

They Are Gone, yet They Haven't Gone



The extraordinary writer Tiesheng Shi said, "I believe that every person who has lived is able to lighten up the future of posterity. Maybe it's a star; maybe it's a torch; maybe it's just a meaningful candle..." I believe death is not a permanent farewell, forgetting is, and that's why monuments are built: to remind the present generation about ancestors' wills. Both of the Hotel Vendome Fire Memorial at Boston University and Revolutionary Martyrs Monument at my hometown Jinan convey the same legacy: the will to sacrifice for something more worthy. Firefighters are willing to give up their lives to rescue more people from burning buildings, and martyrs sacrifice themselves to reunify their motherland. They all fight for people they don't even know, even at the cost of their lives. Their feats remind me of myself. As a student, I'm willing to sacrifice spare time for reading and learning, but what am I willing to offer as a citizen or a national? I deem that these reflections on self-worth and self-actualization are the most valuable legacies of our ancestors. Perhaps only by thinking critically about these issues will their sacrifice be more worthwhile.

