



Good done *in secret* – INTOKU

By Almina Tahirović

It is in human nature to observe and control things that happen around them, making sure that every step they make is not determined by other's will. Very often we are faced with consequences of our own acts towards humanity and nature after all, but somehow we always refuse to understand the significance of the impacts that are created along the path. I strongly believe that the current global situation is something that the world did not want but had to experience, in order to finally let go of all the selfishness within every human being. I witnessed people helping each other before they even helped themselves and it made me realize how crucial it is to value another life like it is your own, how crucial is it to do good in secret, for its own sake, without expecting anything in return. In my opinion, the strongest emotion within us would be empathy, and losing connection to such a magical source of humanity leads directly to destructive behaviors, therefore the inability to leave people better than you found them. The pandemic situation is not only about surviving, avoiding the infection, and staying healthy but also making sure that there is no life that is more or less worthy than another one. Numerous times I have read about suicidal people who were saved only by stranger's smiles on the street, so if it takes only a smile to help people cope

with their demons, then it is our duty to give it to them. Personally, I have lived on my own during the entire isolation process, trying to protect my elder parents from this invisible enemy and making sure that they remain untouched, sacrificing an opportunity to laugh with them, hug them, kiss them, care about them...for their own well being. I have spent time in the apartment, with no available balcony and police hour every day, minimal movements and maximal distance, thinking of other people first, before me. I could not have coped with the fact that I might jeopardize someone's parents, sisters, brothers, friends only because of my selfish interest – going out, when I am able to do it. The only thing that kept me through entire trouble called COVID-19 was faith, faith I put into myself first and then rest of the population, that once in a lifetime, we do something for the others, without expecting praises for doing so. People tend to see only the ugly side of everything, thinking that the pandemic situation is a punishment, but I see it as a second chance to reconnect to all of the things we lost a touch with. On the other side, it was a wonderful opportunity for nature to finally breathe and regain all the lost energy, used to fight the human's wrong actions towards it. It was almost as an invoke, invoke for God's mercy or whatever one believes in. Casualties that occurred are proof that we do not have the control or power we think that belongs to us, and I rather see it as an admonishment than punishment, that something greater exists and we are beneath it so the only chance to stay alive is to coexist with such force majeure. It is often said that fear is the most powerful weapon you can use against the entire humanity because at that very moment they are susceptible to the manipulation that is needed. I say that the most powerful weapon humanity can use against those who are

the manipulators is their own strong will to overcome the fears that are served to them. I have seen different opinions related to the situation, some thinking all of the information is made up, some taking it very seriously, some bending the rules, some following the rules and that was expected, but in the end, somehow we stayed united in this fight and I think that is what matters the most. You can go on a journey on your own, but it is more wonderful if there is someone on the way to help you with it. Three main ideas for this essay were to feel, inspire and connect, three necessary things that kept the entire population on their feet – to feel the pain of others, their suffering and cry for help, inspire those who are able to help by providing them your own examples of helping and connect with all those in need, animals or humans, nonetheless. I am very pleased to let the world know what my country, Bosnia and Herzegovina and its people gave their best to fight this enemy and that we are leaving this unfair battle stronger and smarter. I may not be good with the words or expressing myself, so I will use this chance to quote one of my favorite authors who said it very beautifully – “Happiness can be found even in the darkest of times if one only remembers to turn on the light.”¹ Our light was compassion and altruism and only in the possession of those two, are we able to remain truly alive.

1 J.K. ROWLING (1999). *“Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azbakan“*, Bloomsbury, United Kingdom.

