and kicking a third one. He was already kneeling and didn't seem to move much. He wasn't dead though. I reached for my cell phone and called 911. The police told me to stay away and wait for them. For a minute I just stood there, watching the kid getting hurt. I knew I couldn't wait for another 5 or 10 minutes so I ran towards them and tried to punch the older boys. "Leave him alone!", I screamed determined. As they were now busy fighting me, the kid was able to escape with his last strength. For a second I felt like I had already won. But my huge joy slowly turned into huge pain as I realised I was lying on the ground now. Although they kicked my belly aggressively I stayed strong and fought back. Then one of them pulled out a gun.