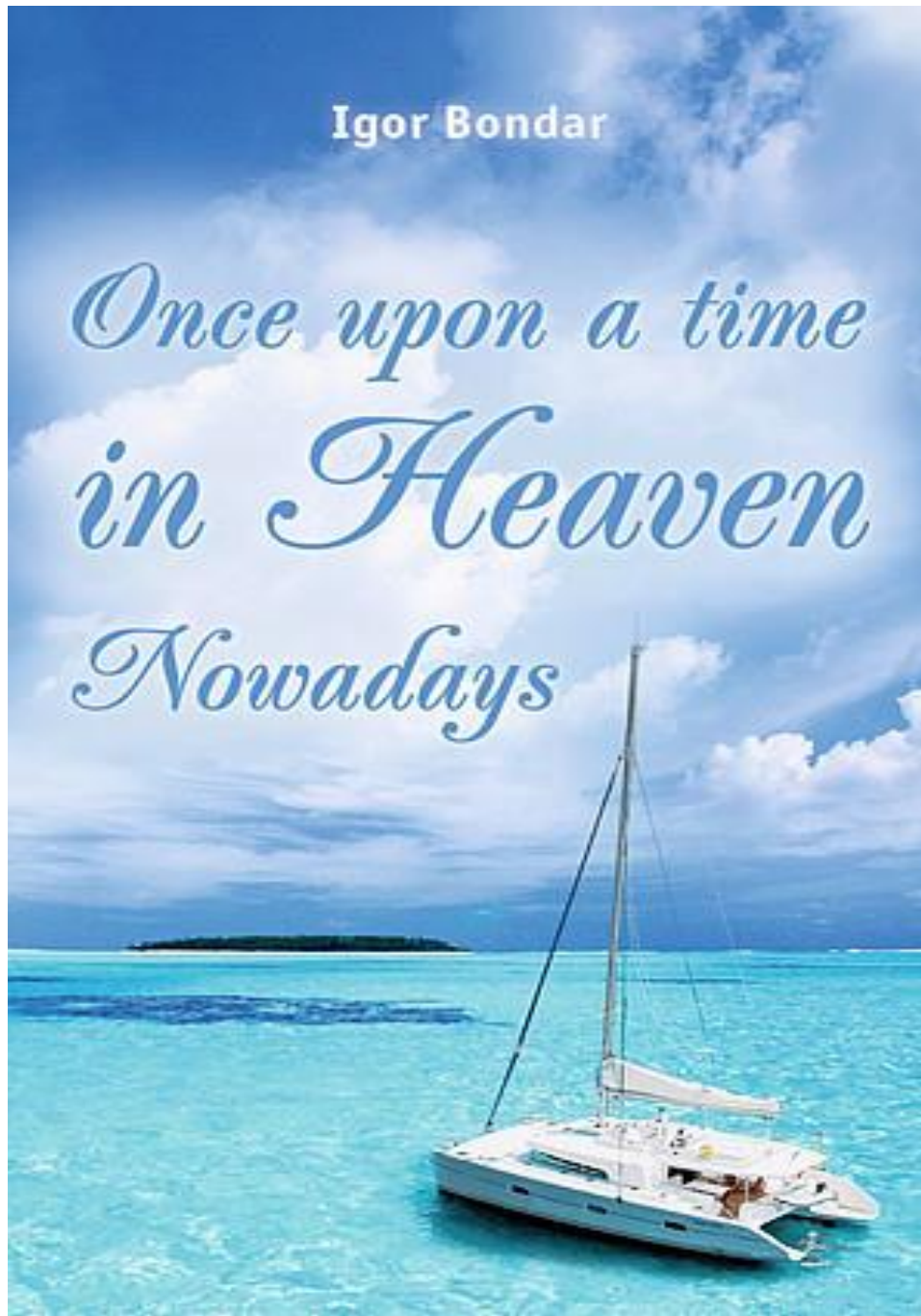


Igor Bondar

*Once upon a time
in Heaven
Nowadays*



Story

In this book, four friends search for sunken shipwrecks in the unexplored areas of the Great Barrier Reef known as Swain Reefs.

The history of Eternity never ends.

It has always been and will always be. So, of course, it exists today.

Everyone can touch it in their life if they rise above all the fuss that surrounds us, if they can believe in a fairytale.

Then suddenly you may find out that the true reality is more, much more than we see. Moreover, it is much more interesting and kinder.

Everyone can open their eyes in this life. Everyone who really wants it...

*No one can tell us exactly,
is it a true story or just a fantasy.
Only our heart can tell...*

Chapter 1

Swain

The anchor chain of a ship was moving down into the blue water to the sandy bottom with a pleasant noise. Forty-two feet sailing catamaran «Dolce Dive» made its first stop at the western end of the Twin atoll, which was located in the most remote place from the coast of the Great Barrier Reef, called Swain. The weather forecast for the next week was just brilliant and all the passengers excitedly anticipated the upcoming dives on these Australian reefs that were almost unexplored by other divers. There were four friends on the ship – the Australian Josh and his young nephew Bob, the American Mike and the Russian diver Yegor. Different circumstances and ways brought them together to this distant place but more on that later. Among other things, the ship's crew had one dearest wish – to find an ancient shipwreck on these reefs.

The fact is that during the exploration of Australia, more than a thousand of various ships sank in the Great Barrier Reef area. So far, only a few dozen of them have been found.

Several years ago, Josh and Yegor became very interested in this fact and immediately started to explore maps of this part of the Great Barrier Reef. They studied currents of this area, winds and always tried to put themselves in the place of the captains who sailed long time ago in these waters without accurate maps and navigation instruments. They came to an interesting conclusion – the ships that sailed in bad weather in some areas of the Swain reefs had a little chance of surviving using only sails. In some places, the reefs were located almost in a chequer-wise pattern.

Sometimes they even created a sort of traps for big sailing ships in bad weather with poor visibility.

For better reliability, the friends made a small model of this area where one could clearly see the possible locations for shipwrecks. The only thing left was to put this theory into practice.

As it turned out later, almost no one dived earlier in these places before. Friends found only one description of an Australian diver – Tom Byron who made a dozen dives there more than twenty years ago. No more information about the underwater world of the Swain reefs was found.

As a result, the part of the Great Barrier Reef several thousand square kilometers, was in fact a white spot on the Australian diving map.

Of course, for many dozens and even hundreds of years the ships on the bottom became overgrown with corals. It will not be easy to recognize them among the living reefs - everything becomes overgrown with living creatures very fast in these warm waters. Therefore, it was necessary to be very attentive to the reefs of unusual form, especially to crosses. Such cross-shaped reefs can actually be an intersection of masts or any other structure of these ships. Nature does not create crosses of a regular shape - any cross is the work of human hands.

* * *

The Father watched his Land with a sad smile. How much had changed there over the last two thousand years! People were now flying in comfortable planes, living in beautiful apartments with all the modern conveniences, driving cars, frequently going on vacation in different parts of the world and always keeping in touch with each other, and monitoring all the news in the world. Of course, the Father did everything for the joy of his children on this Earth.

However, the development of human souls fell behind this external well-being. True love grew in them very slowly. Everyone talked about love

on Earth. However, mostly it was just empty talk. Love itself and the concept of it were heavily distorted. There was very, very little true love on Earth.

The Father looked up from Earth and looked around with warmth. So many nice and sincere children came here, to Heaven, over the last two thousand years! The coming of Jesus to Earth left a deep imprint there and helped many people to find the right way in life. However, today everything looked different, everything had changed.

The last one or two hundred years in the history of Earth have brought more changes into the external life of people than the previous seven thousand. The bad thing about it was that people began to serve their new way of living and often forgot about their souls.

The followers of His Son could not maintain unity in their ranks on Earth. Christianity itself had today many different branches which in some ways contradicted each other and sometimes even rejected each other. The passion of spiritual leaders of different years and eras did its job – Christianity was divided. Almost no one today remembered the former unity of Christians. Important words of His Son and teachings of His first followers were forgotten.

They quarreled over insignificant things and could not unify around the main thing that Jesus brought on Earth. It was ordinary people who suffered most from this. Today they often fail to figure out what is in fact true and where the true God is.

The Father sighed. Today His angelic world, little by little, in different ways, brought to people the truth that was once had already given to people by Him. Angels led their pupils on Earth since their childhood, through kind cartoons and good films, through useful books and kind people. Sometimes good and kind priests helped them. They still remained in different parts of the world and carried a spark of God's light and love in their hearts.

These were challenging times. Humanity fell into disbelief and atheism, meanwhile money and other Earthly goods were often becoming a new “god” for people.

Nevertheless, nobody gave up in Heaven. Love had to go through many trials on Earth over two thousand years. But it survived and was still cherished in many bright and kind hearts. The struggle for each light soul continued today.

* * *

It was Mike’s birthday and he was lying on a surfboard far away from the shore, thinking. Waves were really worse than ever but he was not upset. The morning sun sparkled happily on the water surface and that was quite enough for him. To be honest, Mike wanted to spend this morning far away from everyone and everything, alone with the sea and his thoughts. In fact, he had something to think about.

The past forty-five years changed a lot in Mike’s life - a lot, but not everything. Years did not touch his soul. He was still a hopeless romantic like many years ago. Mike tried to believe in a fairytale but, frankly speaking, all of his “fairytales” had either a banal or a sad ending. In addition, some of them, and this was the most unpleasant thing, for some reason did not want to end at all.

Mike ducked under a small wave crest and shook his head. Birthday...He knew in advance everything to the last detail about this day. He knew who would come today and he knew what everyone would say, and even knew what they would eat. He knew as well that many of these wishes would be said of habit. Ever since childhood, Mike’s soul had been very sensitive to every insincerity and he could not do anything about it.

Once, a jolly fellow said to him over beer in a bar: “Mike, try not to congratulate anyone for the whole year. The one who will come to your birthday after this is your true friend.”

Mike incredibly wished to try out this advice, but it was unacceptable here. This is unacceptable, that is unacceptable, this will not be understood, that is forbidden... Oh God, Mike was sick of all these formalities he had to follow in this life. No storm could make him that sick.

Many friends and acquaintances often envied him. He had all the things most of them were striving for: a nice house on the water, a beautiful wife, polite children, good business and even a large white yacht - the envy of all male neighbors. However, Mike was lying on his board and envied the merry twenty-year old guy who was swimming nearby. Some time ago, he also had such bright and happy face. He used to be that free and light-hearted.

If Mike really wanted a gift today, it would have to be a gift for his soul. Mike looked at the sky and sighed. He did not really believe so much in the God everyone around him was talking about. However, at the same time, Mike has never doubted that the Creator is actually real. Moreover, sometimes he addressed to Him.

And now, he looked at the sky and thought: “It would be nice if something suddenly changed in my boring life today. Hey, are You there? Hear me...’

Mike thought that and began to turn his board towards the shore – it seems that today he will have to swim again to come back. Suddenly, he saw a big wave and he rode it in style right to the shore. Mike smiled at heart to his first success of this morning and headed to his car. Then he took a shower and decided to check his smartphone - another gift that someone gave him for his last birthday.

There was only one message from his old friend from Australia – Josh. Mike liked scuba diving with him on some distant reefs from time to time. Josh was a very merry and light-hearted guy who sometimes liked to hide underwater from all these never-ending problems.

“Dear Mike! – The letter began. – One day we discussed a good idea of diving in some little-known places. My Russian friend Yegor and I are planning an interesting expedition to these reefs with a real chance to find a shipwreck there. If you are interested, please let me know. Sincerely, your friend Josh”.

When Mike finished reading this short message, his hands had already begun to shake with anticipation. Without a second of hesitation, he started typing a reply but soon he gave up on this artificial form of communication and pulled out a good old notebook from his bag where he found Josh’s phone number.

In half an hour, he was sitting on a sandy beach, smiling and looking at the sky. “I don’t know who You are, but I thank You for such a birthday gift,” thought Mike.

* * *

Yegor waited with philosophical patience for the end of these endless negotiations that he was now conducting. Maybe someone was interested in these never-ending gatherings where they discussed many ‘important’ issues on the upcoming construction, but he was not. Yegor yawned, but politely covered his mouth with a palm.

He was a director of a small construction company and now, they were conducting negotiations with a new client about next construction. Yegor helplessly sighed again. Of course, he had to earn money. His large family and numerous subordinates always had a surprisingly good and healthy appetite, and Yegor liked to feed them well. Well, what else could he do? Once, he gladly got into this attractive and tempting collar of a chief. And now, after all these years he only dreamed about the day when he could get out of it nice and quiet.

The negotiations finally came to an end. Yegor said goodbye to the guests and made a dived into the Internet. Yes, there was a message from Josh! His Australian friend sent new information about their

upcoming expedition to the Swain Reefs. That was the place of Yegor's soul and real life! Everything else was just the necessary means to turn these plans into reality.

One day when Yegor was eleven, he had a chance to scuba dive for the first time. Since then, the sea would not let him go. Yegor spent all his spare time travelling to various beautiful reefs. To be more independent in these places, Yegor honestly climbed the diver's ladder from an ordinary diver to the instructor. Now he had much more freedom in choosing places for diving.

His Australian friend Josh recently became a diving instructor as well. Considering the fact that Josh was a lawyer by profession, a rather rare hybrid swam underwater with Yegor. However, very kind and cheerful.

Yegor met him many years ago when he came to a law firm in Australia for advice. He really liked that tall and attractive Australian who was also a diver. Yegor was even more surprised when he found out that Josh often puts everything aside and travels alone to the desert for a week. Yegor sometimes also liked to hide in some wilderness from all these endless affairs, so he understood then, that the letter of Australian law did not leave a serious imprint on Josh's romantic soul.

Later, they became very close friends and often spent their vacations together with or without their families. Considering the fact, that both of them had painfully creative nature, it was not a surprise that over time they became interested in such an interesting project as the search for shipwrecks.

Yegor looked at his watch and dialed his home number. It was spring in Moscow and children had to go to school. That is why this time he was flying to Australia alone. However, his family usually spent the school holidays together on some interesting reefs. Yegor's wife Veronika and their children also liked diving and the underwater world. And they dived a lot with Yegor.

After calling his wife, Yegor immediately dialed the number of Singapore airlines that he knew by heart. The voice of an operator that he heard from the handset seemed to him the most beautiful voice in the world.

- One ticket to Brisbane, please – Yegor said a sacred password that opened a door into absolute freedom for a couple of months.

- There is one ticket for tomorrow, - he heard an absolutely correct “response” of the sweet-voiced operator.

* * *

Josh looked at the stars. They were always closer and brighter in the desert. He was lying on the roof of his trailer with a thermos of hot coffee and thinking. Nowhere else in the world could he think so clearly as here, in the wild desert, alone with the stars. However, recently he has started to enjoy thinking somewhere on the upper deck of a ship during his diving trips on distant reefs.

However, it had its own advantages and disadvantages. The main disadvantage was that he ran out of coffee twice as fast on these trips – his Russian friend and his diving fellow Yegor never refused a cup of coffee and generally did not take his sad eyes off Josh’s thermos. Of course, there were more advantages. Yegor was also a romantic and their endless conversations after diving often led them to such interesting places from where they did not want to go.

For example, they once decided to open a small diving center with an interesting direction. For divers’ amusement, they drove through remote Australian villages and bought old metal things – irons, old instruments, etc. They planned to drop all these stuff on the sea floor for a year or so, for overgrowing with corals, and then lay it on the way of their future guests – divers. Of course, they would dig them into the sand a little... It would not be nice to deprive them of the joy of their own discovery.

Josh and Yegor had already started collecting this old scrap metal, which later could turn out on the most honorable places in the homes of divers from the whole world but suddenly a new idea crossed their mind. All of a sudden, the friends decided to search for information about shipwrecks on the Great Barrier Reef of Australia. Very soon, it became obvious that they had to move in a different direction, and preferably not by car, but by a good ship.

Josh smiled at his memories and poured himself some coffee. After all, it feels good when no one is begging it from you, looking piteously with his innocent eyes! Josh made a sip and looked at the stars again. He always felt comfortable looking at them. He looked at them as a child, as a teenager and he was looking at them right now. Life around him flowed and changed but the stars always stayed the same.

Now, he was a respectable lawyer with a big family and a nice house. However, he could hardly say he was happier than before because of that. Of course, he loved his family very much and always took care of them. However, there was something very important in this world, something that did not depend on the environment, place or time. Something that his soul always needed. Needed so much that he began to suffocate without it.

That is why Josh has never stopped talking to the stars. No one could understand him as much as they did. Well, maybe only romantics like him could. And there were just two such romantics in his life – Yegor from Russia and Mike from California.

Josh was finishing his last cup of coffee when he suddenly realized that he was full. He shook his fist in the direction of Russia and finished his drink out of spite – it was his Russian friend, who'd made Josh's stomach smaller. But, to be honest, Josh would now be glad to see Yegor with his eternal thirst for coffee. Well, he and Mike would be here very soon and Josh would quickly regret this moment of weakness.

Josh looked at the stars for a few more minutes and then turned on his side. He had to come back in the morning...

* * *

Bob was bored. To entertain himself a little, he opened a magazine that was left by one of his guests yesterday. The magazine opened on a page with a description of some party in Sydney. Bob yawned.

Why are all these people try so hard showing their teeth in the photos? Sometimes it seemed that it was not a magazine that he was reading, but an advertising leaflet of some dentist. Bob tried to smile in the same way in front of the mirror and unwittingly shuddered. No way! He will smile as he wishes to.

Bob threw the magazine back on the table and accidentally knocked off an empty bottle of beer from the day before. After that, he looked out the window. Bright sun just ordered him to go out and run from this stuffy kennel. The guy quickly put on his t-shirt, took his inseparable phone and went into the yard. He walked down the alley, sat on a cozy bench in the shadow of a blooming tree and began to check his messages.

Kathy wrote that if he did not show up, he would not see her again. Bob broke into a broad smile. Apparently, his silence was precisely what awakened in the restless Katya the thirst for hunting him.

“Should I try answering her someday?” - Bob thought cheerily and opened another message.

His old school friends called him to some party with lots of girls in Brisbane. “Oh my God” – Bob thought and swiped the message.

The next one seemed interesting. His Uncle Josh from the Gold Coast wrote that he was going for a trip on a catamaran to the distant reefs. He invited Bob to join in warning him that cellular network might not be available there.

“That’s a good idea!” – Bob thought to himself. He returned to Kathy’s message, looked at her grumpy face for a second and immediately called his uncle.

“Distant reefs! That’s the place where no one can find me”, he thought joyfully. Besides, Bob always liked to travel with Uncle Josh who taught him how to sail a catamaran and scuba diving. Indeed, Josh was a cheerful and easy-going self-taught philosopher, just in Bob’s style.

After a conversation with his uncle, Bob strode cheerfully towards the sea. But then he suddenly felt guilty – he imagined how upset would Kathy be. He struggled with his conscience for several seconds and finally found a compromise. “I have to meet with her before I leave”, he thought, and having found harmony of the soul, he went on.

* * *

Seven snow-white angels were sitting on a beautiful shore of the Heaven Sea and talking to each other. Among them were angels that we know very well – Nias, Fiu and Asly, and new angels – Sain, Manif and Leyla who came to Heaven about two thousand years ago. The seventh angel was called Ikos. He was a former ward of Manif and came there not so long ago.

The angels talked about the difficulties their Father had to experience nowadays to lead people towards their happiness. Everything changed dramatically over the years. Only four out of seven angels now had their wards on Earth.

Angel Sain helped a romantic Australian Josh, angel Nias was always near a cheerful American Mike, angel Asly took care of a joyful Russian guy named Yegor. Merry angel Fiu did not take eyes off young Bob.

Since all the wards and angels themselves liked the sea very much, the Father allowed them to go for the expedition to the little-known Swain reefs. That was not surprising – the main romantic in the world was, of

course, the Father. That is why He helped his children to take a break for a couple of months from this sticky and restless civilization in such a beautiful place. Where there was nothing but the sea, the stars and the sea breeze. Where He was much closer to them.

What about shipwrecks? We'll see! Of course, He will give them something, if they do not forget about the stars there. If they do not get carried away too much with a treasure hunt, but remain cheerful and easy-going.

- That's right, my friends, it is not that easy for the Father today to lead the humans towards goodness, - Sain continued the conversation. – In our time, everything was different – almost everyone believed in God, and humans' life was so much easier and clearer. Few things could then distract us from the right thoughts and feelings.

- Exactly, - angel Nias supported him. – When I helped you two thousand years ago, you looked at the stars almost every night. You then thought about eternal, elevated things. Now on Earth, only movie stars attract people's attention. Only few look at the sky and even then not so often.

- That's fine, my friends, - angel Asly cheerfully got into the conversation. – Everything is not that bad. Right now, we are taking our wards to the distant reefs and there the Father will definitely come up with something. We shouldn't even complain about our wards – look at them, they are so kind and romantic. Conversations with other angels sometimes even scare me! Poor things, they try so hard to melt their wards' hearts in this cold and fussy world.

- That's for sure! – Cheerful Fiu caught up with the topic. – Our wards are just great! And the Father will think of something and push them in the right direction. He chose such a beautiful place! As if it was created for various unusual events and miracles. Maybe they will find a real treasure among this underwater scrap?

All the angels laughed at a witty joke of their friend and joyfully ran into the sea. By the way, there were no shipwrecks in Paradise, but no one has ever looked for sunken ships here either.

Chapter 2

Dots on the map

The beams of the rising sun played gaily on the surface of water. Josh, Mike and Yegor were sitting at the round table on the rear deck of the catamaran, drinking their morning coffee. Young Bob was still sleeping. Mike and Yegor had heard a lot about each other from Josh and, thus, got on rather quickly. Similar outlooks on life and common interests often draw people together. As for cheerful Bob, he seemed to like everyone around except for the worst bores.

So, that wonderful morning the divers welcomed away from all the earthly concerns. A detailed map of local reefs laid in the middle of the table with a great bunch of notes on it. From time to time, the friends idly looked at it and then hastily returned their sights to the igneous horizon. The map was useful at home, where it was like a window into the world of interesting plans. Here, it was much more enjoyable to look at the reefs themselves.

- Where do we start, my friends? - Josh's voice came at last.

Mike and Yegor looked up from the horizon and stared indignantly at the peace-breaker. But, soon remembering that he had also prepared them excellent morning coffee, they turned to the table at once.

- Well, to begin with, we need to plan our dives here, - as the most experienced diver in the group, Yegor was the first to open his mouth. It seems, he couldn't get away from his negotiation experience, however, now it had a much more pleasant shade of treasure hunting. - I suggest

we dive in pairs, changing all the time. This way, everyone will have the same level of nitrogen in the blood. Bob will rule the zodiac and pick the divers up from the water. The third person must stay on board to refill the diving tanks and for safety reasons.

Having thought it over, Mike and Josh nodded in agreement. All of the divers present had a skipper license and knew very well how to act in different circumstances.

- For starters, I also suggest limiting the depth of our dives to thirty meters, - Yegor continued. - At that depth we will be able to see clearly for another ten-fifteen meters below. There is no point in diving deeper to search for the ship. There we will need special equipment, which we do not have.

- Wouldn't it be better to limit the depth of our dives to twenty meters? - Mike, who was also an experienced diver, joined the conversation. By doing so, we could easily dive three times a day, since there will be less nitrogen in our blood. As a result, we would cover a bigger area in the same amount of time. And, frankly, it is much better to find a ship in a shallower place.

Josh and Yegor exchanged looks and nodded in agreement.

- From which reef will we start diving? - Josh asked once again as he moved the map to the center of the table.

Mike and Yegor looked at each other in perplexity and suddenly laughed as they realized that they were thinking about the same thing.

- Josh! Of course, we will start right here. - said Mike for the both of them. - First, let's look at the fish, clear our heads and further plans will come by themselves. Ideas love clear heads. Anyway, it does not matter where to dive here – all those reefs unexplored and no flipper of diver has ever touched them.

Yegor agreed with him and smiled.

- Which pair will go first today? – Mike asked his friends later and immediately suggested - Maybe we'll draw the good old lots?

No one objected. Josh quickly tore off two light pieces of paper and one dark piece from a half-empty pack of coffee. After that he put them in a big captain's cap – someone's gift for his birthday – and stretched it out first to Yegor, and then to Mike. They pulled out two light pieces of paper. Josh had a pleased smile – the law of Australian hospitality was fully observed.

Mike and Yegor finished their coffee and slowly began to prepare their equipment. Josh went to wake up his nephew.

* * *

Angel Glay watched with a smile as his ward Katie periodically hit and then kissed Bob's photo. This lasted the whole morning but it seemed that the energetic girl was not going to do something else today.

Indeed, the Father tightly tied her heart to that cheerful guy! But how can she learn to forgive without this thread? She'll just find someone else and that is all. So now sit here and keep on hitting his picture. But don't forget to kiss it sometimes, silly! After all, moments like that make you feel better. I hope one day you will understand that only your pride prevents you from being happy. I really hope so.

Little by little, Kathy began to calm down and kiss the photo more often than hit it. Finally, sighing blissfully, she smiled and put it under the pillow.

That's better, silly. Do not worry - he won't go away. He will swim for some time and come back. Should you scold him less, he will return even faster. The Father will take care of it – because only He is the master of people's hearts. He might tighten one screw in Bob's heart and Bob won't be able to live without you. But only good behavior is rewarded, dear Kathy.

The angel looked at the wall clock in Kathy's room and nodded with satisfaction. Today she whacked Bob's photo for four minutes less than last time. *Not bad, not bad.*

Gladya kissed Kathy's forehead. After that, the girl warmly sighed, took Bob's picture again from under the pillow and pressed it to her heart. The angel smiled at her and flew out the window. Birds greeted him outside with loud cheerful twittering.

* * *

Mike and Yegor swam along the reef slope overgrown with big fan-shaped corals. They felt easy and joyful at heart. Not every diver today can dive in the place where nobody else ever dived. Only the fishes and some other sea animals had seen this reef before. And, of course, God who created it.

The friends did not hurry, why would they do that? Among all this heavenly beauty, all they wanted was to enjoy it and fill their souls with some childish delight. Multicolored schools of small fish surrounded some of the corals like bright clouds. The sunlight penetrating under the water cheerfully played and gleamed on sandy parts of the seabed. Sometimes, larger fish swam past the divers: various types of tuna, groupers and small reef sharks.

Once a huge black skate swam past them. Its slow wave movements were in harmony with the general rhythm of this reef. No one was in a hurry here. Well, maybe just several fishes that sometimes escaped from the teeth of their larger neighbors. And then, peace and tranquility was restored over the reef again.

Mike and Yegor swam to the southern end of the reef end and saw an entrance to some large grotto. They turned on their flashlights and moved inside. Beams of light snatched incredibly beautiful and colorful pieces of underwater life from the darkness. A huge giant grouper who,

apparently, was the host of this cave, became a little confused and gave them way. Perhaps, Mike and Yegor looked like bubbling aliens.

Suddenly, they saw the light glimmering around the next corner. Mike and Egor guessed that there was a second exit from this underwater cave. They swam towards it, sometimes swimming through clouds of small fish. The darkness was disappearing with every move of their flippers and very soon the friends were near the wide exit from the underwater cave.

Here the friends stopped as on cue - a giant manta ray circled around the cave entrance. Like a big plane, it performed aerobatic maneuvers in front of the divers. Actually, it was just hunting for plankton and small fish that harbored there in abundance. However, the friends liked to imagine that Neptune himself organized a beautiful ballet for their visit to the reef.

The divers sat solemnly and gratefully in the front row of the underwater cinema and began to watch the performance.

* * *

- So, gentlemen! – Josh began. He looked especially solemn in the rays of the setting sun. – We are going to make a plan of our future dives on these reefs. Any suggestions?

Yegor, Mike and Bob looked at each other and thoughtfully propped up their heads with their fists. For the next few minutes, one could only hear the sound of waves hitting the shipside. Finally, Yegor raised his head and looked at his friends.

- Dear novice treasure hunters! – He began in Josh's style. – What do you think about intuition?

- I think that is a very good thing, - Mike immediately responded.

- I don't think I would have survived without it, - Josh philosophically added.

Bob nodded too. He probably did not even know the meaning of this word, but a true Australian would never spoil the company.

- Great! –summarized Yegor. – I will not take a single step without it either. Besides, there is one interesting word in Russian language – *avos*'. A foreigner can only understand its meaning after a bottle of vodka. Speaking seriously, it means that a person hopes for something illogical or even sometimes the opposite of common sense. It's strange, I agree, but in Russia it seems to be working and that's why it is quite popular there.

Yegor waited until his friends stopped laughing and continued.

- So, we have only one paper map. However, there is also an electronic copy. I suggest each of you intuitively mark ten places that seem promising to you from the point of view of searching for sunken ships.

Yegor took a sip of juice and finished his speech.

- Well, and after that we will compare these maps. Maybe something interesting will come out of it.

Other friends at the table looked at each other. They had obvious interest and curiosity in their eyes.

- I like it! – Mike answered first. Then added, changing the sound of a new Russian word in a funny way: *Avos*. Hmm ... Before that, I had only heard about "Russian roulette". I hope this is something luckier. Anyway, it means either wasted twenty minutes or something curious.

- I'm in too! – said Josh. – Of course, it's unusual but there is a flavor of mystery in it. At least, it's fun.

- And what about you, Bob? – Yegor asked the guy.

Bob gave an affirmative answer in a cool Australian slang and raised his finger high.

- Let's go then! – Josh summed up and moved to the computer to make copies of the map for all participants of the game codenamed *Avos*.

The angels were happy. Today the Father managed to lead his “treasure hunters” in the right direction. The Russian word *avos* that Yegor remembered at the appropriate time really helped them. That was a good start and could actually bring these dreamers to some more serious discoveries in the future.

- Great job, Asly! – Angel Nias complimented his friend. – You put that *avos* in Yegor’s head at the right moment when he was holding it on his fist.

- Yes, it was quite difficult, - Asly responded laughingly. – Russians sometimes have very hard heads.

- But they can keep these thoughts well in such heads, - Fiu went on with the joke. – This word has been in Russian language for centuries and people still use it there.

The angels burst out laughing.

- Well, now we should push them in this direction, - Nias said after a pause.

- The Father will think of something, - Sain joined the conversation. – The guys will find something very interesting in their decision to follow intuition.

- I think, the Father has already thought something up, - angel Fiu said. – And we have to listen to Him carefully, as usual, and convey it to our wards.

- That’s right! The Father’s beautiful solutions always fascinate me, - angel Sain smiled.

- Tell me about it! – Asly said laughingly. – When He told me about *avos*, I immediately realized that it could work.

After that, the angels stood up.

- Well, my friends, - Nias cheerfully said to the angels. – Let's fly to Earth and help our romantics correctly put the dots on the map!

The angels laughed, and those who had the wings flapped their wings.

- I love this job! – Fiu said in flight and smiled.

* * *

Four pairs of eyes peered into the computer screen with interest when Josh summarized the information. He put the dots of all participants on one map and in ten minutes finished the job. Now there were exactly forty dots on the screen. Many of them were scattered but it was obvious even at first glance that the dots of the participants of the *Avos* game were very close to each other in three places. Moreover, there were four dots in two places and three dots in one place. No other close matches were found on the map.

- Well, what can I say? We do not have perfect matches but three places obviously deserve special attention, - said Josh after several minutes.

- I agree, - Mike picked up his thought. – If we decide to follow the *Avos* plan, we should start diving right in these places.

- Gentlemen! – Yegor joined the conversation. – Even if these coincidences are just rubbish, we will not be at ease until we check these places. Besides, we need to start somewhere anyway.

- I have never imagined that serious men could engage in such nonsense, - Bob added with a laugh. – But I absolutely enjoy it. Just like a new super game in 10D format.

- Our life is nothing but a game, dear Bob, and precisely in this format! – Uncle Josh said to his nephew, meaningfully raising his forefinger.

Bob liked him for such philosophy.

- Which place do we visit first? – Mike asked his friends.
- I suggest a place with three dots. All good restaurants serve a small salad first and the main dish comes only after that, - Yegor suggested with a smile.
- Accepted! – Josh, who liked a good meal, agreed. – Besides, this place is almost on our way. Just a couple of miles aside.

While the friends sat in front of the computer, the sun finally went down. Now the beautiful starry sky was shining in all its glory. The friends returned to the table on the rear deck and looked at this beauty in silence for several minutes.

- The stars somehow remind me of the dots on our map, - Josh finally suggested a romantic version.
- That's right, - Yegor agreed. - And in some places stars are concentrated more. Maybe there are also some treasures, as well?
- There probably are, - Mike made a small contribution to the overall romantic mood and then brought everyone back to the ground. – Well, that is something we'll never be able to check. Let's go to bed.

All the friends smiled. After a quarter of an hour, they went to their cabins. They planned to make an early passage to a new place the next day.

In Heaven, the angels of the romantics also smiled widely. Their wards just had brilliant ideas today.

* * *

The Father smiled from Heaven while looking at the cute divers who were sitting in front of the computer with an opened map.

Intuition... It's great that they learn to trust it. After all, this is the direct relationship connection to Him. And sometimes it can be pure, very

pure. All the angels in Heaven always hear His voice correctly. When they have to make some decision, they have no doubts about it. That happens because they have a very pure soul and live in kindness and love.

People can hear the Father's voice all the time. Heartfelt poetry, scientific discoveries and beautiful music – all of this is coming from Him. The Father always shares with His good children everything they ask for. And even if some children are far away from Him, He still cares for them. Moreover, if they try to find Him during their earthly life, or at least move towards kindness and love, then the Father will respond with special joy to many of their desires.

After all, it is His great joy is to enjoy the success and happiness of His children. There is nothing difficult about it. Even the Earthly loving parents are always happy about the success of their children and need nothing but children's love. The joy of the Heavenly Father is a million times purer and brighter.

And, of course, the Father always helps His children to take the right steps and act correctly in different situations. All over the world people give different names to the ability to hear the Father's voice. Our romantic friends liked the word "intuition".

The Father smiled. Indeed, today they found another good word – *avos*. In essence, it meant trusting something beyond the Earthly rules; but in reality, they trusting Him again.

Of course, everything in this world comes from Him and returns to Him, that's for sure. But how pleasant it feels when you are surrounded by many nice, kind and loving children. True children of the Father, about whom He always takes special care.

Everyone can hear intuition - that is His voice on Earth. This is like the main radio wave there. It can be clearly heard if a person has the right "antennas" to pick it up. The less a person is sunken into the fuss; the

kinder and calmer he is, the higher his antenna is to hear the Father's voice clearly. And vice versa.

The Father smiled and looked again at the dots on the map. Indeed, his romantics were purified by the sea and had very good “antennas”. They were very close.

The Father laughed again and remembered their *Avos* plan. Oh, these kids, how many names they have already given Me!

*The text below is being corrected.
Improved version coming soon.*

Chapter 3

Everyday life of treasure hunters

Bob cooked breakfast. He was eager to be helpful on the ship and yesterday convinced his uncle to let him cook spaghetti for breakfast, a dish that he himself loved very much. When Josh asked him whether he knew how to cook it, Bob only gave a confident nod. In fact, only had a recipe save in the phone but Bob was sure that it was the same.

Bob opened a file called “Spaghetti carbonara” and got down to business. He followed in detail every step of the recipe and began to think that he would be a perfect cook. There is a rumor that they earn a lot, but their job - big deal! – is to follow the instructions and add the ingredients in the right order and in proper time.

The guy had a first doubt about this profession when the oil on a frying pan suddenly broke into flames. Bob extinguished it quite quickly by covering the pan with a lid. The second doubt appeared when he ripped the spaghetti off the sides and bottom of the pot during the stirring. However, Bob bravely coped with these insignificant problems and breakfast was served at six-thirty on the dot.

Cheerful friends came from their cabins in anticipation of their first dive in search of shipwrecks. Of course, after a short passage and a delicious breakfast.

- What do we have for breakfast today? – Mike asked first and sniffed the air.

- Spaghetti carbonara – Josh replied proudly instead of Bob and added – And the performer is my dear nephew!

Bob stood near the stove, happy and blushing, and tried very hard to look indifferent to the high praise.

- Oh, really! – Yegor said surprised by the words of Josh. – Well, many people can follow the example of Australia. I am forty-eight and still cannot cook properly.

Bob's heart skipped a beat again. The divers sat down.

- Well, Bob, uncover the pot. – Mike solemnly proclaimed and pulled the lid of the pot. But it wouldn't open... Apparently, pieces of spaghetti got stuck between the pot and its lid and firmly glued it. Bob used some more efforts; the lid gurgled and finally opened a way to the dish.

- It smells strange, - said Yegor, who was sitting near the pot, and added - it seems that Russian recipe is a little bit different.

Josh was ready to lay out the dish and was first to dive his fork into the pot. After that, he began to twist the spaghetti on it. The other divers could clearly see how muscles ripple under his skin. The fork wouldn't twist at all..

- Bobby, - he addressed gently to the nephew, gradually increasing the force, - how long ago have you cooked spaghetti?

- Right now, - the guy answered, gradually losing his interest in the profession of a cook.

- And before that? – Uncle Josh asked even more gently and finally pulled the lump of spaghetti from the pot.

- Well, I sa-aw the mother cooking and read the recipe, - the guy replied slowly, syllable by syllable, and couldn't take his eyes off the big piece of food on his uncle's fork.

- I see, - Josh sighed, began to cut Bob's spaghetti like a bread on his plate, and dished it out to his friends.

- Pour some more sauce, gentlemen! – He instructed everyone at the same time. – More sauce.

Nobody talked during the breakfast. The friends fostered their efforts to unstick their jaws. Sometimes they smiled to Bob in order to support him and show that everything was not that bad.

* * *

Jesus sat next to the Father and looked at earth where He once lived and that he left two thousand years ago. The life of people has changed so much! Only human souls remained untouched since that time, each of which seeks happiness and love. Seeks, but seldom finds.

This is despite hundreds of “recipes” for happiness that humanity invented over the long history. A soul needs not hundreds but only one reliable and time-tested way given by God and Creator for all these souls. And people lost and distorted that very way. In a greater or lesser degree.

Jesus sighed. He did not know back then that people could distort so much the truth that He gave them. Nowadays people preach such odd and bizarre ideas from His name! And all of that “grew out” from his words about love and forgiveness, about honesty and mercy, about faith and kindness. He did not mention anything that would be difficult to understand.

How much violence has been done over these years by people hiding behind His name? These people, probably, have never read the Gospel with His words. It is not surprising that only few people today trust such

His “followers”. In fact, whom should you trust? There are dozens of them today and each of them interprets His teachings differently.

It is difficult, very difficult for ordinary people to find a right way in all this confusion. They had better take His words and simply read them, but there is another problem – they cannot take their eyes off the screens of TV sets, computers, and phones. Sometimes they do not even have time to look at the nature. There is no place for miracles and eternal life. It is like a fairytale to them.

That is why they rush in search of happiness in places where it has never existed. And earthly life is passing by... The life that was given to them with one and only purpose – to find one’s own happiness, love and eternal life afterwards. Very short life...

In reality, everything is so simple. A body needs food for life, and human’s soul needs love for happiness. A soul cannot be happy without it. And He told people about things that lead to love two thousand years ago. Many things were forgotten or distorted which is even worse. Sometimes it is better to stop and not to go rather than going in the opposite direction. Therefore, you will not have to return.

- Yes, Father, - Jesus smiled sadly. – Back then in Jerusalem only Pharisees led people to the opposite direction, and now I can hardly count the false paths. It is not easy to find the truth for people today.

- No more complicated than usual, son, but there is too much confusion on earth these days. I’m sure we will think of something. Not a single soul that seeks us will be forgotten, not a single kind person will be forsaken. – The Father looked warmly on earth and smiled. – Make no doubt about it.

* * *

Fresh southeast wind blew this morning. The friends quickly weighed anchor and set the sails. The trip to their next stay could take more than

two hours, so Mike and Yegor pulled out spinning rods for fishing in order to pass the time efficiently. Bob was interested and sat down next to them and Josh sailed the catamaran and could only give advice at that time.

There is nothing tastier in sea voyages than fresh well-cooked fish. Besides, friends had to clear off the aftertaste left after Bob's spaghetti that apparently was not the best one. We shall not call it "carbonara" out loud, otherwise, Italy would declare war on us.

So, our friends attached the biggest blinkers on their spinning rods and threw them into the water. Yegor said a phrase from Russian fairytale: "Let big and small fish be caught", thought for a moment and added: "Of course, big is better".

The sea was calm this morning and the fishermen sat at the table. They were drinking delicious green tea and sometimes watched their spinning rods sticking out of ship's boards. Fish always bites when you least expect it. Mike's fishing reel began to crack when he reached the climax of his brand new American joke. He apologetically looked at his friends and rushed to his spinning rod. Bob and Yegor came closer too and began to watch with interest what was happening.

Apparently, the fish on the hook was not small because Mike's spinning rod bent sometimes in a steep arc. In three minutes, the friends could distinguish the fish's shadow in the water, quite big as well. For another ten minutes, Mike either pulled the fish closer to the ship or slacked the line. After all, everything ended well and soon a large and tasty wahoo fish jumped on the deck.

Everyone congratulated Mike on his first success. After that, the senior divers loudly began to discuss the best dish and sauce for wahoo fish. For some reason, Bob did not take part in that conversation. It seems that he will not be interested in the art of cooking for the near one hundred years.

After that, Yegor's fishing reel began to crack loudly. He quickly picked it up and tried to pull up the fish too. However, the fish on the other side of the line was too big – the reel continued to unwind. Strong jerks of the reel made Yegor think that he caught not a fish but a submarine. At one of these jerks the fishing line broke.

Yegor silently said goodbye to the blinker and a big fish and began to restore his spinning rod. In twenty minutes, he put a new line out and kept saying that phrase in various manners: "Let big and small fish be caught. A big one, of course, is better, but let it be twenty kilos or so, not bigger".

* * *

For a long time Josh was looking for sandy bottom for the ship to stop – a true captain-diver is always trying to save the corals. Finally, anchor noisily went underwater and friends slowly began setting out for diving. It was the first place out of three ones marked on the map. There the dots of their unusual *Avos* plan were most scattered. That is why the friends were going to make several dives in that area.

Mike and Josh were the first to go underwater. Yegor parked himself on a rear deck of the catamaran with his friend's thermos. The friends still could not figure how to drink coffee underwater, that is why for one hour thermos was in full possession of the Russian coffee addict.

Soon the two fully equipped divers got into the Zodiac and Bob put off the ship. Yegor waved them goodbye from the rear deck with a hand free of thermos. The way to the place of their first dive was short and took only two or three minutes – Josh managed to park the catamaran very close to the divers' places of interest. Soon, the divers were on the spot and Mike and Josh somersaulted overboard together on Bob's command.

The visibility underwater was very good that day. The friends slowly swam down along the reef slope to the appropriate depth and then swam

with the current. The divers didn't forget for a minute about their treasure hunt – they were carefully looking at large detached reefs, trying to understand if they were overgrown parts of some shipwreck or not. However, even their violent fantasy could not help them to see anything resembling a ship's shape.

However, they were not disappointed by the underwater life around them. They saw so much on the reef for that hour! Several turtles, one of which swam close to the divers for several minutes, a couple of reef sharks, one grey nurse shark that looked very serious but was not dangerous at all, and many other things. The corals here were very beautiful and vivid too.

At the end of the dive, Mike and Josh swam on a beautiful sandy bottom among coral hills and stopped there. Five large and graceful leopard sharks swam over the field. Despite their famous predatory name, they are absolutely harmless. And now their beautiful long tails swayed gracefully in the water and fused into a single unique sea dance.

Mike pulled out his camera from a pocket and took several pictures. After that, Josh slowly swam out to the middle of the field. The largest shark, which did not even have normal teeth, moved towards a new visitor – either out of curiosity or simply to check whether he will be afraid or not? Josh, who was a father of four children, wasn't scared at all. Apparently, the shark realized that soon, turned around in one meter from him and swam away, taking away the other members of its "leopard" school.

Josh stayed in the middle of the field and thought what else to do. He sprawled for some time on beautiful bottom sand, then the friends checked the air in their balloons and sent a beacon to the surface – it was time to come to the surface.

* * *

Angel Sain looked lovingly at his ward Josh. He knew how it felt. Once upon a time, long ago, he was a human too. Sometimes he felt sad, sometimes he felt happy, sometimes he tried to find the meaning of life. And he succeeded.

It was so long ago. Now everything has changed. His Josh dedicated fifteen years of his life to the studies. The whole village where Sain lived studied less than Josh himself. Nowadays, many people on earth live like that. However, all that knowledge has little value in Heaven. These “goods” are valuable only for a short human life though, frankly speaking, it is not always so. It does not lead people to happiness, joy and love— quite the contrary.

It is very easy to miss the main thing because of that. One does not need knowledge for that. Humanity reads many books of the authors who had no education, however, these books have travelled throughout many centuries. The point is that knowledge and happiness have only one source – the Father. If you find Him in your heart, you will find everything you need. And by using your head, you can find only a part of it that is not really essential for happiness.

Sain smiled. If only these nice people knew, close to what they are going from morning until evening and live arm-in-arm. One day they will all find out. Several times Josh managed to touch such blessing and these were the brightest moments, which he would never forget.

One way or another, everyone is always looking for happiness in this life. Happiness is the ultimate purpose of everything that a person does. However, the true happiness is hidden inside of us. This is our soul itself, if it is clean, free of all passions, and full of love. Nothing on earth can be compared to the happiness that comes from a pure and loving human heart.

Once, when angel Sain was a human, he discovered this happiness inside of him. He discovered it and was astonished how simple the Father’s world was. Now most of all he wanted Josh and all other people

to understand that too. What a joy – every day is like a holiday and these holidays last forever. The Father gave this possibility to all His children, to everyone without exception.

Sain lovingly looked at Josh who was ruling the catamaran now. “Rule, my dear Josh. But rule in the right direction”, - he thought warmly.

* * *

- Uncle! – Bob addressed to Josh when threw overboard another bone of the meat. – What will other divers think when one day they discover this bone on a distant reef?

- My dear Bob, - uncle answered with a smile. – It depends on a person who discovers it. For example, if it is a famous anthropologist, he will make a coherent theory about flocks of sheep that were feeding there many years ago. Maybe, he will even be awarded for that. Or, for instance, if a pretty blonde girl finds it, she will nag at her husband the whole evening because the only thing that they are eating for the whole week is fish.

- And if you Uncle Josh sees it, - Mike added cheerily. – He will throw it even deeper to relieve everyone from overthinking.

After that, his friends burst out laughing and Mike threw the bone far into the sea.

- Actually, it is very strange. How it is possible that people see the same thing but make different conclusions? – Bob continued his philosophical meditations and unwittingly remembered Kathy.

- Different indeed, - Yegor, who did not through the bones into the sea but put them in a beautiful pyramid on a napkin, joined the conversation. – It is much harder to find those who make the same conclusions. All our knowledge about the world, about everything that surrounds us is like spyglasses. We look through them on our world. Everyone has his own spyglass.

- Do you think that people never have the same spyglasses? – Josh asked him with curiosity.

- No, never, - Yegor replied. – People cannot acquire the knowledge that is absolutely the same, there are always differences, and that means different perceptions. However, sometimes there are other cases. Sometimes you can just drop these spyglasses. After that, people begin to see the world in the same way but it is not about their knowledge – it is about some other things. By the way, it includes intuition as well.

- How do you know that? – Mike asked him with interest.

- I do not know, - Yegor answered. – I just see it that way. Maybe, it is even better that I do not know. Who knows, maybe another spyglass would appear.

- Mmm... - Josh mumbled with a wise air, reaching out the cupboard to get some wine. – It seems that one cannot understand Russian *avos* without a bottle of alcohol.

- That is right – Yegor answered contently and took out the glasses from the other cupboard door. – Russia drinks because it feels so much!

* * *

Angel Blos dipped his brush made of fluffy feathers into the paint and made another brushstroke on canvas. His work was almost done. Friends of Blos – angels Anrie and Maty sat nearby, cheerily talked to each other and watched Blos's work. At last, the final brushstroke was made and their friend put the brush down.

- That's it! – he said and turned towards his friends.

- Perfect! – Angel Maty who also liked drawing replied and then added, - but I think, my dear Blos, that it's time to change your brush.

The angels laughed loudly. The point was that one bird has been pulling the feathers out of its tail for Blos's brushes for many years but only

when Blos drew it in some corner of his picture. Nothing else could persuade the bird to sacrifice its feathers. Blos smiled and sighed. He took his brush again.

- Well, it likes to be in my picture, - he said gladly, quickly drew a bird on the canvas and explained, - but it likes to be drawn alone. Once I drew a whole flock of these birds and thought that it would give me more feathers, but in the morning, I saw only one feather in front of the picture.

While Blos's friends were laughing at this news, he put the paints away and sat next to them.

- Do you know, - Maty asked him, - that the wards of our friends Nias, Sain and Asly are looking for a shipwreck somewhere on the distant reefs in Australia?

- No way! – Blos could only say. – One can rarely find that on earth. I am sure that this trip will be for their good. In such remote places, people always hear the Father's voice in their hearts better.

- Oh, I am so happy for them! – Angel Anrie smiled and saddened at the same time. – And it does not matter what I do with my wards – he spends the whole days in front of a computer and thinks only about money. That does not surprise me - it is all that he sees every day. I can hardly send him on vacation once a year!

- That is right, it is difficult for the Father today to reach people's minds when they cannot take off their eyes of computers' screens, - Blos agreed. – It would be fine if they see there something good or useful, but they usually see either bad news or silly advertisements.

- Well, I will be trying to drag him on – Anrie said. – He is good and kind inside, but cannot understand this life even though he is in his late forties already. In some twenty years, he will anyway have to leave everything. Still he thinks only about goods. And doesn't even think of his soul. I feel so sorry for him...

Anrie's eyes filled with tears.

- Don't be sad, my friend, - Blos hugged him. – Maybe the Father can give you some advice. Just keep trying to wake him up.

- Well, Anrie, - Angel Maty told him sadly. – So it goes, today is hard times. The Father gave people the right to choose the life that they like. We can only give them advice.

- I know, dear Maty, - Anrie replied. – But I want so much for him to be happy. And there is no happiness in the place where he always sits.

- All right, my friend, enough with sad topics. Time is passing by and the Father does not sleep. He will come up with something, - Blos stood up. – And now, let's fly and visit Nias and Sain and swim in the sea together? It has been a long time since I have ridden this underwater geyser.

Angels smiled again and soon flapped their wings.

* * *

The second bottle on the table was almost finished when Mike and Josh began to understand something. As for Bob, he drank beer and was not really interested in philosophical issues.

- Your country is so unusual, - Mike said thoughtfully. – You do many things in a different way.

- Right you are, - Yegor agreed. – Sometimes even I understand nothing. Well, today, to be honest, it is boring in Russia, but in the old days... Everything was different in Russia in former times.

- What happened before?

- Earlier, honor was in favor in Russia. Women had even schools for noble maidens. Many people in those days would rather lose their life than mackle this honor.

- And now? – Josh asked him.

- And now Russia is like a market, - Yegor replied sadly. – And the word “honor” has almost lost its value. Nowadays, many people think that it is an unnecessary oddity that hinders to earn more money.

- But this happens not only in Russia, - said Mike. – I think, today you can observe such situation in all countries. Anyway, you really need to earn money, don't you?

- No doubt, - Yegor replied and suddenly smiled. – But there is one interesting thing. In the Russian language, a person who has a lot of money is called *bogatiy* (“rich”). And the funny thing about that is that the word *bogatiy* does not have the root *dengi* (“money”). It has the root *Bog* (“God”).

It took five minutes for Yegor to explain this thought to his friends. After that, Josh immediately reached for the bottle.

- Yegor, you know what! We will drink ourselves to death with your Russian language, - Mike said laughingly. – However, that is a really interesting word.

- I am interested in that too, - replied Yegor. – I think our ancestors knew much better what true richness meant but that knowledge did not reach our times.

- *Bogatiy* and *Bog*! – Mike said unusually slowly as if he was trying to remember something, - I heard that before... Wait a second!

Mike jumped up quickly from his chair and rushed towards his cabin. In a minute, he came back with one greenback in his hands. The friends looked at him with interest.

- Do you see what is written here? – he asked and showed an inscription on a well-known bank note.

- In God we trust, - Josh read the inscription that he hadn't even noticed before. – Mmm...Richness and God again, gentlemen. Well!

- And money with that inscription is the most common in the world now,
- Yegor slowly echoed, - well, new points to ponder.

- I think that is all not only about money, - Mike broke on. – I doubt that God needs an inscription without its meaning. America has long been a country with honest elections and absolute freedom for all the citizens ~~long since~~. That is all – His ground rules.

- *Bogatiy* and *Bog*...I think Yegor is right, our ancestors knew much more about true richness, - Josh said and suddenly changed the topic, - Do you believe in God, Yegor?

- I believe but I am not sure in which God I believe, - Yegor said. – Since childhood, I have been sure that there is something greater and ~~more important~~ and I have been always straining after that. Sometimes I like to stand alone in some old temple. There are plenty of them in Russia. There you always feel something unusual, something above the time. I cannot explain more precisely. I also tried to go to a divine service for a couple of times. However, I did not understand much – priesthood uses the Old Russian language and it is a little more understandable than Chinese for me.

The friends smiled and proposed a toast to a new and interesting Russian word – *bogatiy*.

- I have almost the same thing, - Josh said after a pause. – My parents were moderately religious people and I have been sure since childhood that God is real. At the same time, I felt that He is different in some way.

- Yup, it seems that we have a lot in common in that issue, - Mike joined in the conversation. – I still cannot meet the God whom I feel inside of me. But He is real. He sent me here for my birthday.

Mike looked at his friends' eyes round with astonishment and told them a story from his recent past. Suddenly, Bob broke on the conversation.

- Hey, friends! Do you know what time it is? Someone was going to dive at dawn tomorrow...

- Wow, it's eleven o'clock already! – Josh was surprised when he glanced at his watch. – Let's go to sleep, gentlemen. It seems that we can spend a week discussing this topic.

The friends stood up.

- What a strange language! Why do you have to understand each word with a bottle of stiff drink, - Mike grumbled throwing two empty bottles in a bucket. – Now I understand why everyone drinks in Russia. It turns out that they are just trying to understand their language better.

Chapter 4

First findings

Josh and Yegor swam along the coral shoal. They were about to finish their dive. It was their last dive in that area and afterwards “Dolce-dive” had to heave up the anchor and move further into the Swain atoll. The friends have not found any signs of shipwrecks here yet but beautiful underwater life of local reefs compensated that fact over and above.

They have seen so many things under water during these days! They met huge flocks of different fish, many kinds of sharks, dozens of turtles, and, of course, mantas. There was plenty of these graceful underwater beauties in these places.

Now they saw three large mantas circling over the same place in the end of the reef. Josh and Yegor swam very close to them and lay down on the bottom. Apparently, mantas were not afraid at all, quite the contrary – sometimes they played with air bubbles coming from the divers.

Yegor enthusiastically took pictures of that beautiful “trio” with his underwater camera, and Josh captured them on video. The divers took pictures of mantas from every side, put away their equipment and lay on the bottom. They continued to enjoy the performance because it was

impossible to get tired. Suddenly, Yegor remembered one story that he once heard from one experienced diver. The diver assured him that if one makes some wave motions in water with a hand, mantas become interested and sometimes swim closer.

Considering the fact, that they had plenty of air in the balloons, it was the right moment to prove this story. Yegor began to wave with his hand in water trying to do that with grace and the right speed. The closest manta was quite interested and squinted its eyes. It has never seen such an underwater “relative”, for sure.

Yegor did his best and saw out of the corner of his eye that Josh was bubbling with laughter. Yegor used his second hand in order to convince the mantle that he is its “relative” indeed. Josh produced even more bubbles. However, in a minute the mantles came closer. “There we have it!” – Yegor thought and made his movements even more graceful. He did not pay attention to Josh’s bubbles anymore.

Soon it became apparent that the mantas were not afraid at all. Yegor mentally thanked the experienced diver and tried to exploit the success. Listening to his heart, he pushed off the bottom and swam around the mantas. Josh stopped laughing but his eyes in the mask were of the same size as the glasses. “I’d better translate for him the Russian proverb: He laughs best who laughs last”, - this thought floated in Yegor’s mind, but he decided to save wine for more serious translations.

Meanwhile, the mantas saw this bubbling wing-handed creature and swam aside but, at the same time, they did not take their eyes off Yegor. As for Yegor, he tried not to give himself away and rhythmically waved his hands, swimming around the same place. It worked out – the most curious manta cautiously moved to its old place and the other mantas followed it. Soon, a mixed group of mantas and divers was circling above Josh. He could only film this unusual “circle dance”.

Perhaps, it would last for a long time, but boasting was Yegor’s undoing. After several minutes of “schooling” life, he wanted to show a

new swimming style to his counterparts – the “eagle” style. To do that, Yegor proudly and sharply lifted his head during one swipe like an eagle and...

Either a ringing sound of a Russian diver hitting a cylinder valve or a waterfall of bubbles from Josh who was choking with laughter scared the mantas and they swam away. Yegor thought through the pain in the back of his head that today everything was pretty good, but the eagle style was obviously unnecessary.

* * *

Paisius came to the Father. It has been several years since he left earth, his admirable Greece. Today people on earth canonized him. Justice of God was done. At the same time, he has already been among God's most faithful and beloved children.

- Hello, My dear Paisius! – The Father warmly greeted him. – I am so glad to see you! Today people have glorified you on earth. I congratulate you with all my heart!

- Thank You, - Paisius replied modestly. – However, You know that all my glory is just a weak reflection of Your glory.

- I know, I know – the Father replied with laughter. – By the way, don't you know how pleasant it is for me when people on earth glorify My best children?

Paisius smiled.

- I can only guess.

- I feel very pleased, My dear! – The Father said and continued with a serious tone. – Moreover, you have left earth not so long ago and all the books about you and miracles connected to you can be very beneficial. People desperately need a living faith and understanding of what to do with this life. And you even gave them sound recordings with useful instructions. Nothing of the kind happened to the holy men before.

- Yes, Father. You made so many miracles through me. Thank You so much! – Paisius smiled. – Today there are many books on earth dedicated to this and my life on Mount Athos.

- This is very important, My dear. Nowadays, people just need to touch something real and modern. Their faith became so weak over last years. They got used to the old miracles and have no more interest in them. Perhaps, the miracles that were seen by people living on earth now will help them?

The Lord looked at the blue planet with hope.

- I wish that so much...

- We all wish that so much, Father, - Paisius said. – All that fuss of the modern world overcasts the most important part of their life. Without this part a short human soul has no meaning at all...

- Today people choose such life themselves even though they have so much evidence about Me and Heaven, - The Lord reminded him. – They are My children and they are completely free in their choices. It has always been and will be that way. I respect their choice even though I do not agree with it. Besides, I want to have true and loving children next to Me. It will be difficult for them to love and respect Me if I don't respect them first.

Paisius bowed his head to Him.

- Thank You for such high attitude to us!

* * *

At diner in the evening, the friends cheerfully remembered all interesting events of the last dives in these places. Josh's story about Yegor's recent attempt to become a relative of mantas was several times interrupted by bursts of laughter of Mike, Bob, and Yegor himself. Fish baked in a special way was steaming on the table. It was a snapper

caught by Mike when his friends were underwater. There was no wine on the table because Yegor did not touch upon the Russian language today.

After dinner, friends came out to the ship's rear deck at an easy pace holding cups of green tea. Starry sky above them sparkled again in all its beauty. They did not want to talk about banal things standing under it.

- I am still trying to understand, - Mike slowly began to speak looking now at the sky, then at his cup, - what is the point of this life? Today I have everything that I have wished before. My family, a good job, a house, even a yacht. However, I cannot say that I am happy because of all that. But when I swim on my board at sea I feel some right notes in my soul. They make me feel strong; they fill me with joy and harmony for the whole day. How come?

- The question about the meaning of life is as old as this world, - Josh replied with a smile, - perhaps, everyone asked this question to himself at least once in his life. But has anyone found the answer? It is hard to say. I have not found the answer yet, too.

At this moment, Josh cheerfully laughed.

- I do not put up my surfboard too. As well as balloons for diving.

- I think that such people existed on earth, - Yegor thoughtfully joined in the conversation, - at least, I know one of them.

All friends looked at him with interest waiting for continuation.

- Once a few years ago, I visited the city of Nizhny Novgorod that is not far from Moscow on business, - Yegor began, - on the way back I decided to stop in a small town of Diveyevo. I heard many interesting things about that place before. A famous Russian holy man lived there more than a century ago – St. Seraphim of Sarov. I bet this name does not ring a bell for you.

In confirmation of it, Josh, Mike and Bob shook their heads.

- I knew about him not so long ago, - Yegor continued. – I remember that I stayed for a couple of nights in a cozy hotel and in the evening, I visited a local café. There I heard so many interesting stories from pilgrims about this holy man that my former worldview was fractured.

- It will be very interesting to hear. – Josh said. – We do not have holy men in Australia but I have read about them before.

- What impressed me the most, - Yegor continued. – was the scope of wonders of this man of God and the number of witnesses who saw them. For example, several people saw St. Seraphim walking over the ground. His face usually shone so bright that it was impossible to look at him. The number of various healings that he made is just amazing. Moreover, he cures even today those who address their prayers to him. From that time, I remember two interesting facts. First, the Lord himself appeared to St. Seraphim. Second, the Mother of God visited him twelve times, even in front of witnesses!

- That is strange that I have never heard about that. Twelve times? – Mike said in surprise.

- There is nothing surprising. Even I got to know about that only in Diveyevo, though I live in Russia, - Yegor replied and continued. – But that was not the most important thing for me at that time.

Everyone wonderingly looked at Yegor.

- What else?

- This is very interesting and important for sure. However, it was more important for me what I felt there, - Yegor said and smiled. - So, I have never felt such joy in my heart that I felt near the remains of this holy man before, even in childhood. I wonder how much joy could he irradiate when he was alive, if he diffuses kindness even after death? By the way, I have heard there many stories about his kindness and love to other people. It is not surprising because more than two thousand people from all over Russia visited him every day!

Yegor took a sip of his tea that has already become cold.

- That is why I have no doubt that St. Seraphim knew the true meaning of life. Even I was happy and joyful for several days though I just touched him.

All divers on the ship were silent for some time.

- The Mother of God appeared to him twelve times... - Bob said pondering. – It is like close friends visiting each other. Wow!

- Exactly, - Yegor said. – Sometimes we can live near something really important and interesting and know nothing about that. After that case, I have no doubt that there is actually some great sense in this life. But you should look for it really carefully...

* * *

The passage of our friends to the new place for diving took no longer than one hour that morning. And Josh, who navigated the catamaran again, had to be very attentive. There were many scattered reefs and their tops were very close to the water surface.

- Well, Mike, - Yegor said to his friend, standing at the catamaran's bow, - you should be very careful here even when the weather is nice. I can imagine how difficult it is to control a sailing ship in bad weather.

The friends stood on the ship's bow to help Josh notice any treacherous reefs. GPS is a good thing but four more eyes can be really helpful.

- Well, - Mike said. – I would not like to be here in a sailing ship during a heavy storm. It seems that someone played chess with these reefs.

- And what is “chess”? – They heard Bob's voice from behind.

Mike and Yegor looked at each other sadly, sighed and said nothing. There is no need to clutter the mind of a wonderful child of civilization with trivialities.

- Game of chess is an ancient game, - They heard Josh's voice who took pity on his nephew. - People played this game long ago when there were no computers.

- Ah-ha... - Bob said emphatically. – There were such times on earth?

Even Josh did not reply to that question.

- Cap, be careful, - Mike said loudly and pointed at small waves on left port side. – It must be shallow water.

- Thank you, Mike! I already noticed, - Josh responded. – This reef is on the screen.

- Indeed, today captains have almost everything for safe sailing, - Yegor thought aloud. – But are there only advantages?

Mike looked blankly at his Russian friend.

- Well, I mean, what can we do without GPS? – Yegor explained. – Are we able to go without it as before?

- Oh, I see what you mean, - Mike replied. – Perhaps, there is a grain of truth in your words. Indeed, if all the electronics goes dead on the ship, Bob would die of boredom.

Bob felt some kind of trick from his older fellows and asked them cautiously:

- And what about you, would you die too?

- No way! – The friends replied in unison. – We would play a game of chess.

* * *

Today Mike and Yegor were first to go underwater on a new place. They turned a somersault from zodiac, as usual, came down at sufficient depth and looked around. It seemed that this place was not different from the

previous ones, but something inside our friends told them that there was a better chance to find some “figure” inside of this reef “chessboard”, for example, a shipwreck. That is why Mike and Yegor took a closer look at all unusual hills around them.

Sometimes Yegor looked with envy at fish that were swimming so fast near them. “Well, - he pondered dreamily, - that would be great to tame some dolphin here. After that, we could make it search these shipwrecks. Like a dog – we would show it our ship and then would say “Seek!”. It would inspect the whole bottom over just one week”. Meanwhile, even sea turtles easily outpaced the slow divers.

Yegor was still thinking about his brilliant ideas, when Mike called him. He swam to his friend and gave him a questioning look. The American pointed at unusually straight coral on the bottom about three meters long. Everything else around them was pretty common. Mike and Yegor swam slowly around this unusual reef of a regular shape and tried to scratch it with knives. No way! They could not scrape even a bit of it.

Of course, it could be anything: a truly unusual coral or just a sunken tree. It could easily be a piece of a mast. There was “too little information”, as scientists say, to make more accurate conclusions.

Just in case, the friends took some pictures of the reef on many sides and swam further. Even though they did not find anything interesting for now, special interest woke up in their souls inherent to real treasure hunters. This interest is inherent to mushroom hunters as well but in a milder form.

A rich underwater life of this reef did its best to distract our friends from shipwrecks searching. Sharks, scats, mantas, turtles and many other local inhabitants often swam past them. Sometimes, divers forgot about their treasure hunting and looked around. But then, they remembered and got back to their work.

Little by little, the reef ended and the friends had to choose – either swim around for ten minutes before going to the surface on that place or

swim down the other reef side against the current. Our divers always tried to work on fitness, moreover, Josh promised to cook perfect but really caloric fettuccine for dinner. Of course, everyone knows what fettuccine is – it is just wide spaghetti, but friends tried to avoid this word in order not to hurt Bob's feelings.

Suddenly, Yegor paid attention to a painfully familiar object. "This is a bottle!" – He thought joyfully, looking at the bottom, and felt his heart beating two times faster. The bottle was overgrown with corals so much, that it could be ten, one hundred or even two hundred years old. He called Mike, knowing in his heart, how many jokes about it he will have to hear in the evening. Why is it Russian divers who find bottles underwater?

After several minutes, he finally tore off the bottle from the bottom and the friends went back to the ship with their first trophy.

* * *

Seven snow-white angels were sitting again on a beautiful forest glade near a small lake. They discussed with interest last adventures of their earthly "treasure hunters". They were so happy about their success in understanding of new and important truths.

- Well, Asly, - angel Nias continued. – It is great that your Yegor started speaking about Seraphim of Sarov. It was very useful for everyone to hear.

- I agree, my dear Nias, - said his friend with a smile. – The Father sent him to Diveyevo to meet father Seraphim for a good reason. It has stuck in his head.

- Oh, I wish there were more places on earth where people could literally touch Divine Providence, - angel Fiu said with a sigh.

- There are quite a lot of them around the world, my friend, - Asly objected. – So many of such places are in Israel, Italy, Egypt, in many

other countries. It would be enough for everyone if people were really interested in it. The problem is that many people today prefer various earthly “toys” to experiencing such important things. The purity of a souls, love and kindness are often overshadowed. And this is really sad. How can they think of Heaven without pure and loving soul?

- You are right, my friend. Today people are so educated but cannot understand one simple and obvious thing. God stands for all the miracles on earth. Who else could surpass all the laws of the physical world? – Angel Manif joined in the conversation. – Only God knows where people try to find answers to their spiritual questions. Sometimes they get in such labyrinths that the Father is not able to get them out until the end of life.

- Yes, all these modern and trendy theories on earth are so “sticky”. Words are beautiful, but mostly meaningless, without God, - Asly agreed. – Thank God, our romantics did not get in some troubles. Oh, then we would have enough hardships. Now it seems that we can bring them to right conclusions with the Father little by little.

- Of course, we will! Especially, when they are in such places. Look, they have been there just for one week but have been already thinking about so many things! – Angel Fiu cheerfully joined in the conversation. – My Bob even learned about chess.

Other angels laughed his last words down. When angels stopped laughing, Fiu stood up first.

- So? Let’s fly and visit them! – He asked the friends. – It is time for our “treasure hunters” to explore that bottle. Not for the world would I miss that!

All the angels nodded cheerfully and stood up, too.

- We go with you! – Leyla, Manif and Ikos said. – You have way too nice wards. I am excited to know how it all will turn out.

- And I will be with you, My dear! – They heard Father's warm voice in their hearts. – I would never miss that, too.

* * *

The examination of the bottle lasted for two hours. The friends spent first hour by cleaning it outside from adnate shells and algae. The bottle was pretty clean inside because its neck became overgrown quickly. The friends had to be very careful in order not to break the bottle. Good thing that shells do not stick to glass as strongly as, for example, to clay or wood.

Finally, clean bellied bottle took its place in the center of the table. All the divers sat around with cups of tea. The first scientific council of treasure hunters has begun.

- So, - Josh started. – What do you know about bottles?

Yegor was about to open his mouth but wisely said nothing – his name has already been associated with different bottles. It is better to wait a bit.

- I read in some book, - Bob began cautiously, - that people throw bottles with notes from sinking ships into the sea ~~when~~ asking for help.

The friends nodded with agreement. It seems that sometimes Bob came across good books.

- It is not our case, Bobby, because the bottle is empty, - Mike replied and continued. – In America, we manufacture different types of bottles. But this one does not look like a modern bottle at all.

He carefully picked at the bellied finding.

- It does not have any notches on the bottom; therefore, it was not manufactured during last ten-fifteen years. Nowadays almost every bottle has notches to make its passing on the conveyor easier, - Mike

continued. – Consequently, it is older than fifteen years and that is all that I can say for now.

- Then I will try, - Josh continued the topic. – At home, I have a small collection of wines, including very old ones. I heard a few things about bottles, but not so many.

Josh sipped his tea with mint.

- Actually, as far as I remember, manufacturing of bottles started long ago. Venetian glassmakers gained laurels in bottles manufacturing who decorated them with various patterns. However, at that time bottles were very expensive and that does not seem to be our case either. Manufacturing of first wine bottles, more or less similar to our bottle, started in the middle of the seventeenth century. However, at the beginning, they were mostly black and then olive. Judging by the color, our bottle does not belong to these times.

Josh took a deep breath.

- Actually, judging by its form, manufacturing technology, thickness and transparency of the glass, I would say that it was manufactured at least in 1870 and maximum in 1930. Even though today many bottles are manufactured in “antique” style, they are easy to recognize. This one is definitely one of them.

Josh finished his tea and concluded:

- That is all what I can say about it right now. However, you understand that it is a very approximate guess. If only we had the Internet, we would learn more about it, for sure. Unfortunately, or fortunately, we are cut off from any civilization here.

After that, friends kept silent. Everyone looked at Yegor – he was the only one who has not commented on the bottle yet.

- Actually, I know too little about bottles, - Yegor said with a smile. – In the USSR, where I grew up, all bottles were standard and simple.

After a short pause he continued.

- But I like to read detective stories. I think that deduction of Sherlock Holmes would help us in that situation.

Everyone looked at Yegor with interest. He sipped his tea and continued.

- So, logic suggests that the bottle could fall into water by two ways. First, some local angler drank its content and threw it away some time ago. Perhaps, after celebrating his catch. This is not civilized, indeed, but it happens. Moreover, back then people did not care much about purity of the sea.

Yegor looked at his friends. They nodded agreeably.

- I would like to add here, - Mike intervened in Yegor's deduction, - if this bottle is old, one would not throw it away at that time. They cost some money and were used to store something.

- I totally agree with you, Mike! I am moving in this direction, too, - Yegor nodded. – Therefore, if this bottle is fifty years or older, it could get to the bottom only in case of some shipwreck. Of course, it does not ring a bell. The ship itself could survive or might have sunk hundreds kilometers far from that place. Apparently, we cannot extract anything else from this bottle.

- Most likely, - Josh agreed. – There is not enough information for more important conclusions, but we have enough already. I definitely like our today's findings – the reef of unusual shape and this bottle. Something is telling me, my friends, that all this “news from the bottom” is not the last.

Divers slowly drank their tea and went to sleep. The bottle stood in the middle of the table.

Chapter 5

To the secrets of the depths

Dives during next two days were not successful for our divers. Underwater world was at its best, as usual, but quantity of their findings did not rise. On second day, in the evening, friends were having a dinner at ship's rear deck in the open air. Beautiful sunset was burning down on the horizon and the air stood still that is rare in these places. All the worries and problems of our friends have drowned at one of the reefs and they just wanted to philosophize and laugh.

- Uncle! – Bob called Josh. – What for do you look for these shipwrecks? What do you want to find there? Treasures?

This simple question suddenly caused a long silence on the ship.

- Great job, Bob! – Josh complimented his nephew. – Friends, it is time to understand what we really want to find here. Does anyone have anything to say?

They had been thinking for a minute, but Yegor already looked at the door of the cupboard as their salvation. Mike caught his eye and gladly joined him. Josh looked at his friends and headed for the first bottle.

In twenty minutes, friends were ready to give Bob a full and complete answer. Mike was the first to speak.

- You see, Bob, - He said slowly. – Treasures are not the main thing, though, of course, we would be happy to find them. Anyway, it is not ~~the~~ so important.

- And what is important then? – Bob asked, cracking his second beer. He did not have respect for wine.

- Oh, that is not so easy to explain, my dear nephew! – Josh said for Mike. – Unfortunately, or fortunately, you are still so young! You have to live so long and have to bring to life dozens of wishes just to

understand us. Then you will understand that sometimes there is a great difference between anticipation and real pleasure. Most likely, over time you will also become “overgrown” with everything that is thought to be a standard of a happy human life on earth. But if you save your romantic soul, you will feel that this “everything” is not something that you really need. After that, you will look for this “something” that will make you really happy.

- Perhaps, you will be surprised, - Yegor continued, - that this “something” is not expensive houses, cars or huge sums of money. Sometimes it is just the sea, the sun and people who make you happy and who think as you do.

- And who also like to drink good wine, - Mike finished his thought and filled the glasses.

- And what about shipwrecks and treasures? – Josh said laughingly. – Who ever let us go here without an important reason?

The friends laughed cheerfully.

- Josh! – Yegor addressed to his friend, - how heavy are Australian taxes for discovered treasures?

- Twenty-five percent, - his friend replied professionally as he had already examined this issue.

- Well, if we run across the treasures in real, - Yegor continued, - I will build some station here, like “Swain Romantic Corporation” with a good helicopter pad and a cozy restaurant.

- Do you still accept partners? – Mike asked him.

- Well, I have to join you, too, - Josh sighed. – I tried those dishes that you cooked without me. You will go to the bad without me...

The friends laughed again and raised their glasses.

The Father looked at them from Heaven with a smile.

“That’s right, My dear romantics, that’s right. Oh, it’s time for Me to give you something more on the bottom for such right thoughts”.

* * *

This morning Bob woke up at dawn. It would be more correct to say that his alarm clock that he set yesterday woke him up at dawn. Fishing was a true purpose of his early awakening.

The day before he tortured his older fellows with dozens of questions on that topic. Now he was absolutely ready for the independent and serious fishing. Bob faithfully followed all the advice of experienced fishermen. First, he had a cup of good strong coffee, looked at the horizon for a minute and after that threw a hook with a bait overboard. He did not repeat the Russian proverb that he learned from Yegor but came up with his own variant. It sounded like this: “Let interesting and unusual fish be caught, so as to surprise everyone”.

After that, Bob put a fishing rod on board and sat on the steps nearby. The sky began to dawn and an expanse of sea around the ship was clearly seen. First fifteen minutes of fishing Bob spent in complete silence. Nobody on the bottom tried to make him happy or surprised. Bob was about to change the bait, when he heard some small splash overboard. The guy stood up slowly, sneaked up on the board and cautiously looked over it.

A big light brown sea turtle was lying on the surface of the water just in two meters away from the ship. Its head, peeping out the water, thoughtfully looked at the horizon. But Bob gasped in surprise for another reason. One word was written in big and clearly seen letters on the back of the turtle – “Kathy”...

Bob whispered it several times in utter disbelief. Then the light came down on him and he rushed to his cabin for a camera. But as ill luck would have it, he could find it only in a few minutes in the furthest

drawer. When Bob finally ran out to the rear deck, there was no turtle near the ship.

The boy sighed in frustration and sat down on the steps. “Well, it is okay, they will believe me anyway. Today’s fishing is unusual for sure. I imagine how surprised they will be!”

In fifteen minutes, Yegor was the first one to come out of the cabin, yawning. He greeted Bob as usual and was about to sit at the table with an ordinary cup of coffee, when Bob suddenly stopped him.

- Yegor! – Bob said pompously. – Can you imagine that I just saw a turtle with a word “Kathy” on its back?

Yegor looked at him sharply and asked slowly:

- Did you see the phone number near the name?

- No, - Bob replied surprisingly.

- Then it can be not your Kathy, - Yegor sipped his coffee with noise. – Relax, man, and do nothing until she swims here again with a proof that it is really her.

In five minutes, Mike was a second person to sit. When Bob briefly told him a story about the turtle, he heard another question:

- Did it say anything?

- Not really, - Bob said thoughtfully. – It was silent.

- Then relax, my boy! Judging by your stories, Kathy would not keep silent for sure. She would definitely tell you everything that she thinks about you.

Josh was the last one to come out of the cabin. When he heard the story from his nephew, he thought for a moment, and then told him seriously:

- You know, Bob, if you do not want to feel guilty, write her a letter, put it in a bottle, plug it up and throw into the sea. And one more thing, - uncle Josh hesitated for a moment, - Bobby, you’d better not go fishing

so early. Have a good night rest – a young body needs enough sleep. And these damned chips – do not eat so much of them for a night...

Meanwhile, angel Fiu was wiping with a smile the inscription from a shell of a big beautiful turtle – the desire of his ward Bob to surprise everyone was fully complied.

* * *

Angels of our friends on Heaven were happy and excited. Remoteness from the whole world obviously did a power of good to their divers. They have already begun to find more and more fine and good “notes” in their souls.

- I wonder, - Angel Fiu asked his friends, - what else the Father prepared for them on the bottom?

- Oh, you can be sure that it will be something interesting, - Angel Asly replied. – I think it must be something not very big; otherwise they will be too anxious. Even a bottle made them examine it over the whole evening. But it must be something interesting for sure – soon we will know that.

- I am so happy for my Bob! – Fiu continued. – He learns so much with your romantics. Where else can he get that? Oh, I hope that he will not be “stuck” to his screens again when he comes back. They distract him so much from the real life.

- The Father will tell how to help him, - Angel Sain said. – The most important thing is that he is honest and sensitive. Little by little, he will make right conclusions in his life. He is only twenty.

- By the way, the Father’s idea about the bottle was just brilliant, – Angel Nias added cheerfully. – It is so small but made our divers so happy. Oh, I would give them a bottle on the bottom every day! And day by day, it would be older and older.

- That is why we are only angels, - Asly replied with a laugh. – Only the Father knows for sure what and when to give them and what will not make them hurt. Benefiting their souls is the most important thing. And if we only had a chance, we would bestrew them with ships. But what would happen to our romantics after that?

- Exactly! – Angel Nias agreed. – But I always want to make them happy so much.

- Wait a bit. They will come here and be happy with us forever, - Angel Manif replied. – And now on earth they are like at school – they have to learn and understand the main things, true values of life.

- Well, I hope they will succeed, - Angel Nias, sitting nearby, looked at Manif warmly and smiled. – Likewise, I worried about you, my dear, two thousand years ago. As you can see, it worked out well. This time it will work out as well. I have no doubt.

Manif came closer to Nias and hugged him.

- Thank you, my faithful friend! For everything, for everything!

- Isn't it time to fly for a swim in some waterfall? – Angel Fiu offered. – While our treasure hunters are sleeping on their ship.

- Well, it seems to be a brilliant idea, - angels commented and soon they were flying together in the sky towards beautiful mountains.

* * *

This morning Mike and Josh were exploring a new reef. Visibility underwater was worse than yesterday but still good enough. Divers could see every large object at a distance of fifteen-twenty meters. The friends were looking at large reefs very carefully, as usual, and did not forget about underwater creatures around them. There was plenty of them. You can never get tired of this plenty.

Life of the reef is a sight that one can watch forever. That is why people are so fond of aquariums at home. And a real reef with countless underwater inhabitants is much more than just an aquarium. Therefore, the friends were cheerfully staring at everything around them, as usual, and suddenly one thing caught their eye. It was a small reef looking like a casual one. Divers swam towards that reef, without saying a word.

When Josh and Mike were finally above it, they uttered a sigh of surprise and fascination – they saw a large wooden boat underneath. It was really overgrown with corals and crushed by many storms over long years, but it was a real large boat for twenty passengers.

When excitement of the friends passed off a bit, they moved to explore it in detail. Divers took a picture of every detail that could help them to understand the age and belonging of that boat. They examined every inch of a small boat and began to inspect the territory around it. However, they came back soon – there was nothing interesting. No oars, no any other item of a terrestrial origin.

During the time remaining until emerging, Mike and Josh were trying by any means to find the boat's name on its sides and back part. But it seems that they could inspect any neighboring reef with the same result.

Nevertheless, the first true floating trophy was found! The friends swam around the small boat once again with passion, remembering this place, and came to the surface.

This news will make Bob and Yegor happy, for sure. They need to make a really good dinner tonight on this occasion and open the best bottle of wine. Neptune has respect for divers who are happy about his gifts. As usual, Russian Yegor had a more precise proverb for that case: “A gift has a short life, if one didn't drink to celebrate it”.

* * *

The evening feast in honor of their first serious finding on the bottom was in full swing. Before nightfall, Yegor and Bob came down to the small sunken boat as they also wanted to touch it with their own hands. They came back from the dive excited and inspired. Needless to say, that the search for shipwrecks is a really interesting and unusual activity.

When the bottle of wine on the table came to an end, the friends began quietly discuss different ideas about this boat on the bottom.

- Gentlemen! – Josh said officially. To be honest, he always spoke in an official and solemn manner. His tall height and natural staidness always made impact on his every word. No wonder clients trusted him. – If we could not find the name of this boat, it does not mean that we cannot invent it now. Besides, we definitely need some working title not to confuse this small boat with other ships.

Everyone laughed out loud. It seems that this boat made the team more confident about their project.

- I offer you the following, - Mike began, - we found the bottle, the pole and the boat as a part of a project which is called *Avos*. Without it, we would not dive here and found nothing. That is why a new name should be somehow connected with it. Maybe, we should call the small boat *Avos-I*?

- Too technical for a name, - Yegor frowned a little. – But the idea itself is perfect. You know, there is a very similar word in the Russian language – *avoska* (*string bag*), which is funny and fits both the general topic and our “firstling”. I suggest giving this name to our small boat.

- Oh! – Bob exclaimed. – I also know one funny Russian word – *balalaika*. I have a picture of it in my phone.

- This is different, Bobby. However, - Yegor thoughtfully scratched his head, - I think that these two things are equally useful for humankind.

- *Avoska*... Sounds fun, - Josh said. – I am for it!

The other treasure hunters nodded cheerfully.

After that, Yegor filled the glasses and tried to say solemnly in Josh's manner: "For Avoska!" But all his *solemnity* caused a burst of laughter among friends. No, this role suited only Josh.

A little later, the friends began to plan their upcoming dives. They have almost finished exploring this area; only the third area marked on the map with a large quantity of concentrated dots was left.

Divers made a decision to move there the day after tomorrow. They decided to dedicate the next day to *Avoska* and its surrounding area. It was important to inspect every detail. Perhaps, it was their last chance to dive there.

* * *

Mark was sitting in a spacious office and looking through the news on a big screen of his inseparable computer. Everything seemed just fine and he twisted in his chair with satisfaction. For more than twenty years Mark Schultz has worked in that company, dealing with service and selling of cars in Germany and abroad. Over that time, the company has developed and opened two branches in the country. Now he has been working on the opening of the third branch.

Actually, Schultz has already become the second person in that company and had a good share of stock. From a business perspective, everything was going just fine.

However, his angel Anrie, who was also in that office at this time, did not seem satisfied with his earthly ward. How many times he tried to put thoughts about vacation into his head that he and his wife Marta really needed.

Mark leaned back in his chair and stared for several minutes over the computer screen at a big picture with beautiful sea view that has been hanging on the wall in front of him for a long time.

"Such a beautiful picture!" – He thought. "Who gave it to me?"

His angel smiled, - “These were your children who presented this picture for your fortieth anniversary”,

“Perhaps, children presented it for one of my birthday parties”, - Mark began to remember. “Such a vivid sea landscape, like a real one”.

“Yeah”, - angel echoed cheerfully. – “Back then, I rushed through the whole city to find it. I remember, even angel Bloss was helping me”.

“Oh, it’s been a long time since I have snorkeled”, - Mark was still thinking. “And my Marta has recently told me about the sea. Maybe we should go on vacation somewhere for a few weeks?”

Mark thought for a moment but shook his head and moved up to the computer again.

The angel was anxious. Vacation was about to fail, - he had to do something immediately. His mind asked the Father for help. In one minute, Mark’s boss Heinrich joyfully came into his office. His tanned face was shining with a smile – just a few days ago he returned from his trip to Thailand.

- Hello, Mark! – He said happily. – How are you doing there, my dear?

Friends shook hands.

- You have tanned so much, - Mark said with little envy. – You look even a little bit inappropriate for winter Germany.

Heinrich laughed out loud.

- Vacation, my friend, is always decent! – He replied. – What for have we been working for such a long time? To take care of our children and enjoy our life. We always need to get the right balance in this life between the work and the rest.

The boss gave a close look at his friend.

- By the way, you haven't travelled for over a year? That is not very good, my friend. Take your Marta and fly to some beautiful place. Color of your skin looks like this grey computer.

Mark stretched himself dreamily and smiled.

- Maybe you are right, Heinrich, I have to take a rest and go somewhere, - he said with a smile. – Indeed, we have not dined with Marta at sunset on the beach for a long time...

The boss tapped him on the shoulder.

- Deal! I order my friend to go on vacation immediately! – He commanded with a laugh and soon came out the office.

Angel Anrie smiled gratefully: "Thank you, Father!"

In one minute, Mark Schultz called his Marta.

- Hello, my dear! – He said happily. – I have decided something! Let's go on vacation to some islands. Call our agent Elsa; let her find good variants for us.

Mark listened to joyful twittering of his wife and added:

- Yes, start packing our big blue suitcase. One more thing, - he looked again at the picture hanging on the wall, - do not forget to pack our snorkeling masks and paddles. We will swim good and proper at sea.

Angel Anrie cheerfully spanned, - "I did it!" He caressed the picture on the wall with a smile, looked cheerfully at Mark and flew back home.

* * *

"Dolce Dive" catamaran weighed anchor. Mike and Bob raised sails together; Josh was standing at the wheel. Meanwhile, Yegor fastened the anchor on the bow of the ship and kept a look out for all the shoals around. Fresh morning breeze was blowing small waves over the water surface and filling divers' sails.

The passage to the next place for dives should have lasted for less than three hours. The friends had to swim around several groups of reefs and after that enter the desired area. To have fun, the divers took out their spinning rods again. On yesterday evening, they suddenly remembered that have not eaten fresh fish sashimi with soy sauce and wasabi. And this happened in the middle of the ocean full of almost ready products for that dish! All in all, they definitely had to fill the gap in their fish diet.

Besides Mike and Yegor, Bob took out his spinning rod, too. After his last morning fishing, he considered himself a more experienced angler than before. Soon, three spinners went underwater. Mike took place on the left side of the catamaran, Bob took place on the right side, and Yegor fell in the center of the ship's rear deck.

For the next fifteen minutes, the anglers turned their heads in silence, looking at their still spinning rods and the spinning rods of their friends.

- What fish is the most delicious for sashimi? – Yegor was first to break the silence.

Josh, standing at the wheel, brightened up.

- It depends on person's tastes, but wahoo, snapper and perch are considered to have the softest meat. I prefer the blue perch. It has such big eloquent eyes and tender meat quite as good.

Bob, who was sitting on the rear deck, gulped and sat closer to his spinning rod.

- I also like fresh salmon, - Mike added. – But it lives in cold waters and there wahoo and perch will be the most delicious, I guess.

Twenty minutes have passed. Fish was not biting.

- Our dear Josh! – Yegor began very gently, looking at his spinning rod without any interest, - what softest meat do we have on board now?

- Oh! – Josh exclaimed emotionally. – We have lamb meat on the bone and steaks of Black Angus beef. They are made of special black cows; their capital is the city of Rockhampton, which is just in front of us. These steaks are my favorite that is why I took a couple of dozen on board. Nothing comes near to this dish, if you cook steaks on the barbeque and pour with a special sauce.

All the anglers on the rear deck, without saying a word, began to pull up their spinning rods.

- Dear Josh! – Mike, who pulled up the fishing reel first, addressed to his friend. – Let me stand at the wheel for a while. Get some rest and defrost your delicious steaks in a microwave. After all, we are close to their capital for some reason.

After that, Mike gave a significant look at the other fishermen.

- Friends! – He appealed to them. – Don't you mind to eat sashimi some other time?

- No! No! – Yegor and Bob cried in response.

- Anyway, we are not Japanese to eat raw fish for breakfast, - Bob added. – We are in Australia and people there like delicious meat!

Chapter 6

Sailing ship

By the afternoon, “Dolce Dive” catamaran was already anchored in a convenient sandy lagoon. The friends have finally reached the third place. The team decided to spend the rest of the day solving household issues and leave diving for tomorrow. The divers checked water

supplies, food and fuel one more time. Their independent sailing has lasted for fourteen days already and it was time to conduct a small audit.

After the detailed inspection of the ship, Josh voiced his opinion at the table.

- We have enough water, my friends! On-board desalinator does a good job and satisfies our needs, - he sipped hot coffee and continued, - food supplies will last for ten more days even if all the fish around us ignores our spinners.

The divers burst out laughing. Steaks of the famous Australian cows that were eaten not so long ago revived their feelings.

- The situation with the fuel is practically the same, - Josh continued to explain. – It will be enough to start the engine twice a day and charge all the batteries on the ship, at least, for ten days.

Mike and Yegor exchanged looks.

- So, if possible, we have to stop by some port in one week, - Mike said first, - to replenish our food and fuel supplies.

- And also visit some local pub with fresh beer and tasty sausages, - Bob added dreamily.

- And do not forget to call our loved ones, - Yegor edifyingly raised his finger. – Because now we are diving in wild waters with dozens of snappy sharks.

After that, Yegor folded his hands cunningly and continued speaking imitating a female voice.

- However, we can also find there some beautiful antique tiara...

Divers burst out laughing, but nodded in unison. After all that, Josh took a map and a special ruler.

- Then it is better for us to choose a place for refueling and short rest, - He said. – Besides, the weather can change really fast. No wonder why we listen to the weather forecast several times a day on the ship's radio.

- What are the good variants of ports that we have here? – Yegor asked looking at the map.

Josh put the ruler on the map and began to measure something.

- We have to swim three hundred seventy kilometers to Bundaberg port, - he finished his first measurement.

- Bundaberg? - Yegor repeated softly, - Isn't it that small town where people manufacture a wonderful rum that in the recent past was the favorite drink of all sailors of the world?

- Exactly, - Mike said with a laughter.

- But these three hundred seventy kilometers mean a two-day journey for us, and we can buy rum at any liquor store all over Australia, - Josh made a stand against Yegor.

- But it is rum's Homeland, - Yegor said romantically but gave up anyway. – Okay, let's move further.

- Distance to the other port called Mackay is three hundred forty kilometers.

- Not much better, - Mike said.

- I agree, - Josh replied and moved his ruler further on the map.

- About two hundred forty kilometers to Rockhampton. However, there is no good port on the seashore and we will have to sail forty kilometers more along the Fitzroy River to reach the city.

- Not much fun, - said Yegor. – Many different mosquitos can inhabit these rivers. Besides, they are of different types of navigability at this time of year. I think we should not take risks in unknown places.

Josh and Mike looked at each other and nodded in agreement.

- There is a nice place in Gladstone, - Josh continued his measurements.
– There is a big port and a city. The distance is just two hundred thirty-five kilometers.

- That sounds better. – Mike said.

- But there is one drawback, - Yegor made a wry face. – Gladstone is a big commercial port and its landscapes are way too industrial. The contrast with Swain is enormous.

Josh moved his ruler on the map again.

- Then we have just one good variant – a port in Rosman. The distance is, - Josh closely looked at the ruler, - only two hundred twenty kilometers!

- If we go off at dawn, we will manage to reach the port until the end of the day, - Mike counted quickly.

Yegor pulled the map and took a good look at that place.

- There are some good beaches and the city itself is not so big, - He skewed his eyes at Bob. – There we will definitely find a good country pub with excellent sausages and cold fresh beer.

Bobby livened up straight away.

- So? Let's vote! – He said. – Who is for sailing to Rosman?

Four hands raised. It seems that everyone including Yegor was “hooked” on the advertisement of a local pub.

* * *

The next morning was surprisingly calm. The sea looked like a big mirror that reflected white fluffy clouds. Josh and Yegor were the first couple to go underwater. As they began to sit in the zodiac, a big flock of dolphins swam near the catamaran. The whole team on the ship froze and stared after them.

- It is a good sign, - Mike said with a smile and waved a hand to his friends. – Have a nice dive!

Josh and Yegor waved back and Bob cast off from the ship. Visibility underwater was wonderful. The friends went down along the reef slope and moved further along it with a fair current. The sea was not very deep in that place – flat sandy bottom was ten-fifteen meters below the divers. Josh and Yegor glanced in different directions, as usual, searching for sunken items; however, they did not forget to look at local inhabitants of the reef.

However, they did not have to search for a long time – the shipwreck found them finally. It just slowly came out of the blue. Josh and Yegor were swimming when they suddenly ran into its front part. It was so unexpected and yet so real that the friends just froze and did not know what to do – a big wooden sailing boat was just in front of them.

Outwardly, it was about forty meters long and only one mast with a small cross-section survived. As in a beautiful fairytale, Josh and Yegor glanced at the ship in fascination for a few minutes before they became able to do something and to think in general.

Yegor swam closer to the back part of the ship with its name on it and began to clean letters with a knife. It was composed of only four letters: **SOVA**.

Yegor and Josh took several pictures of the back part of the ship, came down to the bottom and swam around. Obviously, the sailing ship remained in a good condition because it was lying on an open sandy bottom. Despite all the bushes of corals on some of its parts, it looked really massive and grand.

Near the ship's bow, the friends found a large hole two by two meters in its hull, which, apparently, was the reason of its wreckage. The divers shone a flashlight on it but did not swim inside – visual inspection was enough for the first time.

Josh and Yegor tried to take a picture of all interesting details on the ship. They read its name in the bow once again to make sure that it was called *Sova*. When the divers inspected the bottom part, they swam to the upper deck. The distance to the surface was only eighteen meters; therefore, the friends had enough time for the dive.

They inspected everything very carefully and found four entrances leading inside the ship. Two of them were quite narrow and overgrown with corals, but the other two entrances allowed the divers to swim inside with their equipment. Josh and Yegor photographed everything around them, used the camera flash to light up the inside part of the ship and looked into all the illuminators and artillery compartments. Of course, least of all divers wanted to come across someone's remains. They were lucky – it seems that the crew of the sailing ship managed to survive in quarter boats during the wrecking.

Soon, diving computers of Josh and Yegor started beeping to remind them about floating up. The friends exchanged looks and began swimming over the ship and taking pictures of it from different sides at the same time.

When Josh and Yegor came up to the surface, they immediately took regulators from their mouths. However, they did not really want to talk for some reason.

- Well, - Yegor finally broke the silence. – Our dream finally came true, my friend! I cannot even believe that we actually found a shipwreck.

- That's true, - Josh replied slowly, - only one hour ago we were dreaming about it and now it became a reality of our life.

Afterwards, Josh looked at Yegor and said thoughtfully:

- I have strange feelings in my soul, buddy. It is difficult to formulate them.

- A precious cupboard will help us, - Yegor smiled in response. – Well, my friend, it is time to inflate a drift signal. Guys have to come down to the ship before nightfall.

Josh pulled the drift signal out of his pocket, still thinking aloud.

- *Sova*. A very interesting name. What does it mean? There is no such a word in the English language. Is it someone's name, name of a city or just an abbreviation?

* * *

On that evening, the friends were sitting on the rear deck of the ship at the table, as usual. It seemed strange, but they did not even want to talk about such a great event. They were smiling calmly as after a successful ending of some serious and responsible work. However, coffee and a bottle of the best wine did their job – soon they became active again.

- So, gentlemen! – Josh began first. – Today we have changed our status from “hunters for shipwrecks” to “founders of a shipwreck”. Congratulations!

- Thank you, - Bob responded seriously and asked, - and what can we do in this status?

Everyone kept silent. Finally, Yegor started speaking.

- We have no idea, Bobby. We have been in that status only for a few hours and also for the first time in our life, - he smiled broadly. – But we have four heads, intuition and a real shipwreck. Therefore, you can be sure that we will come up with a brilliant idea really soon.

- And we also have a precious cupboard, - Mike added cheerfully. – If we are short of ideas, we will always find “fuel” for inspiration.

The friends burst out laughing and filled the glasses.

- Well, my friends, - Josh said, raising his glass of wine. – To our sailing boat *Sova*! Let it bring us luck.

They clinked their glasses as Russian Yegor taught them and drank their wine with feeling. Today even Bob did not stand out among friends with his beer on that occasion.

- So, - Mike continued the conversation, - we have to outline the plan of our actions. Any ideas?

- Of course, I wish we could *dive* into the Internet right now, - Yegor began, - we would find the information about this ship, what it was carrying, what rooms it has inside. This information would be very useful for our inner working. But we do not have the Internet.

- But we have a small book with images of sailing ships. I read it a little before going for a trip, - Josh joined in the conversation. – The design of our sailing ship reminds me of a frigate or a corvette of the first half of the nineteenth century. A frigate is a military vessel; a corvette is a multipurpose ship. It would be great if we could draw its view from the outside. It would be really useful.

- Can anyone of us draw? – Mike asked.

Bob raised his hand.

- Bobby, - Yegor asked him with a mischievous smile, - didn't you learn to draw with the help of the Internet?

Everyone at the table burst out laughing.

- Not really, - the guy responded, smiling broadly.

After that, he took a sheet of paper and in a couple of minutes made such a good caricature of Yegor that he soon regretted about his jab.

- Well done, nephew! – Josh said, looking at the drawing with a smile. – Then take our cameras, go to the cabin and draw the sailing ship. We will listen to the weather forecast for tomorrow on the radio.

Josh switched on the radio and turned up the volume – the weather forecast for sailors was broadcasted in the beginning of every hour. After several minutes, they heard a mechanical voice from the speakers.

As they listened to that weather forecast, the faces of our friends were becoming more and more unhappy.

As it turned out, Fiona cyclone was approaching to Queensland State – their place for diving - from the Fiji Islands with the wind speeds of up to one hundred twenty kilometers per hour. It was to reach Australian shores by day after tomorrow.

When the weather forecast was over, the friends kept silent for one more minute.

- Gentlemen, apparently, our plans are changing, - Josh finally began speaking. – One hundred twenty kilometers per hour on open reefs is a big deal.

- Yeah, I would not like to be here at that time. And we do not have any other options. Tomorrow at dawn we need to go away towards the shore,
- Mike agreed.

- At least, we will have the Internet, - Yegor perked things up. – Such cyclones do not last long. Two or three days, and after that we will be absolutely ready for the investigation inside of the ship.

After that, Yegor turned his head toward the mess room where Bob was drawing the ship and shouted.

- Bobby, what do you think about beer and delicious sausages at the pub tomorrow evening?

* * *

Angels were swimming in a beautiful lake next to a small waterfall. Sometimes they swam under its colorful streams and frolicked there – swam, dove, played. They swam to their hearts content, then came to a small shallow, and sat in a circle on sandy bottom.

- I am still so happy that the Father came up with such a wise and fun idea about this shipwreck, - angel Nias said first with a smile.

- That's true! – Angel Fiu laughed. – Our romantics have a lot to think of. Yeah, I think they will never forget that.

- Exactly, - Angel Asly agreed. – And we will never allow them to forget anything important from what happened and what will happen to them.

- By the way, - Angel Sain threw water up with his wing and it showered our smiling friends like rain. – The Father sent Fiona Cyclone just in time, as well. That is very good that they have enough time to think carefully and make right conclusions.

- All right, my friends! Let's fly and look how they wake up after their delicious sausages, - Angel Manif suggested. – They will have many news today. I cannot wait to take part and help them to understand everything.

The angels splashed in the water for some time and flew on earth. The Father looked at them with a smile – His older children raced to rescue His younger children. What else could be as beautiful and touching for the Father! Good luck to them; He will be always next to them for sure.

* * *

This morning the friends woke up very late. Even birds singing desperately outside the window could not disturb their good sleep. Yesterday's long passage from reefs to the shore and delicious sausages with beer in the pub did their job – the divers needed a good rest.

At nine o'clock Yegor was the first to come out of his room into a garden and sit at the table that stood by the door. He had nothing to do, so he took a sheet of paper and began to draw with a black diving marker the word *Sova*. Sometimes he raised his head and looked with a smile at children playing in a swimming pool nearby. After a quarter of an hour, Josh came out from the next room. He greeted Yegor and sat at the table too.

- Good morning, Josh! – Yegor smiled. – Did you sleep well?
- Just marvelous! Actually, I have been awake for an hour already, surfing the Internet and searching the information about our finding, - Josh replied.
- Very good news! – Yegor rejoiced, turned the sheet over and got ready to write down the information.

However, Josh looked at his friend thoughtfully.

- Actually, there is nothing to write, Yegor. It seems that we found a ghost ship. I did not find any information on the Internet about the ship with such a name.

Josh opened a bottle of ginger beer and took a few sips. Yegor comprehended the news in surprise.

- And I was not able to decrypt the word *Sova* as well. I did not find any cities or understandable abbreviations of these letters.
- Wow, - Yegor sighed. After that, he closed his marker and put it on a clean sheet of paper.
- Perhaps, I have not much to add, my friends, - they heard the voice of Mike who was coming up to the table.

The friends shook hands.

- All that I found was a Swedish word that is translated as *dream*. No more useful information for you.
- A Swedish word? – Yegor was surprised. – Does that mean that we found a Viking ship? Did they get at this place too?
- Not really, - Josh replied with a smile. – Vikings navigated until eleventh century and their ships were totally different. And our ship was probably made in the middle of the nineteenth century.
- Good morning to everyone! – they heard Bob's voice. The divers shook his hand.

When the guy sat at the table too, Josh asked him:

- Bob, haven't you searched anything over the Internet this morning about our ship?

- Kathy called me, - the guy replied in embarrassment. – Well, you know her... All in all, I didn't have time for anything else.

Everyone at the table burst out laughing.

- All right, friends, - Yegor changed the topic. – Whether it is a ghost or not, we need to have breakfast anyway. Breakfast ends at ten o'clock at that hotel, so we have to hurry up.

All the divers stood up and headed to the hotel's restaurant. A few minutes later, it started to rain – Fiona Cyclone finally reached Australian shores.

Half an hour later, sated divers came back to the table and saw Yegor's paper floating on it in a puddle of water.

Josh and Mike came to the table to take it under a shed but suddenly froze. Yegor and Bob felt intuitively that they saw something unusual and came closer. In a moment, they stood astonished next to them.

On paper, they saw a word that Yegor drew this morning. Because of water, it stood out on the backside so it could be read clearly, but backward. Now they could see the word **AVOS**.

- Avos... - that was the only thing that the Russian diver whispered.

* * *

The divers were sitting on the pub's porch and looking at the rain in silence. Sausages were good today but nobody even thought about alcohol.

- So, - Josh finally began speaking. – We all have on hand a ghost ship made around the beginning of nineteenth century and it is called *Avos*. If you have any thoughts left, please, share.

Bob was the first one to break silence.

- Guys! – He startled happily, - I remember one movie about a ghost ship. It was called “The Black Pearl”. There was also a captain...

- Bobby, Bobby! – Uncle interrupted him. – We all have watched this movie, too. If we rely on it, we have to be ready to meet underwater pirates with heads of hammer sharks and octopuses.

They all laughed odd and fell silent again.

- You see, Bob, - Mike decided to continue this topic, speaking either with the guy or with himself, - it is a fairytale, and we live in a real world.

Yegor raised his eyes.

- I do not think so, - he said thoughtfully.

- What do you mean? – Surprised friends asked him in unison.

- Is the reality where such things can happen much better than a fairytale? – Yegor asked a question in return.

- And what does that mean? – Josh tried to understand his thought.

- Look. If someone can make such fairytales in our *real* world, where can we find a true reality?

The friends kept silent for a few more minutes.

- Perhaps, Yegor is right, - Mike said quietly. – I think, One Who sent me here for birthday does such things to us. And it seems that He is real for sure.

- And what should we do now? – Bob asked somehow piteously.

- Follow Him, of course! – Yegor replied emotionally. – This Someone is a good storyteller and, obviously, very funny. He made our voyage so interesting! Like He is trying to explain something really important. And we should just follow Him and guess what He is trying to tell us.

- Is he really kind? – Bob asked Yegor incredulously.

- Absolutely! – Uncle Josh said. – Did anything unpleasant happen to us during that time? On the contrary, we had so much fun.

- Do we have to do anything now? – Bob asked one more question.

His older friends exchanged looks and finally smiled. It seems that they began to understand something.

- You do not have to do anything special, Bobby, - Mike answered for all. – We just have to live on and do what we used to do. And try to understand all the important things that Someone is trying to say. I think we will find many interesting answers on that shipwreck.

- I have watched a weather forecast not so long ago, - Josh changed the topic. – It is too early to sail tomorrow. We'd better replenish our fuel and food stocks. But the day after tomorrow the sea will be calm and it will be easy to come back. I cannot wait to dive inside this fantastic ghost ship.

- Avos, we will find something interesting, - Yegor replied by the same token. – For some reason, I have no doubts anymore.

- Neither have I, - Mike agreed.

- I have no doubt as well, - Josh said.

Everyone looked at Bob who was silent for some reason.

- Tell me everything about that later! – The guy cheerfully came out of the affair with honor.

Apparently, that movie about the pirates on a ghost ship left an indelible imprint on him.

The friends moved to the door but Yegor stopped them.

- By the way, my friends, we definitely need to replenish our cupboard – he said and added, - it seems that many of these puzzles cannot be solved if we are “bone-dry”...

Chapter 7

Back to the reef

“Dolce Dive” catamaran was returning to Swain. Even though it was the early morning, the friends have already sailed quite far away from the shore. Ship’s tanks were filled with fuel again, refrigerators were stuffed with delicious food and perfect wine was in the cupboard. The sun was shining bright again in the sky.

The sea has calmed down and seemed to have already forgotten about the recent cyclone with a strange name. Besides fuel and food, the divers have also bought additional ropes and underwater lights. After that, they went to a local garden store and bought a couple of short shovels, buckets, several water-resistant strong bags and some more instruments. The seller who formed their purchase was sure that it was intended for some house. He would be surprised if he knew what our friends were going to do.

In addition, at the hotel, our divers printed all possible variants of internal structure of ships manufactured in the end of eighteen and nineteenth centuries. Josh also contacted his law firm at Gold Coast, just in case. He asked them to look through all the laws and regulations concerning their discovery and also prepare all the necessary documents if they really find something. Therefore, this short break on shore was quite useful for our friends.

Now they were coming back to their shipwreck fully prepared not only technically, but also legally.

- Josh, what should we do by law if we find treasures on that ship? – Yegor asked his friend.

- Actually, it is not spelled out by law, - Josh, who was standing at the wheel, smiled. – It seems that people do not find such things very often. The main thing is that we should demonstrate our findings to the state and pay twenty-five percent of the value found. Then we will rule out the situation on-site. My boys will prepare all the necessary documents just in case. We will only have to list our findings.

- And one more little thing, - Mike intervened their conversation with laughter. – We will have to find such treasures on the ship and give them right titles. But this is a real trifle.

Everyone burst out laughing.

- What could these ships transport at those times? – Bob asked his friends.

- They transported different cargos at different times, - uncle answered. – Once many prisoners were transported from England to Australia. Later, in the days of manufacturing and agricultural development, all this became more like a casual commodity exchange.

- What do you think, uncle, what could our ship carry? – Bob took interest.

Josh smiled.

- I think, nephew, our ship falls under the third category, - He looked at Bob playfully. – These ships carried cargos under general sea name OGKWIT.

- And what is OGKWIT? – Bob even leaned forward and got wide-eyed.

Mike and Yegor came closer too.

- OGKWIT, Bobby, means “Only God Knows What Is That”, - Josh replied.

Friends' laughter muffled the end of his phrase.

* * *

Kathy was sitting at the table in her favorite café and drinking delicious cappuccino. Sometimes she looked at the phone screen with a picture of smiling Bob. Each time she smiled in reply. She missed him so much! Their yesterday's conversation could last forever if only her phone did not run out of battery.

Oh, Bobby, he is such a storyteller! Yesterday he has been telling her about some kind of a shipwreck for one hour. But it's fine as long as he finishes his voyage and comes back home safe and sound. And TV shows such terrible sharks in the ocean. It is good that Bobby does not dive but just sails on the ship. Oh, these men! Something is always dragging them somewhere. Why do they ever find a wet shipwreck more interesting than this city with its beautiful parks and wonderful shops?

Kathy took a sip and looked at the street. Birds were cheerfully jumping in the branches of a nearby tree. People were walking peacefully down the alleys and sitting with books on benches. Wonderful! What else does one need in life? It is warm and bright here and cappuccino is always delicious. Kathy sighed, feeling sorry for all men in general and for her Bobby in particular.

Actually, one thing was not clear to her in that life – why cannot she live without this funny, simple guy? Look at all these young men – many of them would be glad to be friends with her. Perhaps, among them she could find a calm guy who would never leave her and run away from her somewhere to the end of the world for the whole month.

But for some reason she was scared of the thought of losing Bob. Kathy tried so hard to tackle it, tried to start living without this guy but every time she felt so bad that she immediately decided to make it up with him.

The girl smiled again to her Bobby on the phone screen, finished her coffee and went outside. She was met by the cheerful sun, singing birds and gentle breeze. Kathy stood still for a bit and went out on an errand.

Her angel Gley watched her go with a smile. His favorite “Kitty” was becoming kinder and kinder slowly and surely.

* * *

The next morning after a good night’s sleep, the friends sat at the table for the first meeting. They had just one issue today – an investigation of that sailing ship. “Dolce Dive” catamaran was anchored on the old location, so divers’ way took just a few minutes. The friends filled their cups with delicious coffee, spread sheets of paper with pens and even put a small laptop on the table that they’ve never done before.

- Dear treasure hunters! – Josh began speaking first, as usual. – We are going to explore this ship. Unfortunately, we do not have any practical experience in that field; therefore, we have to make up a clever plan. This plan should consider security issues and describe a competent sequence of our internal operations. Please, give your opinions on this subject.

After a small pause, Mike began speaking.

- Our trip to the shore was quite useful. We have spent many hours surfing the Internet and searching for the necessary information about shipwrecks. In our computers, we have dozens of plans for internal arrangement of cabins and rooms typical for sailing ships of that time. Our goal is to choose one plan that is most suitable for our sailing ship. This will help us to understand what we should visit first.

- I think, I will add some details, - Yegor joined in the conversation. – Of course, a cargo hold and a captain’s cabin will be the places of primary interest for us. In the first place, we will see what cargo this ship carried. All the treasures that we will find must be located in a skipper’s

cabin, if the ship did not carry any special treasures that demand a special premise. However, it is not likely. I do not think that one could carry such treasures to Australia. This is the destiny of pirate ships or, at least, of some Mediterranean ones.

- I agree, - said Josh, - besides, there is a possibility of finding nothing. The captain could take all the treasures on the quarter boat.

Yegor smiled cunningly.

- I would agree with you, my friend, if we were talking about a simple shipwreck, - the Russian diver sipped his coffee and looked thoughtfully into the distance. – But our ship's name, as it turned out, can be read backwards as *Avos*. How many of you think that this is a coincidence?

All the divers have been thinking for several minutes but no one objected.

- That means that the location of treasures inside of the ship will probably be not according to the general rules, - he continued, - but according to the same good old *Avos* plan.

Yegor smiled broadly and happily and finished.

- That means, my friends, that anything can happen.

- All right...- Josh thoughtfully continued the topic after some time. – That is so unusual. On the one hand, we have a real shipwreck made about the nineteenth century. On the other hand, we live by the modern *Avos* plan, which, apparently, has control over time and all circumstances.

- That is even more interesting, - Mike said with a smile. – I have never thought that my birthday present would be so colossal.

- I will also have a birthday in a couple of weeks, - Bob said in a cunning and pathetic manner.

The friends at the table burst out laughing.

- All right, gentlemen, - Yegor continued after a short pause. – Let's move to the technical side of our dives. I will tell you in a few words about safety regulations during the diving in caves and internal premises of a ship. After that, we will think how to apply them on our sailing ship.

The friends moved closer to the table to listen.

* * *

An hour later, Mike and Yegor were the first couple to go diving. Their zodiac was filled today with many items and equipment, which they were going to use underwater for work. First, the friends wanted to tie a rope with a buoy to the sailing ship. That would make their dive easier. Yegor had to do this job. Mike, in his turn, carried a reserve balloon with a regulator, which guaranteed safety during the internal work on the ship.

Yegor looked again at a majestic sailing ship and began to search for the highest point to fasten the rope. That turned out to be a broken mast in the middle of the ship. When Yegor was coming closer, he suddenly realized that the mast's fragment with a small crossbar surprisingly resembles a cross. Yegor thought for a minute and tied the rope.

“Perhaps, it will be very symbolic to start working at that place each time”, - He thought. When Yegor finished knotting, he swam closer to Mike who has already put a balloon in the safe place on the old deck. After that, the friends gave a sign to Bob by releasing several big bubbles from the regulator under its zodiac.

A minute later, the guy began to lower different cargos on the rope, which Mike and Yegor carried to the sailing ship and put nearby the balloon. When no more cargos were left, friends fastened it with a rope. Of course, they were not afraid of thieves. This cargo was the worthless rubbish for inhabitants of this reef. However, the divers clearly understood the danger of strong currents at that place; therefore, they secured the goods, just in case.

After that, Mike and Yegor continued the external inspection of the ship, according to their plan. It would help them to understand its type, age, and, probably, precise location of its cabins. First, they explored and took pictures of all the topsides of the deck, found an anchor compartment, inspected and counted all the artillery places along the ship's sides. Then, they measured length, width and height of the ship with a special rope with tick marks.

After that, their job was finished. The friends came closer to the mast and slowly began swimming to the surface. At depth of five meters, they stopped at the decompression stop and looked at their sailing ship for three more minutes. From this distance, it seemed very graceful and majestic, too.

* * *

- I wonder what findings the Father prepared for them inside the ship. – Angel Fiu asked his friends, playing with one hand with fish in the pond.

Now the angels were sitting together in the garden near Asly's house. Cozy colorful chairs stood by the water and the angels could look at the fish and even play with it.

- Very soon, we will see, - Angel Nias replied. – But do not even doubt that these findings will be not just interesting but very useful for our divers as well.

- To be honest, I am still surprised, how quick and lively the Father led our romantics to understanding of such important things, - Angel Asly said with a smile. – Now they have more faith for sure.

After that, angel Asly made a serious face and continued to speak imitating his Yegor's voice.

- “The presence of treasures inside the ship will probably go to the good old *Avos* plan, - he said along with the laughter of his friends. – Two

weeks ago, he did not even have such thoughts on his mind. And yesterday he noticed a cross on the ship, what an eagle-eyed!

- Listen, what my guy squeaked, - angel Nias said and continued with Mike's voice. – "I have never thought that my birthday present would be so colossal". That is such a pleasure for the Father to hear these words from them!

- That's right, - Fiu gave a warm sigh. – Even my Bobby remembered his birthday.

Angels burst out laughing.

- Your Bob is so young and sweet, - angel Leyla said. – All the things that he is learning now will be so useful for him in the future.

- Indeed. The Father and I will not let him forget anything, - Fiu said.

- Well, my friends! – Sain addressed to the angels. – Perhaps, we should ask the Father what finding will be next. And after that, visit our divers.

Everyone addressed the Father in their minds. In a moment, they smiled cheerfully.

- As usual, - Angel Manif laughed. – Simple, fun and brilliant. Our Father always does like this. So, let's fly? We are so interested.

The angels flapped their wings and headed to Swain.

* * *

- For better understanding what and where we shall search let me tell you about the way sailing ships were loaded back then, - Mike said looking at his computer screen. He has already downloaded all the necessary information on the shore.

Divers were sitting at dawn on the rear deck and drinking their evening tea.

- So, - American continued the topic. – It was necessary to put cast iron and stone ballast on the bottom of all the deck ships to provide good stability. Therefore, there is no point in digging to the very bottom.

Divers nodded in agreement. They were not enthusiastic about digging out some ballast no matter how old it was.

- Next, the heaviest load was put on the bottom: cannonballs, gunpowder, etc. The water compartment was located in front part of a ship: one could store water there for a long journey. It was poured into the barrels. The lower barrels were covered with stones, and the upper ones were surrounded by firewood to prevent them from rolling during the ship's motions.

Mike took a sip of tea.

- There's hardly anything interesting about this load as well.

- We have enough water, we do not need it, - Josh replied with a smile. – And we do not need cannonballs either.

- It all depends, Josh, do not hurry, - Yegor stepped in cheerfully. – Why don't we go back to the port with two cannons on our catamaran's bow? I think that would be perfect advertisement for our expedition all over the news.

- Maybe we should grab a couple of ships on the way, - Australian lawyer muttered disapprovingly.

- All right, leave all the jokes until later, - Mike interrupted with a smile. – Let's move further. Ropes and other spare parts for sails and anchors were usually located behind the water compartment, by a foremast. In those days, storms often damaged sails, tore off anchors, therefore, sailors had to keep a good stock of them. Then, load was stored in bales behind a mainmast.

- And where did the ship's team live? – Bob asked Mike.

- Usually, they lived on the next floor, - Mike said. – Sailor lived closer to the bow, and then, if it was a military ship, soldiers, and officers and warrant officers lived farther. Captain's cabin, as a rule, was located in the end of the ship on the upper deck.

Mike finished his tea.

- If it was a military ship on the next floor were located the heaviest cannons, and if it was a merchant ship the transported load was located there. As a rule, there were a few cannons on merchant ships and they were placed a little bit higher.

- And how many cannons does our sailing ship have?

- Yegor and I counted twenty. Considering the fact, that our ship is forty-two meters long and ten meters wide, it seems more like a merchant ship with good armament. However, it can also be a multipurpose corvette.

- How can we figure this out? – Josh asked him.

- Of course, captain knew best about the ship and its load, - Yegor answered for him. – I think we should inspect the ship from his cabin. If there is some information about this ship, it must be located there. If no, we will take a look into other cabins and bulges.

- I think Yegor is right, - Mike supported his friend. – Besides, there is no difficulty in entering the captain's cabin. It is located on the very top in the end of the ship.

- What do we know about the ship's age? – Josh asked again.

- So far, we can say for sure that it is no older than of 1820, - Mike replied. – It has iron chains on anchors and iron beams for boats. All these innovations appeared at those times. I am afraid that we cannot be more precise so far.

- I can only add, - Yegor nipped into the conversation, - that sailing ships were used until the end of nineteenth century. Once I read about

competition of two legendary sailing ships in seventieths of that century: Cutty Sark and Thermopylae that were carrying wool from Sydney to London. However, sailing ships fell from grace after 1869, when Suez Canal was opened – only steamboats could pass through this canal. Sailing boats had to swim round Africa and it took them several months to do that. Therefore, our ship's age is somehow between these dates. It might have been built long before the shipwreck. As soon as we find something on it, we'll be able to be more precise.

- Well, - Josh said thoughtfully. – We will see what news the captain's cabin will bring tomorrow.

- Tomorrow is your and Mike's turn to go first, - Yegor said. – Bob and I will wait for you with good news.

After that, Yegor looked cheerfully at Bob.

- And we will think about one question. Perhaps, we should place one small cannon on the catamaran? Well, symbolically. For example, we can shoot from it only in the afternoon, as I have read somewhere, or gather people for lunch...

* * *

It is hard to convey the sensations that divers experience when they are swimming above the old ship's deck. Many years ago, people lived there and walked on it. Simple sailors, officers, a captain – all these people were this ship's team in the middle of endless waves. Since that time, everything remained untouched. Only schools of fish sometimes swam inside to brighten this once fast and beautiful sailing ship.

Josh and Mike swam from the mast in the middle of the ship towards the captain's cabin. For some time they have stayed above the wheel and watched it for several minutes. Of course, everything was overgrown with corals but some parts could be seen clearly enough. Friends took some pictures of that place and moved further.

Soon they swam up to the topside in the end of the ship, which was, apparently, the captain's cabin. In its center, friends saw an open doorway. There was no door and it was understandable – who would close it during the wreck. Over time, waves and currents tore it off completely.

Mike and Josh illuminated the cabin with a flashlight through the door and side windows, and then brought a reserve balloon with a regulator and put it inside the cabin at entrance. After that, Mike turned on the bright flashlight, took a loose end of the rope and swam inside. Josh stayed at the entrance. Divers needed ~~the~~ rope during their work in the ship to know where the entrance was. Because if you start doing something in the ship, suspensions and sludge go up and worsen the visibility. Besides, friends can give each other some simple signals.

A few minutes later, Josh felt three spurts in a row. It was a special signal that everything inside was okay and he could join Mike. Josh fastened the rope outside, turned on his flashlight too and swam inside trying to move very slowly because he did not want to raise the dust. Inside he started to move his flashlight around. That's it – the main room of the ship – captain's cabin!

In the far corner of the room, Josh saw light of Mike's flashlight, slipping on the walls. After that, he turned back to the door and began inspecting ~~of~~ the cabin's interior from the very beginning.

Chapter 8

Chest

The Father was looking with a smile at His romantic divers who were swimming in the captain's cabin. Such nice children! Once everyone will leave something behind on this earth. It might be a ship, or a

dwelling, or something else. Human time is short and no one can live forever.

The Father sighed. Just few of His children can understand the true meaning of their lives. Mostly, they prefer to spin in their worldly affairs and troubles like a squirrel in a wheel. Rarely do they raise their heads towards the sky. The possibilities He once gave them stay untapped. And in the end, all these ships and ancient cities become unnecessary for no one needs them – not Him, not people themselves.

It is good already if some tourist walks past them and thinks of his short life on earth. Many other people simply do not draw the meaning of this life.

But one can be happy both during his mortal life and afterwards. He just need to learn to put the true desires of his soul in the first place, to appreciate kindness and love. A piece of the Father Himself is hidden inside the human souls. One cannot find it anywhere else – not in things, not in early projects. Only that way leads people to ~~the~~ happiness. After earthly life, it leads them to the Father's house where they stay forever among the same bright, kind and loving souls.

That is so simple and clear! He gave so many proofs to people over these years! However, they prefer to turn away from them or ignore them. As a result, people voluntarily choose a completely different life for them on earth and afterwards. Unfortunately, more and more people do that in recent years.

And what will happen if sincerity and honesty, kindness and love leave the Earth? Who will need such Earth? Once His Son explained everything to people on earth. He proved his words with hundreds and hundreds of great miracles. But nowadays less and less people are interested in such things; instead, they prefer cheap daily worldly pleasures and endless troubles.

Such a pity! Many people on Earth are so educated and can learn about that so fast and so easily. When people reject the true desires of their

souls, reject kindness and love, honesty and unselfishness, they reject the Father. After all, the world where money rules and there is no love is not His world anymore. His Son has told it them many times.

The Father looked again at his underwater romantics. Like that, one by one, He saves pure souls on this earth. And He will certainly save everyone! The main thing is that people should not turn away from Him but always turn to Him.

* * *

Josh lighted up three big hooks very near the door. A captain would probably hang there his outer clothing and, of course, his big captain's three-cornered hat. "I wonder if he had a parrot on his shoulder?", - Josh thought cheerfully, remembering his favorite book about pirates and continued to flash his torch.

Then they saw a closet. All the furniture in cabins was securely fastened to the floor or the walls with hooks due to endless rolling, therefore the closet remained on its former place. All its boxes were closed on the hooks as well. Josh tried to lift one of the hooks with a knife and succeeded. However, he failed to open the box itself – he needed some more serious equipment. Friends planned this dive only as a primary examination of the cabin, when they would open only those things that opened easily.

Josh took several pictures with his flash camera and continued flashing his torch. There was a big table next to the closet. The captain must have sat at that table with sea maps, planning the ship's route or reading an interesting book. He probably dined there too.

An armchair stood right behind the corner of the cabin. Apparently, once it had beautiful upholstery but now it was hardly noticeable under a layer of mud.

“And there the captain would probably smoke his pipe!”, Josh thought. “Did the parrot fly away from his shoulder or did it keep sitting there no matter what?”

Then he saw a wall with small windows several glasses of which remained intact. Mike was already waiting for Josh in the next corner of the cabin. A ray of light from his flashlight was beaconing one spot. Josh took a look and his heart started beating faster. A chest!

In the corner of the room, at the head of the captain’s bed, they saw a real wooden chest bound with three iron strings. The divers were pleased to see that the lock was safe and sound. It means that the captain had no time to take anything from it before the wreck.

Mike and Josh exchanged the prearranged signals, unfastened all the hooks of the chest and tried to move it. In five minutes, the friends breathed heavily and stopped to rest. It seemed that the chest had grown into the floor and did not want to leave that place.

While taking a break friends were inspecting the captain’s bed. It was not very wide but the experienced captain, apparently, was not afraid to fall from it during the storms. “Perhaps, he tied himself to the bed with a rope at such moments”, - Mike thought. He read about it in some book.

The friends continued to flash in different directions searching around for interesting details. Suddenly, Mike’s flashlight stopped at some offset on the wall near bed-head of captain’s bed. Mike reached out and touched the object. After that, he took off his glove and went on wiping the dust off the offset. Soon, our friends could clearly see a cross with a crucifixion. The captain must have been a believer.

Then our friends got down to the chest again. It was strange but now they managed to move it on the first try. Josh and Mike smiled cheerfully even though the regulators in their mouth didn’t make it easy. They were carrying carefully the heavy chest towards the door and thinking about those very few divers who experience such happiness. Bob and Yegor will delighted to see what they have found!

The chest was almost a size of the doorway. Soon friends tied it with a rope. After that, Mike and Josh came back to the captain's cabin and finished their inspection.

In the other part of the room, near the bed, they saw a dresser with big drawers closed on the hooks. Perhaps, captain kept here his clothes, some things or navigation instruments. In the last corner of the cabin, right next to entrance, they saw a large bench fixed to the floor. It seemed that the captain took off his shoes sitting on it or maybe captain's juniors sat there and talked face to face with him. At this point, our friends finished examining the captain's cabin and ~~they~~ were ready to go up and lift the chest on board of the catamaran.

"We must take a picture of Bob's and Yegor's faces when they see the chest for the first time!" Josh thought happily.

* * *

Mark and Marta Schultz were sitting on the terrace of a cozy Maldivian restaurant and enjoying the sea and the clouds in the sky. The restaurant was built on coral shoal's pales in a way that its guests could get down the stairs right into the water to watch the fish or to swim.

Sometimes guests threw pieces of bread into the water and flocks of multicolored fish ate it right away. Mark looked at the sea, at the fish, at his happy wife and smiled quietly. They have been living on this island for a weak already. Every morning, the spouses snorkeled for a long time over coral gardens, walked on the soft sea sand around the island and sometimes rented a canoe. After dinner, when it was already dark, they enjoyed going to the well-lit pier and watch the night sea world straining after the light. There were big scats and other sea inhabitants and sometimes they even saw a small manta.

Mark sipped his juice. Strangely he didn't think about his job and the problems he had at all. He had a feeling that these bright fish, sea and

sun were quite enough to make him happy. At the moment it was all he craved for.

Sometimes such contrast with his ordinary life scared Mark, but in such moments listened to his heart and realized how good and comfortable he felt. It was odd how little he needed to feel happy. Here there was no need for huge amounts of money, endless business projects and all the things he couldn't go without back at home.

Marta took her diving mask, smiled to her husband, and went ~~down~~ into the sea to the fish. Mark laughed and started throwing pieces of bread near her. As a result, his wife was in the center of a boiling "Jacuzzi" of small fish. In the water Marta enthusiastically clicked her camera.

"Why can't we be so happy and joyful at home?" thought Mark pensively. "There we always have some endless troubles and problems. Walking in the park nearby twice a year is the most we can do. It is so strange..."

Smiling Mark looked at his wife. He had not seen her that happy and cheerful for a long time. She was that happy girl whom he once met and fell in love with. It was so long ago...

"Why can't I always feel that good at heart?" Suddenly, he mused again. "What stops me from always being that happy?"

It's been a long time since Mark asked himself such questions. Strangely, these questions always come to his mind when he is on vacation. The thoughts like that didn't bother him at home, in the habitual working environment. Though, there was no joy back there either.

"Oh, I have to think more about this!" he concluded, took his diving mask, a big piece of bread and went into the water to his wife.

His angel Anrie was smiling. It is so nice when your worldly friend suddenly starts asking himself some truly important questions. After

that, he went underwater to move a couple of large spotter seats closer to Marta and Mark. They will look perfect on Marta's pictures.

* * *

On "Dolce Dive" ship, the process of opening the captain's chest was at full blast. Friends' faces were shining with some new and enthusiastic mystery. When water leaked off the chest, friends put it in the center of the rear deck on a beautiful rug. The whole team of treasure hunters surrounded the chest and could not take their eyes off it. Indeed, it was worth it – it was a big old chest with a huge lock in the center.

- What a piece of beauty! – said Yegor.

- Yup! – cheerfully agreed Mike.

- I wish I knew what is inside, - Bob, who had already managed to take nearly half a hundred pictures, smiled. Now, Kathy will not make fun of his story!

- Good news is that we will find it out soon, - said Josh. – How are we going to open it, friends?

Mike carefully examined the hinges on the top and said.

- Hinges are quite rusty, but still working. I think that we can lift the cover.

- And what are we going to do with the lock? – Josh asked his friends again.

- It has spent over a hundred years in salty water and, I think, there is hardly a chance for us to open it, - Yegor replied. – So, let's just saw its bow. People did not have any strong steels at those times, so, I think it will not take much time.

All friends agreed with this proposal and Josh went for the tool. However, sawing took much longer than Yegor expected – every diver wanted to take a picture while being engaged in such an extraordinary

activity, so the saw changed hands four times. Bob was entrusted to finish the sawing. His uncle was filming this process with a smile, imagining how excited Bob's friends would be when they saw this video.

Finally, friends broke the bow with loud cries. Later, Josh and Yegor with the help of pliers pulled rusty metal in different directions and it gave in. Soon, the precious chest was standing unlocked. After that, Mike and Josh got down to the cover. First, they handled flathead screwdrivers along its entire length and then put them under the cover in places where the steel upholstery ended, and pulled it up with the force.

The cover of the chest made a pleasant scratching sound and got up a little. After that, four friends dove their hands inside and pulled it up. In a few seconds, the chest was opened. Four heads of treasure hunters overhung above it and looked inside with a great interest.

* * *

Angel Asly was sitting and pondering by the sea. How difficult and complicated the world has been lately! People have published thousands of books about happiness over these years but they are still so far away from it.

In fact, every person on earth can realize what makes them happy and what they really want. It's enough to listen to the music of feelings inside of at the moments when we make fine and beautiful things, when our thoughts are pure and noble. These feelings are more important than satisfaction from fame, money or some other worldly things. Like a precious diamond compared to a cheap piece of broken glass.

The paradise world of the Father lives by this fine and noble feelings and thoughts. That is why they are always happy. Everything is so fine there, so beautiful and dazzlingly pure. Perfect music of souls and hearts of Heaven's dwellers is the main song of the Father's world. His world is above all the visible and invisible ones.

If one is really looking for a beauty and nobility in this world, he can find its Source only in Heaven. Only there one can find pure love without unfaithfulness and sense of ownership, forgiveness with no soreness in the future, help without hesitation, and generosity without limits. But only if one really sets his mind on findings those true feelings.

The souls of people on earth can get near to that light and height. The purer the soul is, the higher feelings it can experience. But there is only One Source of all that beauty. Every inhabitant of the earth can touch It.

Back in the day people were given a main commandment: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind”. But a soul cannot love just like that, only if it has to. But a soul will love Him, if it sees eternal beauty, love and nobility in Him.

* * *

The chest was half full. From the first glance it was evident that almost two hundred years underwater left an indelible imprint on it. All items inside the chest remained a packed sculpture of indeterminate color.

Josh and Mike, as being the most careful members of the team, armed themselves with flathead screwdrivers and blunt knives and got to their part of “archeological” work. Bob and Yegor spread out a rubber rug nearby and started putting the items taken from the chest on it.

Two guns and a big dagger came into view first. Perhaps, the captain felt insecure as he kept them close at hand. On the other hand, he could have been keen on beautiful weapons which is not uncommon even nowadays. Then, friends took out the remains of three books. The paper inside had turned to mush years and years ago but some elements of old bindings remained undamaged. Inside one of the books, friends found a small cross and supposed that they were dealing with the remains of an ancient Gospel. The second torn book was bigger and looked like a

logbook. There captain used it to write down the necessary information about sailing. Genre of the third book was impossible to determine.

Right after the remains of the books, friends took out a big bloated bag. Some homogenous mass came out of its holes. Yegor took a piece with his fingers, mashed it and sniffed.

- Tobacco! – He said with certainty.

Friends immediately did the same and agreed. Even two hundred years could not eliminate the smell of tobacco.

- I wonder... – Bob suddenly started speculating. – What if we wash it properly in fresh water and then dry it... will be able to smoke it afterwards?

- Well done, Bobby! Good idea, - Mike replied with laughter. – I think it is possible. Though the person smoking such tobacco must be a true esthete and quite a character. And have a strong health.

Having had a few laughs friends continued the “excavation” of the chest. In a while, they took out two items that apparently once were engravings with some drawings. Perhaps, they used to be the portraits of captain’s close friends but now it was hard to tell. Friends examined them carefully from different angles and put them aside on the rug.

Then our friends found some fabric piece of clothing laying over the whole area of the chest. It looked like a warm jacket, but obviously there was no need for it in those hot places, so the capitan hid it in the chest.

Under the clothes, our friends discovered an iron box of a decent size. Bob and Yegor smiled seeing how much effort Josh and Mike made to lift it from the bottom. The treasure is showing up at last! No treasure hunting is imaginable without it!

After the box took its honorable place on the deck, friends carefully examined it. On one side of the cover there was a small lock. Now divers had no doubts about the purpose of the chest.

While Josh was sawing the bow on the lock, Yegor was cracking jokes.

- I think, my friends, after a couple of such chests we can give an advertisement like that: “We will professionally open a chest of any complexity and age only for ten percent of its value!”

Meanwhile, Bob was filming the opening of the box. Some extra evidence of the treasure found on the bottom wouldn't hurt.

Friends were not disappointed in their expectations. In fact, the box was a repository of money on the ship. Gold coins of a different size, slightly faded over the course of time, were lying in an even layer. There were no other precious items in the box.

- I am sorry, darling, - cheerfully said Mike, looking towards the horizon, - But there was no diadem. Do not worry; we will keep on looking for it. There is a thousand of shipwrecks...

Everyone started to laugh. Then, our friends did not want to bother much with the coins and measured their total weight. Scales showed a little more than nine kilograms. Friends put the old money aside and got back to the chest for some of the items were inside.

- What is that thing? – Josh said in surprise, taking out the last item from the bottom.

All of the friends came closer.

In a moment, they saw a large and beautiful chess box. Unlike other things, this item withstood the ravages of time. The box itself was made in the old style and could be ivory. Josh shook it a little in his hands and everyone heard noise from jumbling figures inside. After that, divers handed the box over to each other in complete silence.

Bob was the last to take the chess box from Yegor's hands. He twisted it in his hands and asked:

- What is that?

- This is chess, Bobby! – His uncle answered with a smile.

The guy continued twisting the box in his hands. Suddenly, he noticed a small sign plate near the hook. Bob wiped it with a finger and read the inscription aloud: “Happy birthday!”

Bob became thoughtful for a moment and then asked.

- Does it mean that the captain liked playing chess and it was a gift for his birthday?

No answer followed. Bob looked at his friends who in turn were strangely looking at him.

- Why do you keep silent? – The guy asked them.

- We just think, Bobby, that this chess has nothing to do with the captain,- answered his uncle quietly.

- What is it then? – Bob was confused.

- I think, it has something to do with you and your birthday, - Mike said with a smile.

Angel Fiu, who was standing beside them, silently clapped his hands.

- Happy birthday, dear Bobby!

* * *

Bob was sitting on the bow of the ship and looking at the dying sunset. Yegor came up from behind and handed him a bottle of cola.

- Don't you mind? – Russian diver asked him.

- Not at all - Bob smiled. – Quite the contrary. I am trying to understand what is going on but my head is spinning. As computer nerds say, too big file has dropped on my modest processor.

- In such cases I open the cupboard, - Yegor cheerfully shared his experience. – Then the processor turns off for some time and you start

seeing things by the help of something else rather than your head. What about some beer?

- Good idea!

Bob stood up and in a moment returned with two bottles of beer.

- You see, Yegor, - the guy said after a while, - only one month ago I lived in a completely different world. To be more precise, I thought that it was different. Well, how can I make it clear...?

Yegor pointed at the beer and Bob nodded cheerfully and took a few sips.

- The world is the same, Bobby, yesterday, today and even tomorrow, - Russian diver said after a short pause. – The only thing we need to do is to perceive it and take it slow. It's important not to make a mistake.

- Yegor! – Bob looked seriously at his friend. – Who is He, Who presented me this chess? It is very important to me!

- Let's think together, - Yegor replied and opened his can. – First of all, He likes kind jokes. Do you agree?

- I think so, - the guy answered. – All of His jokes and presents are very cute and funny, indeed. Why does He do that?

- Why do we joke on the ship?

- Well, to laugh and have fun together.

- I think, He does that for the same reason, Bobby.

- You think that He likes to talk to us and have fun with us? – Bob said with surprise.

- Well, yes, because we are His children, - Yegor replied with a smile. – Could there be any other explanation?

Bobby thought for a couple minutes.

- I do not see any other explanation, - he finally replied.

- So, He is funny, kind and likes to play with us, - Yegor cheerfully summed it up. – And He gives us advices on the important and exciting things in life.

- It seems so, - Bob finally agreed with a smile. – Why wasn't He in my life before? Why so many people live without Him?

- Wait a minute! – Yegor raised his hand in protest. – Let's not be in a hurry and figure it out one by one and for now discuss only the things that concern us.

He pointed at the bottle of beer with a laugh.

- All Australian beer might not be enough to solve the problems of mankind, Bobby.

- All right than! – the guy smiled. – Then, I will put it that way: why didn't I know anything about Him before?

- Well, pal, you are not quite right, - Yegor replied. – It's more likely that you did not want to learn about Him.

- What does it mean?

- Well, have you ever seen Christian churches along the roads? There are millions of them around the world! – Yegor grinned. – Do you really think that people would build them if that made no sense? You were just not interested in that topic before. However, that does not mean that the topic itself did not exist.

- Millions of churches? – Bob was surprised. – I will have to check it out in the Internet.

- Yup, Bobby, - Yegor said with a smile. – In such a quantity people would build only if something was truly meaningful for them. And it must be real, as all of us felt it.

- And very cool! – Bob added, smiling broadly.

- Very cool, Bobby! – Yegor supported him. – Life is always interesting and exciting with Him. Keep it in your heart and open Him to yourself little by little.

Chapter 9

Into the depth

A new day on the ship began with a small meeting of the treasure hunters. The friends sat at their favorite table drinking coffee and began to talk over the latest news.

- Well, dear treasure owners! – Josh said cheerfully. – I congratulate you with your new status! Of course, our treasure is not that great, but it is a treasure anyway.

- And moral satisfaction is even greater, - Mike added. – Only one out of several millions finds treasure during the lifetime.

- And what about financial satisfaction? – Bob asked.

Everyone laughed cheerfully.

- Of course there is financial satisfaction, my dear nephew! – Josh answered with a smile. – I think it will be enough for that sport car, that you've told me so much about.

- And Kathy dreamed about some diamond ring...- Bob added in confusion.

The friends nearly fell off the chairs with laughter.

- Welcome to the adulthood, Bobby! – said Mike after he recovered his.

- Jokes aside, Josh, - Yegor said, - could you guess what is our chest of gold worth?

- It is hard to say, - his friend replied. – Simply as gold it isn't worth much. Perhaps, half a million Australian dollars. But I am sure that its numismatic value is much higher. Almost all the coins are made of gold and they are from different countries – Portuguese escudos, Indian mohurs, British guineas, and Dutch ducats.

- Very good! – Mike nodded with a smile. – Next time it will be much easier get the permissions from our wives to go on our expeditions.

Our friends smiled contently.

- You don't think Kathy will be mad at me next time? – Bob asked everyone and caused a new wave of laughter.

- And what about the year these coins were manufactured? This information could tell us the year of the shipwreck, - Yegor said again.

- Josh and I looked at the dates, - Mike replied. – The majority of the coins belong to eighteenth and beginning of nineteenth century. The two oldest ones are dated 1823. As you know, in 1826 Australia completely switched to payments in British pounds. That is why our sailing ship was carrying the old currency.

- Wow! – Yegor was surprised. – It means that our ship is a real “greybeard”. It is almost two hundred years old.

- Looks like that, - Josh replied.

After that, he took a few sips and continued now addressing to everyone:

- All right, gentlemen! I have only one questing – what are we going to do next?

Everyone started thinking.

- I think we still have to examine briefly the main premises of this ship, - Yegor finally said. – Treasure is good but we are here not just for the sake of it. We can earn this money at home but we there won't be another chance to inspect an unknown sunken ship somewhere at the world's end.

- I couldn't agree more! – Josh supported his friend and smiled. – However, for Australians the world's end is located somewhere near your countries.

The divers laughed.

- I think we need to dive another week or two on this ship, - Mike added. – It is so great that we are the first ones to get into the budes and cabins of an old sailing ship. Besides, our “Avos” plan brings us some intriguing and profitable surprises. How can we ever leave this place without knowing more about this ship?

- I also want to stay here for some time, - Bob said. – I am thinking about diving back to the ship for a couple of time more. I should thank Someone for the chess.

After that, Bob finished his coffee and looked cheerfully at his friends.

- By the way, guys! – He addressed. – Will someone teach me playing chess?

Three friends on various excuses and went each in their own direction.

- I will send you the rules on the Internet when we come back home, dear nephew, - the guy heard his uncle's voice from a distance. – It takes at least two years just to learn the basics...

* * *

Angels Maty and Anrie were sitting in a beautiful garden of their friend, angel Blos, and talking. They came back here after swimming in a mountain lake and now they were talking to each other, relaxing in cozy armchairs.

- Dear Anrie, - Blos addressed to his friend, - how is your ward Mark doing on earth? When you talked to him the last time, he began thinking about serious things in his life.

- Yes, my dear Blos! – His friends replied with a smile. – The longer my Mark is on vacation, the clearer he sees many things. Such a pity that he and Marta have to come back home in a few days. Unfortunately, he switches so quickly from the right thoughts to hustle and bustle of the human world and rarely returns to them again. However, I think that this time his thoughts are deeper than usual. Perhaps, this time he will not forget them so soon.

- That is right, the modern world on earth today is very *sticky*, - Angel Maty agreed with him. – A human should have a great desire and make efforts to avoid flinging himself into that. If people do not think about the meaning of their life on earth, about the brevity of their time, about the One who created this world and why and what will come next, they will never escape from this bustle. Only desire and effort of people will help them to get a victory over the world and find correct answers in this life. Then the Father helps them to understand the life and find the right way. However, people always have to do their own steps.

- Unfortunately, many people of our time have a serious mistake in their worldview, - Blos said sadly. – Many of them believe that if they do not do anything bad and just live day by day on earth in that bustle, they are good. Poor things, they do not realize that if their heart is not full of love and kindness, then it is not with the Father but somewhere else. That also means that worldly interests are more important and close to them.

- Yes, many of them do not see that yet, - Anrie agreed with a sigh. – After their death, the heart stays with things that were the most important for it on earth. Many people will keep these things, fame or worldly bustle. However, without their terrestrial body they will not get that former satisfaction. That will turn their lives into hell. The heart will not get rid of those empty affections and plans. One had to do that while living on earth.

- It would be a bitter moment for many, - Angel Blos said. – Therefore, you should fight for your Mark until the last day, Anrie. Ask the Father. He will come up with a brilliant idea. Perhaps, he will reveal some

miracle to him. Ask, my dear Anrie. You cannot overcome the world in his soul without the Father.

- I ask and I will definitely ask in future! – His friend replied. – But Mark has to do many things himself. You cannot lead a person to the God if he is not willing to meet Him.

- All right, friends, - Angel Maty joined in, - enough of that. Let's fly to my new neighbor, angel Louis. He is building his new house. I will introduce you to him and maybe he will need your help.

His friends gladly agreed and soon the angels beautifully flapped their wings.

* * *

Josh and Yegor pulled the captain's chest back to his cabin. All members of "Dolce Dive" crew decided together to bring the skipper's personal belongings to the old place. Perhaps, other divers will swim there someday and it would be interesting and pleasant for them to play the role of treasure hunters for some time.

Josh suggested keeping the handguns and the dagger on the catamaran and presenting them to some local museum. The friends have not touched the cannons yet. Mike convinced everyone that today one can buy such a "semi-antique" cannon on the Internet only for several hundreds of dollars and it would be exactly like from the ship. In general, the game was not worth the candle and the friends decided to leave these cannons as decorations on the old sailing ship.

The friends put several modern Australian, American and Russian coins on the chest's very bottom before returning captain's belongings. Apparently, future divers will scratch their heads over these modern coins. However, if they swim there over a hundred years, these coins will be valuable indeed.

When the chest was fixed with hooks on the old place, the friends began to open the drawers of all cupboards in the cabin. Wood swells in water and the divers had to spend more time on that problem. Finally, all the drawers were opened one by one. The friends looked them over, took pictures of all items inside of them.

Mostly there were clothes and various items of captain's everyday life. Moreover, the friends found a box with souvenirs. Probably, the captain was going to present them someone. There were boomerangs of different size and other objects of aboriginal art. They also found a small box in the corner with different small coins inside.

Yegor was the first to open it and looked in surprise at three coins with a big hole inside. A couple of roundels in the same box accurately fitted these holes in size. Yegor shrugged his shoulders and swam to Josh with this box. He shuddered joyfully as he saw them and Yegor realized that it was a very interesting finding.

After that, the friends found an astrolabe in the next drawer. This is a device that helped sailors of those times define the exact location of their ship. The friends slid the drawers back to their old places and put only interesting things in their bag. Besides coins and astrolabe, they took an old fork and a spoon, a couple of new smoking pipes, some colored stones and something that strongly resembled a captain's three-cornered hat. Yegor would never put this hat back and the friends took it to the ship.

After finishing all the work, the friends inspected the cabin again. Everything was in its right place again – underwater museum was ready for new visitors. Would it happen in one year or over two hundred years – that did not depend on our divers anymore.

* * *

Angels Sain and Manif were sitting on the top of a beautiful mountain and enjoying a perfect view of the valley. Two thousand years ago,

when they were still humans, the brothers liked to climb the mountain and talk there. Not much has changed in this good habit over these times. Except for the mountains, that became even more beautiful and for their life that now had no end.

- Well, what do you think, brother? – Manif asked Sain with a smile. They still called each other “brothers” in Heaven as once on earth. – How is your Josh doing? What happened to him during that month?

- Nature always helps people to clean themselves, you know that, Manif, - his brother responded thoughtfully. – However, this is not the last thing. Not a clean head leads people to Heaven and the Father, though it helps them so see things more clearly. Only love unites them with the Father but it grows slowly and as a result of their desire and constant attention to their feelings. A person has to make kind and warm things in his life. He should also try to do only good and honest things. He has to forgive all people sincerely. Therefore, a person should act according to the rules that once the Father gave through His Son. Only such efforts eventually lead people to growth of their souls, true love and happiness in their hearts.

- And does your Josh make such efforts? – Manif asked Sain.

- Yes, sometimes, - his brother answered. – However, mostly he does that unconsciously. He has not even read the Gospel yet and heard only some parts from the Father’s commandments. Therefore, Josh does some things in the right way, though by intuition. It would be very useful for him to read the God’s words but he should want to do that.

- Indeed, brother, there are big problems with that on earth, - Manif nodded sadly. – Many spiritual teachers advice to read the Gospel. However, they may “load” a person with various wrong and false interpretations, with their own “rules”. It is even better to prevent such things because it is much more difficult to correct the mistakes. Think of our time: our priests have never changed their wrong views and have

never followed the God Himself. Even though He made hundreds of great miracles.

- That is true! – Angel Sain nodded. – I have never thought that those simple words that we once heard on earth from Jesus hundreds years ago would be interpreted in such various ways and dozens of variants.

- Oh, God! – Manif said. – That is why the Father has to lead His children on earth very carefully. They may always become involved in wrong beliefs. It would be much more difficult to change the consequences afterwards, especially in such a sensitive issue as a human soul.

- Well, it is fine, - Sain smiled. – Thereon, He is the Father! You see how delicately and interestingly He leads our divers. Everything will be fine. As for us, angels, we just need to love our wards and help them.

- Indeed, - Manif agreed. – We need to love, help and believe in them.

- So what? – Sain looked toward the ground. – It is time to see how our treasure hunters are doing. Are you with me?

His brother nodded cheerfully and the angels flew over the mountain.

* * *

The next evening the friends were relaxing on the rear deck of the catamaran after a series of dives on the ship. Josh and Yegor were sitting on the steps near the water; Mike and Bob settled down at the table. The guy convinced the American to give him several lessons in playing chess. There was a three-cornered captain's hat on Bob's head – Yegor gave it to him for this evening. The guy convinced the Russian diver that it would definitely bring him luck.

The last day did not bring any surprises for our divers. All of them, including Bob, dove to the ship one by one. However, the guy was allowed to visit only the captain's cabin due to his lack of diving

experience. Josh, Mike and Yegor swam inside more complex rooms one after the other.

Today, they have examined the ship's mess room and small cabins of officers and navigating officers. To do that, Mike and Yegor cleaned the entrance and prepared the safety equipment during the first morning dive. Tiny cabins of officers in this ship were located closely to the mess~~ing~~ room and were separated only by curtains. Around the big table, they saw eight chests of the officers, which they probably used instead of chairs to save some space. All chests were attached to the floor with hooks and each of them had a small padlock.

The friends had already decided that taking the chests from internal cabins to the surface and returning them to their old places later would be too difficult. Besides, they did not expect to find anything valuable inside ~~of~~ them. That is why the divers decided to saw locks' shackles without detaching the chests from the floor. Friends' assumptions were justified – they inspected half of officers' property and took only some coins, four handguns and a couple of interesting knick-knacks.

The divers decided to open the remaining four chests tomorrow. Needless to say that these new, unusual and sometimes unexpected dives made our friends very happy.

Josh and Yegor were drinking tea on the steps in silence and sometimes smiled, partially listening to the news from the chess table. Apparently, game experience of Bob was growing very quickly. He already knew what is a mate in three moves and a mate in four moves.

- Listen, Josh! – Yegor said seriously and looked in his friend's eyes. – What are we going to do next? All last year we were planning this expedition and I must say that it was quite successful. What is next? What interesting adventure is waiting for us? After all, we are going to die from boredom without interesting plans...

- I have also thought about it recently, Yegor, - Josh said thoughtfully. – You know, I feel a little sad. Of course, we can start looking for the

second ship, third, tenth, but there will be nothing new about that and it is frustrating.

The friends heard by chance that Bob just learned the mate in eight moves and mentally congratulated him on a great step forward. After that, Mike came down to the steps with his cup of tea.

- Won't a chess coach bother you? – He asked the friends with a smile and sat next to them. – I heard your conversation, my friends. I am also concerned with this question. What other new projects may appear in our routine and boring life?

Everyone kept silent for a long time. Finally, Yegor sniffed air with his nose and made a suggestion.

- Maybe we should dip into the cupboard again? It always helps us in solving serious issues.

The friends stood up and headed to the table without saying a word. Bob has already put the chess in the box and put the lucky hat on top.

* * *

All the angels were sitting on the ship not far from their wards. They looked lovingly at them.

Yes, many interesting and unusual things happened in lives of their dear romantics over the last month. Now the angels wanted to know what exactly sank deep into their minds. Is it a shipwreck, a treasure or something else? This very interest will determine plans of our friends for the next month or maybe for next years.

Most of all, the angels wanted them to understand the most important thing. The thing that will always help them in any occasion. The thing that they had to understand themselves, only themselves.

* * *

The first bottle was almost over when Josh suddenly made his proposal.

- Friends! – He began. – Let's first try to understand what we liked most in this expedition.

- It is logical, - Mike replied. – We can even make a list of the most interesting things that happened to us over the last month and everyone will grade these points on a ten-point scale.

- Great idea! – Yegor said. – Then we will understand what activities are the most interesting for us. After that, it will be easier to rack our brains over next plans and steps.

- Brilliant! – The young chess player supported his friends. He put on the three-cornered hat again for this occasion and went to get four sheets of paper from the drawer.

- So, - Josh said when they took pens. – Let's think together about the most interesting things and score it at the same time. As for you, Bobby, I will ask you not to copy off of the neighbors – this is a serious issue.

The divers smiled.

- I offer to make “a trip to unknown reefs” the first point, - Yegor offered.

The friends nodded and bent over their papers.

- I would make “searching for shipwrecks” the second point, - Mike said.

The divers took the pens again.

- What about the third point? – Josh asked.

- I guess, treasures, - Bob suggested.

The friends thought for a while and nodded again.

- What else? – Yegor said.

Everyone kept silent, thinking about the most joyful and pleasant moments in this trip.

- Perhaps, just “observing the underwater world”, - Josh said, thinking. – Well, we can add fishing or something like that.

- Accepted, - Mike nodded and the friends gave their scores for that point.

- I would make a separate point for our conversations in the morning and evening, sunrises and sunsets. In short, I will call it “the joy of communication and beauty of nature”, - Yegor said.

All the divers nodded agreeing with it.

- Yes, that must be a separate point for sure, - Josh agreed with his friend and asked. – What else?

For two minutes, one could hear only lapping of small waves on board.

- Friends! – Bob shook up suddenly and raised his three-cornered hat. – How could we forget about our *Avos* plan?

His older fellows scratched their heads in embarrassment.

- Oh, God! – Yegor could only reply.

After that, the divers immediately bent over their sheets of paper and evaluated this point.

- Any other ideas? – Josh asked again.

This time all the divers kept silent. Bob took the papers to calculate the average score and gave them to his uncle. In five minutes, Josh was ready to announce the result.

- So, gentlemen, - he began. – The average score for the “trip to the distant reefs” is ten points.

The divers applauded loudly and happily and Yegor began twisting the corkscrew into the second bottle.

- The next point about searching for shipwrecks took eight points and a half.

- Wow, - Mike said emotionally.

- The point with “treasures” took only seven points with a quarter, - Josh continued to announce the results.

- My great-grandfather was a banker and he would definitely kill me for that, - Bob said with feeling.

The friends burst out laughing.

- “Underwater life and fishing” took nine scores, and “sunrises, sunsets and communication” took ten points.

- Well, it seems that these things are more valuable than the chest, - Yegor commented on this result.

- I am sorry but I could not calculate the last point, - Josh said with a smile. – There are two hundreds, one thousand and one ten with three pluses.

At that moment, Josh became a little confused.

- Well, I am the lawyer and I cannot break the agreement. That is why I put pluses.

All the friends laughed cheerfully and applauded loudly to such an unexpected result.

- It seems that following the *Avos* plan was the most interesting thing for us, - Josh summed up and addressed cheerfully to his Russian friend, - Yegor! Where is another bottle in that regard? Apparently, the future direction for our next plans is beginning to take shape...

The Father and the angels looked warmly at their divers and smiled warmly too. Great job!

Chapter 10

New findings

The next day, our friends finished inspecting the mess~~ing~~ rooms. The last four chests of the officers did not bring them anything unusual – the divers took onboard only four old handguns, a knife and a few small items. After inspection, the friends put all things back to their places and closed the chests' covers.

Yesterday after dinner, Yegor regretted aloud that he had not bought a dozen of good padlocks on shore. It would multiply the joy of pioneering of future divers. After that, the friends had enough time left to clear the entrance to the cabin where the ship's sailors once lived and look for hatches leading into the ship's hold. However, they put off a detailed examination of these rooms until tomorrow.

Mike and Yegor were last to come back from the sailing ship. When they finished all the internal work, they swam to the upper deck of the ship and began shaking off the dust and mud from each other. Then, they enjoyed different animals swimming around them and moved towards the rope. The friends hold it and began slow rising to the decompression stop.

The sun on the surface was already sinking to the horizon and it was not so bright underwater. Yegor, who was the last one to go up the rope, at some point looked back and froze with surprise. After that, he pulled the rope strongly several times to attract Mike's attention. When he looked back, Yegor pointed with his hand at the broken mast in the ship's center. Judging by the fact that Mike froze too, Yegor understood that it was real – the broken mast in the form of a cross was slightly glowing.

* * *

This evening the friends were drinking on the rear deck some new fruit tea that Josh took out of curiosity on shore. Everyone liked its taste and the friends filled their cups again and again.

At that time, the sea surface was completely calm again and white fluffy clouds floated not only in the sky but on the surface, too. Mike and Yegor told their friends about the unusual phenomenon that they saw underwater. That became a topic for a hot discussion.

- Well, a month ago I would say that it happened because of some luminous plankton stuck all over the mast, - Josh said with a smile. – But now I would not say so.

- I think a month ago, you would not be alone in your thoughts, - Yegor supported him and added. – In fact, people always try to explain by all means unusual things that happen on earth, as though it makes their life easier and happier. But that is so silly... Life is more joyful and calm when you know that there is something great in this world, that there is God in it.

- You are right, Yegor! – Mike nodded cheerfully. – I have recently heard another version of scientists about Moses leading people from Egypt. The wind was so strong that it blew up “a corridor” into the sea. Through this passage, they could come out.

- Strange wind, - Bob commented. – It blew up the water but made no harm to the people.

- Yup, even Bob understood that immediately, - Mike nodded. – Why ever do scientists need that?

- When there is no God on earth, then people and their explanations take the first place, - Josh said thoughtfully. – It seems that life in this way is easier for someone.

- It is strange, - Bob said. – Life is much more joyful and interesting with God.

- This is a delicate subject, Bobby, and only a few people can find the answer, - Yegor smiled to him. – That is why nowadays, two thousand years after the emergence of Christianity, so many people on earth have no faith. However, even non-believers have to believe in something. Well, at least in such unusual wind.

All the divers burst out laughing.

- But that is boring anyway, - Bob did not give up.

- Not everyone in this life likes to believe in beautiful fairytales, - uncle smiled to him. – Some people prefer thick and very clever books. In this life, my boy, everyone chooses what he likes more. Actually, many scientists believe in God. For example, world-famous Einstein, a great inventor who was ahead of his time for decades to come. At the end of his life, he liked to repeat one phrase: “Everything that I wanted to know was God’s thoughts. Anything else is details”. That’s it, folks. Sometimes even scientists understand that God stands above science.

Josh sipped his tea and finished the thought.

- Yesterday, we unanimously called the *Avos* plan the most interesting thing about our adventure, - he looked somehow slyly at Yegor and Mike. – Something is telling me that the glowing mast-cross is related to it.

* * *

Examination of sailors’ cabin did not take much time of our divers. Everything in that room was simple and lean. Almost everywhere, the divers could see hooks for hammocks, where sailors had rest after a watch, in some places there were small chests, mostly without locks. The friends did not even examine them properly. Sailors who earned only a few coins during the sail could hardly put anything valuable inside of them.

The friends gave a look at the big cabin and began searching for the hatches to the ship's cargo hold. One of them was right next to the mess~~ing~~ing room of the ship's officers. Luckily, the friends did not find a lock on the hatch, even though it had hinges for it. Mike and Josh fiddled a little with a swollen door and opened it. After that, both divers leaned inside the hold with flashlights and started careful examination.

Everything that they could see was big bulgy grey bales, illuminated with the flashlights. Only a small space beneath them was loose. Mike and Josh took out their knives and incised the closest ones. Only homogeneous grey mass came to light from these incisions. The divers examined it carefully in the light of the flashlights and even kneaded it in hands. Apparently, sheep wool was inside of all those bales.

The friends carefully examined everything around them once again, did not find anything new and closed the hatch. Everything became clear now about the ship's cargo.

* * *

Mark Schultz was sitting again in his office. His working day was over long ago, but he did not hurry to go home for some reason. The thoughts, which he had on vacation, got stuck in his head. Mark just could not get rid of them and plunge into the ordinary daily routine. Something inside him told that this road leads to nowhere. At the same time, he did not know where these questions lead to. However, he really wanted to know.

Mark was slowly drinking his tea, looking at the picture with the sea view and thinking. "What is the meaning of my life? What is the secret of happiness? Of true happiness, not temporary one". He felt that he had touched something very important and real on vacation. And he did not want to lose it. Probably, he could not lose it – his soul resisted when he was trying to get rid of these thoughts and return to his old life.

One question bothered him: “Do I really have to live the way I do? Is there any other happy and joyful life that I do not see now but that I feel inside of me?” Overall, Mark had no problems with questions, but as for answers...

“I definitely should take time to think about it. Without it, I would be stuck into the old rut”, - the German was thinking. “I also need to read some books on that topic. Something that will help me to see and understand everything more clearly. But where can I find everything that I really need? Nowadays there are so many things around me that I can spend half of my life and still do not find anything”.

Mark sighed and got ready to go home. His angel Anrie was sitting nearby, smiling warmly and cheerfully. It seemed that his “locomotive” was slowly turning in the right direction. It was time to prepare the right books for him. But this task was much easier!

The angel smiled cheerfully, thanked the Father and happily flew back home.

* * *

During the tea time, Josh explained to his friends that the sheep wool was the main export article in Australia for about one hundred years since 1800. Apparently, their sailing ship was not an exception.

- Josh, what do you think, what was the origin of that wool? – Yegor asked his friend.

- Probably, from Sydney or Melbourne, - the Australian answered. – In 1823, ships put only into these ports on the eastern coast. First ports in Gladstone, Bundaberg and Rockhampton appeared only in the very end of nineteenth century.

- And what about the *City 1770*? – Yegor asked his friend again, looking curiously at the map. – Perhaps, the foundation date is inside of its name?

- This is date of Captain's Cook arrival in these places, - Mike answered to Yegor with a smile. – I have recently read about it.

- That is right! – Josh nodded. – And first cargos were received and sent there only a century later.

- By the way, I forgot to ask you, Josh, - Yegor suddenly remembered one thing. – What are these coins with holes that we have recently found in the captain's cabin? I remember you were so happy about this finding if I'm not mistaken?

- No, you are not mistaken, my friend – Josh replied with a wide smile. – Apparently, these was the first Australian money called “holed dollars”. They were manufactured about two hundred years ago from the silver coins by hammering out their middle parts. After that, people stopped exporting this money from the country. Nobody needed these coins in such a form abroad. Until then there was not enough cash money in Australia – people paid it to Europeans for various imported products. The main currency before such “holed dollars” was rum.

- No way! - Yegor vividly reacted to the news.

- That is right, - Josh smiled. – Even the first hospital in Sydney was built with rum.

After that, he continued his story about money.

- So, you would probably be surprised but this money is of real value for coin collectors. As far as I remember, one such “holed dollar” in a good condition was sold in the last international auction two years ago for a few hundred thousand dollars.

The friends at the table whewed aloud in surprise.

- That's right! – Josh nodded. – And we have three of them. Besides, there are two internal coins, which were squeezed out of them.

- Are they expensive too? – Bob asked with interest.

- Not as expensive as “holed dollars” but together they may cost several dozen thousand dollars, too, - his uncle answered.

After that good news, the friends little by little finished their tea and went to rest in their cabins after a long diver’s day.

* * *

At night, it rained a little. Josh woke up first on the ship, wiped his and his friends’ chairs at the table and sat waiting for another sunset with a cup of coffee. He had never been tired either from this nature “program”, or from its other “channels”. A bit later, Mike and Yegor came to the table. They poured some coffee and joined in the viewing. In twenty minutes, the sun floated above the horizon after going through all the steps from rising out of the sea.

- I feel so good here! – Josh said thoughtfully. – But to be honest, I already miss my family and home. How are they doing? Sometimes even my boring phone does not seem such a useless thing.

- It seems that many processes are running simultaneously there, - Mike smiled in response. – I have thought about my family and home for the last few days, too. What about you, Yegor?

- My daughters have probably pestered the life out of their mom with questions about me. Poor thing, she does not even know anything herself, - ~~look-of~~ always cheerful, Yegor became unusually sad. – Last time I called them from shore and told about the sailing ship *Avos*. They are probably very interested about what is happening to us.

- So, what do you think about our future actions? – Josh asked his friends. – We have enough food and fuel on the ship for one more week.

- I have no idea, - Mike said first. – We have already inspected the main cabins on the ship; only household cabins holds are left. However, we

will not find anything interesting there, for sure – maximum a few more bales of wool.

- I also think that it is time to finish our expedition. Everything that we had planned to do was done, - Yegor said. – I think that it is time to move back towards the shore. What do you think, Josh?

- I agree, my friends! – the Australian nodded. – Let's take up the safety equipment from the sailing ship today and prepare our catamaran for the home journey. I think that it will take three or four days to reach the Gold Coast with good wind. The first night we will spend in the bay behind Fraser Island, the second – on Tangolum, and then we will be very close to our port. By the way, we can use phones on Fraser Island.

- Accepted, - Mike approved this plan. – Let's dive before lunch and then prepare the ship.

- And later, at night... - Yegor began with a sly smile. – Gala night to mark the end of the expedition! Dear Josh, please, do not close the cupboard for this night.

The friends laughed cheerfully.

- All right, - Josh agreed with Yegor. – We should definitely celebrate such a successful expedition. Our wish came true and we got everything that we wanted – to the maximum and even more.

- I screwed up the diadem a little though, - Mike smiled broadly. – However, our *Avos* plan compensated that. Overall, Josh, do not close the cupboard this evening, indeed.

- We do not close it at all! – Josh answered laughingly. – I have thrown the key into the sea long ago. All right, I am going to wake Bob up. I hope that he will not damage the ceiling when he gives a skip for joy after hearing that news. He is missing Kathy so much too... Oh, that young boy!

The friends smiled, finished their coffee and got busy.

The Father looked at His divers with a smile who were happy to go home. Another children spent some time alone with nature, touched His miracles, thought about Him. It is always nice when kids think about their parents. It is even more pleasant when they love them.

However, love is a thing that does not appear for no reason. Love appears in response to love and kindness. Those who begin to see beauty and nobility, generosity and love of the Father cannot help falling in love with Him.

Little by little, His big Heaven family is growing – loving children come to the loving Father's Home after their life on earth. That is so simple and clear!

The Father sighed. It would be so nice if more people understood that. They would definitely clean their souls from everything alien to true love. It is necessary. All human passions – anger, lies, condemnation and other ones - will never let love develop in a soul.

People have the fear of God only because of their ignorance. God is Love and people were told about that many times before. However, people always forget about that for some reason.

From the beginning, God gave His children the freedom of will on earth. At the same time, He gave them much evidence of His existence, His love to them, showed the right way to Him. His Son, Jesus, and His followers have told people about that long ago and made great miracles to confirm their words. Then every person makes his own choice.

The Father is always close to every human soul. In the life of almost every person, He shows His presence in the form of small miracles and events that cannot be explained by earthly ideas.

What else can He do to spark their interest and love to Him? The real Father would never force His children to love Him. He sparks their

interest by showing the beauty of His world, the height of senses, by calling them to Heaven. However, not everyone chooses Him even after all these things. And they have a right for that.

The Father looked at His romantics again. “Go, My dear children! Keep going this way and in the end, I will meet you, - He thought warmly. – Do not get lost, My dear, in this life!”

Chapter 11

Back home

Mike and Yegor fastened the balloon with the regulator and different equipment of treasure hunters to the rope in turns, after that, Bob lifted it up, in the zodiac. At the same time, Josh was preparing the catamaran to the long journey. When all the equipment was lifted, the friends gave a signal to Bob, making big bubbles under his zodiac. After that, the guy took the goods on the catamaran and Mike and Yegor continued their dive to enjoy their beautiful finding for the last time.

Over these days, the sailing ship became very familiar and even dear to them. As they were its new team. The friends swam along its boards and enjoyed the clouds of colorful fish around them. In their hearts, they were sad to leave their new underwater friend that brought so many unusual and interesting things into their lives. However, people are just guests underwater.

The friends made a full circle and swam slowly to the mast. When they raised their heads, they saw that Bob’s zodiac stood still on the old place. It was time to go up to the surface – Josh and Bob wanted to dive before the noon and say goodbye to the sailing ship. Mike began to untie the rope from the mast and Yegor was looking at it thoughtfully.

Some great meaning was hiding inside of that. They will have to think carefully about it later. It seemed that the sailing ship *Avos* would give its “treasures” for a long time to the new team. To the team that it was waiting on the bottom for one hundred ninety years.

Mike and Yegor slowly began to go up to the decompression stop. They stood at a shallow depth for three minutes, waved their hands to say goodbye to the sailing ship and floated to the water surface. The morning sun reminded them of many things and quickly cleared up their sentimental mood.

* * *

Gala dinner marking the successful expedition of the treasure hunters to the Swain reefs began shortly before the sunset. Josh cooked a wonderful rack of lamb on this occasion, Mike made his favorite brand “Texas” salad, and Yegor opened two bottles of best wine and sliced some cheese. Bob helped a little bit in everything and at the same time degusted all the dishes. This evening, the three-cornered hat adorned ~~this evening~~ Yegor’s head. Bob lent it when he played chess with someone, and Mike lent it when he was fishing.

After finishing all the preparations, the friends sat at the table. Yegor filled four glasses and Josh took charge of meat and salad.

- Well, my friends! – He began speaking. – Strangely enough, our seemingly hopeless and even a bit fantastic adventure was crowned with complete success. The ancient sailing ship underwater became real and seventy-five percent of treasures’ value will be shared among the members of *Avos* expedition. That is why I pronounce this toast: for dream, for fairytale and for Him, Who made our dreams come true! For “Avos”!

All the friends at the table applauded loudly for such a toast, took a drop and started eating.

In thirty minutes, they were full and leaned on their chairs.

- Josh! – Yegor addressed to his friend. – What do you think, how much will it take to assess and pay taxes for the treasure?

- Oh, Yegor...- Josh could only say. – Such events are rare and even though my lawyers have already prepared the necessary documents I think it will take several months. Probably, we should not hurry. It is better to sell all the treasures from the ship at international auctions at the highest prices.

- Josh is absolutely right, - Mike joined in the conversation. – I have a few fellows who are really experienced in this issue. I think they can give us some advice.

- Well, Bobby and I will flip through the catalogues and look for our future purchases. By the way, Bob, did you find a suitable sports car? – Yegor asked the guy.

- You know, Yegor, - suddenly Bob replied very seriously. – I have changed my mind. I think it would be better to buy a conventional SUV and a small yacht, which can be later transported on a trailer. I have seen that on the roads.

Bob got a little confused.

- I just got attached to the sea, my friends. That is why I want to have the opportunity to go sailing in spare time. I think that Kathy would like this idea too.

His older friends unanimously began clapping their hands.

- Good for you, nephew! – Josh could only say.

- Chess were good for you, Bobby, - Mike smiled cheerfully.

- And I think it's all about the captain's three-cornered hat, - Yegor said laughingly and put the famous hat on the guy's head. – It just captivates with the sea any person who wears it.

- Do you think so? – Bob asked seriously. – Maybe I should put it on Kathy's head for a couple of days.

The friends nearly fell on the deck with laughter.

- It can cause a different effect on women, Bobby – Josh finally took a breath and said. – For example, I would not take such risk.

The friends joked until the midnight and the cupboard's door began to creak at the end.

* * *

The next morning at first light “Dolce Dive” catamaran weighed anchor and headed southwards. Fresh side wind cheerfully filled its sails. There was enough fuel in the tanks and Josh fired the engines to increase the speed.

Today the friends had to overcome a considerable distance. They were going to spend the night in Hervey Bay – a big inner water area between the huge sand Fraser Island and the shore.

During the first two hours, the divers made their way between random reefs of Swain atoll and then, in the open water, charted a course towards the farthest tip of the Great Barrier Reef – Lady Elliott Island. The distance was more than two hundred kilometers and Josh increased the catamaran's speed to twenty knots per hour. The next six hours the friends spent having fun and jumping on waves. Fishing at such speed was impossible and sitting at the table during such pitching was uncomfortable. That is why the older divers stood at the wheel in turns and the rest were lying with books in their hands on sofas in the mess~~ing~~ room. By three o'clock, they saw Lady Elliott Island on the horizon. “Dolce Dive” passed it without slowing and went on.

Hervey Bay is famous for a huge population of whales that come here in winter months. However, now it was autumn in Australia and the divers encountered occasionally only small flocks of dolphins.

The sun was verging on the horizon when the catamaran entered the Urangan port. First of all, the friends filled the ship's fuel tanks and after that stopped at the pier. Josh contacted this port in advance by radio and arranged a place for them.

When all moorings were attached, the crew went ashore happily with phones in their hands. First, the friends headed for the café where they have talked to their relatives and close friends for one hour at good dinner and a cup of coffee. Nobody worried about the treasures left onboard – Josh and Mike hid them so good in the catamaran that it was almost impossible to find them. Besides, thefts from ships in Australia are extremely rare.

It was dark when the friends came back to the ship. They decided to have a good sleep before the next passage and headed directly for their cabins.

* * *

The next day the passage was much shorter. In early morning, “Dolce Dive” left the welcoming port and headed again southwards. The first part of their daily route should have passed through the calm canals of Hervey Bay. The wind was light in that morning and the catamaran moved on the engines. But that did not worry out friends – the ship's fuel tanks were full. Quiet and calm weather in the morning let our friends lively share their impressions on the rear deck. Mike was the first to stand up at the wheel and three of his friends sat at the table nearby with bottles of ginger beet in their hands.

- So, my friends, - Josh said. – Did you manage to talk to your loved ones yesterday?

The divers nodded their heads.

- It seemed to me though that Kathy still would not believe that we had really found something, - Bob said with a smile. – However, I sent her a

dozen of pictures of the chest yesterday, even the one where I am sawing the lock. She calls me a big tale-taller and our chest is only a good joke for her. She keeps asking me at what store we bought it.

His friends almost fell off the chairs from laughter.

- It is not surprising, Bobby, - his uncle replied. – Actually, not so many people are going to believe that. I also sometimes can hardly imagine that everything that happened to us is not a fairytale. In such cases, I usually pinch myself and look at the chest.

- That is why I always wear the hat, - Yegor laughed. – I need only to look in the mirror to see that it is true.

Everyone burst out laughing.

- As for me, chess do not let me forget about that, - Bob said cheerfully. – By the way, Mike, let's play after your watch? The last time I stood up against you was for half an hour!

- You are making a progress, for sure, - Mike answered with a smile. – And I have a few more gray hairs on my head. Okay, Bobby, let's play. But do not forget your hat!

- By the way, Josh, - Yegor asked. – Where will we spend this night?

- If the weather is fine, we will have enough time to reach Tangalooma, which is located on Moreton Island. We dived there once three years ago. Do you remember those waterlogged ships in the shallows? This bay has a beautiful shore and calm waters. Besides, there is one pretty good restaurant on shore, where you can order perfect stakes.

- It would be great to get there today, - Bob gulped.

- There is one difficult section on our way in the end of these canals. It is located right between Fraser Island and the shore and called Inskip Point. We will reach it in one hour. It is difficult to pass this point only at low tide, and now it is high tide. Therefore, everything should be fine.

So it happened like this. The catamaran surfed in breaking waves for a while, passed this place and made for the ocean. Next there was a straight way to Moreton Bay. Josh increased the catamaran speed again up to twenty knots per hour and by four o'clock the friends have already anchored in a picturesque place called Tangalooma. Internet and phones worked very well here and all the divers checked their e-mails and messages in turns.

Later in the afternoon, the dressed up friends sat in the zodiac and headed to the restaurant on the shore. Yegor's hat, despite his protests, was left in the catamaran.

* * *

For the whole evening, Kathy was looking through the pictures in her phone that Bob had sent to her. Here is Bob sitting near the chest, here is Bob sawing something on it. Kathy tenderly looked at the beloved face of her boyfriend and did not notice anything else around her. Well, finally he will be home soon! Kathy flipped and saw the last picture. What stupid hat is that? Looks like he is trying out for the part of a pirate in some movie. Where on earth did he get it?

The girl stared attentively at Bob's face. Something has slightly changed about him. And she definitely liked this "something". His eyes looked more serious. Or maybe it was just a picture. Oh, what is the difference? She loves him anyway!

Kathy sighed and put her phone under the pillow again. She twisted round in her bed for a minute and took it again in her hands. In a moment, the girl was looking at Bob near the chest again.

"A chest. Why do I ever need a chest?" – Kathy reflected and suddenly became thoughtful. "At the same time... If it is true? Then Bob may buy that wonderful ring in a jewelry store on the shore? But that is unlikely. Bob would never find anything underwater, it is just impossible".

To be honest, that was not so important for her. Nothing matters more than Bob! Finally, Kathy began to fall asleep. Just before the sleep, one thought crossed her mind. “I hope that Bob will not bring that awful hat at home. He looks like a clown”.

A minute later, the girl was enjoying a balmy sleep. Her angel Anrie was standing nearby and looking at the walls with a smile. “On what hook in this room Bob’s hat would look best?” – He thought.

* * *

- Well, my friends! –Yegor said with a sated voice in one hour after the beginning of the dinner. – This is our last evening that we spend on the ship altogether. Tomorrow, after our last passage, Josh and Bob will spend night at home, and Mike and I will sleep in a hotel.

The divers were sad and kept silent for a bit.

- Well, sooner or later, everything comes to an end in this life, - Mike said thoughtfully. – Our four-week expedition is over, too. Even though we are sad in our hearts now, I have no doubts that we will come up with new and interesting plans in the future.

- Besides, now we know in what direction we should dig, - Yegor smiled. – Now we will close the issue about our treasures, live in our families for a while, work, and eventually new ideas will come to us themselves.

- When do they come themselves? – Bob inquired.

- Perhaps, when you really want them to come, - his uncle replied and smiled. – Or when you put on the right hat.

All the divers laughed again.

- But Yegor will take the hat back to Russia, - Bob said sadly.

Yegor looked warmly at the guy and smiled.

- Bobby, I give it to you with all my heart. Put it on more often, look in the mirror and sometimes put it on Kathy. Perhaps, it would really help you.

- Oh, thank you, Yegor! – The guy was happy. – I will definitely take it when we are together on vacation.

Everyone became thoughtful.

- Seriously, guys, when will we think about our next trip? – Josh asked the question.

- It is hard to say, - Mike replied over some time. - It depends not only on us.

- I agree, Mike, - Yegor understood his thought and nodded. – This time we only followed our *Avos* plan that was made by Someone else. He should tell us where we should go.

- Yes, my friends, - Josh agreed. – The most interesting thing is that it can be anything. *Avos* plan is a serious thing. It gave us to understand that many times. I think we should feel in our souls what we want to do next. If we do not make a mistake, everything will be just fine.

- And how do we know that? – Bob asked.

- Intuition, Bobby, intuition once again, - Yegor replied. – It always helped us in this trip. I suggest thinking on that topic and get together to compare our results.

The friends at the table became thoughtful.

- You know, Yegor, - Mike said. – That is interesting. We have been searching for our ship in that manner too. Even if one of us makes a mistake, four of us cannot be mistaken. And we should not make mistakes – actually, life is not so long.

- I agree, my friends. We should not make mistakes, but we should not hurry, too, - Josh nodded. – It is always interesting to follow a perfect plan in the right way. But I would not waste my time in boring projects.

- Do not forget about me, guys! Call me and I will come. – Bob smiled and added. – If Kathy does not kill me...

The divers laughed.

- So, when will we meet again? – Josh asked his friends. – And where?

- Friends, let's meet in one year at this very day, - Bob suggested suddenly.

The divers thought for a while.

- You know what, I like this idea! – Mike said first. – We should hatch good plans. One year is just the right period. Besides, we will have enough time to set things right.

- I am in, too! – Yegor said. – It reminds me the book about musketeers. However, they met over twenty years.

- Maybe we should meet in twenty years too? – Bob continued to come up with ideas.

- I am not sure about that, Bobby, - Josh cooled his nephew's ardor. – One year is enough. We should only determine the place.

- I suggest do not determine the place yet, - Yegor suggested suddenly. – We can determine it, for example, a month before the meeting. Perhaps, it would be one more surprise and a new chapter in *Avos* plan.

All the divers were pleased with this idea.

It was dark already when the zodiac approached the “Dolce Dive” catamaran in glowing lights. The friends said good night to each other and went to their cabins.

Tomorrow they will come back to their ordinary terrestrial life.

* * *

The angels were looking at their earthly romantics with great love. That trip to the distant reefs was so useful. The Father showed them so many unusual things!

The angels wanted so much to make them remember everything. They would be happy if our friends continued their life path discovering the Father in their hearts, His great love and infinite goodness. They would be happy if they always wanted to touch this incredible height and beauty that can come only from Him and learn this kindness and love from the Father.

After that, the end of their earthly life will be just an opened door leading to Him. Him, Whom they have known and loved for a long time. And they, angels, will always be close to their friends on earth. They will always give them a cue: a right action, a good thought, a funny joke or interesting plans. And they will always love them very much.

Epilogue

Four men were sitting on the outdoor veranda of a restaurant located on an island in the Indian Ocean. All of them arrived yesterday. Two men, one of whom was very young, came from Australia. The third man was from America, and the fourth one was from Russia. The sunset was burning out in the sky when the visitors finally shared their news with each other. After that, they got down to the main thing – the reason of their meeting.

- Well, my friends! – the older Australian, who was named Josh, pronounced solemnly. – Does everyone understand what we are going to do next?

Three men at the table nodded.

- Well, in that case, let's do it like the last time, - Josh said and after that addressed to the young guy. – Bobby, please, spread blank sheets of paper. Each of us should write the first thing that comes to the mind. And after that...

- We have been waiting for this “after that” for the whole year, - Yegor added with a smile. – So, as the phrase goes, - here we go and let it be.

Everyone bent over the papers.

The angels also bent over their wards. Each of them tried to make his earthly friend write the correct answer on the paper. The Father smiled cheerfully looking at his friendly company made of heavenly and earthly members.

When Bobby collected the sheets of paper in five minutes, the first star lit up in the sky.

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BACK COVER

Everyone likes to search for treasures. In this book, four friends will try to find their own underwater treasures in the most remote place of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. Beautiful sea, kind humor and many other things await them in this adventure.