

“BUT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO GO TO THE CLINIC, IT’S CLOSE BY, THERE’S A NURSE AND SO ON.”

NEEDLE PIERCES THE SKIN.

PHYSICALLY, I CAN’T STAND THE MOMENT WHEN THE INJECTIONS AND NEEDLES.

I THINK I ONLY HATE HUMAN STUPIDITY MORE THAN I HATE I AM A BLOOD DONOR.

FOR A WEEK.

YOU HAVE TO TAKE INJECTIONS

EVERYTHING IS FINE, YOU CAN DONATE.

BLOOD TEST AGAIN, THIS TIME AT MY CLINIC. RAPID RESULTS, DECISIONS, URGENT PHONE CALLS, THEN A VISIT.

I WAS IN KAZIMIERZ DOLNY WITH MY WHOLE FAMILY, NEAR THE MARKET SQUARE WHEN I FELT MY PHONE VIBRATING IN MY POCKET. A VOLUNTEER FROM THE FOUNDATION. DO I STILL WANT TO, CAN I, IS IT A GOOD TIME, BECAUSE THEY’VE FOUND A MATCH.

“YES, I CAN, YES, I WANT TO, WELL, SURE, I’LL BE HOME THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW, OKAY.”

I LAUGHED A BIT, I TENSED A BIT – BECAUSE THIS TIME IT FELT SOMEHOW MORE SERIOUS. SOMEHOW QUICKER. MUCH QUICKER. URGENT.

“WHO CALLED?”

“THEY CALLED FROM THE DMKS FOUNDATION. THEY FOUND A MATCH FOR ME.”

“WOW. THAT’S GREAT!”

“Y-YES, I GUESS SO. I THINK SO.”

SOMEWHERE OUT THERE WAS ONE, SPECIFIC, REAL PERSON WAITING FOR A TRANSPLANT. FROM ME SPECIFICALLY.

I GAVE MYSELF THE LAST INJECTION ON THE DAY OF DONATION, IN THE MORNING. I GOT IN THE CAR AND DROVE TO WARSAW, TO THE HOSPITAL. I HAD A SICK LEAVE FOR THAT DAY. I DIDN’T TELL ANYONE AT WORK WHY.

“SAVES SOMEONE’S LIFE.”

SOMEONE’S LIFE. IT WASN’T THAT VAGUE BLOOD DONATED THEN, I WAS AWARE THAT IT WAS A MATTER OF FIGHTING FOR STRANGE THINGS A PERSON CAN DO TO THEMSELVES. BUT BY AT THE DONATION STATION ON SASKA STREET, WHICH

NEEDLE INTO MY ABDOMEN AND PRESSED THE PLUNGER.

ON MY OWN. FOR A WEEK, EVERY MORNING, I PIERCED A REMOTE WORK, DIMINISHING PANDEMIC, A SENSE THAT I AM INDEED A GROWN MAN AND SOMETIMES I CAN FIGHT

I DON’T KNOW EXACTLY WHEN IT HAPPENED, BUT PROBABLY ABOUT TEN YEARS AGO. WE WERE LEAVING THE SUPERMARKET WITH OUR PURCHASES, AND A TEAM FROM THE DKMS FOUNDATION HAD SET UP A MAKESHIFT TABLE.

“WOULD YOU LIKE TO REGISTER, SIR?” SOMEONE ASKED. I GESTURED WITH MY SHOPPING BAGS. “BUT IT’LL ONLY TAKE A MOMENT!”

SWAB FROM THE MOUTH, SOME FORM, I FORGOT ABOUT IT.

I PROBABLY CONFIRMED SOMETHING WITH SOMETHING ELSE, MAYBE MY DETAILS BY EMAIL, MAYBE A LETTER TO SEND BACK, I DON’T REMEMBER. IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO.

SOMEONE CALLED ONCE, ASKED IF I STILL WANTED TO, IF I COULD UNDERGO TESTS. I COULD. THEY TOOK MY BLOOD, BUT THEN THE MATTER DIED AND NOTHING MORE HAPPENED FOR SEVERAL YEARS.

“WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW WHO THE RECIPIENT IS? OF COURSE, NO PERSONAL DATA, BUT GENDER, AGE, WE CAN PROVIDE YOU WITH THAT NOW.” I HEARD OVER THE PHONE A FEW DAYS AFTER THE COLLECTION.

“NO.” I REPLIED, PERHAPS WITHOUT HESITATION. “NO, WHY BOTHER, IT DOESN’T MATTER. WHAT MATTERS IS THAT WE SAVED SOMEONE’S LIFE, YOU AND I, RIGHT?”

“YES, YES, THAT’S TRUE.”

AS A REWARD, AS A DONOR, I CAN RIDE BUSES AND TRAMS IN ŁÓDŹ FOR FREE. AND MAYBE IN OTHER PLACES TOO. AND I GOT A LITTLE ANGEL FIGURINE.

DO I FEEL LIKE A HERO? MAYBE I DID FOR A FEW SECONDS WHEN I WAS JABBING MYSELF WITH A SYRINGE, BUT OTHER THAN THAT, NO.

IT WAS A RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS.

IT WAS A VERY DIFFICULT DAY.

WHEN THE MACHINE WAS PUMPING BLOOD OUT OF ME, THEY ANNOUNCED ON TV THAT RUSSIA HAD ATTACKED UKRAINE WITHOUT WARNING, AND THUGS IN UNIFORMS WERE MOVING IN, KILLING, RAPING, AND LOOTING WHEREVER THEY COULD.

“YOU MUST BE HEALTHY IF THEY LET YOU DONATE AT YOUR AGE.” THE NURSE REMARKED. “THEY USUALLY TAKE ONES LIKE LIKE YOUR COLLEAGUE.” SHE POINTED TO THE OTHER GUY. I TOOK IT AS A COMPLIMENT.

THEN THEY HOOKED US UP TO MACHINES, ME AND THE YOUNG GUY, PROBABLY HALF MY AGE. FIT, SMILING.

TESTS, EXAMS, COLLECTIONS, ANOTHER INJECTION, ULTRASOUND, RESULTS. CONSENT FOR PERIPHERAL BLOOD COLLECTION RATHER THEN THE HIP PLATE. GREAT RELIEF.

RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS

OR HOW I BECAME A TRANSPLANT DONOR



GODAI

MORE FREE ZINES!



GNAZDOSWIATOW.NET

WWW.DKMS.ORG

DKMS

WE DELETE BLOOD CANCER