

## **For the blood is the life**

I have a confession to make: I am a vampire. My thirst is not for the real blood though, but for the emotional one – for attention, approval, reassurance. I feed on negative emotions and I spoil positive ones, because I rather be included in a mourning than excluded from a celebration. I am envious of other people's achievements and I secretly enjoy seeing their failures, because it makes my own failures feel less painful. I am constantly comparing my abilities and my life to those of others: Every relationship, every experience is either a threat to or a way to feed my hungry ego. I pretend to care about the well-being of others, but in fact I just want them to need me, to make my meaningless existence more bearable.

But the truth is that no one needs a person like me. I have to remind myself of that every time I am being humiliated or worse – ignored. As soon as the pain of indignation starts rising, I have to remind myself that I do not deserve a better treatment. And the pain creeps back inside, like a growling scolded dog. My ego, my sense of self-worth is the source of that pain. It is the vampire, the monster that I have to feed. It has been damaged so much that I became its slave: If it dies – we both die. And so, I have to bring it new blood every day to keep us alive.

Is there a way to break this curse? Maybe there is: It was shown to me by people who gave me their kindness when I least deserved it and nurtured my self-worth without expecting anything in return. This is what I have to do too, there is no other way. We are made so that we cannot give our emotional blood to ourselves, only to others. So many blood-thirsty egos in this world and our own blood turns into bile trapped inside of us! Only by giving it to others can we hope to be saved.

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