Film by Valeriy Prodan

‘SUCCESS BEGINS WITH CONSCIOUSNESS’

Introduction. Interview/вступление, интервью.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: My name’s Dmitry Prodan, I’m heading the youth committee of the Public Human Rights Organization of the Roma Center.

ДЕВУШКА: I am Vera Drongoy. I am a fourth year student of the National University “Odessa Academy of Law”, Judicial Administration Faculty. At the moment, I am a volunteer, I am interning at the Roma Human Rights Center and providing free legal assistance to Roma.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: My name’s Valeriy Prodan. Currently I’m studying at KD Ushynsky South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University, Faculty of Management of Socio-Cultural Activities. Before that I’ve studied at college and got a diploma of a painter, tiler, plasterer. Also I’ve entered the Drama School and studied to be a theater director. But I realized that that’s not for me, I like a movie more.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: I'm getting higher education at KD Ushynsky South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University, Faculty of Physical Education. I am a future teacher of primary school.

ДЕВУШКА: I was born in a really big family: mother, father, two brothers and two sisters. My father’s name is Vanya, mother’s Lena, my brothers are Rustam and Sasha, and sisters – Yana and Milana. We have a really friendly family where everyone’s respected, understood and I know that my family is my support.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: Freshman year, my friend and I started shooting our first film. Our whole crew consisted of two people – me as a first-time director and him as first-time operator. And we shot a short film with absolutely no budget, just on our own.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: I have been doing martial arts for over ten years. I am a master of sports and European champion in combat sambo. I’m proud of it.

ДЕВУШКА: There was a case when a little girl was handing out cookies. And when the turn came to little Roma…

Scene: KIDS ARE PLAYING ON THE PLAYGROND/ СЦЕНА С ПЕЧЕНЬЕМ: ДЕТИ НА ПЛОЩАДКЕ

ДЕВОЧКА: (to Roma boy) Why are you sad? Everyone has whole and one but you have broken, but many cookies.

Interview.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: I thought this movie was just ordinary. I liked it but I didn’t know it could be.. cool. And just for an interest I sent it to the Film Festival. Then I’ve got a call and I was told that it took the first place. I mean.. two newcomers made a short film, and it *won* the first place… It was a very big impetus for me. I started shooting films.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: My childhood was in a village Korsuntsy. Most of the time I spent on the street with others, we were playing football... And while guys were just wasting time, I was dreaming about a big sport. I made punching bag for myself, run in the morning and had a sporty lifestyle.

ДЕВУШКА: My childhood was quite difficult, because I was sick for a long time. When I was nine, I was diagnosed with cancer. A lot of complex punctures were done in my spinal cord. Once it was damaged and I stopped walking. I couldn’t move by myself, I couldn’t turn around. It was so hard that I didn’t want anything. I even distanced myself from my relatives to not to hurt them. I wanted it to stop. But.. when my younger brother came to me and he started telling me: “Don’t do that! You should keep fighting. You’re here not to give up, and we’ll win, because we are together.”

And I needed an expensive operation, I needed a donor… There were no donors, because there was no money. But – thanks to my big family – my brother appeared to be a perfect donor for me! It was a miracle.

When he arrived, so little, so tiny, and said: “I want to help my sister, do what you must do.” Being so small, he already understood the value of the family.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: I was born in a big family with eight children. The first one is Jeanne, then it’s Dima, then me, Andrei, Borya, Yana, Karina, Timur, and mum with dad. In total it’s ten of us.

I was born in a family that appreciated knowledge from childhood. Even though my father went to school and finished only four classes, and my mum, who didn’t study at all, got married in 17, she understood that knowledges are important.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: I studied in Korsun School, there were 12 people in my class and that’s quite a lot for a small school. I studied well, tried to be a straight-A student.

ДЕВУШКА: I had to study two years. I’ve been through a lot during these two years. My family was always with me, they supported me even when I was tired of living. And it was also my big supportive family that didn’t allow me to give up. So I continued to live. And only because of them I didn’t stand idly by, and kept fighting with this disease… and I *won*.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: My childhood was very creative. My brothers and I loved to watch movies, Indian movies. And for the first time in my life a took a responsibility to stage these movies. So we played some certain roles, we searched for suitable costumes to look like those movie actors. Then we gathered all neighbors, asked them for a certain price, supposedly for a ticket. They came, sat in the yard and we performed. So, I mean... even back then, as a kid, I was already aware of what I wanted to do and who I wanted to be in life.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: I’m going to tell you about one situation from childhood…

Scene/ сцена: дети на улице. мальчик-ром проходит мимо.

ДЕТИ: \*screaming\* -You don’t have your own country!

* You have no rights!
* You’re not like everyone else!
* You have nothing!
* Hey you!
* Look what we’re going to do with you!

Interview./ ИНТЕРВЬЮ

ДЕВУШКА: In childhood, my parents always told and taught me that it’s very important to gain new knowledges, go to school, because if you go to school, you can get these precious knowledges that you’ll be able to use for your future. And if you graduate school, you can go to university, prestigious college. And then you can become an example to your younger brothers and sisters.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: In childhood I found out that my father finished four classes and left school. Then I also found out that mother didn’t study in school at all. And I studied in school.. maybe also to prove someone that my family can do something. So that there’s no situation that someone would say that my dad didn’t finish school, my mother didn’t go there at all. And if I become such an example, they will say: “Oh, Here, their son went to school”. And not only to school, also to college, the Drama School, university.

I.e.I wanted my family to be proud of. Even if there are some minuses, I wanted to cover it with pluses.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: There were some difficulties in school. I solved all businesses only with fists. But only I went to sport it instilled in me discipline, character, and respect for people.

ДЕВУШКА: I’ve listened to my parents who guided me on the right path. I graduated school with diploma with distinction with their help, I participated in different events – intellectual, physical. I liked it; this basis came from my family. They explained me how and why it should be.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: There were difficulties with a teacher in school. As usual, I was fooling around so she put me in a corner. I started fooling around there and she started screaming at me and saying: “You won’t achieve anything with such behavior!”

And long before that I’d told her I wanted to go to the Drama School. So she started talking about that, too: “You won’t get into the Drama School, because they take only creative, talented, smart, educated people! And you with your behavior will not go anywhere, only to some vocational school”.

When I got into the Drama School I came back to school, came to her and said: “I’ve got into the Drama School”.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: My parents always supported, motivated me to go to school, told me stories of successful people. I’m thankful to my mum, dad for this support.

ДЕВУШКА: During my studying at school quite often I had to face with mistrust from teachers, and peers. I was often shouted: “You are Gypsy, what are you even doing here? You can’t do anything”. At one moment it hurt me so much, ‘cause I’ve always tried. I’ve tried not for someone, I’ve tried for myself and my parents.

So when they were shouting, offending me I realized I can do better and it gave me a motivation. I want to say that’s how it should be for everyone. Despite all these ‘*loud’* words you have to believe in yourself. You have to believe that you can and you can *better*.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: Once I was helping Roma to make documents, I came into official’s office and I was told: “Why are you helping those Gypsies? They’re used to sell, steal on markets”. I replied: “They are a part on Ukrainian people. They have the same rights that we do. I will help them, because I myself am *Roma*”.

BOY 2: A really interesting story happened to me connected with… cutlets…

Scene/ СЦЕНА С КОТЛЕТАМИ.

ДЕВОЧКА: Someone has eaten my cutlet! I myself wanted to eat it but someone will do it for me… (после того, как мальчик встал) Where are you going? Prove that it’s not you who ate a cutlet. It’s *you* who has stolen my cutlet. Give it yourself or I’ll check your backpack. (после проверки рюкзака) Gypsy has stolen a cutlet.

Interview.

ДЕВУШКА: “It’s better to stay at home, do the housework, cook, wash the dishes, help mum, and when you grow up you’ll get married, have children. You’ll clean, and cook for them… What will be the point from your studying?”

Scene: MOTHER’S WASHING THE DISHES./ СЦЕНА: МАМА МОЕТ ПОСУДУ

МАТЬ: Daughter, why do you need this school? You better get married and give me grandchildren. This school is only waste of money. You have to pay for school, for notebooks, books, for janitor. And every time you have to pay. And give money for New Year, for presents.. Why do you need it? School won’t give you anything. It’s better *to get married!* I will find you a good husband and you’ll give birth to his children. You’ll sit at home, help your mother, tidy up, cook. I’ll teach to cook Gypsy borsch for your mother-in-law and husband. You will cook Gypsy borsch.

You need to get married and not sit near my skirt and play with dolls.

(на ромском) \**shouts in Roma*\* *Get out of here so I don't see you!*

Interview. ИНТЕРВЬЮ

ПАРЕНЬ 2: The saddest story of my nation is when I go home and see a little boy coming to me and asking money for a bread. *Little child is asking money for bread*. Instead of being at home with his mum hugging him, instead of playing with toy cars like other children he *is asking money for bread.* He’s dirty, he’s cold..

ПАРЕНЬ 1: I’ve got a job and hidden for a long time that I’m Roma. I was ashamed. But then I realized that there’s nothing to be ashamed of, and I confessed everyone. And they were pleasantly surprised that Roma can work fairly. That inspired me.

ДЕВУШКА: On Europe Day we represented our nationality. We cooked a lot of tasty dishes and wore national clothes. There were lots of different nationalities representing their own nationalities but we were the best in this contest. We were praised for being different from the others with our identity, culture, tasty cuisine, and really beautiful national clothing. That inspired me so much so I want to continue to represent my nation on my behalf.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: The nicest story about my nation is when I met a girl. We went on dates but I couldn’t make up my mind to confess about being Roma. When I finally told her she was pleasantly surprised. She was proud of me and told that she’s never met such Roma. She said that there used to be only the ones who steal, beat people. So she was really proud that I study, work, and I have goals in my life.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: I remember how in childhood my father put me before a choice …

Scene/ СЦЕНА: ОТЕЦ И СЫН

МУЖЧИНА (to a boy): Take another seat. \**in Roma*\* (открыв дневник) What do these marks give to you?

МАЛЬЧИК: Knowledges.

МУЖЧИНА: \**in Roma*\* Do knowledges give you food?

МАЛЬЧИК: No.

МУЖЧИНА: \**in Roma*\* Who gives you food?

МАЛЬЧИК: You, father.

МУЖЧИНА: \**in Roma*\* Do you know who gives me food? My work. School gives you knowledges but it doesn’t give you food. Work gives you food but not knowledges.

Interview. ИНТЕРВЬЮ

РАРЕНЬ 1: So I had to combine. I studied at school and helped father with work, I earned money for the family.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: I remember a story of my life when I wanted to say something at school but they tried to keep my mouth shut.

Scene. School lesson/ СЦЕНА: УРОК В ШКОЛЕ

УЧИТЕЛЬ: What are you doing there? Weren’t you told to leave school? Didn’t you know that we’ll have problems because of you? You can’t study with us, because you are… \*coughing\*

(кто-то выкрикивает) Someone’s interrupting: Gypsy!!

УЧИТЕЛЬ (continuing): Quiet!... You can’t study with us because your nation doesn’t have it in its nature. Understand? You don’t have a desire… Do you even have books?

МАЛЬЧИК-РОМ: Yes, I do.

УЧИТЕЛЬ: Hm, so bring them here… (когда мальчик подходит с книгами) How many books do you have?

(мальчик считает) (counting): One, two…

УЧИТЕЛЬ (interrupting): \*sighs\* Get them out! Show that Gypsy – person of other nationality – also wants to study. Come on.

(мальчик выкладывает книги) (counting): One, two, three, four, five.

УЧИТЕЛЬ: \*sighs\* Seryozha, come here.

МАЛЬЧИК СЕРЁЖА: How dare you to put your dirty books on teacher’s table? (start to drop the books)

УЧИТЕЛЬ: Ok, Seryozha, stop it. Come on, go back to your seats! Now we need to split into two teams. A winning team… (мальчику-рому: to Rome boy: pack your things!) A winning team will have a surprise.

(starts splitting children) You go there, you go here, and you go there.

М АЛЬЧИК-РОМ: And me?

УЧИТЕЛЬ (ignoring): So, I have a riddle. If you know the answer, you don’t shout, you raise your hand. Ok? (reading a riddle) *It’s easy to know him, it’s easy to recognize. It’s tall and sees far…*

If no one knows, there’s another riddle. Listen carefully, children! (reading a riddle) *A miracle beast lives in a zoo on a summer day. Its forehead looks like a pipe.* Yes, go on.

(МАЛЬЧИК СЕРЁЖА) Seryozha: A rhinoceros.

УЧИТЕЛЬ: Unfortunately, that’s not right. Let me give you another riddle, easier. *It’s grey in winter but white in summer.*

(мальчик в зеленом): It’s a rabbit.

УЧИТЕЛЬ: That’s right.

(мальчик-ром уходит, учительница ему) Where are you going? You’re not only ill-mannered, you don’t even know an answer. Gypsy.

Interview. ИНТЕРВЬЮ

ПАРЕНЬ 1: The main problem of the Roma is illiteracy. There’s no support from parents’ side. If parents support and motivate their children, these children will support their ones in the future. Education is important for life.

ДЕВУШКА: I think the main problem of my nation is education. A lot of us don’t graduate school, so they can’t go to university or college. As a result they can’t get a job. That’s why they can’t build their own life in the future. But I believe that my nation can achieve everything, like lots of other Romas have already achieved.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: The real problem of my nation is that many people don’t know the most elementary things. Their rights. And even when they’re not guilty they can’t justify their innocence by law. And that’s why many ones suffer.

ДЕВУШКА: For me, my nation is my family. And family means that everyone is united, and supported, and never left behind. Everyone is respected in a family. That’s what my nation means to me.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: I’m sure there are so many Romas who haven’t unlocked their potential yet but they will show what they’re capable of.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: I wish you to be champions in everything.

ДЕВУШКА: I want to wish my people to not to be afraid to leave a comfort zone.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: I wish you to not to be afraid to go beyond the possibilities.

ДЕВУШКА: No matter what always give each other a helping hand.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: Be proud of being Roma. Because Roma is for strength.

ПАРЕНЬ 2: Break stereotypes and don’t forget who you are.

ДЕВУШКА: Never give up and don’t lose heart.

ПАРЕНЬ 1: Roma, I wish you \**in Roma*\* to be healthy.

ДЕВУШКА 2: And remember there’s *nothing* impossible.

translated by Margarita Sologub