Father was burned alive by the russian occupants. How children experience loss and what help they receive

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The Charitable Foundation "Children of Heroes" takes care of children who lost one or both parents due to the war. Now there are 760 children under the supervision of the fund. Unfortunately, up to 20 new wards apply to the fund daily. The story of each of them is crucial and challenging. Some children ask to shoot videos with them and publish their texts because they want to tell the whole world that their father or mother are Heroes. Some children, on the contrary, close down, become aggressive and lose any sense of life. The Foundation believes that it is necessary to tell these stories so that each of us understands what families and civilians of Ukraine are going through.

One of the families who survived the occupation of Russian troops in Kyiv region shares their life story "under bullets and shells." The family is experiencing a heavy loss - the death of her father and loving husband.

Life under occupation: we had to stand in line for 13 hours to buy a loaf of bread

The family was in Ivankiv village when the Russian troops started to attack. The area was under occupation from the first day of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

"It was complicated to survive," the woman says. Shops were not working, so it was almost impossible to buy food. But we tried to help each other. Sometimes we had to stand in line for 13 hours to buy a loaf of bread. We gave the children a small piece to live for at least three days. It was scary to go outside often: there were Russian soldiers everywhere, who allegedly came to help us with something".

On April 1, the Ukrainian Armed Forces liberated the village from occupation, but due to the blown bridges, the family left the house to search for a safer place to live only four days later.

Moving to Kyiv with the military of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

"A long crowd of people wanted to get out of the village near the destroyed bridge. I was with my cousin and three children. The military approached us and offered to give us a lift to Kyiv. It was cold and rainy, so we agreed to go with them. We were completely enveloped in fear: we did not know who we could trust and who we could not. And, finally, we were not sure if they were our military," says Tetiana.

Fortunately, it all ended well because they were soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. They treated the children with cookies and sweets, asked about life under occupation, and took them to Kyiv to Shevchenko Square. Then the woman went to her friend and stayed in her house in Kyiv for a month.

"The Russians dragged the car with the corpse inside to the place of their deployment to protect their checkpoint"

Serhiy was an amiable person. He never refused when asked for help. And so it happened that day when the man went to another village to pick up his friend Nazar and his girlfriend. Tetiana's husband asked his colleague for a car and, together with his cousin and another friend, went to help.

When they got to the house where Nazar was supposed to be, a car by the Russian military drove around the crossroad. The guys tried to escape, but the occupiers started shooting and seriously wounded Serhiy. The Russians interrogated the detainees alone. It is unknown what information the racists received, but Serhiy, who worked in the state security service of Kyiv, was mocked the most. As a result, he, exhausted and beaten, lost a lot of blood.

A few minutes later, another group of Russian military drove up to them. The occupants took their phones and documents and ordered them to leave the village immediately.

According to eyewitnesses, Serhiy understood it was a deception because when he got to the car, he quietly told his friends that he wanted to see his beloved children and wife again.

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After the guys drove a few hundred meters away, the occupants started shooting at the car. Those inside fled, and the wounded Serhii remained in the automobile. In a few minutes, the vehicle burst into flames and burned down with the man.

"But even after that, these bastards did not stop, - the woman says. The Russians dragged the car with the corpse inside to the place of their deployment to protect their checkpoint".

Dima is one of the guys who was with Serhiy on the day of his death. He walked home for two days to tell Tatiana about the grief that had happened to them.

Serhiy's cousin was wounded in the heart. On the Zhytomyr highway, strangers picked him up and took him to the hospital. The guy successfully underwent surgery, and after recovery, he joined the ranks of territorial defense.

When the Ukrainian military liberated the village, Nazar went to the same place to pick up the deceased's body. He buried Serhii in the yard of the house where he stayed during the occupation. A few days later, Tetiana and the police reburied her husband at the cemetery.

Then the woman with her children went abroad.

Life in Spain

The family lived in Valencia (Spain) for two months. Danil and Diana were delighted with almost everything around them - the plane ride, the new country, the language, the people. On weekdays the children went to school, and on weekends they went to the sea and relaxed. However, they had to return to their native village after some time. The children began to miss home and their grandmother, who remained in Ukraine alone with the pain of war.

Tatiana had to quit her job in Ukraine to get the money for the tickets to Ukraine.

Returning to the native village

The family rents a house now - small but cozy. Tetiana receives unemployment benefits and a pension, but the money is still insufficient to provide the children with everything they need for education and living.

As winter is coming soon, they need money for firewood, clothes, and shoes for cold weather.

Danil and Diana were abroad for the first time in their lives. The son went to the first grade this year, but he studies remotely due to the war. Thanks to the charitable foundation "Children of Heroes," the children received a tablet to join online learning at school.

Danil's favorite hobby is cutting out various toys and geometric shapes from anything he can find (paper, fabric, cardboard, etc.). Diana is a great helper: although the girl is only seven years old, she can be relied on. Diana is actively learning English and is engaged in modern dancing (so far at home, but when life is more or less stabilized, her mother will enroll her in a dance school).

One of the most significant blocks of assistance of the charitable foundation "Children of Heroes" is psychological work with children and guardians. Thanks to the Foundation, all family members visit a psychologist. They say it helps to distract from the horrors of war and to reboot a little to live on.

Unfortunately, there are already several thousand such families in Ukraine, and their number is growing daily. To help children return to ordinary life, we need your support. You can do it by following the link.

"The Foundation helps regardless of the location of families. If necessary, we help with evacuation and relocation abroad. The Foundation's team works with civilian and military families who have lost their mother or father (or both) due to the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine," says Anna Khomenko, Executive Director of the Foundation.

You can report about children who have lost their parents and need help here or by calling the call center +380 44 247 57 88.

Pass the contacts of the Foundation to their guardians if you know such children. Every child deserves a

happy life full of dignity and joy.

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