



ADAM MAZEK
Diaries

February
2018



- Post "Why should we do sports?" (cover: post "Brok")

WHY SHOULD WE DO SPORTS?

February 2018 began with sports. In the first post, I asked the question: why should we play sports? The answer is obvious: for health. I gave myself as an example. At the beginning of 2011, I weighed 99 kg (218 lbs). With a height of 178 cm, it's easy to calculate that I was overweight. The most interesting is that at that time, I didn't see or feel it at all. This state of mind lasted until the day I suffered quite a severe injury. While playing football, a very painful hematoma appeared on my Achilles tendon. I was grounded for almost three months. It was the moment when I realized that I had to start sport regularly again. The orthopedist recommended swimming. Thanks to this discipline, I lost my weight to 76 kg (168 lbs) in a year. I combined sports activities with stopping eating sweets (lasted a year) and limiting eating to two or three meals a day.

WHY SHOULD WE DO SPORTS?

Was it worth it? Of course! I began to feel better. I had more energy. I am convinced that regular exercises helped me in many matters, e.g., in my professional life. The best solutions to problems came to my mind while swimming. Do I still swim regularly? No, I don't swim as often as I would like. I devote more and more time to my photographic passion (including writing texts and running the website), at the expense of swimming.

Are there any cons of losing weight? One thing comes to my mind - the less weight we have, the more sensitive to cold. Nevertheless, I urge you, my dear Friend, to practice sport as often as possible. Be like Bruce Lee (not like Adam Mazek) and try to add this activity to your daily routine.





EARTH ODYSSEY

About what moment we became human, I tried to answer in the next post, called "Earth Odyssey - made of stone." What are my conclusions? I think we will never be able to answer this question. In the broadly understood world of culture, we can find valuable tips and guesses. One of the most exciting explanations can be found in Stanley Kubrick's film "2001: A Space Odyssey."



EARTH ODYSSEY





- Post "Earth Odyssey - made of stone" (also p.. 4 and p. 5)

EARTH ODYSSEY

At the beginning of the film, the hominid tribe finds a black, ideally rectangular, upright monolith. Under its influence, anthropoids have discovered that bones of dead animals can be used as weapons. Thanks to this, they win a skirmish with an enemy tribe in the fight for waterhole. The first part of the movie is a real masterpiece. Symbolically, Kubrick tries to answer the question raised at the beginning of the text. The movie scene can easily be moved to reality. One of the more interesting examples can be seen in the megaliths of Stenness, Scotland. Thousands of years ago, people built huge stones there. By raising rocks to an upright position, humanoids symbolically became people. In this way, they discovered the sculptural properties and potential that lies in the stone. It was an act of giving sense to the existence of people. The stone was turned into a symbol by our ancestors. This act made them fully human. The relationship between man and stone is so old that we called the beginning of human history the Stone Age. The pieces of rocks were undoubtedly one of our earliest tools and weapons.

EARTH ODYSSEY

As Carl Gustav Jung wrote in his book *The Book of Symbols*, rock has been an indispensable element of human life for centuries. Stones heated by fire can be used for cooking. Stone constructions were used for living or burying the dead. Moreover, a rock can symbolize God and become an object of worship. One of the best-known examples is Ka'aba - the black meteorite rock in Mecca, the primary purpose of Islamic pilgrimage. On the other hand, the world of minerals is perceived as the lowest form of creation. The rocks feel nothing. We can accuse someone of having a heart of stone. Some people are fascinated by the deaf nature of the rock, which denies us access. Polish Nobel Prize winner Wislawa Szymborska writes in her poem "Conversation with a Stone":

I knock at the stone's front door.

- "It's only me, let me come in."

- "I don't have a door" - says the stone.





PEOPLE ARE STRANGE



- Post "People are strange" (also p. 8)

PEOPLE ARE STRANGE

In another post called "People are strange," I wrote that the words of the famous song by The Doors often circulate among my thoughts. Sung by the charismatic singer Jim Morrison, the song raises the issue of the condition of all humanity through the prism of the individual. The fact is that the overtones of the song are just as relevant in the first half of the 21st century as in the 1960s. What makes people weird? There is no clear answer. Each case should be analyzed separately. In fact, each of us is weird in our own way. I am not an exception. Nevertheless, there is one thing I focused on in the text that makes people really weird. The answer is "self-destruction."

A perfect example can be the already mentioned singer of The Doors band. Mixing LSD and alcohol doesn't seem like the right way of life. Addiction to most stimulants destroys people at a dizzying pace. This is probably the fastest and most effective way to self-destruct.

PEOPLE ARE STRANGE

Another example of self-destruction can be the case of Fyodor Dostoyevsky. Many people do not know that the famous Russian writer was a compulsive gambler. The fact is that he fought this addiction for a large part of his life. Playing roulette several times led him to bankruptcy. The famous Russian writer earned money, among others translating texts. At the same time, he quickly lost his earnings by playing roulette. To pay off some of his debts, he wrote the novel "The Gambler". He took inspiration to write a story from his life. The main hero of Dostoevsky's work is a man who is full of two obsessions: love and gambling. The problem with Dostoyevsky's addiction lasted ten years. In the worst moment of a bad habit, instead of feeding his starving children, he spent money on roulette. Luckily for the genius and his family, Dostoyevsky finally dealt with addiction, ten years before his death.

These two examples of world-famous geniuses show that not only the average people are strange and therefore exposed to a series of misfortunes lurking on them. The fact is that we are all just human. Virtually all of us have the power to touch the sky or reach the pavement. It largely depends on us which path we will follow.

• Post "People are strange"





CAT

CAT

Do I like cats? I answered this question in the post entitled "Cat." I didn't like cats for most of my life. I saw them as unloving and selfish creatures. In Carl Gustav Jung's book, *The Book of Symbols*, we read that in a Buddhist story, monks sent a rat to bring medicine for a dying Buddha. It was not given to rodents to complete the mission. The cat kills and eats him on his way. Nevertheless, today I am a happy owner of a milk-red cat named Azorek (photo on page 11, bottom). It is a great joy to watch this little creature. I often see in Azorek two interpenetrating personalities. On the one hand, he can be a tame little kitty and, on the other, a wild, untamed tiger. Evidently, at least two personalities live in it. Cats bring to our homes their wild, inner, and rampant world. I often have the impression that in Azorek's mind, the house appears as an invisible jungle, and the plush mouse becomes a real victim of the jungle king.

- Post "Cat" (also p. 11)



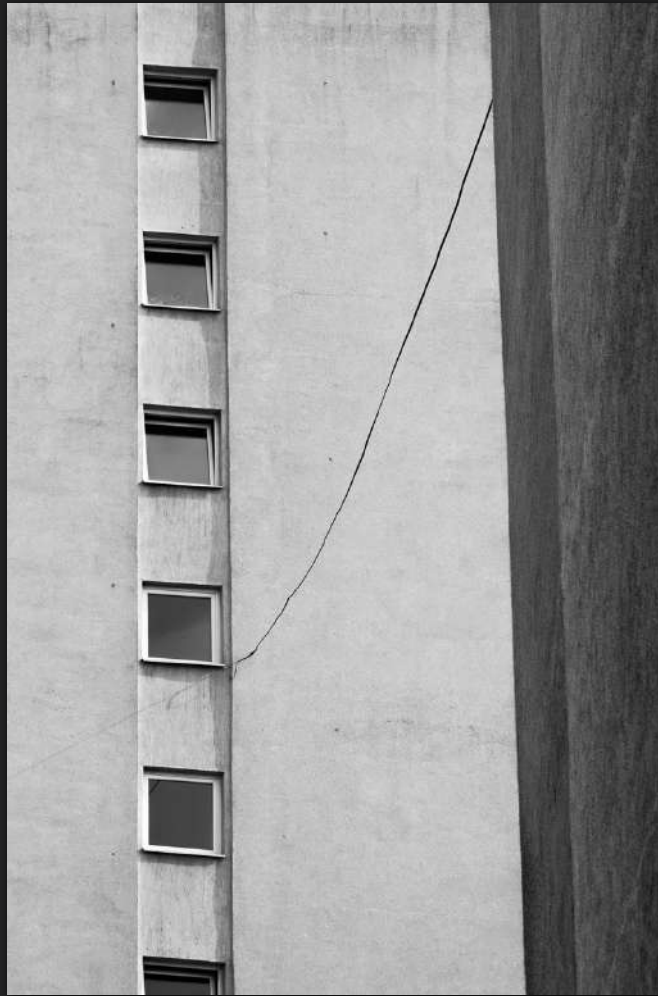
CAT

Cats are always interested in their surroundings, even if they have lived in them for years. For me, it is something very inspiring. I doubt that people would have such power that they could draw inspiration from everyday surroundings to the extent that cats do it. Nevertheless, I believe that we should at least try. A constant search for beauty and unusual things in gray everyday reality is my artistic goal. I would like to be as interested in my surroundings as cats are. I ended the post with a musical accent, mentioning that I finish writing to listen to the song "Cat" performed by The Sugarcubes (with phenomenal Björk as a vocalist!) and pat my Azorek.



• Post "Cat"





- Post "North Sentinel Island"

NORTH SENTINEL ISLAND

The next post was called "North Sentinel Island." To write the text, I was inspired by photos of a tribe living on a distant, title island. The inhabitants of this island are one of the last people who remain completely isolated from modern civilization. The tribe is hostile and aggressive towards strangers. All contact attempts ended in bloodshed. Why did I write about all this? I thought all humanity might be in a similar position to the Sentinel tribe. Perhaps our entire planet is the equivalent of the North Sentinel island to space civilization. Maybe someone is always watching us. This someone (let's call them "Aliens") may not explicitly tell us that they observe us, for our good. They know that contact with us will end in aggression. I am convinced that if we ever manage to contact aliens, we will be as aggressive towards them as the Sentinel tribe are to the rest of civilization. Man is afraid of the unknown. The road is very short, from fear to aggression.

NORTH SENTINEL ISLAND

If we do not have enough knowledge about something, we treat it with distrust and hostility. I went a little further with my divagations. I imagined the successful colonization of the planet Mars. I thought that the whole colonization process could be as difficult for us as the colonization of the Indian subcontinent by a tribe from the eponymous island. A small patch of land in the Indian Ocean is managed by the Andaman and Nicobar administrations. This administrative body announced that it had no intention of interfering with the life of a rampant tribe. There will also be no attempts to contact them. I can only imagine that aliens can observe all our efforts to colonize the planet Mars. I see them smiling at each other with pity. What's more, I see them discussing with each other that it would be better for us if they left us alone. Their discussion and observation could be compared with watching photos and videos about the Sentinel tribe on YouTube and commenting on what we see on the screen.

- Boxoid - post "North Sentinel Island"

AFFIRMATION OF LIFE, MADE BY DOSTOYEVSKI

The sixth post published in February 2018 described the affirmation of life according to Fyodor Dostoyevsky (post "Affirmation of life, made by Dostoyevski."). I wanted to explain what we should learn from the famous Russian writer. Not everyone knows that Dostoyevsky, at twenty-seven years old, was sentenced to death. He was accused of planning the assassination of Tsar Nicholas I. The Russian writer did not plead guilty to the charges. What scares the most in this story is the fact that he and his companions of misery have already been taken to the place of execution in St. Petersburg. The guards divided the prisoners into groups of three. Dostoyevsky stood in the second row. Fortunately for the Russian novelist, execution by shooting was interrupted. The Tsar canceled the sentence at the last minute. Ultimately, Dostoyevsky was sentenced to exile to Russia east, which lasted four years. The Russian genius described these events in letters to his brother. The theme of the death penalty also appeared in the writer's novel, "The Idiot." In the post from February 2018, I focused on epistolography. In my opinion, the feelings expressed in his letters are probably one of the most beautifully described affirmations of life. After the content of the messages, it can be concluded that Dostoyevsky received a second life from fate:

- [Post "Affirmation of life, made by Dostoyevski."](#)





- Post "Affirmation of life, made by Dostoyevski."

AFFIRMATION OF LIFE, MADE BY DOSTOYEVSKI

Brother! I have not become downhearted or low-spirited. Life is everywhere life; life is in ourselves, not in what is outside us. There will be people near me, and to be a man among people and remain a man forever, not to be downhearted nor to fall in whatever misfortunes may befall me — this is life; this is the task of life. I have realized this. This idea has entered into my flesh and into my blood.

Fyodor Dostoevsky "Letters"

In another letter, the famous novelist referred to his past and noted that he was born again:

When I look back at the past and think how much time has been wasted in vain, how much time was lost in delusions, in errors, in idleness, in ignorance of how to live, how I did not value time, how often I sinned against my heart and spirit, — My heart bleeds. Life is a gift, life is happiness, each minute might have been an age of happiness. If youth only knew! Now, changing my life, I am being reborn into a new form. Brother! I swear to you that I shall not lose hope, and shall preserve my spirit and heart in purity. I shall be reborn to a better thing. That is my whole hope, my whole comfort!"

Fyodor Dostoevsky "Letters"

Reading these quotes above, we must remember that they were written by a person who just looked death straight in the eye. To be honest, I do not wish anyone such adventures to appreciate life. That is why I think that it is merely worth trusting Dostoyevsky and taking his words to heart. I think it's worth doing.

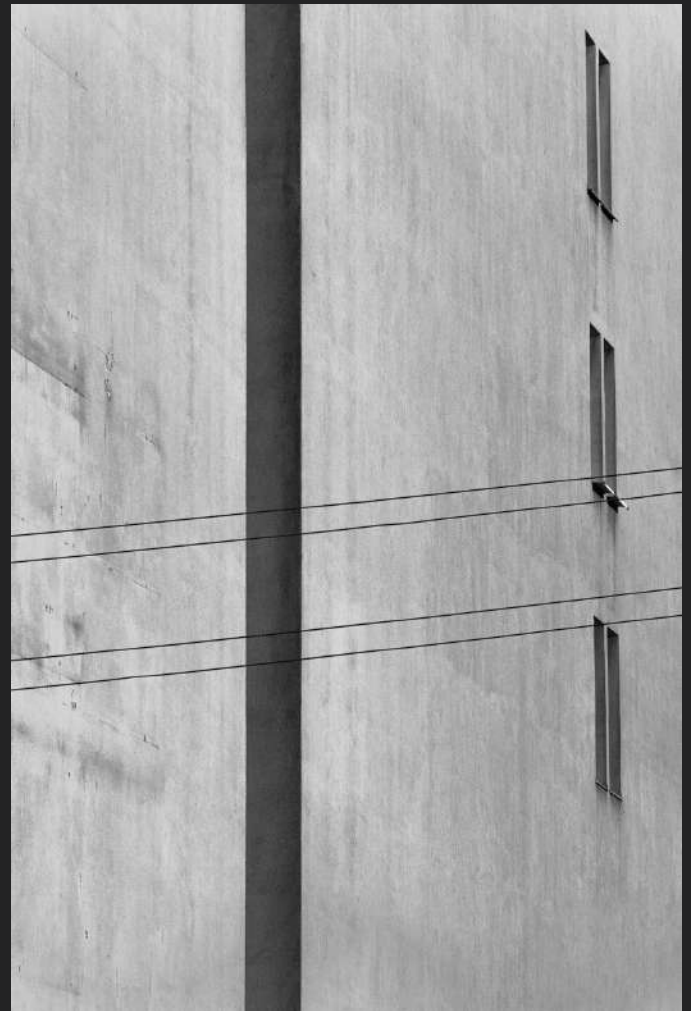
HOW TO MAKE BETTER PICTURES? PART II

I wrote about how to take better pictures in the next post, entitled "How to make better pictures? Part II ". This was the second part of the advice. The first part appeared in the issue of Diaries from November 2017. In February 2018, I mentioned that everyone has the right tool for taking pictures. It's an imagination that you can train. How can we practice it to take better pictures? We should analyze our surroundings visually. We can do it virtually anywhere, at home or in our neighborhood. As an example, I gave a set of four photos that I published in this post. All images were taken in the same place on one of Warsaw's streets. In general, nothing prevents us from standing in one place, e.g., for a minute, and that we carefully observe the environment and analyze how we can take a picture of the area in which we are.

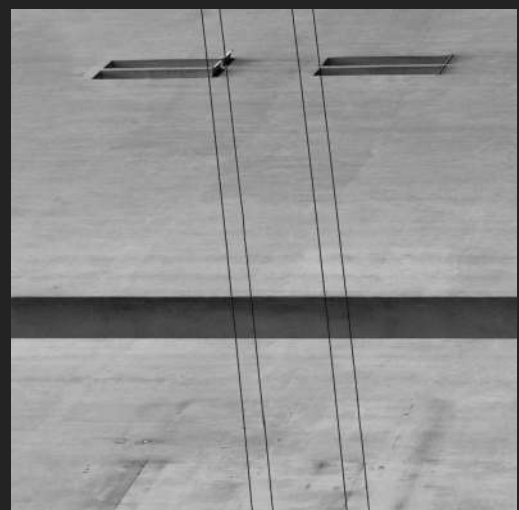
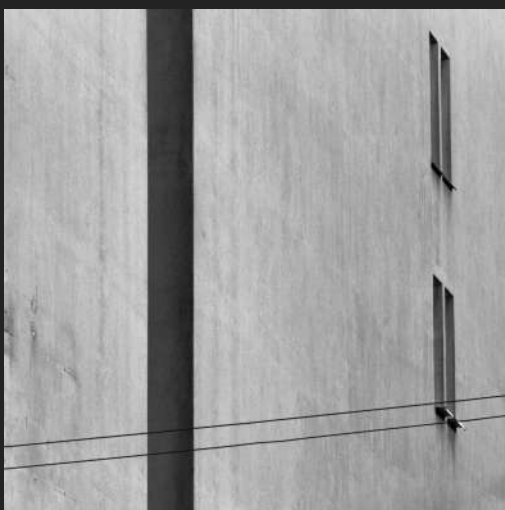
- [Post "How to make better pictures? Part II"](#)

HOW TO MAKE BETTER PICTURES? PART II

Should we take a picture and then crop it in Lightroom? Maybe it will be better if I minimize the frame at the time of making the photo? Will it be better if I present the picture in color or in black and white? Or maybe there is an element in our team that upsets the balance? For me, this type of fun is pure pleasure and one of the aspects of training imagination. I am convinced that we are developing in this way. Thanks to this game, I start to look at the world through the prism of children's imagination, which is interested in virtually everything it sees around. What's more, we become more confident and stronger because we begin to see more than others.



• Post "How to make better pictures? Part II"





- Post "The Little Prince."

THE LITTLE PRINCE

Here is the content of my short pastiche of the Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's story, entitled "The Little Prince":

- Hey, Little Prince! Will you take me for a ride? My dream is to see the Earth from space, hear stories about human civilization, about our heritage. I want to hear, feel, and see all the beautiful things that were created by people! Prince, help me!
- Sure, John. Fasten your seatbelt. I'll take you for a ride on my flying saucer!
- Thanks, Prince. So, where do we start?
- As usual: ancient Egypt and China. Do you see these sandy buildings? These are the pyramids. And this massive, elongated formation is the Chinese Wall. This is the only visible building made by a man that we can see from space.
- Awesome! How did we manage to build it all?
- Simple: thanks to slavery.
- I hope you tell me more about it. I wonder what it's like to have a slave. And what is that? Whether it is...
- Yes, this is a picture. It was painted by Leonardo da Vinci. The painting is known as "Mona Lisa." Next to it is Picasso's work: "Guernica." They are one of the most valuable and most admired works of art created by people. They are priceless.

THE LITTLE PRINCE

- These images attract attention, but I don't know what makes them so unique. WOW! Prince! What flash is this? It is brighter than thousands of suns! I've never seen such a beautiful, magical and majestic thing. This is a much more breathtaking view than these previous paintings. What is this?
- Atomic cloud. Don't you think it looks like a mushroom? It is the result of one of the most devastating and terrifying weapons ever created by humans. It can kill thousands of lives in a few seconds.
- It looks cute. Oh ... Prince! Where are we going? That's no Earth!
- Don't be nervous, silly. This is the moon. Do you see these two funny-looking guys? One of them is taking a small step while making a great leap for humanity. They've just landed on the moon. The moon has been conquered!
- Ah, Prince! Get off your high horse. After all, these achievements are not even a fart for the solar system, not to mention our galaxy or the entire universe.

• Post "The Little Prince."



The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly a wall or a piece of paper, with a prominent diagonal line running from the top left towards the middle right. In the bottom left corner, there is a dark, shadowed object that resembles the nib of a fountain pen. The overall lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights.

LIGHT MY FIRE

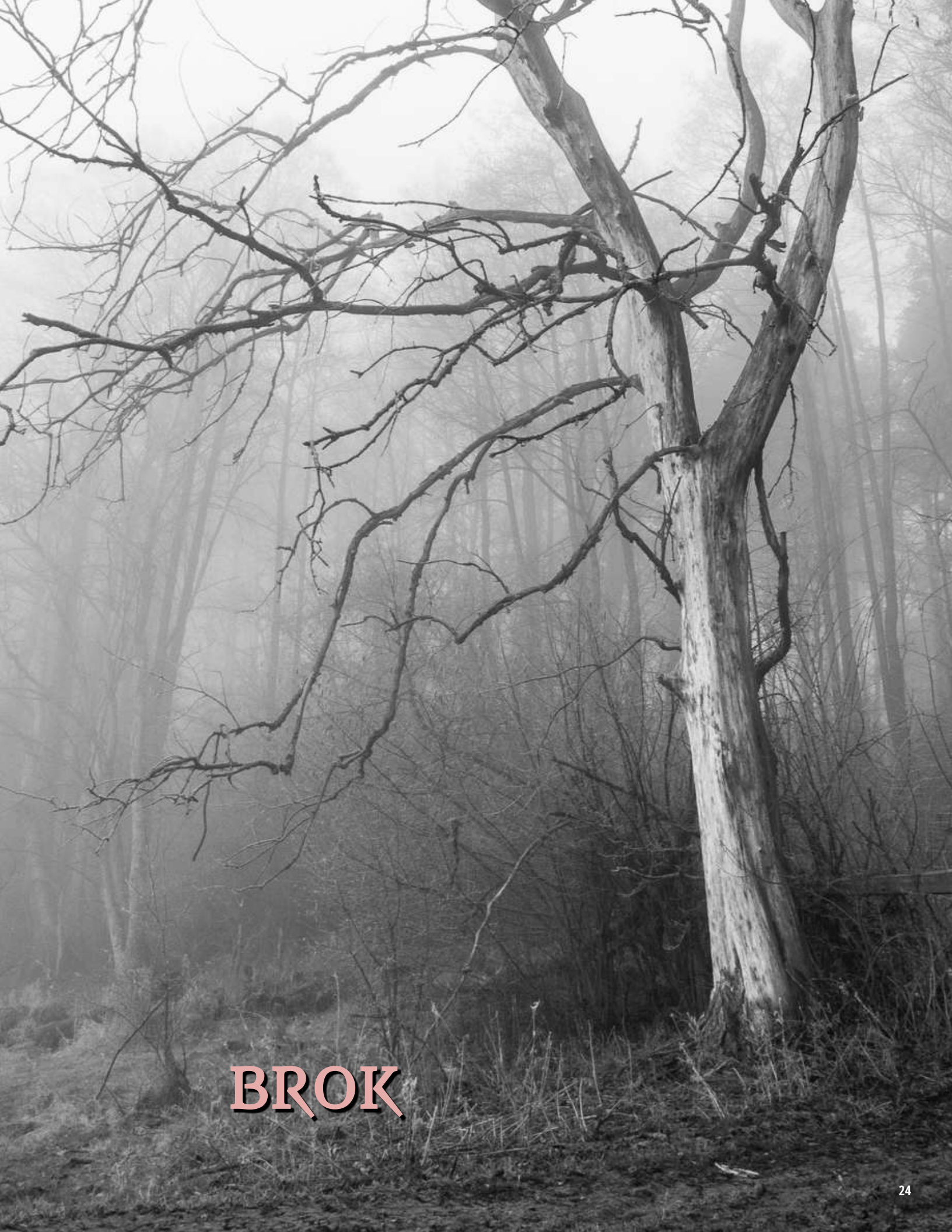
To write the next post, I was inspired by the song by The Doors entitled "Light my fire." In it, I compared taking pictures, writing texts, and, in general, my artistic passion for lighting a fire with a flint. While doing this, sparks start to appear at some point. For me, these sparks are individual photos or posts. After the first ineffective hand movements, do not be discouraged. After the next also. Remember that the more hand movements you make, the higher the chance that you'll eventually succeed. The more sparks (read written posts and photos taken), the higher the likelihood that you will ignite a passionate hobby. I've already started this creative fire.



- Post "Light my fire" (also p. 22)

LIGHT MY FIRE

But what does this fire really do for me? To set fire to forests? Of course not. I want to do this to light up my life path. I want to make me know where I'm going. Let this light and this eternal warmth help me to take the right direction. I believe that every newborn person has this heavenly light within him. It depends on many factors, whether in his adult life, this flame will be nurtured, or whether it will fade out and may go out to the end. My dream is to have a burning torch (lit by the sparks mentioned above) to give guidance to myself, my beloved ones, and the whole society. To make it clear:, I don't want to tell you what to do in my life, my Dear Friend. I want to make you aware that you have many different paths to choose from in your life. Find your inner flame and let it guide your life.



BROK



- 'Post "Brok" (also p. 24-28)

BROK

The last post, which appeared in February 2018, was a post about one of my two hometowns, Brok. Brok is one of the smallest communes in Poland, located in the north-eastern part of the Mazovia, on the edge of the wood complex, named "White Forest." This unique town brings joy, peace and happiness not only to visitors, but above all to its inhabitants. Brok is a popular travel destination for Warsaw residents who want a break from the hustle and bustle. If you're going to take a break from the noise during the weekend, then there is no better place to relax. Why? If only because during walks in the forest you can meet deer, wild boars, roe deer, squirrels or hares. It's an excellent place for nature lovers. Incredibly, three rivers flow through such a small town. One of them is the magical Bug River, the fourth largest river in Poland. The other two rivers are small but charming: Brok and Turka.

Time in Brok slows down. If you are thinking about long walks amid a captivating, idyllic landscape, come to Brok. Every time I come back to my beloved parents, I just feel happy. Photographers will also find something for themselves. Forests, the mentioned rivers or monuments, can be a very grateful subject for taking pictures.



BROK



- Post "Brok"

BROK

Interestingly, my hometown is located on the edge of the Bug River Landscape Park. It is a protected area with a low intensity of human activity. The park covers a large variety of landscapes, of which two dominate: forest complexes and the Bug valley. In short, if you want to hike in the wild, do sports outdoors, photograph nature or wind down in the noise of trees, there is no better way for a weekend trip outside Warsaw. Someone malicious might say:

There is nothing in Brok.

I would answer him:

*There is everything you need in Brok to lead a peaceful, happy,
and harmonious life.*

THE END



BROK