Model Summary, “It’s Hard to Be a Hero”

In the article “It’s Hard to Be a Hero” author Joe Nocera discusses why most of us are not going to be heroes. First, Nocera explains how in 2007 Wesley Autry became a hero when, with no one else around, he risked his life to save a man who’d fallen on the train tracks. Nocera connects this to a current event, six years later. A man named Ki-Suck Han was killed on the train tracks when he was pushed and nobody at the crowded station helped him. Next, Nocera wonders whether any of us would have acted courageously or if we’d all be as cowardly as everyone else at the station that day. Nocera connects the train station case to the famous case of Kitty Genovese, a woman stabbed to death while 38 people heard her calling for help. Nocera then cites current research conducted by social scientists who studied the behavior of bystanders. These scientists learned that when more people witness a crime, they are less likely to help. Finally, Nocera concludes with his overall claim that we don’t know how we will act until we’re in the moment, but it’s more than likely that we will act as cowards, not heroes.