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Kansai Telecasting Award

咲き続ける命

A Life Keeps Blooming

履正社学園豊中中学校三年 徳山佳浩

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When I got home, my mother was crying in the living room. “I am home,” I said to her. “Welcome home,” she answered, but it seemed she could not stop crying. There was a newspaper in her hands. She cries so easily. She cries when she is impressed, overjoyed, frustrated, pleasant, and happy. She is always too busy crying. I asked her, guessing she was reading some articles and crying. She handed me the article, “How painful it is to be kind to others.” It was about the organ donation and transplant from a little child who was declared brain-dead.

The organ donor was a six-years-old girl with an artificial heart due to dilated cardiomyopathy which disabled her heart to pump the blood properly. She was preparing for going overseas to have her heart surgery done. However, she was diagnosed a disease that a blood clot from her heart clogs in a blood vessel of her brain, and she was determined that she was brain-dead. And the recipient was an eight-years-old girl who had been spending most of her life chained to a respirator because she had been critically ill.

It was heartbreaking to know that the article was about the two little girls who had been suffering from fatal disease. However, what was more heartbreaking was what the parents of the brain-dead girl said. I could not help myself from shedding tears reading it.

“When I found out that my daughter was nearly brain dead, I thought back to the time when we were waiting for her heart transplant surgery. I strongly felt that the organ transplantation in Japan is still uncommon, so I had no hesitation to offer my daughter’s heart to children and their families who have been waiting for the transplant surgery. We had been in the darkness for three months since she fell ill. We will be pleased if we can light the hearts of those who have been going through what we had gone through.”

After reading it, I thought of how they felt when they made up their minds. The heart is an organ each of us has only one, and it is indispensable. One day, you are told

that your healthy child has no other way to live but to have a heart transplant. But waiting for a heart transplant is waiting for someone else's death. Beyond hope of having transplant surgery done and seizing happiness of your daughter and family, there awaits despair of other families; they are hoping their loved one to live as long as possible, knowing the last moment is so near. I cannot imagine how it feels to hold a feeling of unbearable guilt which comes from hoping and needing a donor's organ as soon as possible. How distressful, sorrowful, and heartbreaking it is to wait for someone else's death to live.

However, when their wishes did not come true and they were told that their daughter was brain-dead, her parents deplored how painful it was for little children to wait for transplant surgery in the present situation and decided to donate her organs. Their wishes gave another family hope to live. I do not know what to say, both to the girl who saved others and to the girl who was saved. It is because there must be deep sorrow to both girls and their parents before joy of life.

There are incidents and accidents in the newspapers and on TV every day, and they are too dreadful to watch. Drunk driving has been killing a lot of people instantaneously, and there are some random killings. These unbelievable incidents could happen to us anytime. It is same as diseases. No matter how careful we are, they come suddenly. It is too late once we become unable to express our will. I thought it would be important to keep talking about it, not only for myself but for my parents and those who around me. So, I talked with my mother about organ donation and organ transplantation, which was written in the newspaper. I did not want to talk with her crying in a heavy atmosphere, so I started with a smile. "I hope the day will never come, but if I ever fall into a situation like that, I want you to donate my organs. You know, I want my heart to live long."

Slap! "How could you say that? No ifs, you never talk about it ever again!" My mother gave me a hiding with tears. I did not expect it, so all I could do was to say sorry to her. It did not matter it actually happened or not. Talking about it made the precious one so sad. It is what I realized. I do not like to see her being sad.

Organ transplant is a matter of life or death. I believe that it is necessary for all of us to take courage and talk about it. It is how precious it is. I will talk about it with my mother again someday.