

Poznan Express

by Anna Karbowniczek

Mike was a shy boy. As for a fifth grader he was rather small and petite. Among his class peers he looked like their younger brother. During PE classes nobody chose him for their teams. They said that they could harm him with the ball. Even the girls laughed at him that his fiancée still sips milk from her baby bottle.

He was an average student. Only from PE he had a weak pass as he rarely attended classes. When others played football he just skipped classes.

Mike didn't have friends even at the home playground he would rather get out of their way.

He liked visiting the valley with a railroad in the middle of it very much. He would race with trains. He had already perfectly got to know the train schedule. He always knew what time he was supposed to be ready for the start. The moment the train engine got near "the starting point" Mike would run as fast as he could. He ran along the tracks until the train disappeared round the corner.

While running, he dreamt that one day he will become as fast as the Poznan express. Finally the boys would have something to be envious about.

It has been two years now that Mike raced trains, few times a day and even his parents didn't know about it. They did not worry because he was always punctual. They even said that they could set watches upon his arrival. He himself did not say a word afraid of being laughed out.

He didn't even realize that he was becoming faster.

Time has passed, Mike's friends grew larger and he himself did not change much.

One day the head teacher of the school announced during the school's gathering that he has submitted the school to take part in the Regional Sportfest. Each student should choose a discipline he feels best at. In two weeks time teachers would organise competition on the premises of the school. Real sportspeople were going to be the judges. The winners would represent the school in further competition.

Racket arose. Teams formed, boys practiced at the school's sports field and scared Mike wanted to get out of the way. He was convinced; as the rest of his peers were, that there was no discipline in which he could present himself without becoming the laughing stock.

He didn't practice with the boys. He still ran lonely along the tracks and at the thought of the upcoming occasion tears came to his eyes.

- The day of the defeat and humiliation has come – he thought to himself.

Dressed in a T-shirt and shorts, lined up with his peers he already caused laughter with his height but the worst was yet to come.

It seemed that the teacher was also aware of that fact. He knew that Mike had no chances in team games or jumping. In order to save him humiliation he told him to take part in running. He decided that at least here he couldn't hurt himself.

- Whatever is to happen let it be – Mike thought.

'I will get eliminated after the 100m race and I will run away home.' he thought.

The contestants lined up for the 100m race.

Mike felt all the stares on his back.

At it has begun. The whistle has gone. This sound was something nice to Mike's ears. "Yes, it's the train engine... This is the sound". He closed his eyes for a second and imagined he was racing trains. He didn't see his peers running beside him, all he saw were train carriages. He didn't even know when he finished the race.

He came back to the reality when he was surrounded by the group of enthusiastic students and the teacher with the stop watch.

Mike held his head down and tried to get past the crowd. The teacher stopped him, by holding his by his arm. The coach from the sports club also appeared. Everyone was congratulating the scared and surprised boy.

- Were did you learn to run that way? – shouted the coach – You won in excellent time!

The grass beside the track was occupied by the puzzled, defeated students. They couldn't laugh at Mike any longer. It was now that they feared being laughed out by him. But nobody paid attention to them.

- Mike, have you trained with anyone? – asked the teacher who was shocked as much as the person to whom the question was directed to.

Mike timidly smiled and quietly answered:

-Yes, with a train...

I am eleven years old (I was born on the 12th of September 1990) and I just graduated from the fourth grade. I live in Jaworzno (the Province of Silesia). I gladly

participate in reciting, literary and sports competitions. I often write short stories and funny poems.

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