

Emelyan

**The Fairy Tale of Emelya
or
How to Live
by God's Command and
According to God's Will**

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Long ago, there was a family: a father, a mother, and three sons. They lived well, in abundance, and could meet all their needs. Their farm was prosperous. And when the children grew up, they began to help their father and mother in everything.

Yet, for some reason, the parents believed that only their two eldest sons were smart, and not their youngest son, Emelya. It was not that he was some kind of fool though; he just understood things differently than other people.

The truth of the matter was that Emelya was just so kind and honest that many problems arose around him from this. He would never lie, and he would never offend anyone. He loved everyone without measure, and he always felt sorry for everyone. He felt so sorry for a chicken, a goose, or a pig, even tears would fill his eyes. He never wanted to slaughter anyone! And he refused to eat their bodies! He felt pity for worms that were put on hooks. And pulling a fish out of the water was also something for which he felt pity. After all, a fish suffocates, dies, and feels bad without water! That is why Emelya never went fishing. They didn't even speak with him about hunting: of course, he would not go on any hunts!

He gladly picked berries and mushrooms in the forest. And he did not refuse to graze the cows. He never whipped cows, but spoke to them with affectionate words. And he played the pipe for them so that they could understand him from the music: when it was time to go home, they gathered together and went.

Emelya worked well both in the field and in the vegetable garden, and toiled around the house: he chopped wood and stoked the stove, and was ready to do many other things around the household with diligence, never being lazy. But, when it got to the point that his conscience panged him, he would not do it in any way! Even if someone were to threaten to beat him to death, he would not do it!

At first, his parents scolded and punished him in every possible way. But then, they just threw their hands up, saying: "He was born a fool"...

Emelya loved to compose and tell fairy tales. And all the children loved to listen to him, although sometimes the children laughed and made fun of him.

And Emelya played with them like this:

At dawn, for example, he could say: "By God's Command and by God's Will — sun, come up!". And he looked how the sun raised, rejoicing at the beauty of the sunrise! And everyone who was next to him felt happy too!

Of course, it was just a game, but it was fun! Everyone looked at the Divine Beauty of the sunrise, and at the play of light in the sky!

Some boys used to say to Emelya late in the evening: “Tell the sun to rise again!”. And he replied: “Now is not the time! When the right time comes and God’s Command is there — then I will tell it so!”.

And everywhere Emelya tried to see and understand this “Divine Command”. When he understood, he was very happy! Because it is by God’s Will that all miracles in life are performed! But it is important to be able to see these miracles: both how the flower opens its petals towards the sun, and how migratory birds return in the spring and sing songs and build nests, and how the trees grow, stretching to the sky, and how the rain waters everything in time, and how the sun for everyone warms up in time too!

But many people in the village thought that Emelya was stupid. And not because he was not smart or did not know how to do things, but because Emelya was always sincere and trusting, he loved everyone, and did not expect any deception or tricks from anyone. He treated all people as if they were kind and honest as well!

... People sometimes deceived him: sometimes — as a joke, and sometimes — seriously...

Emelya himself never got upset, he never became angry with the jokers, he was never angry with the offenders. Usually, he only wondered with slight regret: “Why do people debase themselves like that, filling their lives with bad deeds?”

And when the parents sent their older sons to the market, the sons always returned with good earnings. They took advantage of others, tricked the scales, and deceived each buyer in various small ways. All of this caused them to have very large profits... And soon, the parents stopped sending Emelya to the market altogether, because he was ready to give away everything for free: he would say: “They need it more!”. It rarely happened that he returned home without a loss. However, he always remembered to buy everything that his family needed. And if there were profits, it was only what people presented to him as gifts for his kindness.

The parents endured it and endured it, but when Emelya grew up, they decided to drive him out of the house altogether, saying: “Let him seek his own happiness and his own destiny!”.

So that they would not be considered cruel, the parents gave him food for the journey and allocated his share of the inheritance: a rifle, a fishing rod, and a wallet of money. They decided that as soon as he knew hunger, he would begin to hunt, and he would fish, and maybe he would grow wiser and become like all people.

Emelya was not upset, he was not offended by this action of his parents: he always wanted to walk the land and see the world — so, he was delighted by this opportunity to fulfill his dream! He knew how to find joy in everything, and tried not to notice the bad, living as if it did not exist at all. Or, when he did notice the bad, he tried to offer help to correct the troubles as best he could, when he had the opportunity to do so.

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And so, Emelya walked and saw a man wanting to kill a dog by hanging it on a tree!

Emelya hurried to the man to stop him, and asked:

“Why do you want to kill the dog?”

“There is no benefit from it, it eats food for nothing! It doesn’t bark, doesn’t bite, doesn’t guard the house! I will make a hat out of its skin: in this way, at least, some benefit will come of it!”

“Give me your dog, since you don’t need it!”

“I won’t give it up for nothing! But I’ll trade it for your rifle! I’ll hang it on my wall! Everyone will know that I have a gun — and they will not come to rob my house!”

Emelya traded the rifle for the dog, and then the two of them left the man, walking together! It was fun for them! After all, it is always good to have a friend around!

On another day, a man with a sack on his shoulders walked towards them, and in the sack, someone was stirring and meowing sadly!

Emelya guessed that there was a cat in there. He asked:

“Where are you taking the cat?”

“To the knackery. It’s a completely worthless animal: it doesn’t catch mice — but only sits around eating sour cream! Why do I need such a cat?! In this way, I can at least make for my wife a fur coat collar — out of its skin. It will turn out beautiful, just like a fox one!”

“Give me the cat!”

“I won’t give it for nothing! But I’ll trade it for your fishing rod!”

“Okay! Take it!”

... They made the trade.

The cat was fluffy and affectionate, the dog was kind and funny! They even became friends with each other, and they loved Emelya, their savior, more than anyone else! They understood his every word, and they tried to help him in everything!

Emelya always shared his food with them.

One day, they went to another village — and there, a woman chased a rooster around the yard, trying to catch it and break its neck!

The friends hurried to help!

Emelya said:

“Why do you want to kill the rooster, mistress?”

“He yells in the mornings, not letting me sleep! I’ll cook soup out of it, and stuff a pillow with its feathers!”

“Give me the rooster, since he is a hindrance to you!”

“I won’t give it away! Trade me something for it!”

Emelya gave that woman all the food that he had with him — and in exchange, he received the saved-from-death rooster.

And just like that, all four of them started walking together — hungry, but happy!

The rescued rooster sometimes flew in front of them, other times, it sat on Emelya’s shoulder. The dog and the cat ran alongside.

One day, they saw a man who was whipping the horse under him cruelly, overworking it. Already exhausted, it could barely even walk, let alone gallop... Just a little more — and it would fall, and then the horse could not be saved!

Of course, Emelya wanted to save such a horse from death. In exchange for the horse, he gave the peasant the purse of money that his parents had given him as his share of the inheritance.

And so, the group became five. Except for his friends, Emelya had nothing more...

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Emelya began wondering what to do now. After all, they needed a way to live, but how — he did not know.

Many times, he heard that people prayed to God and said their requests to Him. But Emelya himself had never prayed before. Everything that God did — he accepted with joy, and it seemed to him that there was nothing to ask for.

But he felt concern for his friends. They needed to find a way to live so that everyone would be happy!

And Emelya decided to ask God for advice. He called: "God! God!".

And he saw a bright Light, like the sun.

He was surprised:

"Are You God?"

"Yes!"

"I had no idea that You shine like the sun!"

"I come to every person in the form in which he or she most easily see Me. After all, how else could they recognize Me?"

"So, is it possible to talk with You?"

"You're hearing and understanding Me right now, are you not? Of course, I can talk!"

The Light shone around Emelya and turned into a state of an affectionate smile.

God continued:

"People have forgotten that they can hear My answers or simply understand Me without words. But I show Myself to them every day, and I am ready to give understanding to them — and not only through words! The whole human life and everything around — this is a conversation with Me and My answers to everyone! A person just needs to want to learn to understand Me!"

"Then tell me: how can I live now so that, by Your Command and by Your Desire, everything will work out?"

"Soon, you will see an old Russian sauna on the bank of the river. Stay there and live with your friends. I will teach you how to be a bath attendant!"

"That shouldn't be too difficult to do! I could probably do all those bath tasks easily!"

"Don't say that — until you've learned it! I will show you how to cure people from diseases in this Russian sauna!"

Emelya was delighted and thanked God for the advice!

The friends looked and, indeed, up ahead there was an old Russian sauna standing on the bank of the river. They stayed there and began to restore order.

At first, it was difficult for them. But it didn't matter, they did it!

The cat and the dog dug up the vegetable garden. The rooster planted seeds in the beds. The horse helped Emelya to prepare firewood from dead trees in the forest and deliver them to the sauna.

The friends repaired the sauna. And they made a new part to the house where they could live happily and comfortably.

They gathered berries and mushrooms, special kinds of herbs, and hazelnuts. Hay was prepared for the horse.

From the branches of birches, blown down by the wind, they made brooms.

Sometimes people began to come to that sauna so that Emelya could steam them.

And there was a rumor that after the person had been steamed in that sauna by Emelya, all their illnesses then went away.

"The earth is full of rumors". And from such rumors, more and more people began to come.

And when Emelya steamed someone in the sauna, he would often say:

"By God's Command and by God's Will, let the ailments go away! Let joy come, let sorrow go away!"

“Kindness is coming! Love heals! Those who live in love bring God’s Light to the world!

“Like the sun — let love shine in the soul! Whoever lives like this will not get sick again!”

And God in Emelya’s sauna shined like the bright sun!

But not all of people immediately noticed this, because only a loving heart can see the Light of God.

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Living so, the friends overwintered there. And, after winter, things became even better!

The vegetable garden was a help! They also sowed wheat and buckwheat.

More and more people came wanting to take a steam in Emelya’s sauna. And everyone tried to thank him in whatever way they could: someone might bring flour, someone else might bring honey...

The friends began to live comfortably.

... But not everyone could be cured of their illnesses, no matter how Emelya tried to wash away all the dirt from them, trying to remove their illnesses.

Sometimes, it even happened that Emelya wanted to say: “By God’s Command, be gone, you ailments!”... But, as soon as he opened his mouth, the words would not come out.

Emelya asked God:

“Why is it so?”

And God answered:

“Because My Command is not there...”

“Why don’t You want the person to become healthy?”

“You should know that by My consent troubles and difficulties enter people’s lives! And they are needed for admonition and for atonement of the evil that those people have done.”

“How can You help such people?”

“They have to understand and set a lot right in their lives!

“There are simple rules, observing which a person can approach a clean life.”

God told Emelya about the simple Laws for a happy life. And Emelya began to explain those rules to people:

“A person needs to live in such a way so as not to do harm to anyone, not even by speaking evil words or thinking evil thoughts. And a person should not want something that belongs to someone else and should not to envy others. It is better to rejoice always in what is in life every day — and be grateful to God for that!

“You should always try live in such a way that everyone around becomes better!

“And then goodness and happiness will return to you from all sides! Then God will help: He will tell you how to solve problems, and how to prevent troubles!”

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A year passed, and then another...

What else do you need to be happy? A kind hostess at home!

So the cat, rooster, dog, and horse decided that they needed to someone to marry their dear Emelya: to thank him for all his kindness and care!

And they went to look for a bride for him.

And not just some bride, but they decided to find the very best bride for their best friend!

In almost all the tales that our friends had heard, heroes married royal daughters. Therefore, they began with the royal palace. They knocked on the metal forged gate. They wanted him to marry the Tsar's daughter. But the guards did not even let them into the yard...

So, the rooster then flew through the window of the royal daughter's room.

He admired her beauty, dresses, and adornments...

He sat on the back of a carved-gilded chair.

And the princess said to him:

"Ugh! A ragged bird! What are you doing here?! Your place is in the soup!"

The rooster decided: "This is not our bride: Emelya will not like her!"

Then the friends decided to go to the merchant's daughter in the upper room. But they were not allowed into the merchant's yard either.

Then the cat thought of a plan, climbed over the fence, and entered the room to the daughter of a rich merchant.

And the merchant's daughter shouted at him:

"Shoo, flea!"

The cat decided: "This is not our bride: Emelya will not like her!"

... They searched for a long time and visited many houses. Sometimes, barely escaping alive, they ran away as hard as they could — so that evil people could not put the dog on a chain, so that the rooster would not be boiled in soup, and so that the horse would not be deprived of its freedom.

Of course, not every person they met offended Emelya's friends but, even then, they still could not find someone suitable: they all didn't seem good enough for Emelya!

The friends began to feel downcast, wondering: "Where can we find a bride for our Emelya? Maybe it's not our business? Maybe he should find a bride himself? After all, they say that the heart knows which girl it will love!"

... Deciding so, they then began their journey back. But the way back was not short...

... One day, they saw a house on a hillock. The light in the window was on, smoke was streaming from the chimney, and it smelled of cakes.

They decided to knock and ask for a night's lodging.

A kindly girl opened the door for them, greeted them warmly, let them spend the night, fed them, and gave them water.

It felt so good for all the friends that they decided to live in that house for more than one day. They told everything about Emelya to the mistress and master, Marya. People called her a master for a good reason, because she had skillful hands and a kind heart. She showed indescribable beauty in any handicraft, and she showed kindness in any business.

But it was time for the guests to return home.

The rooster, cat, dog, and the horse said to Marya:

"We have been looking all over the world for a bride for Emelya, and we have never met anyone better than you! Come with us!"

"No, dears, this will not work. It would be better to take for your Emelya this shirt that I embroidered and the pies that I baked, as a gift. Then, if he wants, he can come to visit me himself!"

... Well, what more can be said?

By God's Command and by God's Will, Emelya and Marya fell in love with each other. They became husband and wife, and they had children — a boy and a girl. Happiness in the house did not disappear: everyone, who lived in it, generously shared that happiness with other people, which is how, after all, happiness increases!

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One day, Emelya's brothers brought to him their parents, their mother and father, who had become ill. Emelya's father and mother ached all over in their old age, and could no longer bend or turn well...

The aged parents saw their son and shed tears, apologizing to him for driving him out of the house and calling him a fool.

But Emelya did not blame them for anything. Instead, he said words of gratitude to them.

In his sauna, he steamed and healed them.

He told them:

"I've understood and learned a lot, but there is still much to come that I must learn!

"And it was not a bad thing that I did not consider myself smart, because of this, I always looked for wisdom in kindness.

"Such wisdom does not come immediately to a person. Gradually, out of the love of the heart, it is born and grows!

"This is how one can learn to recognize the Will of God. And, in the same way, this is how I continue to learn!

"It is not enough — to just say: 'By God's Commandant and by God's Will...'. Instead, a person needs to learn *in everything* the Divine Wisdom!"

The parents of Emelya were surprised with the rationality of their son! And they thanked God for everything too!

* * *

Much still awaited Emelya and Marya in their lives! After all, their path of cognition of God's Will and God's Love had only just begun!

But in one fairy tale, it is impossible to tell everything, and it is time for us to finish this story!

Let everything be done according to God's Command and God's Will, and let all people learn God's Love and God's Wisdom!