

Sarkar

Fakir.
The Science of
Miracles

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Chapter One: Circus of Mr. Lurie

The director of the circus strolled leisurely along the city. Before the first performance, two days remained. He admired the colorful posters of the new program of his circus, which adorned round advertising stands: “The circus of Mr. Lurie! Acrobats and riders! Tamers of tigers and lions! Jugglers and clowns!”

His thoughts were filled with satisfaction: “The city is large, the public must be very many. The proceeds and multiplication in fame of one of the best circuses in Europe — all this is waiting for us here!” Such prospects amused the pride of the director, whose name was Etienne Lurie, and he continued his journey in high spirits.

A crowd of spectators gathered around one of these bollards with a billboard. They clapped enthusiastically.

Mr. Etienne was curious and came closer.

Before the crowd, a little blond girl of five or six years bowed and collected coins in a basket.

“Come on, again! We were late at the beginning!” — several recent spectators asked.

... The girl made a funny bow and an air kiss — as it was done on the playbill of the circus by Mademoiselle Sisi. And then the girl began to show her performance again.

The director already wanted to move on... But a few movements of the little actress intrigued him to stay.

Yes, it was a real “nugget” — this natural flexibility comes once in a hundred years! The whole ridiculous facetiousness disappeared, the girl turned into grace, she was happy because with incredible skill she performed a few flips, walked the wheel two circles without stopping, and then bent in a graceful bridge. It was clear that no one had ever taught her such a thing, the movements were not perfect. But, in fact, to perform such poses, wherein she easily twisted the body, requires years of training!

The director once again examined her from head to toe with the professional’s eye. Beautiful appearance, blond curly hair... Just an angel can happen if to wash and properly dress her!

He had already imagined the girl as a soaring angel in a white-pink dress under the dome of the circus.

When the audience dispersed and the girl looked pleased with her received pennies, Mr. Etienne Lurie approached her and asked:

“Who taught you this?”

“I did myself. I saw the circus performers on the square and how they were applauded and given a lot of money. So I, too, decided to make enough money to cure my mother.”

“Is your mother sick?”

... The girl has become sad:

“She died this winter...”

“And with whom do you live?”

“The hostess, from whom my mother and I rented a room, allowed me to stay and live there, so that I

could pay her debt. My mother was ill for a long time and did not pay our rent...

“Don’t you have any more relatives?”

“No...”

“Do you want to perform in a real big circus? This one?” — the director pointed his finger to the poster. — “You will have a beautiful dress with sparkles and a gold hoop in your hair. And — shoes from satin.”

“I want to... But only who will let me go there?”

“I myself am the director of this circus. I want to make you a real actress!”

The girl’s eyes expressed surprise and delight. The director himself noted the immediacy and emotionality of his new acquisition. Now it remains to complete the formalities. If the girl does not have relatives, then this is quite easy!

“What’s your name?”

“Katya.”

“We’ll have to think up a real circus name for you. For example — *little Mademoiselle Kitty!*”

Katya was very surprised that she might be called *Mademoiselle*...

And the director took Katya by the hand and went to the nearest confectioner’s shop. He fed the girl with cakes and offered tea. By this, he finally won her over to himself.

Then he talked strictly with the hostess for a long time, while Katya packed her meager belongings.

He gave the landlady a little less money than she wanted. But Mr. Etienne was not used to make the money fly, spending it on the greed of other people.

When all the preparations were completed, he stopped the cabman and, loading up all the property of Katya, stored in a small pack and suitcase, sat Katya beside him and asked to go to the circus of Mr. Lurie.

* * *

Everything that happened for a while seemed to Katya a fairy tale.

Even the fat German Franz, at whose disposal — to choreograph the circus numbers — Katya was given, at first seemed nice to her.

She liked even his funny accent. He used words from different languages in the speech, including unfamiliar for Katya circus words for body movements, as well as commands. And when he was angry, he spoke only in German.

The word “alle” was now the main in Katya’s life.

She was dressed up in a thin leotard and a very short gown for trainings. And the circus dressmaker took measurements and began to sew a special dress for Katya’s performances — with sparkles and small wings.

Katya perceived all this as... magical!

And she even could watch all the shows every day!

In the inaccessible to the public premises of the circus, where specially trained circus animals lived, she stroked — with permission of the trainers — clever dogs and cats, monkeys, and horses! With

admiration, she looked at the huge elephant Tubo, the lions and tigers!

The world of the circus was special, with its own laws and rules. Katya studied them gradually.

But the feeling of a fairy tale, which suddenly turned her life, ended very soon.

Mr. Franz forced her to do more and more exercises every day from morning to evening. The body was constantly sore from overstrain and bruises.

She always heard his: “bad!”, “wrong!”, “smile!”, “alle!”, “alle!”, “alle!”, “alle!”...

And only very rarely it sounded: “good!”... But then a new exercise was invented at once, more difficult than before...

And then the trapeze was added, which was raised all the more... And the fear of falling became torturous...

“If you are not a good, I will drive you into the streets, and there you will die of hunger!” — Franz shouted at her.

Sometimes Katya even wanted to be on the street and die, so that these endless tortures would stop.

Chapter Two: Clown Tom

One evening, after another such angry tirade of Franz to Katya with accusations of her being incompetent and lazy and threatening to turn her out into the street to starve, Katya burst into tears in her small room — from the sorrow of her unhappy fate.

She sobbed, her face buried in a pillow, it seemed to her that all good had ended forever in her life, and she would never again have joy and hope!

Suddenly — in the doorway, the head of a clown appeared, whose name was Tom. He also began to whimper loudly, and then from the special tubes hidden under his amusing red wig, streams of water, which depicted the streams of tears, began to sprinkle. Katya already knew that for this he was pressing a rubber bulb hidden in his pocket. But, nevertheless, she smiled through the tears. Tom cried louder and louder, tears splashed in all directions!

“I’ve over-wept you! I’ve won!” — Tom said, walking into Katya’s room and sitting on a chair opposite Katya, who was crying on her bed. He added:

“Surrender!”

Katya completely stopped crying.

“What happened, Katya?” — Tom asked, and handed her a large checkered handkerchief.

Katya wiped her tears.

She told Tom about all her misfortunes.

Tom gave her ointment in a jar and said that it would help to lessen the muscle pain and treat the bruises. Then he sat down beside and asked:

“Do you want me to teach you not to be afraid and to do in your number things that are not yet working out?”

“I’ll never be able to, I’m afraid of this trapeze! I cannot do this and will never get success in it!” — said Katya sadly.

“Forget such words, Katya! In the circus — they do not exist!

“Man can learn almost everything! Human’s possibilities are huge!

“For example, you can manage this body by yourself — so that not you are controlled by the body! The body can whimper: ‘I do not want, I cannot, I’m tired!...’, but you give it a command — and it obeys!

“But only, this command should be very clear and assured!

“Have you seen how Madame Matilda teaches the dogs to jump through the hoop, stand on its hind legs? She gives them a clear command. So you must learn to give the body similar commands!

“So, gradually, you can perform a number of any complexity!

“Do you want me to help you? We will train early in the morning while all others are still asleep.

“Do you really want to be a real artist? Then — you must learn to never feel sorry for yourself, but do everything with joy! Only in this case, the public will be delighted to applaud you!

“But this is not the most important. Applause is only a recognition by others that you are performing well. But it happens that other people do not immediately notice what is important or beautiful. To prevent this from happening, you need to learn how to work so that you yourself can get joy from your performance!

“You see how all artists of the circus work! What the public consider to be magic and miracles, is achieved by their daily work on every element of the number.

“When a person works hard to achieve the result, then, what seemed impossible yesterday, becomes not only possible, but only a small step that allows you to rise higher, to move further!

“And most importantly is, if you conquer your fear of heights, pain and learn to do with joy what you must do, — then you can be happy!

“There is one small difficulty here: you cannot once and forever overcome fear...”

“And how then?”

“You can just learn to keep fear under your control. Do not allow fear to command!

“So — you can learn to overcome all those emotions that make you weak and unhappy, make you feel yourself a victim of some circumstances or other people.

“I’ve tested it in my life many times. If you give up before difficulties or indulge your weaknesses — then you never become better! And if you do not give up — you become better every day! Though slightly — but better!”

*** * ***

From that day, the friendship between the clown Tom and Katya had begun.

Tom’s shows were always so cheerful! All the audience roared with laughter and applauded enthusiastically!

And in usual life, Tom at any time was ready to give everyone a “hit the spot” of humor and jokes. He — as if always and everywhere participated in the performance, and he played in it the role of joker, entertaining all!

Many in the circus loved and respected him, many even were afraid of him: they were afraid to be-

come subjects of his jokes. Even the director of the circus Mr. Lurie sometimes respected his opinion.

But with Katya — Tom was different: a real and kind friend, without sad irony over what is happening, without a lot of buffoon masks.

Katya herself was difficult the first time to wake up at dawn, and Tom woke her up himself.

“To get up early in the morning — it’s great! The day then becomes much longer — and you can do everything that you have planned,” — he said. — “But to be lazy and sleep for a long time means you have to hurry afterwards — to catch up to everything. And in the bustle and haste, we can forget how to notice the most important in life!”

... Tom every day began to teach Katya not to be afraid of heights and to perform complex movements on the trapeze, overcoming the trembling of body and soul.

... He once was himself a gymnast... It was a long time before a fall and injury, which was so serious that he had to become a clown.

He knew all the details of performing gymnastic and acrobatic movements — and began to help Katya to learn them while others were still asleep.

He lowered the trapeze to such a height that Katya was not scared. He insured her, helping to correctly do various coups.

Then Tom — gradually — increased the height. Then there was a trampoline-grid...

But, which was most important, Katya has learned to overcome her fear, has learned to achieve beauty and clarity in the execution of all movements! She was happy together with Tom — for every such little victory!

Tom invented some new elements into the numbers, which Katya then showed to Franz. And he, attributing to himself their discovery, included those movements in the newly-created numbers.

And the numbers really turned out to be bewitching with their beauty!

* * *

The first performance of the “soaring angel” caused a furor among the public. Katya was seen off with thunderous applause.

The little figure of a girl in a pink dress, embroidered with sparkles and with small elegantly made transparent wings on her back, shone in the beams of special searchlights. Katya did complicated coups under the very dome, and then as if was flying around the arena from trapeze to trapeze.

Mr. Lurie was incredibly pleased!

Tours began in many European countries. Performances, performances... And between them — endless trainings...

Katya got used to it.

But one day she complained to Tom:

“I do not see the life that is there, beyond the walls of the circus! I almost do not see even the cities we come to! They seem all the same, only people speak other languages...”

“You, Katya, see much more than most people living in these cities! And certainly — more than the children of some craftsmen or workers from the factory.

“But that rich, dressed up public who applauds us... I do not know if we should dream of such a life...

“Once I tried to live without a circus... I then earned a lot of money... I held on so for several years. But, nevertheless, I did not manage to live this way long — and I returned to the circus. In any case, here all — are honest!... But there... There all also play their roles, but very many deceive others and often deceive themselves...”

“So you have become a clown, who cheers people?”

“Yes, Katya. And people... They are everywhere the same, even though they speak different languages...”

... This conversation prompted Tom to begin to teach Katya everything that he knew himself and what he could teach.

At first, he simply read to her fairy tales with pictures, buying them in the bookstore — not new, but cheap. Then he taught Katya to read and count. He also told, as far as he knew himself, the history of the countries to which they came. And when such an opportunity was given, they together went for a walk around the city, in which Mr. Lurie’s circus was on tour at that time.

Chapter Three: **Among the Aerial Gymnasts**

One day, while walking freely in the city, Tom and Katya went to the marquee of the circus-

chapiteau. On the poster, which was not made in a printing house, rather simply drawn on a plywood board by a not very skillful artist, the inscription flaunted: “Air Acrobats of the Thibaut Dynasty”.

Tom paused at the poster for a long time...

“Do you want to see real art?” — he suddenly asked Katya.

“Of course!”

... They bought tickets.

The show was uncomplicated. Costumes and the whole entourage were very inferior to what was in the rich and world-famous circus of Mr. Lurie.

... But, when the performance of the aerial gymnasts began, Katya understood what Tom was talking about. It was perfect execution of the most complicated elements of a number. Light, flexible bodies seemed to fly like birds in the air. Incredible coherence and accuracy of movements made imperceptible the extraordinary efforts of the gymnasts and turned the entire area under the dome into a magical space where people — as if were flying, only occasionally touching by hands or feet trapezes or the hands of partners...

“Wow!” — Katya whispered in ecstasy.

... After the performance, when they were already going to the exit, one of the gymnasts suddenly called out:

“Tom? Is it you? Cannot be! How glad I am to see you!”

... Tom shuddered and turned around.

“Hello, Tonya!”

“Is this yours?” — Tonya with a caress in the eyes bent to Katya, stroked her light golden hair. — “What a beautiful girl! And she is already great!”

... And, turning to Katya, she asked:

“Did you like the performance?”

“Yes!” — Katya enthusiastically said and added a few professional words describing those coups and techniques that particularly delighted her.

“Wow! So does the dynasty of Thibaut air gymnasts continue?”

“Yes!” — Tom suddenly happily answered. All the tension that was felt in him this evening suddenly vanished. Some incredibly beautiful and calm tenderness blossomed, which usually was hid somewhere in the depths of him, under a lot of jesting masks.

“Will you go to your father?” — Tonya asked.

Tom shook his head:

“No, better not... Better you come all, if you decide.” — Tom handed out invitations to the circus of Mr. Lurie.

Tonya frowned slightly...

“I do not know if it will turn out... You do know your father: he criticizes everyone for being untalented and he probably would not like to watch. I myself will try: I will come, if he lets me go...”

“In any case, you now know where to find me... Well, in general, if that... And if you need my help...”

“Yes thank you!”

... They warmly said goodbye.

* * *

Tom walked, immersed in his thoughts.

Katya pulled him by the sleeve:

“Did she say ‘father’? Did your dad perform there?”

“No, Katya, he does not perform... He is the owner of this circus. Do you remember, I said that I was an aerial gymnast? And then — I had to leave... It happened so...”

... Tom never forgot what happened then...

He was young, in love with Tonya, brought her to their circus.

Here — they make the number...

The father is unhappy: the girl — though she is capable — but to include in a number the “not-circus” — it is very difficult!

... Then Tonya fell in love with Serzh-juggler...

And then Tom had broken...

Then the old wooden construction of suspension under the dome had broken, on which the ropes and trapezes were fastened. Tom held all others by his body for a long time, connecting the place of the fault with his hands. Moments, while all the gymnasts descended, seemed to him to be slow in time...

... And then he could not save himself: the forces were over, he had fallen down. Arm muscles were broken, plus a fracture of the spine...

... Tom dreamed of performing again. And this dream gave him strength. He learned to walk anew, to move his hands... Overcoming pain, he forced the body to obey...

But, when he had more or less recovered, the father said:

“You will never be able to work really well under the dome again. And to be a burden to others — it’s not for you!”

... Father did not have any pity to anyone, including himself. If their positions were reversed, he would have done the same with himself. Tom knew this and tried to drive out the insult: “Yes, a cripple, a disabled person cannot be their companion... But I almost have recovered in just one and a half years!... I hoped that a little more — and I can perform!...”

His father’s words sounded like a verdict: “You will never be able to!... Do not torture yourself and us! Go away and make your own life! Go away without saying goodbye to anyone: it will be better! Do not have sentimental scenes! Good luck to you!”

The father had turned and walked away... Tom did not see him again.

Tom was not there already the next day...

Father was always ruthless in such matters. He never compromised, did not forgive someone who allowed oneself to deceive at least once, in some way failed or for other reasons did not meet his requirements for a real artist. He expelled those whom he considered incapable or unworthy, as if he had erased them from his life forever. And a return to the past could not be!

Tom then realized that his father was right, and that, despite all efforts, he could no longer perform as before. And to engage in all sorts of ancillary activities and look with pain or envy there — under the dome of the circus, where he would like to be... Spending his life on this sadness — it is unworthy!...

For several years, Tom worked different jobs. He easily mastered new ways of applying his forces in various matters, earned a good salary. But the circus... remained an “unhealed wound”.

Once he visited the circus performance of Mr. Lurie — and there he realized that he must return to the circus! Whatever you like, but come back!

He decided to become a clown and composed several funny numbers.

His first acts were not very good, but Mr. Lurie could discern in people. He had a kind of “flair”. This young man with incredibly sad eyes had liked him — and he took Tom to the troupe. Mr. Lurie was not mistaken: Tom became a kind of a “star”. His numbers were better as time passed. Clever irony and incredible ingenuity, a willingness to laugh at himself... Mr. Lurie rightly believed that he helped Tom become one of the best clowns in the world!

Tom for a long time with all his might tried to forget the offence, to erase it from memory... But... only drove it very deeply.... Only today, he happily realized that he had forgiven his father and all of them... He simply loves them all now! He loves Tonya — without jealousy, without pain and sorrow for the past, loves the whole of their team, loves his father!...

He put his arm around Katya’s shoulders. Without this, his beloved little Katya — it would probably not have happened.

That’s it — as Tonya said — “the continuation of the dynasty”!

And what is a dynasty?! It does not matter! Katya became for him the main joy and meaning in life! He needed her! He is for her — both friend, and teacher, and father! She, in fact, has become to him like a daughter!

* * *

The next day Tom, nevertheless, hoped a little that Tonya would come to their show, he thought over the idea of how to make fun of himself that he was now — not a gymnast, but a clown...

He watched from behind the scenes the public after the show.

Katya walked over and touched his sleeve.

“Don’t be sad! Probably, they’ve gone. You know: it happens...”

Chapter Four: Holiday of Good Deeds

Several years have passed. Katya was the real “star” of the circus of Mr. Lurie.

Once, in one of the large cities, every day among the public in the first row, Katya began to notice a teenage boy, dressed in a suit, about the same age or slightly older, who enthusiastically clapped and did not remove his gaze from her.

A few days later, after another show, Mr. Lurie brought this boy and his father backstage to the room, where Katya took off her wings and was about to change clothes.

“Well, here she is — our ‘star’!” — He introduced Katya. — “And this is Count de Noiri and his son Alex. You made an indelible impression on Alex, Mademoiselle Kitty!”

... Katya looked with surprise at her admirer and on the director, who became so unnaturally kind with her.

Alex handed Katya a gift — a beautiful box with a bow, and then unexpectedly for his father and for Mr. Lurie pronounced:

“I want Mademoiselle Kitty to come to our house today and dine with us. And tomorrow — to spend with me all day: because tomorrow there is no show!”

He pronounced it in a tone, implying no possible objections.

“It’s not customary,” — Mr. Lurie tried, nevertheless, to object...

But, apparently, the boy’s father often yielded to the whims of his son. And now he took from his wallet a voluminous bundle of banknotes and with an odd smile extended the money to the director:

“But can we make an exception? Isn’t it?”

“Yes of course!” — Mr. Lurie said, realizing that at the whims of this “baby” he can very well profit.

“Can I wash myself and change clothes?” — Katya asked.

“No: I like it this way! You are so beautiful in this dress!” — Alex said. — “If you want, you’ll take a bath in our house before going to bed! Let’s go right now!”

Katya left on the table the unopened box, threw on her old plain-looking coat, which contrasted so sharply with the glittering and sparkling attire for performances, and went to the count’s crew.

... They drove up to the luxurious mansion.

The servants accepted their outer garments.

Katya has never seen such luxury!

“It’s like I came to the palace of a fairy tale about Cinderella!” — she thought.

... Then there was a huge hall with a large table on which there were only three covers.

Alex’s father did not sit down: he said he was not hungry and left the children only in the company of lackeys who silently poured juice and served food.

Katya looked with amazement at several forks and spoons near the plate, not daring to choose one of them.

Alex had broken an awkward silence:

“You can eat with a spoon, even with your hands! Here — there is no one to observe etiquette!”

Katya looked around in astonishment at the four servants, frozen in silent poses...

“Ah,” — Alex laughed. — “Go away: we ourselves will choose what to eat and drink!”

The footmen left with bows.

“Don’t you consider them humans?”

“Why? They are people... But these people do everything I want, my father pays them for this. And if I want — they will be driven out in the street. So don’t be embarrassed!”

“And I? Because I came here, also due to your father payment.”

“You’re another matter! I like you! We had to somehow convince your director to let you go!”

... After dinner, Katya got accustomed to the unusual situation in which she fell into.

But then the caretaker came in and strictly pronounced that today it’s too late and it’s time for everyone to sleep. The maid led Katya to the bathroom, trimmed with marble. Then, when Katya finished enjoying the warm bath with snow-white foam from a

special fragrant soap solution, the maid gave her a robe and a nightgown — all in lace — and led her to a separate bedroom.

... The next morning after breakfast Alex led Katya to his room. Katya was surprised to see little figures of people and animals of wood or porcelain, “magic boxes” with different fancies and music, painted houses, boats with sails and even a railway with a locomotive, trailers, and rails.

“I have no toys, and I do not know how to play with them,” — Katya said, embarrassed.

“It’s easy, I’ll teach you!” — Alex replied confidently.

... They built the city for a while from the dices, laid the railway... But it got boring for Alex very soon. Then they went to the garden and let out into the pond ships with sails — so beautiful and like real sailboats.

This also very quickly bored the young earl.

But Katya still did not cease to be surprised that it’s possible to spend time like this...

Alex suggested:

“If you want, we’ll go shopping and I’ll buy you everything you want — a new coat, shoes, elegant dresses, all kinds of toys, anything you want... I want to make you feel good!”

“But your father will pay for this... Is it so? It turns out that it’s he, not you who does me pleasure, but, maybe, he does not want it to...”

“Well then...” — Alex thought for a moment. — “I remember: I have my own money! I was given such a birthday present, but I did not spend it! This may not be enough for all your desires, but this is my own money!

“Speak: what do you want?!”

“Yesterday it seemed to me that I was in a fairy-tale castle, and now I want to be a fairy who does good miracles! So — that in real life at least for a short time it becomes the same as in a fairy tale!

“Have you ever dreamed of being a magician?”

“No...”

“But I dreamed!... When I was little, Tom — he is my friend the clown — he taught me how to make our day off good. We did a sort of celebration for ourselves. The main rule was to do something good for others! We went for a walk — and arranged little kind miracles.

“For example, in winter we fed frozen and hungry birds. Then at the market we bought food from the poorest old woman. And sometimes — we just walked along the street and gave smiles and kind words to people! Tom always knows how to joke so that where we passed, like flowers of joy blossomed out!

“And today you, too, can help me to do little miracles!”

“But I cannot joke...”

“Well, okay: I thought of something else!”

... They went to the city in a carriage accompanied by only one servant who was in charge of the safety of the young count.

Instead of outfits and gifts, Katya asked Alex to buy chocolates, sweets, soft and lush buns and pies, and put everything in large boxes.

Then, at the request of Katya, they went to the poor neighborhoods of that city.

“Formerly, I lived with my mother very poorly, we rarely had enough food. And it seemed to me a

real holiday — to get a piece of soft bread or candy,” — she told Alex.

... Poor neighborhoods surprised Alex. He did not even imagine that there are people who live in such poverty!

And Katya — was so happy, treating the children with free treats! She felt like a wonder-worker who can do wonders!

Katya was surrounded by little and older children. They looked at her circus outfit.

The children began to ask:

“Tell us about the circus, please!”

... At first Katya tried to describe the performance in words. And around her more and more little listeners gathered...

Then she began to show everything she could herself. The audience gathered from many neighboring houses. The children and their parents approached. And just random passers-by stopped — and could not leave!

Katya invented her own show, as if she wanted to present the beauty of the whole circus action.

And she was enthusiastically applauded to the redness of their beating hands, by both children and adults who never were and would not be in the circus!

Alex and his servant also clapped.

... But after the performance, Katya had become sad.

“Thank you for this day, Alex! Now take me back to the circus!” — she asked.

Alex obediently agreed. For this day, there was a change also in him. If he ordered in the morning how to be entertained, then he tried more and more

to give pleasure to Katya and help her. This brought him a new, never before experienced joy of caring for another, for others.

And he began to understand something new, which — from now on — could change his life...

“When I’ll grow up, I find you — and we’ll get married,” — he said seriously.

“It does not happen: you are a count, and I am a circus...”

But, anyway, today, we had a good holiday of good deeds!”

* * *

In the evening, Katya was long in thoughtfulness, and then asked Tom:

“Tom, do you believe in God?”

“I guess I believe, Katya! All the circus people are those who to some extent believe in the Higher Powers that control destinies, and in all sorts of signs.

“We are all — here in the circus — so different from each other: different nationalities, different faiths... Most of us risk our lives, going out into the arena with predatory animals or — like you, climbing to a height, the fall from which is deadly. Or — riders, for whom a mistake can also cost lives... But even those who risk only disgrace, if the number does not work out — also usually perform some rituals: for everything to go well... Probably, man has the need to believe in help from above...”

“Do you have a prayer which you used to use?”

“No... It seems to me that any prayer is suitable. If God hears us, is it not the same to Him, what words we use to address Him?”

“But He does hear us, and namely here!” — Tom pointed to the center of his chest. — “From here, from the depths, He hears us! From here — He teaches to forgive others.

“If there is in the chest the warmth of love, it seems to me that this is because God understands me and approves. If inside here is emptiness and sadness, it seems as though there is no Him with me at all...”

“Why are some people rich — and others are poor? Someone was born into a family of servants and forced to work hard all their life, doing hard work, — but someone like Alex was born by wealthy parents and is tormented by boredom, not knowing where to put money and time...”

“Today we were in poor neighborhoods of this city. There — such poverty, dirt! And people, including children, live there...”

“Everyone, probably, can change something in one’s own life, so I suppose. Even children from these poor families can try to escape from that poor life, start learning... I met people who achieved everything they dreamed, though they were born in poor families.

“But after all, what else is to be seen, Katya: not in material wealth only — the happiness is!

“Sometimes happiness is in embracing a beloved and dear person, just as we are sitting together now, embracing, we can talk heart to heart, we understand each other. In some of those poor families,

children can receive much more love than in families of aristocrats...

“Happiness cannot be purchased for money!

“And today you gave those people joy — and it’s great too! Perhaps, your treats and your performance — they brought more happiness to people than we give in our shows to the whole audience!”

Chapter Five: **Appearance of Fakir**

Time went on; Katya was 14 years old.

The spectators were no longer touched by the girl, who was hovering under the dome of the circus. All the complications of the number that Mr. Franz invented were not noticeable to the public. How many turns in the air were made, how difficult were the jumps in the performance ... — spectators were not surprised by the skill of aerial acrobats!

Katya also worried that the previous ovations and cries of ecstasy had now been replaced by not too stormy applause and boredom among many of the public.

Mr. Lurie himself was indignant at the fact that everything in the number was now “old as the world”. He threatened to drive Mr. Franz out of the circus if he will not make a new number.

And then Franz came up with a “death number”: the net-trampoline is removed, the safety cord is uncoupled in front of everyone. And Katya must jump from under the very dome, every time seriously risking her life...

Tom offered to make a spare lodge, invisible to the public. But Franz did not even listen:

“To deceive the public is not good! You can play a fool and deceive fools, but I’m doing a real job!”

... Before the first performance, Tom admonished Katya:

“Do not uncouple the lodge! Number, after all, is very ‘raw’!... Spit on this audience, on this Franz, on the director!”

“No! When everyone shrinks from fear for me, and I jump — it will be so great! I must succeed!”

“Your head is turned by applause, desire for glory, triumph! Why risk your life so much? It’s just a manifestation of pride!”

“This is my skill!” — Katya pouted.

Then she embraced and kissed Tom:

“Everything will be fine!”

... Recently, Katya had become stubborn: she argued with Tom, insisting on her way even when she was clearly not right.

Tom accounted for all this as her “transitional age”. The girl is growing up! She does not like too much care. She wants freedom, admiration from others, fans...

* * *

Tom every time worried for Katya so much that in a few months of performances with her jump from under the dome, he had gray hair on his head.

He had an inner feeling that everything was going wrong... He was trying to figure out a way to change this.

He even spoke with the director, Mr. Lurie, so that he would give the order to ban this number.

But the conversation turned out to be fruitless:

“Mr. Lurie, I ask you: let’s cancel this number! Give me two weeks — and I will make for Katya no less spectacular number but without such a senseless risk!

This jump is conceived for execution incorrectly: the danger is too great, and it is very easy to make a mistake! And, no matter how hard to train, this risk will not be decreased! Yes, I understand: we all live under God and the days of our lives are numbered... But here — Katya tempts fate every time! You cannot do it this way!”

“Leave it, Tom! All is well! Katya herself agrees to this number. If she was afraid or did not want to...

And so, what you say is just ridiculous! Many circuses work without insurance — and there is nothing to worry about!”

Tom tried again:

“Yes, there is always a risk, even a biscuit can choke — and a person dies!” — Tom showed on the table where Mr. Lurie stood a vase with a biscuit and a cup of tea, and continued: — “But there is a risk senseless and unreasonable! Why do you need this horror in the hall before the jump, cries of nervous young ladies?! Moreover, in this number, there is almost no beauty! And the technique is very doubtful!”

“That’s enough, Tom! Do not object! Crowds stand in line for tickets for the sake of this number

with a deadly leap! I do not intend to cancel anything! Conversation is over!”

Tom had realized that he was powerless to influence the situation.

... Everything was fine one, second, third, even fiftieth time... And then the terrible had happened...

Tom saw everything, standing behind the scenes.

Katya only hesitated for a split second... Flight in the air, coups... But the trapeze just slipped over the tips of her fingers...

If not Franz, but he, Tom, had pushed the trapeze, he would have caught this fraction of a second and accelerated the movement... But Franz... did not notice... And that had become fatal...

... In the arena — Katya’s flattened body, screams of spectators, panic... The entertainer calms the audience. Madame Matilda appears with dogs and monkeys...

... Katya was carried on arms to her room.
She’s still alive...

The agonizing expectation of a doctor...

His words sounded like a verdict:

“I’m powerless in this case... If she will not die in the next few days, she will remain a cripple, she will not even walk... So, perhaps, to die is the best way for a girl. I’m not a magician...”

... Tom followed the doctor:

“I have savings, I saved for my old age, I will give everything! Let’s take her to the hospital! Maybe it’s possible to do something!”

“You can pray if you believe in God. She could not even be brought alive to the hospital...”

... Tom looked desperately after the departing crew...

Snow fell on his red-haired wig, tears came from his eyes in despair and impossibility to help...

He did not even know what to ask from God: about a quick and painless death for Katya — or for her to survive?

At that moment the stranger touched his shoulder:

“Perhaps, I can help you?”

He was a tall Indian in the European dress of a rich man and in a snow-white turban. He introduced himself:

“Fakir Ra-Mak-Mey.”

Tom heard this name.

In the circus world there are famous magicians who show old tricks, wrapping them in a new entourage. But there are also those who, under the mask of tricks, do what the experts in this matter cannot explain in any way.

There were legends about the fakir Ra-Mak-Mey, newspapers published articles about his miracles, or, on the contrary, there were the attempts to “expose” his tricks. But these attempts to “expose deception”, however, did not reveal the secrets of the magic of the fakir.

Tom also knew that their director sent to Mr. Ra-Mak-Mey a letter with a proposal to perform in his circus.

Fakir... His dark brown eyes were special. They — as if were opening a passage to other worlds...

Tom... suddenly has believed in the impossible, in a miracle...

“Katya fell from under the dome...,” — began to explain Tom inconsistently.

“Let’s go: we can help her in time!”

* * *

Katya was in coma. Life almost left her body.

The fakir told Tom not to enter and closed the door to the room, where he remained next to the girl’s body.

It took about half an hour.

Tom prayed without words. He invested all the forces of the soul in a request to God to save Katya, restore her health! He asked God to forgive him for having very seldom remembered Him all his life, he said that he was ready for any sacrifices, he was ready to give any promises and keep them, he was ready to give his life... Only let her live, let her recover!

When the door was opened, Tom thought that a wave of unusual warmth splashed out of the room, then — like ocean waters poured through that open door!

... He had recalled how several times in his childhood he felt what he himself called *the Presence of God*. In those years, as a child, he did not see the Divine Light, did not hear His words, but knew for sure: God is near! This was accompanied by a feeling of the great joy, tenderness, happiness! And then — all this... was forgotten behind the bustle and sorrows of an uneasy life...

Now he was covered with a wave of a state a thousand times stronger!

Then the wave subsided.

Katya breathed evenly and seemed to just be asleep, as if nothing had happened...

Ra-Mak-Mey said:

“She will now live in this body for a long time. The body is already healthy, but we will not wake her up for a while, so as not to embarrass others around with healing by the Will of the Higher Powers.”

“Do you know how to work miracles?”

“But it’s just the possession of knowledge that can be used to restore the matter of the body...”

“Let’s go to have dinner and talk.”

They settled down in a quiet corner of a half-empty hall in a small restaurant next to the circus. Ra-Mak-Mey ordered them vegetarian food, juice, and water.

The dinner passed in silence, the conversation started after.

Ra-Mak-Mey peered into the space around Tom’s body and inside it for a long time, as if he saw right through the body and soul. Then he said:

“In fact, everything happens in accordance with the Divine Plan.

“As for the healing, there are different levels from which man can influence what surrounds him or her.

“Man is not only a body!

“And the human body, if to consider carefully, is not only bones, muscles, internal organs...

“However, all this consists of the smallest particles that are located in a certain way and move, interact according to the certain laws. There are — how

would I say it? — ‘rules’, obeying to which — any material body is formed and manifested in this world.

“And there are invisible to the usual eye, as if nested within each other, layers within every body.

“And still there is a soul — a living immortal entity that must control this body.

“Both bodies and souls live according to the laws, created by God.

“And if you understood how it is possible to control processes in bodies — from the spiritual world, then it would not be surprising that one can restore any damage in the own body. This can be done by one in relation to one’s own body, but there are exceptional cases when one can help another in healing.

“You would be surprised that healing the body is much easier than healing the soul!

“Katya’s situation is a kind of advance for her, a chance to correct some of her own mistakes. And — what is most important — the opportunity to learn a lot and help other people.

“If we cannot explain it to her, then this tragic situation is likely to be repeated again — one way or another.”

Before Tom’s inner gaze, the images of the fall came, fear squeezed like a vise...

Fakir stopped the growth of this emotion in simple words, but it was clear that he seemed to read like in an open book everything that was happening in Tom’s thoughts and emotions.

“Fear is one of the most destructive emotions! Do not give in to it! You yourself taught this to Katya! To a person, fear can be useful only as a security de-

terrent from those processes and events to which the soul is not yet ready.

“I would not be able to heal Katya, prolonging the life of the soul in this body, if God did not point out the possibility of a very favorable further course of events, useful not only for Katya herself, but also for many other people.

“If Katya did not have the possibility of a complete spiritual transformation, then her further life in the material world would not make any sense!

“I’m telling you this because you, Tom, played an important part in the fate of Katya.

“By the way, you prayed and spoke of your readiness to carry out any errands from God!”

“Yes: I prayed and asked, I am ready!”

... Suddenly unpleasant thoughts slipped through Tom’s mind: what if the Hindu heals with not the Divine Force at all...

“Doubts destroy faith!” — Ra-Mak-Mey said and fell silent...

Tom thought: “God, direct me so that I serve You, but not some powerful but dark forces! Only to You, I gave promises! And thank You for saving Katya!”

Ra-Mak-Mey, as if listening to Tom’s thoughts and appreciating his resolve, continued:

“Jesus often said to the healed: ‘Your faith has saved you!’”

“Are you Christian?”

“Formally, no, but it does not matter. Do you think that Jesus Himself was a Christian — in the modern sense of the word?

“Most likely, if Jesus had come now to the Earth and started talking to people about God, heal — then

all the ministers of all Christian churches would have declared Him to be a false prophet or even antichrist, just as the worshipers did in that old time.

“In fact, everything is so simple: **THERE IS GOD!** This is the basis and essence of faith!

“He is over all religious traditions and beliefs of mankind! He is the One for all people!

“He is the Creator of the entire universe!...

“However, and in India, most people only worship ‘god’ Ganesha or other fairy ‘gods’. They perform all sorts of rituals or do Hatha Yoga’s exercises. And they are sure that this is enough...

“You asked about my faith. I am not a slave of any religious doctrine.

“I will say another thing: almost all people worship God or ‘gods’, but only very few personally know Him Whom they worship!

“But Jesus knew the One Whom He called *Heavenly Father*.

“I, too, know the Divine. It is for me — the Reality.

“It is ONE! Although He is composed of *Multi-tude*.”

“Are you the Messenger of God?”

“I’m just man who has learned to look a little past the curtain of the ‘illusory world’ — into the Divine world and has studied some rules and laws by which the Divine Primordial Consciousness controls His Creation. I do not know everything, and I continue to study.

“And the one, who studies, inevitably wants to share the acquired knowledge and experience — with other people who might need it.”

... Tom and the fakir talked a lot this day and the next days. They became very close, because Tom had found someone who could answer questions about life and death, the purpose of everything that exists in the universe. These were the questions that long haunted the soul.

... Ra-Mak-Mey signed the contract with Mr. Lurie and stayed in the circus, preparing to show his number.

Tom invented a shortcut to the long eastern name of the fakir — and everyone in the circus began to call him simply Mr. Ram.

Chapter Six: **Katya and Ram**

A week since the fall had passed. Katya was in some quiet forgetfulness, but Ra-Mak-Mey did not hurry to wake her.

“Let her body get used to being healthy, and everyone around will forget about what happened ‘impossibly!’” — he laughed, when Tom anxiously inquired about her health.

And, in fact, soon everyone was already quietly interested in Tom about how things are with Katya, and Tom answered with confidence: “Better! She is recovering!”.

So no one in the circus was surprised when Katya had fully woken up. Surprised then was only Katya herself, seeing Ram leaning over her bed.

“Who are you?”

Katya looked at the stranger in the eastern turban, sitting on the edge of her bed and gently holding her hand in his swarthy hand with thin and graceful fingers.

His eyes were so native, caressing, soothing, familiar...

But she had never seen before his face.

Or have I seen?...

Yes! In a dream!...

He then seemed to find her and called. She saw only eyes in the Light, like the gentle sun. His loving peace enveloped her like a cloud and... Then she could not recall.

Suddenly Katya had recalled another... Fall from under the very cupola of the circus, fear, pain, understanding that this is the end...

Did it really happen? Or is it just a terrible dream?

Am I alive?

The stranger said:

“It was a kind of ‘terrible dream’. Do not think about it now! With your body — it’s all right!

“And all that happens to us here, in this world, is really like a dream.

“But man is able to wake up — and know the Reality!

“But we’ll talk about this another time, if you want to, of course.”

“Who are you? Where is Tom?”

“Tom is performing now. Soon he will come and be glad about your full recovery.

“And my name is Ra-Mak-Mey. But Tom shortened that name, claiming that it was too long. And

here, in the circus, everyone now calls me Ram. I like that name.

I am a fakir. Recently I signed a contract with Mr. Lurie — and now I am also performing in your circus.”

“Can I stand up?”

“Yes... But... Tom is coming! Now I'll go to prepare for my performance.”

“May I see it?”

“Yes.”

Tom in his arms carried Katya to the arena, still fearing for her health. Katya was cheerfully welcomed and seated next to the entrance of the arena — on the pedestal for the performance of dogs.

Fakir's performance from behind the scenes was observed not only by Katya. Even the artists, accustomed to various tricks, watched it not for the first time.

The show was fascinating not only by the novelty of the elements, but for a special state which encompassed all viewers.

The golden fog like smoke was released by fakir at the beginning of the performance from an empty bowl. For this, Ram put his hand in bowl and as if was stirring. This fog enveloped everything and everyone, giving all the sense of happiness.

Then four white pigeons emerged from the same bowl and took flight under the dome. There they seemed to snatch out of the void and picked up with their beaks the light translucent fabric and brought it to the fakir.

He covered with fabric these birds which were sitting on the edge of the bowl — and they... disappeared.

Then a flame had broken out in the bowl. Ram began to extract from it different objects...

And everything that happened next was also magical!

Sometimes Ram invited someone from the audience to check the objects before another miracle — for firmness or for emptiness...

Most viewers believed that those who took part in this were so-called “duck decoys”: special helpers of a fakir, playing along with him. But the circus people knew that this was not so, and their surprise was limitless!

Rama’s show ended the program — as the most new and spectacular! The public accepted everything “with a bang”. Mr. Lurie even decided to extend the tour in that city.

Chapter Seven: **About Love for People and God**

Days went by. Mr. Lurie dismissed Franz after the tragedy with the fall of Katya. And Ram promised the director that Katya, when he taught her what he had in mind, would act in his part of the show.

And gradually Ram began to carry out his plans.

The preparation of this new program took several months.

In the meantime, there was also another training for Tom and Katya by Ram.

Each time questions for discussion came from them. Ram never began to explain something only because he knew it himself.

Tom found in Ram a very interesting interlocutor. Even before the full recovery of Katya, they began to discuss many of the philosophical themes and problems of people's lives that Tom would like to understand before, but did not have someone who could answer his questions at least somehow.

In one of the first such conversations, late in the evening after the performance, when Ram and Tom were alone together, Tom asked:

"Who needs all that I spend days and years of my life on?"

"I'm tired of seeing dull faces laughing at primitive jokes! I am sad about what makes them laugh — my spectators!"

"Sometimes I look at this crowd and am looking for at least one meaningful face... — and then I want to give it all up!"

"But I tried to live without a circus! There — it is even worse!..."

"And wouldn't you dream of making such a number where laughter would exalt people over their weaknesses and vices, teach to help, to compassionate?"

"I tried it. But people are simply stupid and evil! Everything, I was trying to do, was useless!"

"Explain to me: human life — does it make any sense?"

"One must admit that there is a sense that we all jostle here on the Earth, in this booth of suffering and deceit!"

"What is the reason of existence of everything, if we all run around in circles and from time to time trip ourselves up?! And then — with a nose on the ground — bang! One fell down, shook oneself up,

ran, fell down again!... And one day — to no longer stand up...

“Why does God allow all this?”

... Tom had recalled one of his previous numbers. He absurdly ran around the entire arena to reach the gymnastic bridge and jump on it as the balancers acted before him. He started running, and then with one foot dexterously set his own trip up — and fell crashing full force to the floor flatwise — to the laughter of the audience. He got up, glanced around, looking for something on the sand of the arena on which he could so stumble. Then he threatened someone in the hall, ran again, ran out even more — and fell even funnier...

... Waking from the memory, Tom continued the conversation:

“People — in the majority — are stupid and evil! I see for many years almost every evening how they roll with laughter, when they see how a person has fallen, hit, or that someone has deceived another... And they laugh in the same way outside the circus at those who have fallen into real trouble!

“But when trouble happens in real life with one of them, they do not laugh, but are angry and look for those guilty in their troubles, take revenge on the offenders...”

“You do not love people, Tom! You made an exception only for Katya — and it saves you, supporting the desire to live!”

“Don’t you agree?”

“It seems to me that you complicate your life, thinking so about people...”

“But why are people so stupid and wicked? Can you explain this to me?”

“Let’s go.”

“Where?”

“You will see...”

They donned their walking-clothes and went out into the night...

After walking several blocks through empty city streets, Ram opened the door on which was the inscription: “Children’s Orphanage of St. Sophia”.

The sleeping watchman did not stop them.

They entered a large room, where a fat woman in a dull gray dress and a white apron tried to cradle a baby who was yelling for strength. From its weeping — lying in other cots and cradles, children woke up and also started to roar.

“Answer me: why are they ‘stupid and angry’ — these little people, which are selfish and screaming about their suffering?” — Ram asked Tom, pointing to what was happening.

“But these are babies, children, and even those who do not know their parents!”

... A woman with a screaming child in her arms, frightened of accepting strangers as possible inspectors, began to make excuses explaining that the children are hungry and therefore do not sleep well...

Ram took the kid from the hands of the woman, began to rock — and it suddenly fell silent. And in general — suddenly everything was quiet: the rest of the children also stopped crying and fell asleep. On some faces even there were smiles.

Then Ram took money out of his wallet and handed it to the woman.

“Buy what you deem most necessary for children! It is a gift to the Orphanage of St. Sophia from an Indian guest who is here on an unofficial visit.”

This explanation and money rendered the poor woman speechless for a while.

And Ram and Tom just as calmly walked past the sleeping guard.

Ram continued:

“The adults (bodily) people, surrounding us, in the majority are similar to these babies. They — as souls — are still babies. They barely know how to think yet. They are full of selfish desires. They want to eat! They want to be loved! They want to be happy, but do not know how and where to seek happiness!

“And no one taught them that to fight, to take away from others for oneself, to hate, envy — this is not just bad! But it generates a whole chain of misfortunes in their own lives! They after all are then born in the worst conditions and experience the pain that they caused before to others! In India, this is called the action of the ‘law of karma’.

These people do not know, do not feel their Divine Parent! They do not even look in the direction to God, Who alone can give true happiness!”

“God can give happiness? Why does He do not this?”

“We’ll talk about this some time later. For yet — you cannot even imagine the happiness that God can give a person! You need to be at least a little ready to be able to perceive this happiness, accept it!

“For a child, who is shouting, to give a mountain of diamonds or make it the owner of a castle, it will not become happy and will not stop roaring. It still needs only mother’s milk and care... But one who knows that true Happiness, which can be found in the *Unity with God*, — this one will not exchange this

happiness for a mountains of diamonds, or for factories or castles!

“But this is about happiness... And you asked me about the stupidity of people.

“People around us — in the majority — are still the young souls, not brought up, not wishing to learn.

“They are still small in age. And so — they are stupid. They have not yet learned to love — and therefore are angry.

“They are orphans, because they do not know their Divine Parent: Mother and Father for all!

“Do many children want to learn if their wise parents have not taught them to joyfully learn about the world and work for the good both of themselves and other beings?”

“So where is God? Why does He not teach His children? Why did He leave them orphans — here, in this cruel world?”

... Ram suddenly pointed a finger at Tom’s chest:

God — you will find Him here, in yourself!

“As for people — start teaching them! This is the meaning of your life, of which you asked me!”

“To teach? I?”

“Yes.

“You are no longer a baby! You are capable of thinking and drawing conclusions. You can watch how easy it is to control a crowd: how one can freeze it with delight looking at the beauty, for example, of Katya’s performance, or just laugh at good jokes, or can turn into a frightened herd... And if at the head of such a crowd is evil man, then he or she can, manipulating the thoughts and emotions of such people,

turn them into a boiling hateful weapon to achieve their own selfish goals...

“Recall: the same people listened with enthusiasm to the preaching of Jesus — and then they demanded to crucify Him!...”

But Jesus, nevertheless, taught people — both by His life, and death! And by those words, which are preserved in the Gospels, He teaches even now!”

“Ram, it is probably in India that everyone can become a guru and teach people in one’s own way...”

“Everyone already, at least by one’s own example, inevitably teaches those people, who are with him or her, how to live, how to act. Teaches — to bad or good. So you: teach only to good!

“We have a wonderful job for this! It allows us to address directly to many people and give them the opportunity to begin feeling life and thinking more correctly!

“God will help people — through your deeds and words! You can begin to gradually awaken in people that in them which is really good. You can start teaching them to think a little better, look at the world and one’s own place in it...

“But it is only an individual who can significantly change himself or herself! This must be a fully conscious work on self-soul. Here we three with Katya will do it, if you want.

“As for other people... When they get tired of enjoying information about wars, about the cruelty and atrocity of some in relation to others, about the tragedies and wrecks in someone’s life path? — I do not know the answer to this question...”

“But do not take it too much to heart! The whole world around us does not have to correspond to our desires and the level of our own development!

“Accept only that: if man has cognized the Light, then he or she can live in the Light, even if there is darkness around! It is so, because this Light is burning now in oneself!”

Tom asked:

“What can we change in this world?”

What can be changed in a world where lie, violence, hatred, envy, desire to rule over those who are weaker, and the fear of the stronger abound? What can be changed in the world of people living only by animal instincts of obtaining food and reproduction and not using the opportunities given to men by man’s nature — higher than that of animals?

“Often even animals are more intelligent and capable of love than so many people!”

“It’s all so, Tom, but...”

“There is a Vision by God of all that is happening here. And He takes into account everything that we are doing, — in building our future destinies.

“And there is an amazing FREEDOM granted to every soul: the freedom to choose — from different possibilities — Light, Good, Love. And God — as the Main Goal!

“Only then the opportunity becomes open to learn to move oneself into the Divine World and look, love, understand — as God.

Then — a person leaves despair because of impossibility to change the whole world! One begins to change oneself — and everything around also changes unexpectedly! This is one of the Divine Laws existing in the world order!

“Then — it will be possible to help others, showing them the way of liberation from suffering. But by this way, only those, who understand and want, will go.

“In this world, we can change very little. We can change mainly — only ourselves. It is the efforts aimed at changing oneself: the purification of the soul, the approach to God — which change the world around us!

“All then begins to obey the harmony that this soul carries. And, the more the soul is stronger and stronger, the more clearly its impact is felt by other people.

“Like the light of the sun, this effect can be ignored. But it exists and works!

“The light of the sun gives the opportunity to grow and develop life on our planet.

“Similarly, the soul, which has become the Light, helps others — even simply by radiating Love and Peace into the material world.

“Sometimes they say that a certain person is radiating joy and love. When such a person communicates with people, he or she has influence on them. As if he or she entered a dark room with a candle — it became evident, what in the room is the right thing, and what — the trash.

“So the presence of the person, carrying the Light, illuminates in other souls the bad and the good, the important and the secondary. And people have the opportunity to ignite from that spiritual Fire their own lamps, following the example of one who has learned much.

“But this is the choice of each person.

“Look: some — try to ‘turn off the light’, so as not to see the vices in themselves...”

*** * ***

Soon Tom created a number with screaming babies and a stupid tutor of an orphanage. Everything fell from his hands, he dropped his pacifiers and ridiculously got confused in diapers. Then in one or another cradle the baby started screaming. And from behind the scenes, swaddled folds, depicting abandoned babies, were brought and handed over to Tom... Tom fussed, rushed between the cradles, fell. And at the end of the number, unwound nappies surfaced under the dome and depicted the inscription: ORPHANAGE OF ST. SOPHIA, THEM THERE ARE 185!

At that moment, after long laughter, the hall suddenly had calmed... In such silence, Tom never stood at the end of the number.

And then there was applause.

One of the spectators after the presentation handed Tom money:

“This is what people gathered for the orphanage. Please, pass it to them!”

Chapter Eight: **Principles of Life Established for Us by God**

Every morning and every evening, Ram in his room immersed in meditation.

Once Katya asked:

“What is meditation, what do you do when you sit so still? You have not done anything for so long... Why?”

“This is the body that sits quietly and does nothing. But the soul at the same time communicates with God.

“Do you read prayers in the morning, before eating, before going to bed?”

Katya was embarrassed:

“Sometimes I read, and sometimes I forget...”

“Why do you read?”

“For everything to be good — with Tom, you, me, all people! I ask God about this!”

“Does God hear you? What do you think on this?”

“I do not know... Sometimes I think that He hears, since all people pray so. And sometimes I think He cannot hear, since there is so much sorrow around.”

“Know, Katya: you can address God, as to Tom, for example, with simple words! He hears and understands everything. He is — Alive! And — He is always everywhere!

“He is invisible to ordinary sight, but you can learn to both see and hear Him by soul.

“And you can interact with God. You can learn directly from Him. My meditations — this is my study from God.”

*** * ***

Once Katya asked Ram:

“How do you do your miracles? Are you Messiah-the-Wonderworker, the prophet? But then why are you performing in the most ordinary circus?”

“What prophet am I? And even more — the Messiah...”

“I just a little more than many other people know about how this world, visible by the eyes of our bodies, is arranged. And yet — I know how to see by the soul in those worlds which are not perceived by the usual bodily glance.”

“Is it like mediums who talk with spirits? We had a medium in the circus, his table jumped and spun when he summoned the spirits, but then Mr. Lurie chased him away.”

“What mediums do is only a tiny little crack into intangible worlds, even if such a medium is not a deceiver. And the spirits, with which mediums usually speak, are most often not Divine and very fond of evil pranks and deceiving. The fact that the world of spirits is invisible — does not mean that the Truth abides in it!

“There are so many invisible spirits...”

“In the most dense and darkest layers of the invisible (for the ordinary vision) space, there are anger

and violence. There is like the dirt of a garbage dump, the waste of the universe.

“In the middle layers are different gray states of sadness.

“There are also worlds of joy, happiness, which are usually called paradise.

“But there is the World of God, Who has created everything here!

“And those who are already entering the World of God, can continue to live in the body in the material world. Such man can live in this world and be the Conductor of Divine Love, Kindness, Wisdom, and Justice.

“This can be learned by anyone of good — to the best of one’s ability. And this one becomes an example of a clean and righteous life, a life of love, without anger, hatred, condemnation, without the urge to snatch for oneself anything at any cost.

“And this is more important than all miracles!

“Many sages have often told people the simplest rules of a righteous life! But people usually seek only physical health, happiness in the world of matter, power over other people, supernormal powers for miracles — but not their own observance of those simple rules for a pure and ethical life that please God!

“But it is the observance of these rules that can lead to the true happiness that God gives to such people!

“You can live among people — and yet not suffer yourself and not bring suffering to others.

“The constant calm and joyful state of the soul — this is the paradise that one creates for oneself and other beings around.

“But such constantly dominating states as grief, anger, irritation, resentment, and other negative emotions — are hell in which such one immerses oneself and also spreads around, harming others.

“Moreover, living in one of these states at the present time, one brings this into one’s future: in the near future in the earthly life and in the ‘posthumous’ existence of the soul.

“Did you notice that when doing good, a person experiences joy?”

“Yes, Tom and I made the days so kind and happy! This was our ‘magic’ game.”

“And God also feels joy for man who does good to others! In this unity in the joy of man and God — only is possible to live happily!

“And through this — the sensation of the Living God comes, His Presence in one’s own life.”

“Can you teach me this? Can you teach me to feel God, to see and hear Him?”

“Of course!

“Most people in different religions are not looking for God at all! This is so — and in my homeland in India. And everywhere: in Europe and in Asia, I met with such a perversion in religion! Those people only fulfill certain ‘rules’ — and expect *for this* the satisfaction of their desires.

“Another similar naivety is the guard magic. It is like you here in the circus: one kisses a cross before the performance, another reads a prayer, the third in a certain sequence puts on the details of the costume and places a statue in front of the mirror... But all this helps only... *to believe* in your luck, not more.

“But to feel God, we need to establish contact with Him in the mutual emotions of love! And your own love should be directed towards Him!

“God can be cognized only by striving with one’s mind and heart to such cognition of Him!

“This is how the world is constructed: one, as a rule, finds in it what one is looking for!

“The world is like a space in which there is a lot of objects. And one directs one’s attention from one to another, to which one considers necessary for oneself or for helping others.

“Until one finds an entrance to the World of God, rushing to there, — this one will wander about among the events and subjects that are not too important.

“To cognize God — it is possible only through love to Him!

“It is that love which allows us to connect by the souls with one whom we love.

“Try to feel the place where love arises in you! Think, for example, about Tom — and feel, *how* you love him!”

“Yes, here, in the chest, it is as if it had become warm. And — joyfully from this!”

“Yes, love is born in the heart: not in the material, but in that, which is in the soul. It is called the spiritual heart. It is located, in the chest, where we feel the inhaled air.

“In India, such energy centers in the spiritual structure of an organism, where various states of the soul arise, are commonly called chakras.

“And here, just where the lungs are located, is the chakra anahata. It is here that bright emotions of love arise.

“And it is through mastering this center, you can learn to feel God! It is here the entrance to His World opens!

“Try to feel in the spiritual heart a little sun with rays! Try to shine by it and caress all good creatures!

“Soon you will learn that if you look at everything from the spiritual heart, then everything changes in a magical way!”

... Katya began to learn this, gradually mastering the ability to live always in a state of calm and joyful love for everyone and everything.

And Ram continued to reveal to her and Tom the rules for the life of souls in the material world.

*** * ***

Katya loved to ask Ram about that invisible and mysterious Divine world that Ram knew so much. All the magic of Ram’s shows was based on his knowledge and skills! And Katya thought that even a little bit — and Ram will teach her and Tom, too, to create magical and good miracles!

And Ram repeated to them that all that he can do is not magic, like in children’s fairy tales, but the manifestations of the Divine Laws of the universe’s life!

“The laws of God,” — he said, — “are not at all what some people invented and recorded in special books, so that everyone would follow them.

“The laws of God are the Principles of Love and Harmony, by which everything is created by God and must develop! Violation of these Principles — volun-

tary or involuntary — brings disharmony, the consequence of which are what people call troubles and suffering.

“But such events are only pointers to the fact that the rules of harmonious life are violated by one and one should change something in oneself.

“Sustainability in one’s own life is ruined by oneself alone, if this one violates those Principles that are laid by God in the basis of the development of the universe!

“The observance of these Divine Principles by people brings beauty and joy, peace and happiness to their lives!

“If all the people of the Earth for at least two weeks observed the Commandment of Jesus, not responding evil to evil, wishing peace and love to everyone around — then probably the ‘golden age’ would come on the Earth!

“Answering evil for evil, we multiply evil.

“And answering with love and peace — we, though a little, however will transform into better the world around.”

Chapter Nine: **On Patanjali’s Commandments**

Once Ram told Tom and Katya about a wise man who lived in India. The name of this sage was Patanjali¹.

¹ See also in the book “Ecopsychology”.

Ram spoke in detail about his Teachings, commenting on his understanding of each saying:

“The instructions of Patanjali are written for those who want to approach the Divine Perfection. They were divided as ascending steps — in order to make the gradual preparation of the soul and body for new states more evident.

“So, Patanjali outlined some preparatory rules for those who enter the spiritual Path.

“The first such rule should be called *non-harming other creatures*.

“This is a very important commandment, which should be thoroughly thought out and applied in everything in your life.

“You need to learn not to harm other people and not only people — by our own deeds, words, emotions, and even thoughts.

“I explained to you once why I do not eat the bodies of dead animals. This is also included in the principle of not harming other beings.

“But I would like, not for you to imitate me, rather that you always follow the principle of non-killing nourishment namely from compassion.

“The second rule is *truthfulness*.

“This is the desire to always tell the truth. And in those cases when the truth cannot be said because it can hurt someone — then keep silent.

“This rule should mean sincerity, truthfulness not only before people, but also before God — with the constant understanding that He knows about us everything in every moment, and we cannot hide from Him either our deeds or even thoughts. Such truthfulness before God makes it very easy to perform the process of purifying yourselves-souls.

“The third rule is *not to want of another’s*.

“For someone it means not stealing, for other someone — also not to be envious. And in the end, the fulfillment of this rule brings calm satisfaction to what God has bestowed, without striving for excessive material savings. And this, in turn, will allow one to send the maximum attention to the Creator and improve oneself in the love for Him through meditative practices.

“The fourth rule is *freedom from all unnecessary, superfluous in life*, which also distracts from the main task: the spiritual transformation of self-soul.

“This is very important: to learn to get rid of the excess, obsolete, from attachments to unnecessary, interfering on the way forward.

“If you do not clear your life of the old, then it cannot be filled with the new. Our old habits, desires, aspirations should gradually give way to new spiritual aspirations.

“The fifth rule calls *to learn to love God, to become ‘charmed by Brahman’* (the Holy Spirit — in the collective sense of the word) — as it sounds in Sanskrit: the ancient Indian language.

“The sixth rule concerns *observance of the purity of the body*.

“This can be done only externally, through frequent washing of the body, cleaning teeth and the like. But it is appropriate to add the energy purification of the chakras and meridians.

“Then I’ll teach you this if you want.

“An important seventh rule is *clean food*.

“Acceptance of food should be in a favorable atmosphere of peace and love.

“Food should be clean, filled with the energy of good when preparing it.

“And let it be deprived of the energies of fear and pain, with which the bodies of dead animals are saturated.

“The eighth rule concerns *maintaining a positive emotional state*.

“To live in joy and to give this joy to others is very important and very much helps to overcome difficulties in both material life and the spiritual Path. We have already talked a lot about this.

“The ninth rule — *the direction of thoughts on God, philosophical conversations, the reading of spiritual books*.

“Necessary earthly affairs, including concern for others and other social obligations, should, of course, be carried out. But they should not overshadow the Main.

“The fulfillment of this rule allows us to turn the mind from the worldly problems — to God.

“There is also a rule called *tapas*. These are voluntarily accepted self-restrictions, self-discipline for mastering the will and independence from the desires of the body or wanderings of the mind.

“There are people who suffer and even get sick — because of the absence of something unnecessary yet passionately desired in their lives. But the voluntary abstinence from delicious food and observance of reasonable self-restraint from everything superfluous — both disciplines bring joy and health.

“And, if we apply these restrictions not only for health, but for approaching the Divine World, then joy multiplies in the soul!

“When all of the above is largely mastered, it becomes possible to fulfill the eleventh rule — *the feeling of penetration of all that exists by the Creator!*

“Also Patanjali taught that one should observe tolerance for those who think and act differently, always show *kindness, mercy*.

“It is very important for us to learn, ascending the steps of the Path, *to be simple, devoid of arrogance, to overcome pride in ourselves, to learn humility*.

“These are the preparatory rules of Patanjali.”

... Tom pronounced:

“And is this just the very beginning? It cannot be mastered in all my life!”

“Therefore, souls are embodied on the Earth more than once, but many times, in order — on their own bitter experience of mistakes and suffering — to realize gradually the need to comply with these rules.

“And further in the Teachings of Patanjali there are the stages of study, on which asanas are mastered. These are special positions for the body that contribute to the purification of the chakras and meridians.

“Then for this purpose *pranayamas* are used, which teach to move the subtle vital energies of consciousness, which are called *prana* in India. This contributes to further purification and the ability to perceive the energies of Life in the subtle and subtlest worlds.

“Then the stage of *pratyahara* follows — *the management of the indriyas*. And *indriyas* are like tentacles of consciousness, which are stretched out, like hands, to certain objects to which the soul’s attention is directed.

“Our thoughts and desires form energy ‘tentacles’ with ‘suckers’, which keep the soul in connection with what they are attached to. It can be objects of the material world, concrete people...

“And it is important to understand that the *salvation* can be reached only if to redirect your attention to God! Then, for interaction with the material world, only a necessary and sufficient part of the soul’s attention and forces remains.

“This redirection of attention is called — *maintaining the concentration of the attention on God*, which in India is called the word — *dharana*.

“Then the stage of *dhyana* follows. It means the mastering of meditative practices, which allow to an even greater degree to fulfill all the principles listed above.

“And the last stage is called by Patanjali as *samadhi*.

“This is teaching the Blissful Mergence with the Divine Consciousness and fixing oneself in this status of being.”

“And have you mastered it all?” — Katya asked, delighted with the mysterious knowledge of the Indian sage.

“Well, let me just say: I can teach you something, but now we will not run ahead! Now I’m glad that you listened with interest and are ready to start working on yourself from the very beginning!”

[To be continued.]