



A Voluntary Charity working in Ukraine and Moldova

with roots going back to 1990



Voices from Ukraine – How did Tanya learn of her son Roman's death?

For three long days, Tanya waited. She knew her son Roman was away on assignment, but something didn't feel right. He usually found a way to send a short message—even just a quick login on Signal or Viber to let her know he was alive. But now, the silence stretched on, heavier with each hour.

Growing anxious, Tanya finally picked up the phone and called the commander of Roman's unit. The voice on the other end was cold, distant. "Hold on," he said, "and accept my sympathy."

That was all.

The world seemed to stop. Tanya remembers almost nothing after that—just the ache, the disbelief, the way her legs gave way beneath her. Later that evening, Roman's wife came to confirm what Tanya's heart already knew: her son was gone.

In the photo taken years before, Tanya stands proudly with her two sons—Roman, now a fallen soldier, and Serhii, who remains by her side. Serhii is a chef and has been granted an exemption from service to care for his mother. Every three months, he must go to the Draft Office to prove she is still alive and in need of him. These exemptions now exist only in an app—mechanical, impersonal, in contrast to the life-changing weight they carry.



Roman served in the 59th Brigade. He was a commander, fighting to liberate the village of Liubymivka in the Kakhovka region, near Mykolaiv and Kherson.

On November 9th, 2022, Roman was killed in action. His body was brought home just two days later, on November 11th.

He had never spoken to his mother about the horrors of the front. He wanted to protect her from the fear, the danger, the truth. But now, that silence echoes in her grief. When Tanya speaks of her son, her voice trembles, and the tears come quickly.



A Voluntary Charity working in Ukraine and Moldova

with roots going back to 1990



Voices from Ukraine – How did Tanya learn of her son death?

In his memory, the family erected a large gravestone and monument in the cemetery. It was Serhii's idea—a gesture of love and sorrow. He wanted the world to know who his brother was. To never forget.

Last summer, seven-year-old Ilinka, Roman's daughter, attended a camp—a fragile return to something like childhood after losing her father. She celebrated her birthday there. The camp happened to have a small memorial to fallen soldiers, and during a moment of sharing, children took turns expressing wishes.



Last summer, seven-year-old Ilinka, Roman's daughter, attended a camp—a fragile return to something like childhood after losing her father. She celebrated her birthday there. The camp happened to have a small memorial to fallen soldiers, and during a moment of sharing, children took turns expressing wishes.

When it was Ilinka's turn, she stood among them, small and brave. With the simple hope of a child and the grief of one far too young to bear it, she made her wish, her prayer: *for her father to rise from the dead*. Her voice, soft but clear, cut through the stillness. Those around her were moved to tears. Pastor Andriy, who was present, could hardly speak. "It was one of the most raw and painful moments I've witnessed," he said later. "A child's wish that carried the weight of an entire war."

There is a photograph of Roman at the cultural centre where the camp took place. It's one of the few places where Ilinka can see his face now.

We can only hope that the camp brought her even a little peace—a few moments of laughter, of sunshine, in a world so changed by grief.

Roman's widow, Zulfia, carries the heaviest burden of all. Her days are filled with sorrow, her strength tested by every new sunrise. She mourns not only the man she loved, but the future they were meant to have.

This is not just the story of a fallen soldier—it is the story of a family shattered by war, held together now by memory, by love, and by the aching, unbreakable bond that death cannot erase.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE IS A VOLUNTARY CHARITY AND RELIES ON DONATIONS

If you would like to support this work, please make cheques payable to **cr2ee** or direct transfer to Barclays Bank, Exeter. 20-30-47 account number 20902446

cr2ee, Braida Garth, Staplake Lane, Starcross, Devon. EX6 8QT
Tel 01626 891945 or 07970 204506 E Mail: mail@cr2ee.org.uk
Authorised by the UK Charity Commissioners: Registration Number 1062623