

In memory of Marcy

Solidarity Collectives

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We want to tell you about our comrade, Marsy, who was killed in action on 11 November, near Avdiivka. (The family has asked for no media coverage, so we will not disclose his real name)

Marsy came to Ukraine in March 2022, shortly after the beginning of the full-scale invasion, and he joined the anti-authoritarian platoon in the Kyiv region. He continued to help as a volunteer with other comrades in the summer 2022, in different regions in the east from Kharkiv, then around Bakhmut in last winter and spring, supporting different units to cover the lack of medics and evacuation personnel. He was taking care of his training and fitness. He wanted to get better at what he did. He understood that his life and that of others depended on good preparation. Even when he became an infantryman, he tried to take care of his and his colleagues' medical preparation. He went on his last mission voluntarily.

Before coming to Ukraine, as we have learned, he graduated from Oxford in history, helped in the struggles of refugees in Calais, had participated in the squatting movement, and took part in the struggle of the Kurdish liberation movement in Rojava in the SDF forces. He built communities everywhere he went, practiced mutual aid and was always questioning and challenging hierarchies. He was known by many other names and was loved by an astonishing number of people from many countries and struggles. You can learn or share memories about him at this site.

He was an internationalist fighter, moving and acting in solidarity with people he thought needed his help around the world, and always kept his humor and talent in taking care of others, selflessly defending people he was meeting at the same time and seeking to understand critically any context.

Marcy was quiet and modest, he always tried to listen and understand his surroundings. Many loved him and everybody had a respect for his clear understanding of what he wanted and could do, even in the most tragic and dangerous of situations.

He knew how to make hard choices and joked about risks to himself. You can see this through his own words in an interview he gave to us here.

Memories from comrades

Lesik

It was one of the occasions when the Western comrades sent us (the anti-authoritarian squad) a car, and they had a new fighter with them. Tall, slender, he looked like a university student, with soft and gentle movements and expression – he did not look like a soldier at all.

Marcy had a cheerful and easy-going personality, but he proved a real fighter. It turned out that he is a fighter for freedom, against fascism, and had already fought in Kurdistan against ISIS. Now he again came on a campaign against Russian fascism. Marcy was a staunch anarchist and left-libertarian.

He was trying to learn Ukrainian, and I speak English, so this brought us together. I gradually learnt to see the depth of his personality and intellectual strength. Marcy studied anthropology books and talked (always ironically) about his adventures in Kurdistan. I showed him Vasyly Simonenko's poem "To a Kurdish Brother" and told him about the context.

Either this was his nature or maybe he learnt this from his Kurdish sisters and brothers, but he had such friendliness and unobtrusive tenderness to him, an oriental trait not often found

here. Understanding this, he half-jokingly taught us a respectful Kurdish address that means something like “sweet sir” in Ukrainian.

Marcy supported me in moments of despair and hopelessness, he told me to read books instead of doom-scrolling. Unfortunately, the bureaucratic machine of the army let us down. He fought for a long time without any documents, insurance or salary, but felt that this war was just and did not want to retreat. I was lucky enough to meet him in the rear in a town in the Donetsk region.

A few weeks before his death, Marcy’s interest in Ukrainian poetry was rekindled again. I gave him a book that he hardly had time to finish reading – An Anthology of Ukrainian Poetry of the 20th Century. Apparently, his last peaceful days before the fateful battle were spent reading and translating.

Farewell dear Marcy, see you in eternity.

DK:

I would prefer never to write obituaries for friends and to write their names on a mortar shell.

I think old people must feel something similar when they part with their loved ones, friends and acquaintances. When the world turns into a desert, not only because of human expansion and ecological destruction, but also in such a personal domain. Loved ones die in the war, leaving behind emptiness that cannot be replaced by anything.

One of the best people I have ever known. Extremely kind, sensitive and brave, ready to help. Only once did he make me feel uncomfortable: when I felt I was about to die during a training session, he cheerfully ran an extra lap, which was very annoying.

When he would tell me one of his many stories about how someone close to him had been injured or killed due to neglecting safety measures or in some other accident, we would joke that we didn’t understand how he was still alive. It’s a defense mechanism that is a facade of the intense desire that someone close to me never becomes the protagonist of such a story.

These cursed years take away the best of us, who are called by a deep love of life, for which, after all, they leave other countries, ignoring their relatively privileged status, coming to the very edge to hold the frontier between two worlds: the fascists’ dream where death is eternal and the one where utopia is still possible.

Rest in peace, dear friend. We will remember you and take revenge as long as we breathe.

Kseniia, Solidarity Collectives

I remember our first meeting with Marsy.

Our organization was handing over a heart monitor for the “pirate team” where Marsy worked. This is what we call medical volunteers who carry out medical evacuations from hot spots, but who are not part of military units. This is quite a common phenomenon in Ukraine.

I remember my first impression: people with smiling, cheerful, cheerful faces with a hint of fatigue, lots of shared laughter and jokes about the “army land”, about medicine, about the Ukrainian mentality, all sitting around a warm summer table with strawberry pie and kvass. Marsy behaved quietly and modestly, he always tried to listen and understand his surroundings, he took care of his brothers and sisters.

Since that August, we have met a few more times, surviving in the space of this war.

Once this was in the vicinity of Bakhmut, which at that time was still controlled by Ukrainians, then in Kyiv for the memorial service of fallen comrades.

Marsy, like all the soldiers who have been in Ukraine since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, was very exhausted. He went through many deaths of comrades and he also saved hundreds of soldiers' lives. And despite his endless, hard work, he found time to write to me once every couple of months and ask whether I rested enough. He did not forget about his own health and the need to take care of himself. Oh, Marsy-Marsy, he was a very bright and kind guy, it's hard to believe that this bloody war took away such a bright and kind person who had the right to live his own amazing life.

Comrade

As a combat medic, Marsy helped save the lives of hundreds of wounded soldiers. Sometimes pulling them out of real hell. From places where few would go voluntarily. He didn't care about comfort, he could endure a lot. However, he paid a high price for this. Especially when friends died. Sometimes he needed a few days to get back together. And then he got up and kept walking... after the next ones. He also took care of his training and fitness. He wanted to get better at what he did. He understood that his life and that of others depended on good preparation. Contrary to appearances, this is not a common attitude at the front.

He played sports and listened passionately to music. Headphones were his inseparable attribute. He had the soul of an artist. He wore his military uniform with a colorful sweater and a funny necklace. He learned Ukrainian. In his notebook he wrote down new words to learn. He also tried to write something. Short forms, thoughts. He drew a little. And he loved poetry. We liked dark humor. Maybe it helped survive. Even when he became a stormtrooper, he tried to take care of his and his colleagues' medical preparation. He was a brave and good soldier. He went on his last mission voluntarily. This was a job for volunteers. See you my friend.

A. from ABC Dresden

Every time a freedom fighter dies in Ukraine today, different political forces from the right to the state try to claim their life. According to some, anarchists and anti-authoritarians are suddenly fighting for the Ukrainian state or Zelensky. But no matter how loudly these voices shout on the day of our comrade's death, we will not allow him to be "taken" from us.

Marsy's actions in recent years have shown the importance of solidarity in the struggle against the violence of the Russian state. Our comrade, who during his work in the country saved hundreds of lives and gave his life for the freedom of the people of Ukraine by action, not words, set an example to tens of thousands of others around the world, of how one could and should live.

Marsy was not a Western cowboy who came for adrenaline to this terrible war. Instead, for many months, he calmly and modestly evacuated the wounded from various war zones, working in the hottest areas of the front. And although here and now it may seem that he is no more, Marsy continues to live because of all those who he saved and those who were lucky enough to know him.

Those who die in the struggle will not be forgotten!

RAF

First of all: we are very sorry that we couldn't make it to Kyiv for the memorial ceremony, a few of us are even in Lviv today, bringing clothes for Lyman and sleeping bags and mats for our friends and people in the units at the frontline, but unfortunately there is not enough time to stay two more days to attend this ceremony.

Our hearts and thoughts are with you. Here in Berlin, we mourn for Marcy everyday and every minute, so we write you a few lines about how we got to know him over the last year, and how close we were in such a strange and funny way, and that it hurts us that he is no longer with us, can no longer think and fight with us.

With our small anarchist group from Berlin, Radical Aid Force, we have been in contact with Marcy for over a year. Together we organised direct help and support for Ukraine in the war against Russia and its desire to destroy and occupy.

We were in contact with him when we wanted to send first aid directly to wounded soldiers, when we wanted to organise our solidarity trips closer to the frontline and seek direct contact with hospitals, when we wanted to write articles for the German news and obtain more voices from Kramatorsk and the area around Bakhmut.

Marcy was there, helped, put us in touch with other paramedics, hospitals and was able to say what he needed as a paramedic himself and always with modesty. But others' needs and others' requests somehow took precedence and he held back.

When we met him in Kramatorsk on 14 April 2023, it wasn't about him first.

We wanted to see our friend Fancy and with no doubts Marcy invited us all to his house. Fancy came straight from the frontline and celebrated her birthday with us and Marcy – there was barely any stuff in the small kitchen but with great attention and kindness Marcy asked several times: does someone would like to have a cup of tea?

It was a wonderful, quiet moment on a day on which we later came under fire with Fancy in Konstantinivka.

Marcy was sad that day because so many good people had already died around him and the situation as a volunteer is complicated and even boring at the same time: you have to be ready and prepared at all times, you have to wait a lot and you have to spend a lot of time alone, which is not easy.

We tried to support him with everything: learning French with French comics, horror films and suggestions for trips to zoos. Zoos were supposed to do both: A distraction from the long hours of boredom and the excitement of beautiful living creatures.

We don't know if Marcy ever actually visited the zoo, but we do know that he loved the paintings in his hallway of cartoon animals, which we all painted on the wall for him and that was somehow calming.

Unfortunately we also helped him with his last decision: as a volunteer he became more and more sad and also unhappy with his position and his short missions of not being able to help enough. He told us himself that it was terrible that too many friends wanted to be heroic at the front, but could not escape the war himself at the same time.

We invited him to visit the zoo in Berlin or Prague or Marseille with us, but we also helped him to find a new army unit where he could continue to fight and help as a combat medic.

Since he was deployed near Prokovsk for the last few months, we were in contact almost daily. The crazy thing was that, as far as he told us, he felt very comfortable in his unit, and on the other hand, every mission was hell.

We really wanted to hug each other briefly on the edge of this hell on our last tour to Sloviansk, but unfortunately our schedule didn't allow it. Marcy, we are so sorry that you are no longer here, that we can no longer hug each other and that we can no longer fight for a free Ukraine and, more importantly, a world of free people. Farewell, we didn't know you for long, but we are very happy to have met you briefly and we carry you in our hearts for ever

Salam

I'm tired of writing about dead comrades, probably more than the European leftists are tired of this war. But I could not refuse to write.

Marcy was wonderful. I can't remember anything bad about him. Only good.

At first, he seemed like a strange and slightly distant guy. I still thought he had such jokes after the war in Kurdistan. But a little later, Marcy revealed himself as the kindest, most positive, and most energetic character. Yet completely freaked out positively.

We've been living in the same front-line town for the past few months, and we've seen quite a bit of each other. Thanks to him, I improved my English and he tried to communicate with us in Ukrainian. He was very funny, but at the same time I understood him.

When his work as a paramedic was over, he started looking for somewhere to go. I offered him options with a UAV and a mortar. Marcy replied that he would be bored there. So he joined the assault unit.

And here his "craziness" played with him a dirty joke. And today he is not with us...

I do not know what else to write, except banal: «Sleep, well brother». I will not forget you, and a few pictures of us together will always remind me of you. See you in the utopia!

GNIP

War takes the best people. Without exaggeration, our friend, British anarchist Marsi, was one of them.

Marsi came to Ukraine in the spring of 2022 and immediately rushed into battle. He started his combat journey as a paramedic, saving the lives of Ukrainian soldiers. He was a highly motivated fighter, and received no pay for it.

In mid-2023, M. became a combat medic in an infantry assault team. He died in the fighting near Avdiivka.

Marsi had a great knowledge of philosophy, history, art, and was particularly passionate about poetry. He was a great friend and interlocutor, someone you could always rely on.

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