

A. Belyaev

STORIES

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"Classics fantasy" 5

A. Belyaev

Classics fantasy – 5

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Classics fantasy – 5

A. Belyaev

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WHITE SAVAGE

I. THE BIRD ON THE HAT

A strange impression was made by these ruins of times of the Roman dominion by ancient Lutetia which got lost among houses of Latin quarter. Ranks of stone half-ruined benches on which the audience once clapped, enjoying bloody entertainments, black failures of adits where hungry animals before an exit to the arena growled... And around such usual, boring Parisian houses, with the wood of pipes on roofs and hundreds of windows, it is indifferent looking at pathetic ruins of former greatness...

Travelers stopped.

Them was three: Anatole, the boy of years of ten, thin, dark-haired, with the stiffened question in sad eyes; his uncle Bernard de Troyes, «the silk king», and his wife Clothilda. Only Clothilda's persistence forced her husband to give up urgent affairs and to undertake this «scientific expedition» – a new whim of the young woman who was fond of archeology.

Madam de Troyes, appear, was fascinated by a show. Her thin nostrils shuddered. Several times the nervous movement of a hand it put the disobedient lock of a nutbrown hair which was beaten out from under the gray silk hat decorated with a little white bird in order.

– It is necessary to force to tell these stones! – she exclaimed at last. – We made a mistake. We should arrive at night when the moon shines. The moon will bring shades of the past to life, and before us magic pictures will be developed. We will hear sounds *букцин* – the Roman military pipes. One their thunderous roar brought into flight of enemies... Pipes will begin to sound, and in reply to them the roar of the hungry animals who scented human meat will be distributed, and we will see how Caesar... ah... oh...

Clotilda de Troyes desperately screamed. The unexpected event interrupted poetic flight of her imagination.

Some person of years of twenty five, high, put as Hercules, with a fair-haired small beard and moustaches on a bronze face, imperceptibly crept to it and the bystry movement broke a white bird from her hat, broke off it on small pieces, bewildered began to touch fingers cotton wool shreds which filled a bird.

His eyes... Despite all fright, Clothilda could not but notice these eyes, their extraordinary blueness, brightness. In them some strange fire burned. It was no madness fire, but at the same time in eyes there was something strange that she never had to meet In them vigilance of an animal and naivety of the child. It would be possible to call a face of the stranger beautiful if not outstanding nadbrovny arches, deeply put eyes and wide nostrils. It was without hat the Long and thick fair hair covered his head.

All froze with this unclear trick of the stranger. But in the next minute Bernard de Troyes rushed to him, swinging a stick. The stranger, showing a mouth in the wide smile opening his fine strong teeth accepted it as a game. It as if teased de Troyes, running up to it and dodging from blows with dexterity and natural grace of a young panther.

And from the street some person already ran, swinging hands.

– Adam, back! – he as though on a dog shouted.

The light-haired giant reluctantly, but obediently stopped a game, having stepped aside with some muffled growl. At the same moment from other corner the police officer involved with shouts approached.

– I bring my apologies! – the person who recalled Adam shouted still from a distance, swinging a hat. – Allow to assure you that there was no evil intention. May I introduce myself... Professor

of Sorbonne of department of archeology and paleontology Augustus Likorn. And this Adam... I will explain to you now...

But the become angry «silk king» wanted to hear nothing.

– This disgrace! To offend the woman...

– But allow to explain...

– Any explanations! – And, stretching to the hand shivering with anger and nervousness the business card to the police officer, de Troyes told: – Here my card and address. I ask to write down these misters and to bring the matters into court. We go!

He took the wife by an arm, nodded to Anatole, ordering it to follow himself, and quickly walked to the varnished car waiting them black.

When the fine limousine silently started at way, Anatole turned back also with children's curiosity, looked with fear and admiration at the strange person who broke a bird from the aunt Klo's hat.

II. UNPLEASANT VISIT

Professor Likorn, having turned from Italyansky Boulevard into the small street Pille-Vil, shortened a stride. After noise of the boulevard the silence of this small street struck hearing. It was the silence of the temple, is more right – pagan temples of the Golden Calf. There live millionaires. Gloomy multi-storey buildings with lattices at windows of the first floor unfriendly look at rare passersby.

– It seems, ... here – Professor Likorn, worrying, pressed the button of an electric call which is put in order in a grin of the bronze lion's head. The silent door-keeper slowly opened a door, let in professor the lobby filled with plants with the big, standing at an entrance bear and called upward.

On the wide ladder covered with a dark red carpet the servant went down. Likorn stretched it the business card.

– Mister de Troyes of the house? I would like to see it on private business.

– Mister de Troyes accepts on personal records on Thursday and Saturday of nine hours twenty minutes to ten o'clock in the morning. Today you can see only his secretary.

At this moment on a ladder Clotilda de Troyes in a gray coat and a silk hat with a white bird at a board seemed. Likorn bowed and stepped aside, passing it to an exit.

Clotilda de Troyes kindly answered bow. She recognized Likorn:

– Professor Likorn! You to the husband? It is absent. What brought you here? Whether history with a bird on my hat? You see, the bird sits in the place again. Means, everything is all right.

– I really came to talk to mister de Troyes concerning that unpleasant incident which took place...

– Well, talk to me. Eventually, not the husband, and I appeared as «victim». Means, all this history – my personal record. Professor goes with me.

The servant hasty approached Likorn and respectfully took off a coat.

Likorn hardly kept up with Clothilda who quickly walked upstairs.

– Our acquaintance was started quite originally, isn't that so? – with the same kind smile Clothilda addressed Likorn when they took seat in a drawing room in easy chairs.

– Yes – he confusedly answered – it is original, though it is not absolutely pleasant both for you, and for me. The police made the protocol, and business will be brought to trial.

– What nonsenses. I will tell the husband, and everything will be settled. Also we will not tell more about vessels, protocols and police. One of these words cut to me hearing.

At Likorn went away from heart.

– I even am very happy – Clothilda continued – that this case delivered me interesting acquaintance. I read your books about the primitive person, and very much it are pleasant to me...

Likorn bowed. He did not expect in any way to meet here the venerator of the scientific works.

– Tell, professor, this young man who caught a bird on my hat whether the wild person is that whom you found in the Himalayas in your last expedition? All newspapers wrote about it, and I terribly wanted to look at this celebrity.

– Yes, it it. The wild person, or rather the white savage whom I found in the Himalayas, at the height of several thousand feet.

Clothilda made the bystry movement.

– As it is interesting...

– Really, this white savage is of extraordinary scientific interest. He is not just a savage. It is incidentally remained copy of absolutely disappeared human breed, the last representative of people who lived many tens of thousands years ago and who as I assume, were primogenitors of the European people.

– You named him Adam?

– This name was given it for fun, and then was assigned to it. Exclusively interesting copy. But ... – professor Likorn sighed – if you knew how many he brought to me cares and troubles! At first I, certainly, could not release him from prison. He had to be trained as an animal. But he missed locked up. And when it «was a little civilized», I began to take it with myself on walk. It is attached to me and is obedient as a dog.

When I for the first time went with it to the Luxembourg garden, he literally went gaga over. And before I came round, he already climbed up a tree and cried for joy so that the walking children with crying in horror jumped aside aside. The watchman hardened from such sacrilege. Another time Adam rushed to the pool of the fountain of Carnot – he wanted to bathe. At the Place de la Concorde he climbed up a horse statue, having gathered around himself crowd of gapers...

Clothilda laughed. She listened to it with great interest.

– Once, when we came back with Adam on the carrier, to him bothered to go too slowly. Adam seized the carrier by a collar, put off from a trestle, one jump of villages astride a horse and rushed off at full speed.

Clothilda again loudly burst out laughing.

– You will not retell everything. And on my head protocols, penalties, trials pour. Shampollionna Street where we live with it, was simply completely terrorized. At first the administration of Sorbonne disentangled me from a trouble, also the Ministry of Public Education sometimes came to the rescue. But eventually they were bothered by it. Fortunately, Adam considerably settled down. He already decently speaks French. I already rejoiced that with its wild tricks is through, and here the day before yesterday this unpleasant case with you...

– Let's not speak about this case, dear professor. Tell better as you managed to tear off from native mountains of a biped young of wild animal and to transport to Paris.

– I prepare for printing my traveling diary. If you are interested, I can give you proof-sheets.

– Lovely professor, as I am grateful to you! Tomorrow send. – Clothilda fitfully got up and reaped both hands of Likorn.

III. DIARY OF PROFESSOR LIKORN

Next day the maid gave morning mail on a tray.

– It is the diary! – Clothilda exclaimed. – Mari, today I accept nobody.

When the maid left, Clothilda with nervous haste broke off a big envelope, took seat in a deep chair and began to read.

«June 11. When I went to an expedition to the Himalayas, one my colleague playfully wished me to meet among eternal snow of mountain tops «the living namesake» [73]. This wish was not executed. «The snow dwelling» [74] accepted me quite inhospitably. And in general my travel in the scientific relation went quite unsuccessfully.

I began the travel with a sole of the southern slope adjoining the Province of Assam. The mountains below covered with magnificent tropical vegetation shelter tigers, elephants, monkeys. Bright greens of all shades, from light yellow to dark blue, are decked by brighter paints of flowers of plumage of birds: parrots, pheasants, hens of the most unusual coloring. If not clouds of insects and unpleasant dampness at night and even in the afternoon, rising from the boggy lowland at a sole of mountains, this place would be worthy names of earthly paradise.

Also the second belt, at the height of 1000 meters, with its vegetation familiar to the European eye – oaks and wild chestnuts is fine.

It is higher than 2500 meters – already a kingdom of coniferous trees, and at the height of 5600 meters «the snow dwelling» begins in the true sense. Here the bear or a mountain goat only occasionally rises. As it is strange to stand on top of six-seven thousand meters, in ice air from which takes breath and to look down, at a green belt of tropical vegetation. Amazing show.

But I came not for the sake of beauty of the nature here. I looked for «the namesakes», traces of those who lived in this snow dwelling one hundred, one thousand, million years ago. My searches, however, were unsuccessful. Himalaja jealously hid the secrets under ice blocks.

The travel is accompanied by extraordinary difficulties here. Mountains are broken, crossed by gorges. At night intolerable cold. At all there is no fuel – either a bunch of a dry grass, or a bush. Snow, both ice, and eternal silence.

Conductors grumbled, and many of them abandoned me after one conductor fell in an abyss and broke. With me there were only three. To cut with them ice in search of remains of minerals would be madness. It was necessary to hope for the help of the nature: sometimes at a collapse of rocks or ice blocks bones of primitive animals are bared. But the destiny did not send me such lucky coincidence. And I already thought of disgraceful return.

But today's morning rewarded me for everything. I represent how many noise will be done by my find in all scientific world.

Here is how it was.

Early in the morning I wandered between frozen rocks alone, with a rifle behind shoulders.

Having turned for the rock, I uvidat something forced me to shudder. It seemed to me that I hallucinate. I steps in twenty, at the rock, was faced a back to me by a biped animal. Otherwise I cannot call this being. Only the raincoat from the animal skin which is chopped off on the left shoulder was thrown his naked bronze body. A thick hair turned its head of hear into a shock. On hands and under skin of naked shoulders and a right shoulder-blade played muscles as huge spheres. He rested naked legs against ice as though it was the parquet, and held an ice block in hand. But this block did not constrain its movements at all. Holding suspended this weight, he all case moved forward and looked out for something below. At last, having snatched some moment, it with wild growl which was carried on the mountains as the thunderclap, threw a block down.

And immediately furious growl of a bear in reply sounded. The biped animal broke off still a big block and threw it down, and after that with the same growl itself rushed down.

In several jumps I was on its place.

Before me the new picture as if snatched out from Ice Age opened. Never to forget to me this picture.

At the bottom of a small ice hollow the blood-stained wild goat with the killed backbone lay. Over it there was on hinder legs, with the blood-stained head a bear. He furiously growled, having raised forepaws up, and from its mouth the blood stream flew on bluish ice. And towards to it, only with an ice block in hands, fearlessly there was other animal – biped.

Why the biped animal so hurried? Why it did not finish a bear from the safe rock? He was not able to cope with feeling of hunger at the sight of a delicious goat or considered a bear the formidable opponent?. Who will read thoughts under this thick skull?

Opponents quickly met halfway each other. When the distance between them was no more than one and a half meters, the biped animal laid down the ice shell into a bear. The blow had in the left eye. The bear sat down, raised a howl from pain and began paws to rub a muzzle.

But at the same moment, увидав the remained eye that the opponent made a jump, a bear, overcoming pain and falteringly growling, again rose in all the growth in a defensive pose. Also the biped animal stopped. Several minutes they were motionless. Then the biped animal slowly began to come from the gone blind eye of a bear. The bear began to move ahead in the same direction, around. So they passed two circles as fighters before a resolute fight.

I expected that they will fall arms of each other, but left differently.

At the beginning of the third circle the biped animal appeared near the goat lying on ice. With extraordinary speed he suddenly seized a goat, clamped a goat ear in strong teeth and with dexterity of a cat began to climb up ice ledges with the production.

Bear, having forgotten about heavy wounds, with the doubled roar rushed after the enemy who is carrying away a tasty breakfast. But the thief climbed up already almost four meters, and the bear in powerless rage scratched an abrupt ice slope.

I was delighted with courage, dexterity and resourcefulness of a biped animal – whether these qualities made him the tsar of the nature? – and already thought of how to me to avoid meetings with a giant. Suddenly shout of animal despair woke a mountain echo, and I saw how the biped animal together with a goat and the broken-off block flies down. With bump the body of a biped animal fell, the block pressed down his leg, and the bear with a victorious roar rushed on the victim. The biped animal was not given yet and, lying on a back, tried to reject fists paws of a bear with the huge shown teeth.

But situation it was almost hopeless. Here the bear broke skin from a brush of the right hand, here started sharp claws in the left shoulder... and the biped animal who just showed bravery miracles screamed with fear and pain as only animals can shout.

One minute I threw up a rifle, clung in the head of a bear and, risking to kill a biped animal, pulled the trigger.

The booming shot swept in mountains, the echo repeated it many times, and at once there came the silence. The bear killed on the spot failed all over on the enemy, having covered it with the huge hulk. Whether he is living, my biped animal?

– I do not remember how I ran away to a hollow. Rushed to a bear and, having grasped him by paws, began to pull. Futile effort. I, the Parisian of the twentieth century, possessed powerful weapon which strikes to death, but too weak hands which got used to deal with books, but not with carcasses of bears. I managed to release the head of unfortunate only. He was living and did not even faint. And he looked at me brilliant and blue as the sky, eyes.

My thunderous shot which at once laid a bear, my look, extraordinary for a biped animal – all this had to is strong to blow his mind. But at the same time, I am not mistaken, he understood the main thing: that I am a biped animal, come to the rescue him too. And in his look I read something similar to gratitude. Gratitude of the person to the person. The feeling of gratitude is also familiar

to animals. But in his look there was something bigger. Animals so do not look. Yes, it was the person. The wild person, the unknown, the died-out primitive white race, but people.

However to argue there was not time. It was necessary to call to the aid. And I began to shoot, did not shoot all the cartridges yet. Then began to shout. Reciprocal shouts were heard soon. To me my conductors hurried.

With their help I managed to exempt the white savage from carcass of a bear and a block of ice. He did not groan though blood plentifully flowed from its wounds, through the broken-off muscles the humeral bone was visible, and the leg, apparently, was broken. I made bandaging, and then we with the greatest care incurred our precious burden to the parking lot.

Hardly to the brother I would show so many cares. And it is clear why: it was not just the person. It was, perhaps, the copy of the remote ancestors of the person only around the world. A number of indisputable signs spoke for it... I shouted on conductors when they stumbled, and itself mentally already anatomized him, weighed his brain, measured a facial angle...

Of course, it is not *Pitecantropus erectus* which remains of bones are found thirty three years ago by the Dutch doctor Dubois – *питекантропус* was closer to a monkey, than to the person, and died out already about one million years ago. And it is not the Heidelberg person living at the beginning of Ice Age – something between the person and a monkey; at last, it and not the Neanderthal person of Ice Age – that is lower and stockier... Most likely he is a *kromanyonets*, the primogenitor or rather incidentally remained descendant of these primogenitors of the people of Western Europe. Live *kromanyonets*. What will be told by my colleagues? What will tell all scientific world? It is better than a unicorn. I surpassed itself most.

IV. CONTINUATION OF THE DIARY

June 13. My Adam, as I called the wild person, recovers quicker, than I thought. Two days after fight with a bear he lay in fever, without memory, growled and tried to rise. We with great difficulty managed to hold it in a bed.

Using his unconsciousness, I, admit, did not keep and made some researches of anthropometrical character. The volume of his skull – 1175 cubic centimeters (the gorilla – 490, at Europeans has 1400 cubic centimeters). Interestingly, how many his brain weighs?

When his life hung by a thread, at me, I repent, the thought flashed to provide it to itself. And if he died, I could anatomize immediately a corpse. How many difficult questions opening would resolve! But I kept – I will be frank up to the end – not on philanthropy. I lay hopes for this wild person. I will take away it to Paris, I will teach to speak, I will tame, I civilize and how many extraordinary interesting he will be able to report then! The most interesting question: whether somebody else from its tribe remained or it is the last copy of prehistoric people?

He, certainly, owns something like the language consisting, however, of only several sounds similar to interjections.

«Aya», for example, he tells every time when wants to drink. Very often he publishes some additional sound similar to tts-a-a as though calling someone. And when I showed it a skin of the killed bear yesterday, he told: «At-at-at», and his face expressed pleasure.

I attentively examined his body. Extraordinary large volume of a breast was result probably of life at heights where air is very rarefied. On soles his skin мозолисто is thick. That is why it does not freeze legs.

Cheeks and even his forehead are covered with a down. On all body, in particular standing and on the back of hands, reddish hair, five-seven millimeters long grow. Of course, not they only, and the thick tempered skin and good cellulose protect it from cold.

On his raincoat I found the interesting «pin» made of ivory, decorated with the carved bird similar to a wood-grouse. Art is familiar to it. And he, obviously, climbed down mountains there where elephants are found.

Since that moment as I saved it from death, Adam shows to me dog attachment. When I tied up to it wounds, he grabbed my hand and licked a brush and a palm in a gratitude attack. Thus, I had pleasure to get acquainted with «a primitive kiss».

This morning Adam got out of a bed and, despite my ban though in general it is obedient, left a tent, broke a bandage and, having substituted a wound to the sun, lay till the evening. This mountain sun does miracles. The tumor fell down. The wound quickly drags on. Some more days, and we will go to a way. Whether it will go with me? Whether will leave the native mountains? Anyway, I will not leave it. Live or dead, it will be in Paris.

September 27. At last I houses, in Paris, in the small apartment! As long I did not write! Adam with me. But what it costed me!

Against my expectation, it followed me. Adam obeyed, is more faithful – tried to obey each my word as itself could master the primitive nature. Until we went down, to people, everything was good. But further...

My first care was to dress it. I could not bring it into civilized society naked, only with an animal skin on a back. With great difficulty I found for a white flannel suit on its growth. It was just wide shirt and trousers. He somehow put on a shirt, but with trousers could not reconcile in any way. They constrained and made laugh him. It continually clapped itself (himself) on thighs, sniffed and hilariously twisted legs.

In Calcutta on the crowded street he suddenly... took off trousers and threw them. In Calcutta people got used to see nakedness, and it did not make too big scandal. But what if it does such piece in Paris?

For the first time I gave a good telling-off him and as it was pathetic in the consciousness of the guilt! He tried to lick to me hands again though I also forbid it to do it.

When we were already onboard the steamship, a story happened to it again.

Before the withdrawal the siren began to roar. Adam fell to the deck in panic horror, then jumped and one jump rushed through a board to the sea. It was necessary to catch it from there and to conclude in a cabin.

Many cares were delivered by it to me and with feeding. There could not be also a speech going with it to a table d'hote. Brought it a lunch in a cabin. But he refused – he could not eat our dishes. Came to an end in the fact that I had to give it, as well as in mountains, crude meat and water. Besides he suffered from a heat and therefore often howled, than caused complaints of passengers. It was very difficult to come with it to the deck. It always gathered around itself (himself) crowd of gapers. All this very much constrained me.

Difficult and long to describe all events of this travel. Adam passed for fear to surprise all the time. Trains, cars frightened him. Our clothes, at home, electric lighting was struck literally to tetanus. Some trifle to which we do not pay the slightest attention – the spinning illuminated signs, sounds of brass band or pack of the making a din kids newsdealers – so absorbed it that I needed to pull several times it a hand to get moving forward.

But anyway, my tortures came to an end. Adam in Paris.

December 14. Adam makes progress. He does not lick to me hands any more. Got used to wear a suit, very much loves bright ties, learned to eat our dishes with a knife and a fork. Knows several everyday French words. But I do not decide to be shown with it on the street yet. And it was necessary to air it. Adam began to miss – because probably that sits in the room all the time, though at an open window, despite severe winter. At night, in particular when in a window the moon shines, he sits at a window and howls. I forbid it to howl, but he after all howls, quietly, hushfully, plaintively... In the middle of the night this howl the person very much irritates, but, I see, he not in forces not to howl.

To entertain him, I bring him books with color pictures. To my astonishment, he very well understands them and rejoices as the child. But especially my last gift pleased him: puppy mongrel. Adam does not leave him for a minute, even sleeps together with Dzhipsi – he says «Zhips» – and the dog pays it in reciprocal love, understands it on one gesture. Not therefore whether what their psychology is close?

December 26. However Adam «was not absolutely civilized» yet. Today to me the old companion came and friendly tapped of me on the shoulder. Adam, possibly thinking that I am beaten, with growl rushed on the guest, and after it and Dzhipsi, and me not without effort was succeeded to calm all three. My old friend, the nervous and irritable person, was very scared and angry this trick.

– I on your place would keep it in a cage – he told, leaving».

* * *

Further in the diary there was a description of events already known to Clothilda: Adam's adventures on streets of Paris. But she read everything up to the end.

– It is solved, I have to be engaged in his education! – she exclaimed, having thrown the manuscript on a table, and immediately sent to professor the telegram, inviting Likorn to come to it together with Adam.

V. ADAM IS PUBLISHED

With some nervousness professor Likorn approached a familiar entrance of the house of de Troyes under a hand with Adam.

Adam with an unseparable doggie, in a black hat and a fashionable coat looked absolutely decently. Likorn called.

– Look, Adam, be a clear head. Behave decently. Do not shout, do not jump...

– Yes...

The door opened, and they entered a lobby.

The door-keeper, having recognized Likorn, respectfully passed him. The footman ran up to take off a coat.

Suddenly Adam with a wild roar rushed on the bear effigy standing in a corner with open paws squeezed a bear for a throat and was pushed with it to the floor. Dzhips began a bark. The amazed footman dropped a coat on a floor and stood with an open mouth.

– Adam, back! – Likorn shouted.

But Adam himself also understood the mistake when his iron fingers broke through a skin of a bear and took tow shreds from there.

– Poor Adam, you were mistaken. Bear not real.

– A bird not real, at-at not real... In total not real – Adam perplexed muttered, rising from a floor.

– We go, Adam.

Adam trudged for the master, heaving from consciousness of the fault a deep sigh.

– I will be ... – he grievously spoke.

In Adam's language it meant «I will not be». Likorn involuntarily smiled.

The servant brought them into Clotilda de Troyes room.

When Likorn with Adam appeared in the doorway, Clothilda, hospitably smiling, met requirements of them, giving to Adam a hand. But her hand remained to be groundless.

Adam's attention was suddenly attracted with a porcelain Chinese bobblehead with slanting eyes which stood on a marble fireplace and swung the head. Then he took a knickknack in hand, it crackled, and on a floor splinters fell down.

– Adam, sit down – professor strictly told, having taken him for a shoulder and seating in a chair. – Sidi. Do not move. You see that you did.

– I will be – it is deplorable Adam said, sorrowfully considering splinters on a floor.

– I warn you, madam – Likorn told, greeting at last the hostess – that this visit can deliver you and me many troubles. Adam is brought not so up to happen in society. And I would prefer to take away Adam, with your permission, now.

– I will be – Adam responded, having heard the name.

– Trifles – Clothilda answered. – Please, do not worry. It as the child that from it to ask...

By the end of an appointment between professor Likorn and Clotilda de Troyes the agreement that Adam will lodge from now on in her mansion took place and it will continue his «education» under control of the professor.

VI. UNIVERSITY AT HOME

Adam moved and at once turned upside down de Troyes house. The host felt like the most unfortunate.

– You can imagine what means to live in one house with a tiger – Bernard de Troyes said to the partner on trade – I try to avoid this savage, but, judge whether it is possible to avoid meetings, living under the same roof. Who knows that at it on mind? He can kill, break a fireproof case, set fire to the house... I have not dinner now at home, I come back through the side course directly to an office, I close a door on two locks and I do not sleep all night long.

– But really it is impossible to get off this resident?

De Troyes hopelessly waved a hand:

– So far at the wife there will not pass this whim – in any way.

Adam was engaged with Clothilda in reading and the letter in the mornings, and in the evenings arrived on «training» to her brother Pierre.

Society of the young cheerful officer was pleasant to it more, than occupations with Clothilda. Adam willingly was engaged with Pierre and surprised the teacher with extraordinary bystry progress. For some month Adam was perfectly learned to driving the bicycle, driving, rowing, boxing, soccer.

However, its mad driving on the car came to an end in numerous penalties, but for Pierre it did not matter while «and the sister's hands» as he spoke, «there was a key from Bernard de Troyes cash desk».

In boxing and soccer Adam crippled people the crushing blows much. The soccerball which is started up by his leg struck from legs as a bomb. However success it was recognized by the best athletes. It became a celebrity in a sport field.

On Adam's misfortune, Pierre educated him not only in the field of sport.

Quite often in the evenings the young officer changed clothes in a civilian dress, took with himself Adam and went somewhere to Montmartre to be unsteady on vegetable marrows in search of adventures. Pierre excited quarrels, then направлял Adam and enjoyed effect of «beating of babies». Adam excited by wine scattered the tavern fighters pressing it as a bear of puppies. Hop dumped from it thin varnishing of «civilization», primitive instincts broke outside, and it became really terrible these minutes.

Pierre was set aside by Clothilda, she began to be engaged with Adam one.

– Well-well, we will look what will be made by you yours «the improving women's influence» – the offended Pierre said with irony.

However he had to admit soon that Adam considerably changed for the better.

Clothilda often walked with Adam on foot, and business did without any adventures. Adam behaved well.

What sometimes confused Clothilda, so it is Adam's questions, absolutely simple, but which, however, she was difficult to answer.

That he asked whether to consider «neighbor» of a bear and whether it is necessary to substitute it if strikes, «other cheek». That, having seen on the street of the hungry beggar near the delivery boy of pies, Adam samochinno fed the beggar and started disputes about «others» and «own», obviously without perceiving «bases of the economy» and insisting that hungry it is more, than police officers.

Such talk awoke in Clothilda some disturbing feeling. And once, seeing that Adam goes, having bent the head, obviously reflecting over some new question, Clothilda solved: he should be entertained. With it it is already possible to go to theater fearlessly. It will be necessary to show it some good classical play.

VII. THE SAVED DESDEMONA

Adam sat with Clotilda de Troyes in a bed of the first tier, near a scene.

When the curtain rose, Adam quietly screamed from surprise:

– The wall left...

– You sit quietly – Clothilda tutorially told – you do not rustle.

– I will be – as usual, Adam answered. There was Shakespeare's tragedy «Othello».

Adam looked at the auditorium shipped in a gloom on bright festoon lightings, on the top boxes.

– You look there – Clothilda by a fan pointed to the stage.

Adam looked and «there», but it was visible that the theatrical performance does not take its attention. Clothilda overestimated Adam's development. The poetic speech of the tragedy, with conditional arrangement of words, melodious diction of the French drama school complicated understanding. Adam perceived only outer side of a performance: paints and gestures...

Recovered only its collision of groups of Brabantio and Othello in the second stage a little. And in the third scene of the first act he already impatiently potted on the place and sighed: to it bothered to sit in theater.

But there was Desdemona whose role was played by the actress with a world name. Her charming appearance, her suit and, the main thing, its concerning voice made a miracle: Adam suddenly addressed all in sight and hearing. He and stared hard at the stage, without taking eyes with Desdemona. When it left, Adam sighed and with alarm asked Clothilda:

– Where it left? It still will come?

Clothilda smiled:

– Will come. Only you sit quietly.

– What is her name?

– Desdemona.

And Adam began to repeat quietly:

– Dezhdemon... Dezhdemon... Dezhdemon...

The performance suddenly gained extraordinary interest. Adam lived Desdemona's appearance, suffered from impatience when she left a scene. He still understood hardly more than one tenth of what was told on the stage, but some intuition, new to it, he quite truly estimated people depending on their attitude towards Desdemona. Othello, up to awakening in it of jealousy, excited Adam's sympathies as well as Cassio. Rodrigo was not pleasant, he began to hate Iago.

When Othello for the first time roughly shouted on Desdemona: «Away from my eyes!» – Adam deafly grumbled. From this point he hated already and Othello.

The tragic outcome came nearer. Desdemona at herself in a bedroom sings a sad song:

The poor thing sat under the shade sikomor, sighing.

Oh, sing a green willow...

When Othello entered to Desdemona, ready to suffocate her, Adam suddenly all pricked up the ears, as at the most dangerous moments of hunting. His eyes with dry gloss monitored each movement of Othello, muscles strained, the head went to shoulders. Fingers stuck into a velvet upholstery of a barrier of a box.

Desdemona's entreaties, Othello's anger – all this was clear to it without words. At last while Othello began to smother Desdemona, the inhuman roar was distributed in theater – a roar which was expected by neither Shakespeare, nor the director, nor public.

The figure of the huge person grew from the dark depth of a box. One jump it flew through orchestra on the stage, ran to the actor playing Othello tore off it from Desdemona, pushed to the floor and began to smother, smother in the most real way.

From the scenes to the aid of Othello firefighters, workers, actors rushed. Among this dump Adam did not release from Desdemona's type. Suddenly he noticed that Desdemona rose and leaves.

Adam instantly left almost lifeless Othello, scattered the firefighters who pressed him, Iago, the worker and Cassio, ran for Desdemona, picked up her as a plumelet, to hands and in the same way, through orchestra, came back to a box.

Here he seated Desdemona and began to iron her on the head as child, and it is tender, the interrupted voice spoke:

– Sidi with me, Dezhdemon. Nobody will offend you. Sidi, we will watch together there, what will be farther.

And Adam in full confidence that he watches continuation of a performance, monitored the turmoil which rose on the stage and in the auditorium.

Clothilda, pale, rose and in exhaustion fell to a chair again.

– Adam – she exclaimed – release Desdemona now, and we go home!

But Adam looked at it so that to it it became terrible.

– No – he firmly answered. – No. She will be killed. I will give nobody it...

Desdemona trembled with fear in strong hands of Adam... Clothilda lost the head. Really new scandal will burst? But it was and this time.

– Do not worry, I ask you – she addressed the actress, speaking so quickly that Adam did not understand – we go to me, and there I will manage to exempt you from the unexpected savior. We go, Adam.

Adam obediently followed Clothilda, carrying Desdemona on hands. They passed through a scene, in a side exit, called the car and soon were at home.

Adam for a minute did not leave the burden. Having come to the room, he carefully lowered Desdemona on a floor and told:

– Here nobody will touch. I will guard.

Having left the room, it closed a door and settled as a dog, on a floor, having blocked a door the body.

Adam did not get used to go so to bed late. The healthy sleep held down a mighty body at once. When he fell asleep, Clothilda, quietly going soft shoes, entered the room of the neighboring room concluded through a door, brought the actress, threw it with the coat and a shawl and, having apologized to it, sent on the car home.

VIII. THE LEOPARD IN THE HOUSE

Just dawned when Adam rose from the firm bed and slightly opened a door to the room.

– Dezhdemon! – quietly he called. The answer was not.

– Dezhdemon! – already with concern Adam repeated and entered the room.

The room was empty.

Deaf shout escaped from Adam's breast. But he did not trust yet: quickly bypassing all corners and back streets of the room, he looked for Desdemona.

It was not.

The roar of a wounded animal raskatitsya on all mansion of de Troyes. Adam suddenly felt extraordinary inflow of anger. He was smothered by this anger, anger against the city where all artificial. Artificial birds, artificial animals, artificial words... And even Desdemona artificial. It disappeared, having left only a light aroma of spirits.

Adam went mad. It began to break furniture, to break vases – everything that came to it hand. These are calmed him a little.

Then he suddenly nestled to a chair on which Desdemona sat, and began to inhale the smell of perfume left by her. From a chair it went further, on this trace, having widely opened nostrils, catching a familiar smell.

In the house turmoil already rose. Everywhere servants ran. It is unknown, than it would come to an end if Adam also unexpectedly did not escape down, smelling air and having extended the head forward as a police dog.

Clothilda blocked in the room breathed a sigh of relief and began to put on hasty.

Brought morning mail. Clothilda looked at newspapers. Many of them already responded to the event which happened in theater last night.

«The saved Desdemona», «The savage in Paris», «Again Adam», «Is time to stop a disgrace» – names of notes dazzled. Almost the name of Clothilda de Troyes also was mentioned in each note along with a name of Adam.

Bernard de Troyes with the same newspaper in hands entered.

– You already read? – he asked Clothilda, having seen the newspaper lying on a floor. – So cannot proceed. It is impossible to live in one house with a leopard.

Clothilda did not object. The issue of the return moving of Adam to professor Likorn was resolved, and reported about it to professor.

Meanwhile Adam, having run out on the street, ran around the house, trying to catch Desdemona's smell. Attracting attention passersby, he ran further and further in hope to find, at last, a trace. Without knowing the city, it found some intuition theater. But the theater was closed. Having run all over several times the building, Adam went to ransack on streets again...

Only late at night it returned to de Troyes mansion, tired, hungry and embittered.

From this day Adam became the real misfortune of the house. Almost all nights he howled as in the first days of arrival to Paris, without looking on any admonitions of Likorn, and in the afternoon it vanished on streets in search of Desdemona. He did not know that the frightened actress the next day left Paris incidentally not to catch sight to it. When he came back home, all house faded in horror. Inhabitants of a mansion sat in disturbing expectation in the locked rooms and only occasionally silently as shadows, crept along the corridor.

Adam was irritable and wanted to see nobody. Even he met Likorn gloomy and did not answer questions, than very much upset professor. So many interesting secrets should be pulled out at the primitive person for science!

Only for two beings Adam did some exception: for Dzhipsi and Anatole's dog.

Something like a smile appeared on the lost weight and turned pale Adam's face when he saw Anatole. And the boy appreciated this attachment. Children's intuition he understood the tragedy

Adam who is torn off from native mountains and thrown into the boiling copper of the big city.

– Let's leave with you – Adam spoke more than once – there, it is far ... – And in it so much deep melancholy was «far» that Anatole tried to console in children's caress big, strong and at the same time helpless as the child, the friend.

«Far» – it the word was also expensive and inaccessible to Adam, as well as Desdemona. In his soul the deaf protest boiled, and this protest at last broke outside.

IX. FLIGHT

There was a guest-night. One of those for which de Troyes house was famous. Among invited at the strict choice there were «necessary people» from ministerial and bank tops with the wives. Huge rooms were buried in tropical verdure. Fresh flowers decorated tables, dozens of servants finished the last preparations. All society waiting for a lunch was placed in extensive salon.

De Troyes was happy. Only one cloud saddened Bernarda this brilliant holiday. Adam... If only he did not take in head to come. But it came. Came before the most concert office, gloomy and silent. Anybody without having greeted, he took seat in a corner.

The invited famous singer sat down at a grand piano: she accompanied herself. Incidentally or deliberately, but the actress started singing Desdemona's song:

The poor thing sat under the shade sikomor, sighing.

Oh, sing a green willow...

Adam hardened. He did not imagine that others can sing Desdemona's song yes sir as though it is sung by her. Then it suddenly began to tremble from head to foot. His face was distorted by a suffering spasm. He seized himself by the head, then suddenly cried so that crystal on chandeliers rang out:

– It is not necessary!. – and, having run up to a grand piano, struck a cover which with a crash and a ring of strings broke.

Adam with groan ran out from salon in a corridor. In a corridor, the door to the room, had Anatole. Adam on the fly picked up the boy:

– We run... to mountains... rather...

Side exit, on the street, had several cars. Adam chose the strongest car and, having dumped the driver, took seat on his place, having put near himself Anatole and Dzhip-si. The car rushed and rushed off at reckless speed on streets of Paris at once...

X. THE SKY OVER THE HEAD

Scandal in de Troyes house was picked up and inflated by the newspapers living on sensations. High visitors of an invited dinner de Troyes revolted with Adam's behavior in return pressed the buttons to lift a newspaper campaign against the white savage. Adam became the hero of the day.

And, as it often happens, under the influence of a newspaper sensation the public opinion which was still indulgently watching eccentricities and Adam's tricks suddenly armed against it. Newspapers demanded immediate arrest of Adam and contents it in the most strict isolation.

Adam knew nothing it. With mad speed flew on streets of Paris and sighed at last all breast when before it the country fields crossed by a tape of the highway were developed.

– Where mountains? – he asked Anatole.

The dozed-off Anatole could not think at once where he and about what mountains Adam asks. Having remembered flight, the boy suddenly felt the joyful, concerning and terrible feeling. More than once he dreamed of flight to far-away countries in search of adventures. And now the dream is fulfilled.

– Mountains – he answered Adam – is: Pyrenees, Alps... I saw the Alps... Their tops are always covered with snow...

– We go to the Alps! – in nervousness Adam said.

– But it is far... And then... We can be detained on the way.

– No, we is far ... – Adam carelessly answered.

– And phone? The police by phone will let know to all cities, and we can be detained.

Adam of it did not expect. He knew how to take cover from dangers among the wild rocks covered with snow and coniferous forests, but how to escape from phones?

Anatole appeared the rights. Already in Korbel where they drove at dawn, they were tried to be detained.

Adam gathered mad speed and broke through a chain of police officers who began to shoot to them following, marking at car tires. One of them was shot.

– Look whether the pursuit is visible! – Adam through a shoulder to Anatole shouted.

– Now not, lagged behind...

Adam unexpectedly stopped the car, seized Anatole with one hand, took out from the car, lowered on the earth and one rushed off on the highway.

– Adam! Adam!. – the thrown Anatole shouted to it following, crying with chagrin and unexpected treason of the friend.

Adam did not turn a car wheel on abrupt turn of the road and suddenly from dispersal crashed into the river, lifting cascades of splashes... Джипси began to squeal for fear. Splashes, steam and bubbles rose over water. The river quietly bore the waters, only circles waves from that place where water completely absorbed the car with the person and a dog dispersed.

Anatole in catalepsy stood under the begun rain. But it lasted several moments though they also seemed to Anatole infinitely long. Soon on a water surface wet Dzhipsi seemed, sniffing from the water which got into a nose, and after a dog and Adam. It came up from water and in three waves of mighty hands was at the coast. Adam and Dzhipsi equally shook off water. Adam ran up to Anatole, having mounted him upon a neck and without a word, ran to bushes.

– Quietly. Sidi. Bend down.

Anatole did not manage to recover as on the highway car sounds were heard. In a few minutes the car with police officers flew towards Melen.

When the car disappeared from the sight, Adam began to jump.

Anatole at last understood military cunning of the friend. The rain washed away traces of car tires, and police officers did not notice its disappearance. This time they were saved.

It was time to think of a breakfast. Anatole was intolerably hungry.

– Sidi, I will come soon – Adam told and went along coastal bushes.

There passed painful hour before Anatole heard whistle of the approaching Adam.

Adam carried two rabbits and, covering hollow, pieces of a dry tree. He threw the killed of rabbits at whom Dzhipsi began to sniff, and began to extract fire, rubbing one piece of a tree with another. In iron hands of Adam work moved quickly. Anatole felt a smell of burning soon, the smoke seemed, some more bystry, strong rhythmic movements – the flame flashed. Anatole ate the rabbit meat fried on a fire with appetite. Imitating Adam, it broke off pieces of meat hands.

The rain ceased. The sun looked out and dried up clothes of fugitives. Anatole, tired for all endured disorders, with pleasure fell asleep. And Adam lay on the earth and without coming off looked at the sky.

At last the sky over the head instead of these opposite dead white ceilings where there are neither birds, nor the sun, nor stars, nor fresh breath of air.

Adam dreamed of a fast appointment to mountains. Though not the family, but nevertheless mountains. And it was happy for the first time for all the time since climbed down mountains to valleys where these strange people who prefer stone boxes to a scope of the earth and sky live in crowded conditions and vanity.

Happy days of free, vagrant life stretched. In the afternoon fugitives slept in thickets at the river, moved ahead at night on the southeast where, according to Anatole's instructions, there were mountains.

Adam was able to sleep and watch each sound. When the sound seemed menacing to it, ears of the sleeping Adam began to move strenuously, and he woke up soon. And they managed to escape a meeting with people.

However the destiny measured on Adam's share a few happy days. By poll of inhabitants the police defined the place of disappearance of the car soon. Persecutors surrounded with more and more narrowed ring fugitives.

One early in the morning to them had to escape in the face of police. They took refuge in the wood and several hours carried out at tree top, hidden by dense branches, looking from above at the enemies rummaging on the wood.

It was harder and harder to get food – hens and rabbits whom Adam caught about farms. The main thing, he felt that to them not to leave from tenacious paws of police, and then again bondage... One this thought gave him the creeps...

XI. ADAM'S END

At dawn of gray day Adam came back to Anatole and Dzhipsi, loaded with a young lamb.

Suddenly he pricked up the ears. His ears started moving. To it the remote disturbing bark of Dzhipsi and the scared shout of Anatole calling to the aid was heard.

With the inflated nostrils Adam rushed to more often bushes growing near the highway where he left Anatole.

Police officers bore to the car of the beating-off and crying Anatole. Dzhips overstrained from bark.

Having thrown a ram, Adam in several jumps appeared at the car. He seized one police officer by a collar, lifted over the head, took a detour in air and rejected far in bushes.

Three hefty police officers snatched on Adam. Fight was started. Adam rejected them from himself. They grabbed him hand and hung on them. One of police officers with professional dexterity tried to put to Adam cuffs, and he managed it. But Adam broke off shackles though wounded in hand blood at brushes, and after that, embittered by pain, he snatched on the police officer and stuck to it into a neck the sharp teeth. The second of attackers left an operation... Then the chief of small group, seeing what without use of weapons of Adam not to take, shot from the revolver. The bullet got into a shoulder of Adam on which bear claws left hems, and shattered a humeral bone.

Adam howled from pain, but continued to beat off a healthy hand. However severe bleeding weakened it more and more.

Police officers snatched on it again and after several unsuccessful attempts held down to it hands again. Adam pulled a chain and moaned from pain. It was tumbled down, strong connected, thrown into the car where Anatole, pale for fear, already sat, picked up wounded and quickly started on on a way.

Dzhips with abrupt bark pursued the disappearing car...

Adam was placed in one of the cameras intended for violent mads. Walls of the room were upholstered with soft felt, at windows – lattices. A heavy door – on an iron bolt.

To Adam made bandaging and left one. He growled, rushed to a door, bent a lattice at a window. He raved the whole day, and at night so howled that gave the creeps even the hospital attendants who got used to everything.

By the morning it ceased. But when it was given to a door window a breakfast, without deciding to enter still, he only drank several drinks of tea, and the breakfast threw out in a corridor.

Adam shouted and as the animal in a cage, went, without ceasing for a minute, heaved a deep sigh and from time to time loudly and lingeringly shouted, calling Desdemona, Anatole, Dzhipsi... Sometimes called also Likorn.

It was one, absolutely one in this close box where there was so not enough air for his lungs and where the sun only through thick rods of a lattice looked, casting from it a trellised shadow on a white wall.

For the third day Adam calmed down. It ceased to go. Sat down on a floor in a corner, a back to light, put a chin on the raised knees and as if stiffened. It touched nobody any more. To it doctors and scientists entered, but he sat silently, not answering questions and without moving. And still ate nothing, but greedy drank.

Adam began to grow thin extraordinary quickly. In the evenings it began to be in a fever. He sat, knocking teeth, covered cold then. Cough began to torment him soon, and during fits of coughing blood even more often began to be shown.

Doctors swung the heads:

– Transient consumption... These mountain inhabitants so difficult adapt to air of valleys...

One night after the most severe fit of coughing blood suddenly rushed from his throat and filled in all half of the room. Adam fell to a floor. He died...

When he recovered after a faint, he quietly and hoarsely asked the doctor:

– There ... – And he showed the door.

The doctor understood. Adam wants on air. Perhaps, last time to look at the sky. He choked. But unless it is possible to take out the heavy pulmonary patient in crude autumn night on air, under a drizzle!

The doctor negatively shook the head.

Adam looked at him with plaintive eyes of the dying dog.

– No, no. To you it is harmful, Adam ... – And, having addressed the hospital attendant, the doctor gave an order: – A pillow with oxygen...

Oxygen prolonged Adam's tortures till the morning. In the morning when the pale beam of the sun lit a white wall, having drawn on it with a shadow a window lattice, something like a smile, same pale as a beam, flashed on Adam's lips. It began an agony. He occasionally cried out some unclear words... He did not pronounce any French word.

At ten hours twenty minutes mornings Adam died. And at one o'clock in the afternoon the official notice that Adam needs to be discharged from hospital as it is decided to send it to the Himalayas was received...

* * *

– After all he well made that he hurried to die – without hiding joy, the anatomist said, starting anatomization of a corpse of Adam.

Any corpse was not so carefully prepared. Everything was measured, weighed, carefully recorded. Opening – gave a lot of extremely interesting. Appendix was very big sizes. Muskulus erectus cocigum was clearly allocated, muscles of ears were very developed. Brain... About Adam's brain professor Likorn wrote the whole volume. Adam's skeleton was carefully built, placed in a glass show-window and put in the museum with an inscription:

HOMO HIMALAJUS

In the first days in the museum at a show-window with Adam's skeleton crowded to many people. Among visitors curious looks marked out Clotilda de Troyes and the famous actress...

Adam stopped being dangerous to «cultural» society and began to serve science...

IDIOPHONE

I

The investigator Paolo Minetti carelessly threw eye-glasses on the opened «business», carried out by the left palm on a high forehead, the aquiline nose acting from red, thick cheeks and clamped the turning gray small beard.

– Take away it!

Three carabinieri, with checkers bare, in a black form with red edgings and in the cocked hats decorated with feathers took away the arrested – the young man in a working suit, with a suntanned face on which the prison already put a grayish raid.

Having remained one, the investigator slowly lit a long sigarette, drank from a glass ice water with red wine and wearily looked in a window. The window lattice stood out on the sparkling surface of the Mediterranean Sea clearly. In the distance the Pisa hills became blue.

Minetti brushed away the flies who chose his moist forehead and annoyancely grunted.

Already two weeks as sits in this hole – Voltaire, caused here for interrogation of five defendants placed in the local prison similar to the medieval castle with chambers cages for solitary confinement.

Minetti, the inveterate theater-goer and the passionate fan of music, was upset up to the soul depth when he was called from Livorno in the heat of tours of the Milan opera here.

But, having examined business, he was consoled. Business was interesting and promised for his career in a case of a successful outcome much.

For it was already honor that charged to carry on the investigation to it. Loud political process was coming.

At journey of the Italian prime minister on the car through Siena in it the shot from crowd which did not do harm was made. The police of public safety which appeared in time on the scene arrested, on suspicion, five people and seized a material evidence – the revolver thrown on the earth. But who exactly made a shot, it was not succeeded to find out. At anybody of arrested of weapon it was not found.

It was not succeeded to establish also accessories any of them to some «criminal political organization».

It is clear, that at such provision of business it was impossible to bring charge to all five. It was necessary to get more weighty proofs by all means. But how?. Personal recognition would be best of all. However, despite all the experience, on all professional tricks and tricks, Minetti could not achieve recognition. All five arrested categorically denied the participation in attempt at life of the prime minister and at the same time watched at the investigator such innocent eyes that he flew into a rage.

– Or all of them are cunning fellows and shot five together from one revolver, or... or the sixth shot, the devil all of them a pobera!. – Minetti muttered, having remained one ambassador of interrogation.

Time went... The going on tour troupe left Livorno long ago, but the hell with her – another will arrive. The fourteenth day passed also fruitlessly, as well as thirteen previous, however, not absolutely so. This day from Rome the inquiry was sent whether Minetti will complete the investigation soon and will submit the case to Tribunal.

It is already worse. One more such inquiry, and Minetti can withdraw, and to send other investigator to his place. And then – farewell dreams of the transfer to Rome or Turin... It is good if do not transfer with decrease, to Kalta-nizetta somewhere yet or Sassari where you will be bored to death...

From one this thought of Minetti felt that he begins migraine.

It is necessary to work quickly, resolutely.

– Oh, damned flies!. – The investigator took out a red fulyarovy scarf and threw with it the head. – Idiophone!. – he spoke, smiled to some thought and negatively shook the head.

The scarf thrown over the head reminded him the story of the old inspector of prison that the local candidate for judicial positions, signor Berichi, invented the device by means of which it is possible «to listen to others thoughts» – an idiophone.

The metal cap from which go a wire to phone is put on the head...

– The nonsense is some! – spoke aloud Minetti. – And however, than I risk? Though I will have a good time a little. Grew dull absolutely! – And it, having called the inspector of prison, asked to invite signor Berichi with his device.

II

Signor Berichi did not keep itself waiting long. In half an hour the door with noise revealed, and to the room the inventor of an idiophone with a sac in hands ran in.

Minetti expected to see the silent, concentrated person, one of those maniacs who puzzle over a quadrature of a circle or invent the perpetual motion machine. But before it span cheerful, live as a monkey, the dark-haired, curly Neapolitan. Whether it is a mistake?

However the guest hurried to disseminate doubts of the investigator.

– I am very glad to get acquainted... Беричи... that!. Here mine child.

And, having strong shaken hands the investigator, smiling from ear to ear, sparkling white teeth, for a minute without stopping, Berichi began to take out «idiophone» from a sac.

– There is a metal cap... It is put on the head of the person, whose thoughts you want to learn. Very useful piece for investigators and jealous husbands. I will declare the patent and I will put to myself in a pocket one million liras!.

At the same time Berichi so derisively shchurit eyes that it was impossible to understand whether he speaks seriously or mystifies, wishing to play a cheerful joke.

Minetti did not manage to squeeze any word, and Berichi continued to crack as a record player which plate rotates with extraordinary speed.

– You probably know, signor Minetti that, on the last scientific researches, our nervous system and a brain are the transformer of electromagnetic waves. Result of work of a brain – our thought – radiates special electrowaves. It is only necessary to catch them and to make the return transformation of electrowaves in a thought, in the sounding thoughts if you want. A metal cap – the receiver. This box – the amplifier of the electromagnetic oscillations made by a thought, and this box – the return transformer. Here electrowaves are made out in a sound thought. And this reception phone. It is clear, how new moon, isn't that so?

Minetti vaguely lowed.

– Allow to make experience... I already disposed to bring one of five arrested, by name the Sell here.

And, without expecting the answer, Berichi opened a door and shouted:

– Enter!

Carabineers entered the arrested.

Berich rushed on an office, placing furniture and fitting the device.

Minetti with a grimace of mistrust monitored all this vanity. He already regretted the invention to have a good time an idiophone.

– Take seat on this chair – Berichi addressed the arrested – we will put on to you the head this beautiful hat now and we will start up the smallest electric current.

The prisoner shuddered. His face turned pale.

– From what it a time – he answered – in Italy without court execute people electricity?.

Berich loudly burst out laughing.

– Anything similar! – And he put on to himself the head a metal cap. – Here you look. This piece is so safe for life as your own head of hear. It is the new device by means of which it is possible to listen to your thoughts. And if you are innocent, then have to agree to experience willingly: we will immediately be convinced that your conscience is true as sterilized milk.

Sell interrogatively looked at the investigator.

– I warrant you, the Sell that your life out of danger – Minetti unsteadily spoke. To tell the truth, this minute he doubted safety of experience, but to recede was late.

Sell thought and, having waved a hand, took seat in a chair.

Berich were quickly put on the prisoner's head by a metal cap and something was turned in one of boxes. Hum of the induction coil was heard. Easy current spread as a touch of ant legs, on the prisoner's head. A sell shuddered and frowned.

– It is not sick? Even it is pleasant, isn't that so? Also protects the head from flies. Here so. And I will take seat here, for you, I will listen in phone and to write down your innocent thoughts. You sit absolutely quietly and think about what you want.

And the inventor of an idiophone took seat in a chair with telephone earphones on the head and with a pencil and a notebook in hands.

III

There came terrible silence. The silence was broken only by hum of the induction coil. Minetg and carabineers with alarm monitored experience.

In a few minutes the Sell got used to the current passing on the head and almost did not feel it any more. But he began to test something more painful soon: fear to ruin itself a careless thought. He was exhausted from internal fight. By extraordinary effort of will he tried to distract the thoughts from dangerous memoirs. But the rebellious thought came back to these forbidden places of memory as a moth to a candle flame which will burn its wings sooner or later...

«In vain I agreed – thought the Sell – as if I was not tricked. Ah, devil take it!. If they hear my thoughts, so they already heard that I am afraid to get on their rod. What if they consider it for recognition of fault?. Nonsenses! What here recognition?. And there is no fault. However it is necessary to think of something another... Clouds... Here behind a window, in the sky, clouds float... I will think of them. Clouds... clouds... But I can think that I shot, it is simple to think: „I shot“. It is only a thought! It is everyone can think. Really these words I already accused myself?.»

From nervous tension, from a metal cap on the head, hot from a heat, and tiresome tickling of electric current at the Sell the head was turned and on all body the perspiration acted. He did not get used to operate the thoughts, usually they floated at him a train as a chain of clouds. And here it was necessary to watch himself all the time, to think of to thinking of a shot in Siena... It was over its forces.

«Nonsense, nonsense! I will consider. Time, two, three... The prime minister went in the black car with the fat secretary... four, five... Disguised detectives represented the people welcoming the „favourite“ leader... six, seven... again I think of it! Well, and that from this?. I incidentally was in the scene!. And then, it is only a thought... Anjelica ... – suddenly unexpectedly thought the Sell of the wife. – As she worries!. And Mikuel is probably happy. It remained to me has to. Just about, I will think of the».

But in a few minutes his thoughts soared over the fatal area in Siena again.

Suddenly the Sell it seemed that he invented very witty way of fight against the enemy overhearing his thoughts.

«Hey, you, signor! Listen!. I shot, I did not shoot. Write down if you want, but write down everything! What, was taken?.»

Sell smiled. It became cheerful.

«If you want, the signor, I will mentally sing to you a song:

If the grief gnaws heart,

Drain a glass of wine!

The old friend – it will help,

The leu is fuller, bottoms up!.»

He mentally sang, and under words of a cheerful song is imperceptible for him as the black snake among flowers, crawled a dangerous thought...

«The bullet passed on only one finger over the prime minister's head... She got to a show-window of shop and made a round hole in glass. Any crack... The prime minister leaned back on a back of the car and, having turned pale, looked at the fat secretary... Someone's hands seized me by shoulders...»

Sell suddenly grew cold with horror when noticed this black snake of forbidden memoirs. He wanted to lull a song attention of the enemy, but lulled own into a false sense of security. For the first time for all life he noticed that in a brain several whole trains of ideas can proceed at the same time. One of them as the ships lit with the sun floating on a smooth surface of the sea proceed in the light of our consciousness. And others, like deep-water fishes, slide imperceptibly in depth and a gloom of subconscious life. Instead of one enemy, there was several their one whole train of ideas – thousands of chains of thoughts which it is impossible to follow ... «That if everything them can be overheard this devilish device?.»

Sell grew cold. He gritted the teeth and could not constrain groan. Its nervous tension was ready to pass into a fit of hysteria. He already wanted to shout: «It is enough! I am guilty!» – it is to stop this torture rather.

And, as soon as he thought of it, hum of the induction coil suddenly stopped.

– Well, well, it is enough! – he heard the voice of Berichi which became suddenly dry and official.

– Unfortunately, you were not so innocent... During this time, as I listened to your thoughts, you more than once, not two and not three gave yourself, though tried to distract the thoughts from dangerous reminiscence... Desire to sign the application that you plead guilty to attempt!

Sell, wandering eyes, made the signature the shivering hand and, being unsteady, left an office.

IV

Minetg rushed to Berichi and embraced it.

– Ingeniously! Amazingly! You rendered me and justice extraordinary service. I am infinitely grateful to you though, of course, my gratitude is insignificant in comparison with the fact that it expects you... I admit, I very much doubted, but now...

Did not allow it to finish speaking Berich. All its humour and cheerfulness returned to the inventor of «idiophone». With dexterity of a monkey he slipped out embraces of Minetgi and, having squinted cunning left eye, asked:

– And now you trust in my invention?

And again, without having allowed to finish speaking to the investigator, he began to chatter:

– And it is vain! Absolutely in vain! My secret is invented not by me. It is invented very long time ago by that which the first shouted: «On the villain the cap burns!» Unless this proverb, in different options, does not exist at all people hundreds of years?. And so, I, on fashion of the twentieth century, embellished a cap which on the villain burns only electric finishing!

Minetti was struck and disappointed.

– Means, there is no invention?

– Well, not absolutely so. We nevertheless managed to achieve consciousness by means of this «invention». But it is only a game on psychology! Try to become in a corner not to think of a leopard. You will not manage it. Well, and for the Sell such «leopard» is his crime. He could not but think of him. Sure that all his thoughts are recognized, the criminal considered themselves caught what he undersigned for. Simply?.

V

Despite all severity of the prison mode, a message about the recognition of the Sell got by means of some device it became known to all for the prisoner soon.

And when brought four arrested on the case of attempt at the prime minister into an office of the investigator to declare it that they are free one of them approached the investigator and firmly told:

– I do not belong to those simpletons who confess, at least of their wine and was not still proved. But I not from those which because of the skin allow to suffer for myself innocent. A sell he is absolutely innocent. He confessed only because you drove it crazy your foolish device. I shot at the prime minister and I will shoot once again if the case is presented. And only I one have to bear the answer.

Berich which was present at the same time involuntarily reddened.

But Minetgi only with a good-natured sneer looked at him. Yes, «invention» of Berichi is not absolutely ideal. The cap was capable to burn on the head not only the villain and nearly ruined the innocent. But unless the court can exist without miscarriages of justice?. The main thing was made: responsible is found, and Minetgi waited for increase.

And what way it was reached – whether everything is equal?. If only this way brought it into Rome!.

NEITHER LIFE, NOR DEATH

I. MR. CARLSON OFFERS THE PLAN

– What you on it will tell? – Mr. Carlson asked, having ended a statement of the project.

The large coalman Gilbert answered nothing. It was in the nastiest mood. Before the arrival of Carlson the executive director told him that the situation on coal mines is worse than ever. Export falls. The Soviet oil more and more forces out competitors on Asian and even on European the markets. Banks refuse the credit. The government finds impossible further subsidizing of the large-scale coal industry. Workers worry, defiantly impose impracticable requirements, threaten to flood mines. It is necessary to find – which exit.

And at this moment as though derisively, the destiny sends some Carlson with his mad project.

Gilbert frowned the red eyebrows and rumbled long yellowish teeth an aromatic sigarette. On his shaved worried look expression of boredom stiffened. He was silent.

But Carlson not from those who are discouraged by silence. An uncertain profession and an unknown origin, the little, fussy man with the Irish accent, a short nose, black hair standing as at a hedgehog, Carlson stuck the sharp eyes into the tired, faded Gilbert's eyes and drilled them the persistent uneasy thought.

– What you on it will tell? – he repeated the question.

– It is the devil's work, some frozen human flesh – at last Gilbert apathetically answered and with a fastidious mine put a sigarette.

– Allow! Allow! – jumped, as on a spring, Carlson. – You, obviously, acquired to yourself my idea insufficiently?.

– I admit, I have no special desire and to acquire. It is nonsense or madness.

– Not madness, not nonsense, but the greatest invention which in skillful hands will bring to the person millions! And if you doubt, then allow you to remind history of this invention.

And Carlson began to chatter as though he answered the learned lesson:

– Anabiosis is incidentally opened by the Russian scientist Bakhmetyev. Studying temperature of insects, this scientist noticed that at gradual cooling the body temperature of an insect falls, then, reaching temperature minus nine and three tenth degrees Celsius, rise almost to zero at once, and then again falls already to ambient temperature, approximately by twenty two degrees below zero. And then the insect falls into a strange state – neither a dream, nor death: all vital processes stop, and the insect can lie, the okochenely and frozen, vaguely long time. But rather carefully and gradually to warm up an insect, and it comes to life and continues to live indifferently. From insects Bakhmetyev passed to fishes. It froze, for example, a crucian who lay in an okocheneniye, or anabiosis as Bakhmetyev called this state, several months. Warmed up, it returned to life and floated, as always.

The death of the scientist interrupted these interesting experiments, and forgot about them soon. And, as it often happens, Russians invent, and others use fruits of their inventions.

Remember Yablochkov, remember the inventor of radio telegraph Popov, remember, at last, Tsiolkovsky... So was and this time. German Shteyngauz for practical purposes used Bakhmetyev's invention: transportations and storages of live fish. As you know, he acquired millions!

Gilbert became interested and listened to Carlson already with some attention.

– I thank you for a lecture – he told. – I receive to a table the fresh fish hooked in the remote seas. But, to admit, I was not interested in way of its freezing. This or that whether everything is equal? If only fish was absolutely fresh. And, you speak, Shteyngauz earned millions from this business?

– Tens, hundreds of millions! It now one of the richest people of Germany!

Gilbert thought.

– But it is only fishes – he told after a pause – and you offer absolutely improbable thing: to freeze people! Whether it is possible?

– Perhaps! Now it is possible! Bakhmetyev froze the animals who are exposed to hibernation, so-called cold blooded: groundhog, hedgehog, bat. As for warm-blooded animals, it did not manage to subject them to anabiosis. However the Russian scientist, professor Wagner famous for the victory over a dream invented a way to change composition of blood of warm-blooded animals, bringing closer them to blood of cold blooded animals. And it managed «to freeze» and recover a monkey already safely.

– But not the person?

– What difference?

Gilbert discontentedly shook the head, and Carlson smiled.

– I speak only from the point of view of biology and physiology. At monkeys composition of blood, absolutely identical with the person. Absolutely identical. And here to you extraordinary, but quite feasible prospects: mass freezing of people, in this case э... э ... unemployed. Who does not know what whether the emergency is endured by the coal industry and one coal? Periodic crises and the unemployment accompanying them, unfortunately, constant disaster of our social order. On it any trouble-makers like communists predicting death of capitalism from the internal contradictions which are tearing apart it play. Let them do not hurry to bury capitalism! Capitalism will find a way out, and one of exits is the way offered by me!

Crisis will burst – and we will freeze the unemployed and we will fold them in special glaciers. And passes crisis, demand for working hands will appear, we will warm up them, and welcome to the mine.

Carlson was inspired and spoke, how on a tribune.

– Ha-ha-ha! – Gilbert did not keep. – Yes you joker, Mr.?

– Carlson. And I speak absolutely seriously – Carlson took offense. This person began to occupy Gilbert.

– Yes – continuing to laugh, the coalman told – there are such nasty times when, apparently, and willingly would freeze itself about the best days! But will cost how many your mad project? It is necessary to build special buildings, to maintain special temperature in them!

Carlson raised a finger up, then put it to the prickly head of hear.

– Here everything is considered! My plan is simpler! To you as to the owner of mines, it has to be known that warmth increases approximately by one degree with each seventy feet in Earth depth. You also know that the richest deposits of the splendid coal are found in Greenland, behind the Polar circle, in Humboldt's glaciers. As soon as the coal market gets stronger, you will be able to begin development there. You receive a number of mines of various depth with various temperature. And this temperature will remain invariable years there at all times. It is necessary only to enter small amendments to adapt mines for our purposes. I will not complicate you a statement of details now, but I can submit when you order, quite developed technical plan and the estimate.

«That for the funny person» – Gilbert thought and asked Carlson a question:

– Tell, please and you who: engineer, scientist, professor?

– I am a schemer! Scientists and professors are able to sit out fine eggs in the laboratories, but they are not always able to break them and to make fried eggs! It is necessary to be able from the immaterial ideas to take material pounds sterling.

Gilbert smiled and, having thought a little, stretched to Carlson a box with cigarettes.

«Victory» – Carlson exulted in soul, lighting a cigarette the electric lighter standing on a table. But Gilbert did not give up yet.

– Let's say that all this is possible. However I expect a number of obstacles. The first: whether we will get permission of the government?

– And why and not to give to the government this permission if we prove full safety of application to people of anabiosis? Social value of this measure will perfectly consider our government.

– Yes, it so – Gilbert answered, turning over in the mind members of the conservative government whose most had personal large interests in the coal industry.

– But most important question: whether workers will go to it? Whether they will agree «to fade» periodically for the period of unemployment?

– Will agree! The need will force! – with conviction Carlson told. – People with hunger are hung up, burn, and here like rest! Of course, it was able to approach it is necessary. First of all it is necessary to find daredevils who would agree to subject themselves to anabiosis. This should promise the first the large amounts of remuneration. When they revive», they should use as advertizing. Then at first it will be necessary to promise monetary support to families. But of course, it is necessary to stop up a throat and to some of the working aristocracy consisting in leaders of so-called labor movement. And further you will see that further everything will go like clockwork. The unemployed will «be frozen» by the whole families. And the terrible evil – unemployment – will be destroyed. At you will be given a free hand. Extraordinary prospects will open for you! Millions, tens of millions will begin to flow in your safes and fireproof cases! Decide! Tell «yes», and I will submit you all estimates, plans and calculations tomorrow.

The common practical sense said to Gilbert that all this fantastic plan was a pure gamble. But Gilbert endured such financial position when the person before fear of inevitable crash rushes to the ventures. And Carlson drew such tempting prospects! The large businessman and the businessman was ashamed to admit to himself that it as he drowning, is ready to grasp this chimerical straw of «frozen human flesh».

– Your project is too unusual. I will think and I will give you the answer!.

– Think, think! – willingly Carlson agreed, rising from a chair. – I do not dare to detain you – and it left, smiling enough. – Pecks! – cheerfully he shouted, being dipped into the bubbling copper of traffic of City.

II. STRANGE CLIENT

– Carlson, you ruined me! – with a sour mine Gilbert spoke. – I spent enormous funds for the equipment underground телохранилищ. I throw money for advertizing and our announcements. And nevertheless for all month of a newspaper campaign any person wishing to subject himself to the first public experience of freezing despite the good remuneration offered by us was not. Obviously, life of workers is not so bad, Carlson as socialists shout of it! And eventually, if anabiosis such safe piece why to you, Carlson not to subject itself to the first experience?

– Me?

– Well, you!

– Me? – once again Carlson asked and tousled the shchetinisty hair. – I am ready! Yes, yes! I am ready! But what will become with all business? It will fall asleep together with me! No, lulling others, somebody should be awake! I am a schemer! Without such as I, the whole world would plunge into anabiosis hibernation!

Their altercations were stopped by knock of an entrance door. The office included extraordinary lean person with the scarf which is reeled up around a long neck. By the light of a strong lamp big round points of the visitor sparkled as automobile headlights. He cleared the throat and stretched issue of the newspaper.

– I according to the announcement. Hello! May I introduce myself. Eduard Lesley, astronomer. Carlson was driven by a sphere to the visitor.

– Are very glad to get acquainted with you! I ask to sit down! You wish to subject yourself to experience? Our conditions are known to you? We will pay you the considerable sum and we will provide a family with lifelong pension in a case... um... But of course, this case will not occur!.

– It is not necessary! Khe-khe... Remuneration is not necessary. My name, apparently, says enough that I do not need money. – Lesley frowned. – At me another... to a khe-kha, damned cough...

– From the scientific purposes, so to speak?

– Yes, scientific, but only not of what you, probably, think. I am an astronomer as told you. I wrote big work about group Leonid which fell in November from the Leo constellation...

Lesley has again a fit of coughing, having grasped with a hand a breast. Having cleared the throat, he quickened and suddenly with great feeling started talking:

– This group was observed by Humboldt in South America in one thousand seven hundred ninety ninth. It perfectly described this wonderful heavenly phenomenon. Then Leonida approached Earth in the one thousand eight hundred thirty third or one thousand eight hundred sixty sixth. Waited for them through the usual period of time in thirty three – thirty four years, in one thousand eight hundred ninety ninth. But here to them there was misfortune... Da-with, misfortune! They too close approached the planet Jupiter which attraction rejected them from a usual orbit, and now they pass the way at distance of two million kilometers from Earth so they are almost invisible to us...

Lesley made a pause again to clear the throat.

Carlson for a long time expressing impatience tried to use this pause.

– Allow, dear professor, but what relation the falling Leonida's stars, the Leo constellation and Jupiter have to our enterprise?

Lesley pulled a long neck and with some irritation tutorially noticed:

– Have patience to listen to the end, the young man! – And it, having defiantly turned on a chair, addressed Gilbert: – I am busy with difficult calculations about which I will not speak in detail. These calculations are connected with destiny of group Leonid. Accuracy of my calculations is challenged by my respectable colleague Zauyer...

Gilbert exchanged glances with Carlson. Whether they deal with the maniac?

This eye was caught by Lesley, and, with irritation having pulled a neck, it ended the speech, having sent the round points to a ceiling as if calibrating the thoughts to the sky:

– I am sick... the last stage of tuberculosis.

– But you at the wrong door addressed, dear professor! – Carlson told.

– To the address! All right – with to listen to the end. I am sick and I will die soon. And the next emergence Leonid in the field of our sight can be expected only in one thousand nine hundred thirty third. I will not live up to this time. Meanwhile I can prove the case to the scientific world only as a result of additional observations. And here I ask you to subject me to anabiosis and to return to life in one thousand nine hundred thirty third, then to ship in anabiosis again, awakening in one thousand nine hundred sixty fifth, then in one thousand nine hundred ninety eighth and, at last, in two thousand twenty first. It is clear? – And Lesley filled the eyepieces on interlocutors.

– Absolutely it is clear! – Gilbert answered. – But, dear professor, by then your scientific opponent can die and you will have nobody to prove your case!

– We, astronomers, live in eternity! – with pride Lesley answered.

– All this is very entertaining – Carlson told. – I see that anabiosis – very good thing for astronomers. You, for example, can ask to wake you when the Sun goes out to check fidelity of your calculations. But we – not astronomers – are interested closer future. Now we need only experience as proof of the fact that anabiosis is absolutely harmless and safe for life. Therefore we stipulate that stay in anabiosis did not last more than a month. Second condition: processes of immersion in anabiosis and returns to life have to happen publicly.

– I agree to it. But month does not suit me at all! – And the upset Lesley began to tie a scarf around the long neck.

– Allow – Gilbert stopped it. – We could make so: we «awaken» you in a month, and then we immerse you in anabiosis on any to you time again!

– Perfectly! – the pleased Lesley exclaimed. – I am ready!

– You have to sign a number of obligations and statements that you of own will subject yourself to anabiosis and you have no claims to us in case of a failure. It only for formality, but nevertheless...

– He agrees, agrees to everything! Here to you my hand! Report when I am necessary to you! – And the pleased Lesley quickly left office...

– Well? Pecked? – Carlson repeated the favourite expression when Lesley left, and tapped of Gilbert on the shoulder. Gilbert frowned from this familiarity.

– Not absolutely the fact that it is necessary for us. Here if to steam of workers who would trumpet then in mines.

– There will be also workers! Patience, my young friend as this astronomer speaks!

– It is possible to enter? – At a door of office the shaggy head was pushed.

– Please, I ask you!

The office included the young man in a yellow checkered suit. Having made theatrical gesture a wide-brimmed hat, the stranger was introduced:

– Мепэ. Frenchman. Poet.

And, without expecting a reciprocal greeting, it drawlingly began:

Was tired of torment of expectation,

Was tired to chase a dream,

Was tired of happiness and suffering,

I was tired to be oneself.

To fall asleep and sleep, without waking,

That to forget about itself

And, the last sinking into a sleep,

Not to know, not to feel, not to live.

Freeze! Gotov.

Let hot I get down

My corpse cold will recover!

– You give money now or after awakening?

– Later!

– He does not agree! The devil only knows, whether you revive me. Money for a barrel. To Kutn last time, and there do that want!

Gilbert was interested in this funny shaggy poet.

– I can give you in the advance payment five pounds sterling. It will suit you?

At the poet of an eye sparkled hungry gloss. Five pounds! Пяггъ good English pounds! To the person who ate sonnets and triolets!

– Of course! Sold soul to the devil and it is ready to sign with blood the contract!

When the poet left, Carlson snatched on Gilbert:

– You reproach me that I ruin you, and throw money down the drain. Why you gave advance payment? You do not see what the bird is? I bet for five pounds that it will not return!

– I accept! Let's look! However today happy day! Look, still someone!

The office included gracefully dressed young man.

– May I introduce myself: Lesley!

– One more Lesley! Really all Lesley take liking to anabiosis? – Carlson exclaimed. Lesley smiled.

– I was not mistaken. Means, the uncle already was. I am Arthur Lesley. Mine the uncle, Eduard Lesley, professor of astronomy, told me a regrettable message about what wants to subject itself to experience of anabiosis...

– And I believed that you wish to be influenced by this useful experience! Think, you will become one of the most fashionable people in London! – Carlson fished around.

But this time fish did not peck.

– I do not need so extravagant ways of popularity – with modest pride the young man spoke.

– In that case you are afraid for the uncle? Absolutely in vain! His life is not exposed the slightest danger!

– Really? – with great interest Arthur Lesley inquired.

– You can be quiet!

– Any danger! – quietly Lesley spoke, and to Carlson was heard that even more quietly Lesley added: It «is a pity». – And whether it is impossible to dissuade the uncle from this experience? He tubercular, and at weakness of his health hardly he is fit for experience. You risk and can only compromise your business.

– We are so sure of success that we do not see any risk.

– Listen! I will pay you. I will well pay if you refuse the uncle as object of your experience!

– We do not go for bribery – Gilbert put in a ward. – But if you tell the reason, then, maybe, we also will meet requirements of you.

– To Prichin? E-e... it so ticklish property...

– We are able to be silent!

– As it is unpleasant, but I have to be frank... You see my uncle is rich, scary rich. And I... his only heir. The uncle is hopelessly sick. Doctors say that his days are numbered. Perhaps, only a few months separate me from wealth. It as is impossible more by the way; I have the bride. And at this moment your announcement comes across to it, and it decides to subject itself (himself) to anabiosis and to fall asleep nearly for hundred years, waking from time to time only to look at some falling stars! Understand my position. Cannot approve court me in the rights of inheritance until the uncle is in anabiosis!

– Of course, no!

– Here you see! But then farewell inheritance! It will be received by my prapraprapravnik!

– We can «freeze» also you together with your uncle. And you will lie a mummy before receiving inheritance.

– I thank you! So you will risk to lie to a world skonchaniye. So, you refuse to deal with the uncle?

– It would be strange to refuse from our party after ourselves published the announcement of the hunter's call.

– Your last word?

– Last word!

– That it is worse for you! – And, having slammed the door, Arthur Lesley left.

III. INCONSOLABLE NEPHEW

The first experiment of anabiosis of the person is decided to be conducted in London, in specially employed room, publicly. Broad advertizing attracted to the huge white hall of the numerous audience. In spite of the fact that the hall was crowded, artificially maintained temperature in it below zero. Not to make an unpleasant impression on public, operation of injection in blood of the person of special structure by it decided to make for giving of property of blood of cold blooded animals in the special room where only the family and friends of the persons which were exposed to experience could have access.

Eduard Lesley was as usual with an astronomical accuracy, on the dot, exactly at twelve o'clock in the afternoon. Carlson was frightened, увидав of him – before the astronomer grew thin. The feverish flush covered his cheeks. At each breath the Adam's apple convulsively moved on a thin neck, and on a scarf which professor brought to a mouth during fits of coughing, Carlson noticed blood drops.

«The bad beginning» – Carlson thought, conducting the astronomer under a hand to the certain room.

After Eduard Lesley there was a nephew with a face of the heart-broken relative who is seeing off the beloved uncle at the cemetery.

The crowd greedy examined the astronomer. Cameras of reporters of newspapers clicked.

The office door was closed behind Lesley. And the public in impatient expectation began to examine «scaffolds» as called someone standing highly in the middle of the hall of device for anabiosis.

These «scaffolds» reminded enormous aquariums with double glass walls. It were two glass boxes enclosed one in another. The box, smaller by the sizes, served for the room of the person, and between walls of both boxes there was a device for fall of temperature.

One «scaffold» intended for Lesley, another – for Mere which with poetic inaccuracy was late.

While doctors prepared in an office for operation and listened to pulse and heart at Lesley, Carlson several times in impatience ran in the hall to cope whether Mere came.

– Here you see! – Carlson shouted, for the third time running in an office and addressing Gilbert. – I was right. Мепэ was not.

Gilbert shrugged shoulders.

But at this moment the office door with noise revealed, and on a threshold the poet appeared. His face and clothes bore obvious traces of violently spent night. The wandering eyes, a silly smile and staggering gait said that night waste still far did not evaporate from his head.

Carlson with anger snatched to Mere:

– Listen, to this disgrace! You are drunk!

Мепэ grinned, rocking extensively.

– At us in France – he answered – there is a custom: to execute the last will doomed to death and to treat him before an execution dishes and wines what only he will wish. And many, going to death, to death also get drunk. You want «to freeze» me. It neither life, nor death. Therefore I also drank from the middle on a half: neither it is drunk, nor is sober.

This conversation was interrupted with unexpected shout of the surgeon:

– Wait! Give fresh solution! Pour in it in the new sterilized mug!

Carlson looked back. Half-naked Eduard Lesley sat on a white chair, panting a hollow breast. The surgeon clamped tweezers already opened vein.

– You see – the surgeon was nervous, addressing the sister of mercy helping him who highly held a glass mug with chemical solution – liquid dimmed! Give other solution. Liquid has to be absolutely pure.

Quickly brought to the sister a large bottle with solution and a new mug. Injection was made.

– How do you feel?

– I thank you – the astronomer answered – it is tolerant.

After Lesley Mere underwent operation of injection.

In the light clothes made of matter which is freely passing heat them entered into the hall.

The uneasy crowd became silent. On the put ladder of Lesley and Mere ascended to «scaffolds» and laid down in the glass coffins. And here, already lying on a white sheet, Mere suddenly recited a hoarse voice an epitaph to Scipio of the Roman poet Enniya:

That is buried here to whom

Neither citizens, nor strangers

Were unable to render

Abuse, worthy him.

And after this unexpectedly he snored a tired dream of the become tipsy person.

Eduard Lesley lay as the dead person. Its features were pointed. He often breathed short sighs.

The surgeon, watching the thermometer, began to cool air between glass walls.

In process of fall of temperature snore of Mere began to cease. Lesley's breath was hardly noticeable. Mepə time or two moved with a hand and calmed down. Eyes remained half-open with Lesley. At last breath stopped at both, and at Lesley eyes grew dim. At the same moment glass covers were pulled over «coffins». Access of air was stopped.

– Twenty one degrees Celsius. Anabiosis occurred – the surgeon's voice among complete silence was heard.

The public slowly left the hall.

Gilbert, Carlson and the surgeon passed in an office. The surgeon sat down for some chemical analysis now. Gilbert frowned.

– Eventually, all this makes the depressing impression. I was right, insisting on giving to public only an awakening show. This funeral will discourage at anything to subject themselves to anabiosis. It is good still that this idler Mere brought a comic note in this funeral chorus.

– You are right and are not right, Gilbert – Carlson answered. – The picture turned out gloomy, it is right. But the crowd has to see everything from beginning to end, otherwise she will not believe! At our «pokoynichok» control watch is established. They are open for a review day and night at any time. And if we lost at a funeral, then twice we will win on revival. I am occupied by another: operation of injection is quite unpleasant and difficult. For mass freezing of people it is unusable. But wrote me that professor Wagner found more simplified way of the necessary change of blood by inhalation of special vapors.

– Devil take it! I suspected it! – suddenly the surgeon exclaimed, lifting a test tube with some liquid.

– In what business, the doctor?

– And the matter is that all our experience and life of professor Lesley hung by a thread. As you remember, at injection of chemical solution I paid attention that liquid became muddy. It should not have been at all. I personally made liquid in the conditions of absolute sterility. Now I wanted to establish the liquid turbidity reasons.

– And what you found? – Gilbert asked.

– Presence of hydrocyanic acid.

– Poison!

- One of the strongest. Kills instantly, and from it there is no rescue.
- But how it got there?
- In it all question!
- This is Arthur Lesley. Inconsolable nephew of the astronomer. You remember, Gilbert, his request and then threat? What villain! And watch what sincere regret played!
- When he was able to do it? It seems, it did not approach close devices...
- Yes – the surgeon thoughtfully spoke – it is possible that here others are involved. Perhaps, sister of mercy?
- It is necessary to let know polices! This crime! – the indignant Gilbert exclaimed.
- By no means! – Carlson objected. – It will only damage to us, especially among workers on whom we finally count. And eventually, what the police can make? Whom can we accuse? Arthur Lesley, interested person? But we have no proofs that he is involved in a crime.
- Perhaps, you are right – Gilbert thoughtfully spoke. – But, in any case, we should be very careful.

IV. RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

There passed month. Day of «resurrection of the dead» came. The public worried. There were disputes whether it will be possible to return to life shipped in anabiosis.

At night on the eve of revival the surgeon in the presence of Gilbert and Carlson examined Lesley and Mere. They lay as the corpses, cold, lifeless.

The surgeon knocked with the doctor's hammer on the frozen lips of the poet, and blows were accurately carried on the empty hall as though the hammer struck a piece of a tree. Eyelashes became covered with hoarfrost from heat which left a body.

At survey of a body of the astronomer the trained eye of the surgeon noticed on a naked hand a small hillock under skin. At top of a hillock hardly noticeable speck as though from a prick, and below – the frozen drop of some liquid was seen.

The surgeon disapprovingly shook the head. Having scratched out a lancet the frozen drop, the surgeon carefully carried this piece of ice in an office and there subjected it to the chemical analysis. Carlson and Gilbert watched closely work of the surgeon.

– Well?

– The same! Again hydrocyanic acid! Despite all our precautions, Arthur Lesley, apparently, managed to inject in some way under skin of the adored uncle several drops of lethal poison!

Gilbert and Carlson were depressed.

– Everything died! – in despair Gilbert spoke. – Eduard Lesley will not wake up more. Our business is hopelessly compromised.

Carlson raged.

– Under its court, the villain! Now and I see that this criminal should be transferred to justice hands, at least scandal also damaged to us!

The surgeon, having propped up the head a hand, thought of something.

– Wait, maybe, still it is lost nothing! – at last he started talking. – Do not forget that poison was injected under skin of absolutely frozen body in which all vital processes are suspended. Absorption could not be. In the absence of blood circulation poison could not be carried and by birth. If poisonous liquid was heated, then it could get in a small amount under skin which under the influence of heat became more elastic. But further liquid could not get. You can judge by the drop which acted in the place of a prick that the criminal did not manage to enter a significant amount.

– But and one drop it is enough to poison the person?

– Quite right. However we can remove this drop very quietly, having cut out it with a meat piece.

– Really you think that the person can remain live after poison was in his body, perhaps, two-three weeks?

– And why is also not present? It is only necessary to cut out more deeply that there is no drop left in a body! To warm a body, at least partially, risky. It is necessary to make original «cold» operation.

And, having taken the hammer and the tool reminding a chisel the surgeon went to a corpse and began to cut down a hillock, working as the sculptor over a marble statue. Skin and muscles small frozen splinters of drop on a box bottom. Soon in a hand small deepening was formed.

– Well, apparently, it is enough!

Splinters carefully swept away. Deepening was greased with iodine which immediately froze.

Behind a window traffic began. The house had already a turn of expecting.

Doors opened, and the hall was filled with public.

Exactly at twelve in the afternoon removed glass covers of boxes, and the surgeon began to increase slowly temperature, looking at the thermometer.

– Eighteen... ten... five it is below zero. Zero!. One... two... five... is above zero!. – Pause. Hoarfrost on eyelashes of Mere melted and as teardrops, filled corners of eyes.

The first moved Mere. Tension in the hall reached the highest degree. And among the come silence of Mere suddenly loudly sneezed. It discharged crowd tension, and it hooted as a beehive. Mepə rose, took seat in the glass box, yawned and looked at crowd with osolovely eyes.

– Good morning! – someone playfully welcomed it from crowd.

– I thank you! But I fatally want to sleep! – And he pecked the head.

In public laughter was heard.

– In a month did not sleep!

– Yes it is drunk! – voices were heard.

– At the time of immersion in anabiosis – the surgeon loudly explained – Mr. Mere was in state of intoxication. In such state overtook its anabiosis which stopped all processes of an organism. Now, at return to life, naturally, Mere appeared under the influence of hop. And as he, obviously, did not sleep at night before anabiosis, he feels requirement of a dream. Anabiosis not a dream, and something between a dream and life.

– Blood! Blood! – someone's scared female voice was heard. The surgeon looked around. Eyes of crowd were turned on Lesley's body. On a sleeve of his dressing gown the bloody spot acted.

– Calm down! – the surgeon exclaimed. – There is nothing terrible. During anabiosis professor Lesley had to perform the small operation which does not have relations to his freezing. As soon as blood got warm and blood circulation was resumed, from a wound blood acted. That's all. We will make bandaging now. – And, having broken off a sleeve of a dressing gown of Lesley, the surgeon quickly bandaged his hand. During Lesley's bandaging recovered.

– How do you feel?

– I thank you, well. It seems, it is easier for me to breathe.

Really, Lesley breathed exactly, without convulsive movements of a breast.

– You saw – the surgeon addressed crowd – that experience of anabiosis was successful. Now undergone anabiosis will be examined by specialists doctors.

Crowd it is noisy dispersed, and Mere and Lesley passed in an office.

V. FAVOURABLE ENTERPRISE

At careful medical examination of Eduard Lesley unexpected consequences of anabiosis became clear. It turned out that under the influence of low temperature all tubercular sticks which are in sore lungs of Lesley were killed and Eduard Lesley, thus, absolutely recovered from tuberculosis.

However, even at Bakhmetyev's experiences such opportunity was theoretically assumed. But now it was the incontestable fact which brilliantly resolved a question of fight against tuberculosis, this terrible enemy of mankind.

Carlson was not mistaken. Eduard Lesley and Mere became the most fashionable people in London and around the world. They were interviewed, removed, invited for public statements. The astronomer, though felt absolutely healthy now, was weighed upon this unusual noise. He insisted on that it was subjected to anabiosis till 1933 again.

– I should preserve myself for science – he said.

And his desire was granted. It was transported to Greenland. And he the first went down to the deep Konservatoriuma mines as this underground storage for mass freezing of people was called.

But Mere directly bathed in popularity waves. It was not satisfied with public statements. He wrote the poetic poem «On That Coast of Styx». He wrote about how his soul, having exempted from fetters of the stiffened body, rushed a whirlwind in blue air of World space. She swam on the shining rings of Saturn. Visited planets of the remote stars, «where the lilac flower people singing an eternal song of happiness grow». It soared in spaces of the fourth measurement where objects are measured in width, length, depth.

«On the earth there is no proper expression» – wrote Mere and confusedly explained living conditions in the world of the fourth measurement, «where there is no time» where there are no concepts «out of» and «inside» – where all objects pronitsat each other, without mixing the forms. He wrote about extraordinary meetings on the Milky Way which is taking away out of limits of the star sky known to us.

Its poem, certainly, did not maintain the slightest scientific criticism: in a condition of anabiosis he could not even have dreams the frozen brain. But the public greedy to sensations, inclined to mysticism, was fond of these fantastic pictures. There were fans of strong feelings who wished to be influenced by feeling of «flight in boundless spaces», plunging into anabiosis. They, of course, felt nothing how they the frozen hulk, but, «wakening», supported a lie of Mere.

Over any expectation anabiosis brought to Gilbert enormous profits. Besides thrill-seekers, to Gilbert TB patients were flown down from all over the world. Greenland «sanatorium» worked perfectly. Patients received full treatment. And soon still new clients increased. The English government recognized more «humane» and, the main thing, cheap to subject «incorrigible» criminals to anabiosis instead of life imprisonment and the death penalty.

At last, anabiosis was applied to transportation of the cattle. Instead of the tasteless, frozen in the usual way meat received from Australia to England began to deliver animals in a condition of anabiosis. They did not need to be fed on the way, and after a supply to the place of them warmed, recovered; and British received the freshest and cheap meat to a table.

Carlson rubbed hands. On its share a considerable part of the huge income which was brought in by anabiosis fell.

– Well? – he fatly spoke to Gilbert. – Now you understand that the schemer means? Your money and my projects brought you millions. Without me you would be ruined with your coal mines long ago!

– Coal mines give me a loss also now – Gilbert answered. – There is no sale, workers are pig-headed, the government refuses subsidies. Yes, Carlson, life – difficult piece! You the good schemer,

but life carries out the projects contrary to our desire. We assumed to freeze the unemployed together with their families, and instead turned our refrigerators into sanatoria and prisons!

– Patience! Also workers will come! Now you have spare capitals. Promise good contents to families of workers in case the head of their family wants to subject himself to anabiosis. Believe, they will go to this rod! And when they will get gradually used to anabiosis, it will be possible to reduce the price. Eventually they will ask that they were frozen together with families, if only not to starve! They will come! The need will tire out! Believe me, they will come!

And they came...

VI. IN ICES OF GREENLAND

Cold autumn wind knocked down. The young miner-coalminer working in the Cardiff mines, having bent the head, slowly approached the small cottage which was seen through naked branches of a garden.

Bendzhemin Johnson stood at a door, deeply sighed before opening it, and, at last, timidly entered the house.

His wife, Frederica Johnson, washed the dishes at a big fireplace. The two-year-old son Samuel already slept.

Frederica interrogatively looked at the husband.

Johnson, without undressing, fell by a chair and quietly spoke:

– Did not get...

The plate slipped out Frederica's hands and with a ring fell in a wash-tub. She with fear looked back to the child, but he did not wake up.

– The strike committee has no more means... In a bench do not trust for...

Frederica ceased to wash the dishes, wiped a hand about an apron and silently sat down to a table, looking in a corner to hide the nervousness from the husband.

Johnson slowly took out from a lung pocket not on a coat season the crumpled issue of the newspaper and put on a table before the wife.

– On here, read.

And Frederica, brushing away a tear which dimmed it eyes, read the large announcement:

«Five pounds a week receive families of the workers who agreed to oversleep till spring...»

There was an explanation Further what is anabiosis. Frederica already heard about it. Gilbert's agents conducted promotion of anabiosis among workers for a long time.

– You will not make it! – firmly she told – We are not the cattle that we were frozen!

– City gentlemen do not disdain anabiosis!

– With fat your gentlemen rage! They to us not the decree!

– Listen, Frederica, but, eventually, in it there is nothing neither terrible, nor shameful. Dangers to me any. I not shtreykbrekherstvy, do not infringe on anybody's interests.

– And mine, and your own interests? Same almost death, though for a while! We have to fight for the right for life, but not rest in bed the frozen hulks until then, dock misters owners will not deign to revive us!

She got excited and spoke too loudly.

Little Samuel woke up, began to cry and began to ask to eat. Frederica took it on hands, began to rock to sleep. Johnson with melancholy looked at a fair-haired head of the son. He so turned pale lately! Poblednela and Frederik...

The child fell asleep, and Frederica fell at a table, having hidden the face in hands. It could not constrain tears more.

Bendzhemin stroke-oared rough her fluffy hair, same light as at the son, and it is tender as child, persuaded:

– I grieve about you! Understand! Tomorrow Samuel will have big circles of the smoking milk and white loaf, and you on a table will have a good piece of beef, potatoes, oil, coffee... It is difficult to be separated, but it only till spring! Apple-trees in our garden will blossom, and I will be with you again. I will meet you, cheerful, healthy, blossoming as our apple-trees!.

Frederica once again sobbed and stopped.

– It is time to sleep, Ben...

It is more they about anything did not speak.

But Bendzhemin knew that it agrees. And the next day, having said goodbye to the wife and the child, it already flew on the passenger airplane to Greenland.

The gray-green veil of the Atlantic Ocean was replaced by polar pictures of the North. The ice desert with the mountain tops scattered on it here and there... From time to time the airplane flew by low above the ground, and then owners of these desert places – polar bears were visible. At the sight of the airplane they in horror rose by racks, stretching paws up, as if asking mercy, then started running away with an unexpected speed.

Johnson involuntarily smiled to them, envied severe, but their free life.

In the distance constructions and airfield seemed.

– Arrived!

Further events went extraordinary quickly.

Johnson was invited in Konservatoriama office where wrote down his surname, the address and supplied with number which was attached to a hand in the form of a bracelet.

Then he went down to underground rooms.

The underground car flew with terrific speed down, crossing a number of horizontal mines. Temperature gradually increased. In the top mines it was much below zero whereas about ten degrees below rose.

The car unexpectedly stopped.

Johnson entered brightly lit room in the middle of which there was a platform with four metal ropes going to a wide opening in a ceiling. On the platform there was a low bed made by a white sheet. Changed clothes of Johnson for a light dressing gown and suggested to lay down in a bed. Put on a mask the person, forcing it to breathe some couples.

– It is possible? – he heard a voice of the doctor. And the same minute the platform with its bed began to rise up. He felt everything the amplifying cold soon. At last cold became intolerable. He tried to shout, descend from the platform, but all members of his body as if hardened... His consciousness began to be stirred up. And suddenly he felt how pleasant warmth spreads on his body. But it was delusion which is experienced by all freezing: in the last effort the organism lifts body temperature before giving all to warmly cold space. In this short time of a thought of Johnson earned with extraordinary speed and clarity. Or rather, it were not thoughts, but bright images. He saw the garden in gold beams of the sun, the apple-trees covered in fluffy white colors, a yellow path on which his little Samuel runs to it towards and after it there is a smiling, young, red-cheeked, blond Frederica...

Then everything began to grow dim, and he finally fainted. In some moment it returned to it, and it opened eyes. Before it, having bent, the young man sat.

– How do you feel, Johnson? – he asked, smiling.

– I thank you, small weakness in a body, and it is generally quite good – Johnson answered, looking around. It lay in the white, brightly lit room.

– Be supported with a glass of wine and broth, and then to the road!

– Allow, the doctor, and how with anabiosis? He was not successful or in mines workers urgently were required?

The young man smiled.

– I am not a doctor. We will be familiar. My surname Kruks. – And he gave to Johnson a hand. – Anabiosis was successful, but we still will manage to talk about it. We are waited by the airplane!

Johnson, being surprised that anabiosis so it is finished soon, quickly put on and rose with Kruks to the surface.

«And Frederica cried probably all night long» – he thought, smiling to a fast meeting.

The entrance to a vault had a big passenger airplane. Around the eternal ice desert was spread. There was a night.

The polar lights polosovat the sky sheaves of beams of the gentle changing coloring.

Johnson, already in a warm fur coat, with pleasure inhaled clean frosty air.

– I will bring you to the house! – told Kruks, helping Johnson to walk upstairs in a cabin.

The airplane quickly rose in air.

Johnson saw the same cross-country terrain, the same frozen craters appearing from time to time for ways as steppe barrows, and the same bears to whom he so envied recently. Here and ancient gray-haired waves of the Atlantic Ocean. It is a little more time, and coast of England heaved in sight in gray fog.

Cardiff... mines... cozy cottages... Here also its white cottage which is buried in dense verdure of a garden is seen. At Johnson heart was strongly clogged. Now he will see Frederica, will take on little Samuel's hands and will begin to throw up.

«Still, still!» – the kid as usual will murmur.

The airplane was made by an abrupt bend and went down on a lawn at Johnson's lodge.

VII. RETURN

Johnson in impatience left a cabin.

Air was warm. Having thrown off a fur coat, Johnson ran to a lodge. Kpykc hardly kept up with it.

There was a fine autumn evening. The setting sun brightly lit large red apples on garden apple-trees.

– However – with surprise Johnson said – really I overslept till fall?

He ran up to a fencing of a garden and saw the son and the wife. Little Samuel sat among autumn flowers and with laughter threw mother's apples. Frederica's face was not visible behind apple-tree branches.

– Samuel! Frederica! – joyfully Johnson cried and, having jumped through a low fencing, ran through beds towards to the wife and the son.

But the kid instead of rushing towards to the father, began to cry, having taken away the approaching Johnson, and in a fright rushed to mother.

Johnson stopped and suddenly uvidat the mistake: it were not Samuel and Frederica though the boy very much resembled his son. Young mother left because of a tree. It was one years with Frederica, same light and ruddy. But hair were more dark. Of course, it is not Frederica! And as soon as he could be mistaken! Possibly, it is one of neighbors or Frederica's girlfriends.

Johnson slowly approached and bowed. The young woman expectantly looked at it.

– Forgive, I, apparently, frightened your son – he told, getting accustomed to the child and being surprised to similarity with Itself – ale. – Frederica of the house?

– What Frederica? – the woman asked.

– Frederica Johnson, my wife!

– Whether you were mistaken the address? – the woman answered. – Frederica is not here...

– Pretty business! That I was mistaken in the address of own house!

– Your house?.

– And whose? – This confused woman began to irritate Johnson.

On a threshold of a lodge the young man of years of thirty three attracted obviously, seemed noise of voices.

– In what business, Elaine? – he asked, without descending from a step of a porch and popykhivy a short tube.

– Business is in that – Johnson answered that during my absence here, obviously, there were some changes the question turned not to it – ... Others lodged in my house...

– In your house? – derisively the young man standing on a porch asked.

– Yes, in my house! – Johnson answered, having waved a hand on the cottage.

– With whom I have honor to speak? – the young man asked.

– I am Bendzhemin Johnson!

– Bendzhemin Johnson? – the young man asked again and burst out laughing. You hear, Elaine? – he addressed the woman. – One more Bendzhemin Johnson and owner of this cottage!

– Allow to assure you – suitable Kruks suddenly put in a ward – that before you really Bendzhemin Johnson. – And he pointed to Johnson by a hand.

– It becomes entertaining. And with itself dragged the witness! Allow also you to tell that your joke is unsuccessful. Thirty three years I was Bendzhemin Johnson who was born in this house and its owner, and now you want to convince me that the owner of the house, Bendzhemin Johnson, this young man!

– I not only want, but also I hope to convince you of it if you allow to come into the house and to explain you some circumstances, obviously to unknown to you.

Крукс said so convincingly that the young man, having thought a little, invited him and Johnson to the house.

With nervousness Johnson entered the house which left so recently. He still hoped to meet on the usual place, at a fireplace, Frederica and the son playing at her legs on a floor. But they were not there...

With greedy curiosity Johnson threw the room in which carried out so many joyful and bitter minutes.

All furniture was unfamiliar, alien to it.

Only over a fireplace still painted plates Elizabethan times – a family jewelry Dzhonsonov hung.

And at a fireplace in a deep chair the gray-haired, decrepit old man with the legs wrapped in a plaid, despite warm day sat. The old man took entered an unfriendly view.

– The father – addressed the young man the old man – these people claim that one of them Bendzhemin Johnson and the owner of the house. Whether you wish to catch one more sonny?

– Bendzhemin Johnson – the old man proshamkat, examining Kruks – so called my father... but he died in Greenland long ago, in this damned glacier where froze people!.

– Allow me to tell how there was a business – Kruks answered. – First of all, Johnson not I, and here it. I Kruks. Scientist, historian.

And, addressing the old man, it began the story:

– To you was if I am not mistaken, about two years, when your father, Bendzhemin Johnson, fell into a trap the coalman Gilbert and decided to subject himself to «freezing» to save you and your mother from starvation during unemployment. Also many other suffered much and desperate family workers followed Johnson's example soon. Being empty Konservatorium on the northwest coast of Greenland quickly was filled with bodies of the frozen workers. But Carlson and Gilbert were mistaken in the calculations.

Freezing of workers did not solve the crisis which endured the English capitalism. Even on the contrary: it only aggravated the inflamed passions of class fight. The most firm workers were revolted with «the frozen human flesh» as they called application of anabiosis to «conservation» of the unemployed, and used freezing as propaganda means. Revolution broke out. Group of the armed workers, having captured airplanes, went to Greenland with the purpose to recover the brothers who were dead asleep and to put them in ranks of fighting.

Then Carlson and Gilbert, wishing to anticipate events, gave on radio the order to the servants in Greenland to blow up Konservatorium, hoping to explain this crime with accident.

The radiotelegram was intercepted, both Carlson and Gilbert incurred deserved punishment. However radio waves fly quicker than any airplane. And when pilots went down at the purpose of the flight, they found the abysses only gaping, smoking, fragments of constructions and pieces of frozen human meat. It was succeeded to dig out several untouched accident of bodies, but also these died from too bystry temperature increase or maybe from suffocation. Works were at a loss the fact that plans underground телохранилищ disappeared. It was necessary only to put a monument over this sad place. There passed seventy three years...

Johnson involuntarily screamed.

– And not so long ago, studying history of our revolution on archival materials, I found Gilbert's statement with a request for permission in archive of one of the former ministries to it to construct Konservatorium for conservation of the unemployed. Gilbert in detail and eloquently wrote about what benefit can be derived from this means in «business an izzhitiya of periodic crises and related working disorders». The minister's hand on this statement wrote the instructions: «Of course, it is better if they peacefully rest, than to revolt to resolve...»

But the most interesting was the fact that the plan of mines was enclosed to Gilbert's application. And in this plan my attention was drawn by one mine going far aside from the general network. I do not know by what reasons builders of mines were guided, laying this gallery. I was interested in another:

in this mine there could be bodies which are not injured by accident. I immediately reported about it to our government. The special expedition was equipped. Started excavation. After several weeks of unsuccessful searches we managed to open an entrance to this mine. It was almost not touched, and we went to its depth.

The terrible show was presented to our eyes. Along a long corridor in walls niches in three ranks were arranged, and in them bodies lay. Closer to an entrance, obviously, hot air got, at explosion it killed the people lying in anabiosis at once. Closer to the middle of mines temperature, probably, increased more slowly, and several workers recovered, but they probably died from suffocation, hunger or cold. Their distorted persons and convulsively brought together members spoke about agonal sufferings.

At last in depth of the mine, behind the covered turn, there was equal cold temperature. Here we found only three bodies, other niches were empty. With all precautions we tried to recover them. And we managed it.

The famous astronomer Eduard Lesley whose death was mourned by all scientific world, the second – the poet Mere and the third – Bendzhemin Johnson who is just brought by me here on the airplane was the first of them... If my words are not enough, in confirmation of them I can provide indisputable proofs. I terminated!

All sat silently, struck with the story. At last Johnson heaved a deep sigh and told:

– Means, I overslept seventy three years? Why you did not tell me about it at once? – he addressed reproachfully Kruks.

– My dear, I was afraid to subject you to too strong shock after your awakening.

– Seventy three years!. – in thought Johnson spoke. – What at us now year?

– August, one thousand nine hundred ninety eighth.

– Then I was twenty five years old, so now to me ninety eight...

– But biologically remained to you twenty five – Kruks answered – as all your vital processes were suspended while you lay in a condition of anabiosis.

– But Frederica, Frederik!. – with melancholy Johnson exclaimed.

– Alas, it is absent long ago! – told Kruks.

– My mother died thirty years ago – the old man creaked.

– Here so piece! – the young man exclaimed. And, addressing Johnson, he told: – Then that you my grandfather! You are younger than me, you have a seventy-five-year-old son!.

It seemed to Johnson that he raves. He carried out by a palm on the forehead.

– Yes... son! Samuel! My little Samuel is this old man! Frederica is absent... You – my grandson – addressed he the to the namesake to Bendzhemin – and that woman and the child?.

– My wife and son...

– Your son... Means, my great-grandson! It at the same age at what I left my little Samuel!

Johnson's thought refused to perceive that this decrepit old man also is his son... The old man the son also could not recognize in young, blossoming, as the twenty-fifth anniversary to the young man of the father...

And they sat confused, in awkward silence looking at each other...

VIII. AGASFER

There passed nearly two months after Johnson returned to life.

In cold, windy September day it played in a garden with the great-grandson George.

This game consisted that the boy took seat in the small flying car – a computer-controlled aviette. Johnson adjusted management personnel, launched the motor, and the boy, loudly shouting from delight, flew around a garden at the height of three meters from the earth. After several circles the device smoothly fell by in advance defined place.

Johnson long could not get used to this new children's entertainment unknown in his life. He was afraid that to the mechanism there can be something and the child will fall and rasshibtsya. However the aircraft operated perfectly.

«To put the child on the bicycle too it seemed to us once dangerous» – Johnson thought, watching the flying great-grandson.

Suddenly the sharp wind gust rejected an aviette aside. Mechanical control was regained immediately by the broken balance, but wind carried the device aside. An aviette, having changed the direction of flight, flew on an apple-tree and got stuck in tree branches.

The child in a fright cried. Johnson, in not a smaller fright, rushed to the aid of the great-grandson. He quickly scrambled on an apple-tree and began to remove little George.

– And how many times I spoke to you that you did not arrange your flights in a garden! – suddenly Johnson heard a voice of the son Samuel. The old man stood on a porch and in anger shook by a fist.

– There is, apparently, a platform for flights – no, by all means it is necessary in a garden! Not rumors! A trouble with these boys! Here you will break to me apple-trees, I you!.

Johnson was revolted by this old man egoism. The old man Samuel very much loved baked apples and worried for an integrity of apple-trees more, than for life of the grandson.

– Well you, be not forgotten! – Johnson exclaimed, addressing the old man to the son. – This garden was for the first time divorced by me when still you did not exist! Also shout at someone else. Do not forget that I am your father!

– Well, that father? – peevishly the old man answered. – On favor of destiny, my father was a boy! You to me almost in grandsons are fit! Seniors should obey! – tutorially it finished.

– Parents should obey! – Johnson was not appeased, lowering the great-grandson on the earth. – And besides, I also am more senior than you. I am ninety eight years old!

Little George ran to the house to mother.

The old man stood a little more, moving lips, then angrily waved a hand and too left.

Johnson brought an aviette to the big garden arbor replacing a hangar and there wearily fell by a bench among shovels and a rake.

He felt lonely.

With the old man the son he did not have relations at all. The twenty-five-year-old father and the seventy-five-year-old son is the ratio of years, not corresponding to anything, put a barrier between them. As Johnson strained the imagination, it refused to connect together two images: little two-year-old Samuel and this decrepit old man.

Most closer he met with the great-grandson – George. Youth is eternal. The spirit of modern times did not leave the mark on George. Child at the age of George rejoices to both a ray of sunlight, and a tender smile, and red apple the same as children of its age rejoiced thousands years ago. Besides and the person he reminded his son – Samuel child... George's mother, Elaine, also resembled to Johnson Frederik, and he stopped on her a look of the grieving tenderness more than once. But in the opinion of Elaine, directed on it, he saw only the pity mixed with curiosity and fear as though he was a native of a grave.

And her husband, Johnson's grandson bearing his name Bendzhemin Johnson, was far to it, as well as all people of this of generation new, alien to it.

Johnson for the first time felt the power of time, the power of a century. As it is difficult for inhabitant of valleys to breathe the rarefied mountain air, so it was difficult for Johnson living in the first quarter of the twentieth century to be applied to living conditions of the end of this century.

Externally everything changed not so strongly as it was possible to assume.

However, London expanded on many miles in width and rose in thousands of skyscrapers up.

Air traffics became almost exclusive way of movement.

And in the cities moving crews were replaced with mobile roads. In the cities it became more silent and purer. Pipes of factories and plants ceased to smoke. The equipment created new ways of getting of energy.

But in public life and in life there were many changes since its time.

Workers died on the steps of a public ladder as lowest group, groups, excellent from above standing and on a suit, and by training, and on habits.

Cars mail exempted workers from the hardest and dirty physical work.

Healthy, simply, but well dressed, cheerful, independent workers were the only class holding all threads of public life in hand. All of them got an education. And Johnson studying as copper money nearly hundred years ago felt awkwardly in their environment, despite all their affability.

They spent all free time more on air, flying on the easy aviettes, than on the earth. They had absolutely other interests, inquiries, entertainments.

Even their short, compressed language, with many new words expressing new concepts was in many respects unclear to Johnson.

They spoke about societies, institutions, new types of property and sport, new to Johnson...

Continually, at each phrase he had to ask:

– And what is it?

It needed to overtake for what proceeded without it throughout seventy three years, and he felt that not in forces to make it. Difficulty was not only in extensiveness of new knowledge, but also that his mind was not so cultivated to apprehend and acquire everything saved up by mankind for three quarters of the century. He could be only the detached, alien onlooker and a subject of observation for others. It also constrained it. He felt the views of the hidden curiosity which are constantly directed to it. It was something like the recovered mummy, an archeological find of an entertaining subject of old times. Between it and society the insuperable side of time lay.

«Agasfer!. – he thought, having remembered the legend read to them in youth. – Agasfer, the eternal wanderer punished by immortality alien to all and all... Fortunately, I am not punished by immortality! I can die... and I want to die! Around the world there is no person of my time, except for, maybe, several old men forgotten by death... But also they will not understand me because all of them time lived, and in my life a failure! There is nobody!..»

Suddenly at it in mind the unexpected thought moved:

«And those two who recovered together with me there, in Greenland?»

It in nervousness rose. Uncontrollably pulled it to these unknown people who suddenly became so dear to it. They lived in at one time with Frederica and small Itself – ale. Some threads are stretched between them... But how to find them? Крык!. He has to know!

Крык did not leave Johnson, using him as «a live historical source» for the work on revolution history.

Johnson hurried to Kruks and stated him the request, expecting the answer with such nervousness as though the appointment to the wife and the little son was necessary to it.

Крык something thought.

– Now end of September... And November, one thousand nine hundred ninety eighth... Well, of course, Eduard Lesly has to be already in Pulkovo Observatory, sit at the telescope in search

of disappearing Leonid. In Pulkovo Observatory the best refractor in the world. Lesley, of course, there. In the same place you will find also the poet Mere... He wrote me recently that he goes to professor Lesley. – And, having smiled, Kruks added: – Obviously, all of you, «old men», feel inclination to each other.

Johnson hastily said goodbye and went to a way with the first passenger airship which was flying away to Leningrad.

He did not imagine what forthcoming appointment will be, but felt that all this that else can interest it in life.

IX. UNDER THE STAR SKY

The shivering hand Johnson opened hall doors of Pulkovo Observatory.

The huge round hall sank in a gloom.

When eyes got used to darkness a little, Johnson saw the huge telescope standing among the hall reminding the long-range gun which sent the muzzle to one of openings in a dome. The pipe was strengthened on a massive support along which there was a ladder to fifty steps. Ladders conducted also to the platform for observation at the height of three meters. From this platform, from above, someone's voice was heard:

– ... The deviation from a form of the stretched ellipse and approach to a form of a parabola occurs depending on special action of mass of certain planets to which comets and asteroids are exposed at the movement towards the Sun. The greatest impact in this regard is just exerted by Jupiter which force of an attraction makes almost thousand share of an attraction of the Sun...

When Johnson heard this voice which was accurately distributed in emptiness of the hall when he heard these unclear words it was attacked by shyness.

Why it came here?

What will tell professor Lesley? Unless these parabolas and ellipses are not also unclear to it, as well as new words of new people? But to recede was late, and he coughed.

– Who there?

– It is possible to see professor Lesley?

Someone's steps quickly taped on iron steps of a ladder.

– I am professor Lesley. What can I serve as?

– And I am Bendzhemin Johnson who... which lay with you in Greenland, shipped in anabiosis. I wanted to talk to you...

And Johnson confusedly began to explain the purpose of the arrival. He said about the loneliness, about the lostness in this the world, new, unclear for it, even that he wanted to die...

Likely, these, new, would not understand it. But professor Lesley understood that easier that many experiences of Johnson were experienced by him.

– Do not mourn, Johnson, not you one suffer from this rupture of time. Something similar was tested also by me, as well as my friend Mere, allow to present him to you.

Johnson shook hands with gone-down Mere, on the old habit long ago left «new» people who restored beautiful and hygienic custom of ancient Romans to raise a hand as a sign of a greeting.

– You too from workers? – Johnson Mere asked though that resembled the worker very little.

– No. I am a poet.

– Why you froze yourself?

– Out of curiosity... And perhaps, and from need...

– And you lay as much time, as well as I?

– No, it is slightly less. I lay at first only two months, was «revived», and then decided to plunge into anabiosis again. I wanted... to keep youth as long as possible! – And Mere laughed.

Despite a difference in development and in former situation, these three people were pulled together by the general strange destiny and an era in which they lived. To Johnson's surprise, the conversation accepted brisk character. Everyone could tell a lot of things to others.

– Yes, my friend – addressed Lesley Johnson – not one you test isolation from this new world. I was mistaken in many calculations.

I decided to subject myself to anabiosis to have an opportunity to observe the heavenly phenomena which occur in several decades. I wanted to resolve the scientific task most difficult for those times. And what? Now all these tasks are resolved long ago. The science made enormous

discoveries, revealed during this time such secrets of the sky about which we did not dare and to dream!

I lagged behind... I infinitely lagged behind – with grief he added after a pause and sighed. – But nevertheless I, seem to me, is happier than you! There – and he pointed to a dome – time is estimated in millions of years. That our centuries mean to stars... You never, Johnson, observed the star sky in the telescope?

– Not before was – Johnson waved a hand.

– See the Moon on our eternal satellite! – And Lesley spent Johnson to the telescope.

Johnson looked in the telescope and involuntarily screamed from surprise. Lesley laughed and told with pleasure of the expert:

– Yes, such tools did not know our time!.

Johnson saw the Moon as though it was from it at distance of several kilometers.

Huge craters lifted the tops, the black, gaping cracks plowed deserts.

Light, bright to pain, and deep shadows gave to a picture extraordinary relief look. It seemed, it is possible to give a hand and to take one of moonstones.

– You see, Johnson, to Long such what it was and thousands years ago. On it nothing changed... For eternity seventy five years – are less, than one moment. Let's live for eternity if the destiny tore off us of the present! Let's plunge into anabiosis, into this dream without dreams that, wakening once a century to observe what is created on Earth and in the sky.

In two hundred-three hundred years we, perhaps, will observe life of animals, plants and people on planets... Through thousands of years we will get into the mysteries of the most remote times. And we will see the new people less similar on present, than monkeys on people...

Perhaps, Johnson, future inhabitants of our planet will reduce us on degree of the lowest beings, will shun relationship with us and even to deny this relationship? Let so. We are not sensitive. But we will see such things of which the people who are becoming obsolete the term put by it life do not dare to dream... Unless for the sake of it you should not live, Johnson?

At our request me and Mere is subjected to anabiosis again. You want to join us?

– Again? – with horror Johnson exclaimed. But after long silence he deafly said, having hung the head:

– All the same...

HUNTING FOR BIG DIPPER

– Fatally wounded lion fell upon me and died. All poured by its and blood, weakened by wounds and fight, I choked under a shaggy belly of a dead animal. Only in the morning companions found me and hardly live took from under a corpse of a lion and brought round. But nevertheless I am grateful to it: if it so well did not cover me, I would be torn to pieces by the hyenas who ran together to the battlefield. That is why I also told that the dead can save life live – finished the story Is wild.

– An interesting case – Mike told, throwing dry branches in a fire.

– Yes, but there are cases better – Nick responded, and his face came up from a gloom, having sparkled glasses of points. – If you are still located to listen, I will tell you an interesting case of hunting for a tiger.

– Are not located at all – Mike muttered.

But Nick probably did not catch and, having drawn near is closer to a fire, briskly told:

– There now and perfectly. It was I do not remember in which year: in the nineteenth...

– Or in the twenty ninth.

– Do not disturb, Mike. You do not want to listen, you can go to bed. And so, it was in the nineteenth or twentieth year» I traveled around Africa and decided to hunt on a tiger.

– On a tiger, in Africa? – with doubt Dick asked.

– Do not disturb it, It is wild – melancholic Mike told, clapping the lit-up rod on a fire.

– Yes, on a tiger, in Africa. What here improbable?

– I spoke to you, Is wild, do not disturb it. The tiger was a traveler too. He came from Asia, jumped through the Red Sea to take a walk in Africa, and by the way decided to get acquainted with Nick.

– I sat in the wood – Nick continued. – There was a bright moonlight night. The sky blue to blackness, and on it stars about a plate. In the silence of the night I heard careful, furtive steps of an animal and squeezed more strong my skorostrelny rifle «фильд No. 2», forty-eight-charging – the invention of my friend Richard Fild. Heard about it? Cannot be! Where you were? The invention to them did the gun «фильд No. 1» then to noise for the whole world. He, you see aimed to invent the gun of extraordinary force which had to operate nearly with energy of disintegration of atoms.

Mike poorly moaned.

– I was at its first experience with «fildy No. 1». We went with it to the island Stek-Skerri [75] and decided to make test of the gun in the deserted area, on the ocean coast. Fild set the object at height of a breast of the person and shot. I expected a thunder, but heard only whistle. I did not manage to take several steps to look on a target as suddenly Fild fell with easy groan, being covered with blood. Someone's bullet pierced it through. Ahead of us was nobody. Survey of a wound, wider on a breast, than in a back, convinced me finally that the criminal shot behind. At Fild as all outstanding people, had envious persons and enemies.

«What bastard was able to do it!» – I indignantly exclaimed, lifting my poor friend.

«Be more careful in expressions – Fild answered with a weak voice. – Really you do not understand that I nearly killed myself?»

«How it could be? Ricochet? The bullet returned back?»

«On the contrary, it flew all forward, with lightning speed flew about the globe and struck me behind...»

I was so stunned that, having put on wounded Fild's earth, began to become straight slowly. At this moment at me the hat which is brought down by someone's invisible hand fell. I lifted it and saw that the hat is shot. The bullet made one more flight around the globe and nearly killed me.

«What will be now?» – I perplexed asked, being hasty settled on the earth.

«Nasty – Fild answered. – The bullet has to strike everything on the way and many troubles will do. I did not calculate force of my gun. Now the bullet will rush around Earth as the small satellite until friction force about air gradually reduces its speeds; then it falls to the Ground».

«But really it punched everything that was on its way: trees, at home, rocks?»

«Obviously» – Fild answered, fainting from blood loss.

Fild was right. The bullet really did many troubles. It pierced thousands of people on the way, killing one to death, crippling others. And only frightened others: smashed a cup in hands of some old woman who was peacefully sitting at a fireplace or punched a hat, as at me.

In the woods the bullet killed a set of animals, and its way was noted by corpses which lay as the beads passed by an invisible thread. The globe was as if divided into two half by an invisible barrier through which it was impossible neither to pass, nor to pass.

It was necessary to put a fencing on all way of flight of a bullet. For iron and highways carried out in the place of their crossing by «a deadly ring» tunnels or built bridges. But it was especially bad at the sea. Red protective buoys specified the forbidden place. The ocean steamship message happened to change of passengers who were transported under the dangerous place on submarines... In a word, the bullet gave awfully much a lot of trouble. At scientists the heads swelled, engineers went as mads, inventing means against a bullet. What only they did not think out! Obstacles from concrete, steel boards, and the bullet as if did not notice these obstacles and had no intention to slow down flight. Eventually it was decided how doctors speak, «to be osumkovat»: concluded in metal tubes all its trajectory – all way of its county. Then someone suggested to fill a tube with water or oil to increase resistance. Poured. But from friction liquid evaporated, and pipes burst, and a bullet – though that! From it alloy it was cast.

– What did all this come to an end in? – Dick became interested.

– Only one Fild could help a trouble, and he helped as soon as became independent after wound. «Like cures like – he told. – It is necessary to send a counter bullet».

– Well?

– Well also sent. The bullet crashed into a bullet, and the bullet passed through a bullet, having shattered into the smallest parts. These parts flying in opposite directions would be dangerous too. But, fortunately, from blow both bullets changed flight, and splinters were carried away in heavenly space towards Big Dipper.

– Also wounded her in a paw? – seriously Mike asked. – But you, apparently, began to tell about hunting for the «African» tiger, and terminated hunting for Big Dipper. What did your hunting for a tiger terminate in?

– The gun misfired, I rushed on a tiger and tore to pieces it to pieces – Nick angrily answered.

DEAD HEAD

I. IN THE PURSUIT OF GLORY

– Collecting exactly at noon on this glade.

Joseph Morel nodded to two satellites, corrected a road bag behind the back and, wagging with a net for catching of insects, went deep into a thicket.

It were possession of palm trees, ferns and lianas.

Morello carelessly sang a cheerful song, sharp-sightedly peering through glasses of points at greenish twilight of the rainforest. The young scientist was in the best mood. He was lucky in life. Morel was not forty more years old, and he already had professor's rank. His work about spiders received an award, and now it received a scientific business trip to Brazil, in the low-studied riverheads of Amazon, this paradise for entomologists.

«The science knows two hundred thousand species of insects. Charlz Read assumes that their not less than ten million. Every year not less than six and a half thousand new types are described. It will be not bad if six thousand more opened by Joseph Morel increase this year. What magnificent monument from insects will be erected to himself by Morel!» – professor was carried away in ambitious dreams. And his dreams were quite feasible. In this wood there would be enough material not for one «monument». Motley pieces of future greatness of Morel in the form of beautiful multi-colored butterflies rushed before it as snow flakes. It was only necessary to aggregate these flakes sparkling all colors of the rainbow – and scientific immortality of Morel is provided. His sharp-sighted eye of the scientist already noticed several unusual forms of butterflies, but Morel did not hurry. Among this inexhaustible wealth he was able to afford luxury to be legible. Besides he was interested in spiders more, and here they met a little.

The more went deep the Morello into a thicket, the shadows became more dense, the wood is more silent. Huge trunks of palm trees as columns, left highly up, closing light of the sun the weaved leaves. Vegetable parasites – orchids and bromeliya stuck to shaggy trunks of palm trees. And below young palm trees and ferns scattered the fanlike leaves, forming a dense underbrush. And from a palm tree to a palm tree, from a trunk to a trunk were stretched as snakes, uzlasty lianas – these wire entanglements of rainforests. In places the bright yellow beam of the sun cut through the greenish twilight of the wood, and in gold of beams the red wing of a parrot flashed, diamond sparkled flown by a humming-bird, the flame lit an orchid flower.

– O-and! O-and! Ha-ha-ha! – sharply the parrot shouted. It was answered by a big monkey. Hanging on a tail, she rhythmic was shaken, trying to reach a hand a parrot. But a parrot, having estimated distance a sloping eye, sat not movably and continued grumbling «about – and» as the neighbor who started a quarrel with boredom. Two little monkeys noticed the person and some time followed it, dexterously getting over on hands on lianas. One monkey grasped another by a tail. That began to squeal, grinned, and here they began to fight, having forgotten about Morel.

The wood lived life.

Morel's legs softly went on the earth covered with a moss and the rotted-through leaves. It became more difficult to go. Damp, hothouse air was filled with aromas of flowers and plants so strongly that the Morello choked. As though over this wood there passed heavy rain from stupefyingly spicy spirits. The net was confused in branches. A morello fell, having hooked for lianas or the tumbled-down trunks which acquired a moss. The scientist passed no more than three kilometers, and already felt fatigue and all was covered with a perspiration. He decided to come to the open place. Having looked round, the Morello noticed from himself to the right a light spot as though there the dawn was engaged, and went to this gleam. It came to the forest glade going along the dried-up course

of one of uncountable small inflows of Amazon soon. In the period of rains on this course the real river which was carrying away a windbreak in the prompt current stormed. But now the bottom was dry and covered with sharp marsh herbs. Only at the edges and here and there on a bottom the rotted-through trunks of trees which remained from a high water were scattered.

Morello went down in a dry bed of the river and inhaled in himself drier and rarefied air. The same minute its attention was attracted with the huge butterfly who had wingspan more than a meter. A morello even bent down, ready to a jump. In it the scientific and passionate insects hunter started talking.

«Absolutely new kind of acherontia medor (the dead head)» – thought the Morello, monitoring flight of a butterfly.

The back of a butterfly was not brown with a caesious reflection, as usual, and golden, with the dark blue drawing of a skull and the crossed bones. Her forward wings were the same golden color, and back – azure. A morello with chagrin thought that its net is too small to capture such big insect. But an exit was not. It had to catch this butterfly, at least with risk injure her wings. And the Morello jumped on a butterfly, having waved a net. The disturbed butterfly made the whistling sound and departed along a stream, as if setting on the hunter. A morello, jumping and falling, ran behind it. In a minute before his only desire was to stretch in a grass and to have a rest. But now he forgot about it and began to chase a butterfly with such heat as though he caught own immortality. And a butterfly, slowly waving soft wings, continued to attract it for itself as a marsh spark, dexterously dodging from a net in the zigzag flight. The bed of the river coiled, branched on several courses, did abrupt turns that complicated a pursuit even more. From Morel sweat poured streams, filling in eyes; a bag behind the back and a box for insects dangled on it as on the enraged camel, but he felt nothing and did not see, except the «Golden Fleece» flitting in air. Tens of times he was close to victory and already let out the triumphing cry, but the butterfly was imperceptible as fantastic «bluebird of happiness». A morello ceased to notice the road for a way back for a long time. If now a half of Brazil vanished into thin air, he would not notice, hypnotized by «the dead head».

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