

The background of the entire image is a night sky filled with stars and the Milky Way galaxy. In the lower portion, there is a silhouette of a mountain range. A person is standing on a peak, holding a flashlight that beams a light up towards the sky. The overall mood is mysterious and fantastical.

A. Belyaev

*Inventions of
professor
Wagner
(Cycle of stories)*

"Classics fantasy" 3

A. Belyaev

Classics fantasy – 3

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Belyaev A.

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INVENTIONS OF PROFESSOR WAGNER

(cycle of stories)

The created legends and apocryphal stories

I. THE PERSON WHO DOES NOT SLEEP

Ivan Stepanovich Wagner, professor of the 1st Moscow university of department of biology, is known to the scientific colleagues as exclusively versatile mind, the talented inventor and the courageous experimenter long ago. Wagner became known to wide public only five years ago when he had to act as the defendant on so-called «dog matter» in national court.

I kept newspapers of that time. Here is how in one of them the correspondent who was present at court describes appearance of professor Wagner:

«In his nutbrown hair, a broad fair-haired beard and the hung moustaches it was possible to notice only a few silvery hairs. Fresh complexion, rosy cheeks and shining eyes spoke about health. It could not give more than forty years».

And at this time to professor Wagner was for fifty.

He was accused of kidnapping of dogs for production of scientific experiences. In court very interesting circumstances became clear. It appears, professor Wagner invented means for fatigue, and also means against a dream; the dream, according to professor, represents a disease.

Wagner delivered to himself a task to capture bigger amount of knowledge, than that which can contain a human brain. And professor achieved it that, without needing rest and a dream, he could work nearly twenty four hours a day. Besides, by a training it developed ability to think both halves of a brain independently one from another. His eyes moved also independently one from another, and Wagner could watch, thus, several phenomena at once. He could write with at the same time right and left hand...

All this and many other things became clear on «dog process», and the name of professor Wagner became known to the public reading newspapers at once. It and was called: «The person who does not sleep».

I was one of those which became interested in professor Wagner. I very much wanted to get acquainted with it. The case came to the rescue of me. I got acquainted with Wagner in the Crimea, in Simeiz, we had with it some of the most interesting conversations.

Then Wagner disappeared somewhere. In general it quite often changes residences that does not prevent it to give lectures at the Moscow university. For this purpose it uses a broadcast. And only for a practical training it is to Moscow for a month or on two. All his pupils succeed, and the university administration does not object to such correspondence method of training.

So, it disappeared though its voice was punctually heard in audience. Rumors about its extraordinary experiences and inventions continued to be handed down. I carefully wrote down these stories. Some of them seemed to me so improbable that I put in the notebook on fields a question mark to check truthfulness of the story when I meet Wagner or I learn his address. Said that he in Leningrad is engaged in some radio experiences that is going to Novaya Zemlya, but he told the address to nobody. And only recently he unexpectedly reminded of himself. On the korotkovolnovik one night I accepted from it the radiotelegram. He sent me hi and reported the address.

I immediately rewrote all stories about its inventions which I had to hear, and sent it, asking to tell me that in them the truth and that a lie. His answer convinced me that my fears were not vain. Alas, more than a half of my documents on professor Wagner were apocryphal stories. The created legends arose on my eyes. Among these legends there were not only stories about inventions

Wagner, but also curious episodes from his life. For an illustration I will give some of these invented stories before passing to original incidents. I tried to transfer the speech of story-tellers in all records literally.

II. THE CASE WITH THE HORSE

On annual races on May 21, 1926 in Ipson [79] the general attention was drawn by a draw of the first prize in five thousand pounds sterling. Two applicants for superiority were distinguished from three-year-olds of beautiful English racers: light-golden Lorelya and red handsome Viking. The majority of rates was put on these two horses who already showed the extraordinary qualities on training run. But Viking, by universal recognition, had more chances of a prize.

Jumps began. Did not pass also minutes as Lorelya and the Viking moved forward out of operation on the head, and in several seconds the Viking was ahead of the rivals already by one and a half cases.

– Bravo, Viking! – the frenzied crowd shouted. The victory, appear, was behind it. But here on turn there was an event which probably for a long time will remain in memory of those who were present at this derby.

The Viking as if went mad. It did not curtail on turn, and rushed directly on a fence, *расшибся* and fell. The horses who flew behind nearly crushed the poor Viking together with his jockey. Having got rid of one danger, they got to another. The part of crowd putting on the Viking got savage. Respectable gentlemen, risking to get under hoofs of horses, jumped off from stands on a race path with obvious intention to tear to pieces the traitor jockey. They did not doubt that the jockey was bribed by the owner Lorelya, the large merchant, the silk wholesaler. Fortunately, the skilled jockey did not suffer when falling. He considered the moment and ran from the crowd pursuing it with such speed as if he wanted to take part in jumps instead of the Viking who left an operation.

The rage and indignation of losers on the Viking were so strong that many from run together to the scene pushed the Viking in a stomach with a leg. It was an ugly show. The crowd dammed all racetrack. It fell on time to stop jumps. Stands reminded the volcano crater filled with the boiling lava. And this lava of human passions was not less terrible, than magma.

When the first nervousness settled, immediately started the investigation. To the aid of the jockey the group of policemen who saved it from crowd mob killings appeared in time in time. The jockey, of course, swore and swore that he is not guilty in anything and itself does not know that with the Viking; ordinary the horse obeyed the slightest movement of a hand. The crowd did not trust words of the jockey, but as nobody could prove him to guilt, the investigation was temporary is directed to other party. The Viking was lifted up and carefully examined. His breast was seriously injured, a part of skin and meat is broken, but it were fresh wounds from blow about a fence. Eyes and legs of a horse were as though are not damaged. She looked normally. The Viking was lashed a switch and looked how it will go. Being unsteady, the Viking moved forward. Before it there was a column. The Viking as the blind person, went on a column, without turning. And, having only hit a breast, stopped.

– He went blind! – voices were heard. One gentleman approached and waved before the Viking's eyes a hat. The Viking involuntarily hitched up the head.

– Sees!

– He went mad! – someone shouted.

– Unless the horse can go mad? – objected it. – They rage, but it happens absolutely differently.

The Viking was taken away from a column, by stegnul, and it went again. Surprising business! It went only in a straight line, without turning neither to the right, nor on the left. Eventually it reached a deadlock between two booths and stood there as if he, burning down from shame, wanted to leave all, to see nobody. Skilled grooms defined at once that the Viking without assistance cannot break an impasse into which he came only because the deadlock lay on the way of its rectilinear wandering.

Now anybody did not have doubt that the Viking is sick with a strange disease of straightforwardness. It did not dismiss charge from the jockey, but nevertheless broke confidence

that a disease of a horse – his hands business a little. Jockeys too become attached to horses, and it was difficult to assume that the jockey could go to such crime. Strangers could spoil a horse. But how the jockey overlooked?

The crowd rushed to the jockey again:

– The Viking was ill something?

– Was ill – the jockey answered. – The groom said to me what the Viking on the eve of races badly ate and badly drank. Mr. Dzhibbs, the owner Vikinga, even wanted to refuse participation in jumps, but Mr. Thompson, the veterinarian, told that it is trifles and that by the morning everything will pass. He promised to watch the Viking. And it is valid, Mr. Thompson stayed in Vikinga's stable all night long...

Continuation of the investigation was after races. And any more not crowd, but the investigator interrogated Mr. Thompson. The veterinarian assured that, except an easy indisposition which occurred because of the groom who broke the feeding mode the Viking was not sick with anything. And now he, Thompson, finds it difficult to define a disease of the Viking though has to note that the Viking is really sick: it can go only on a straight line.

The best forces of medicine and veterinary science were attracted to the diagnosis of a disease of the Viking, but nobody could understand anything. The beautiful horse was spoiled. But whom, when and how? The Viking set the scientist an unsoluble riddle.

Here on the stage professor Wagner who was in a scientific business trip in Oxford at this time also acted. Having read in newspapers that nobody can understand a disease of the Viking, Wagner wrote the letter to the editorial office:

«The Viking is not more expensive than the red skin now. Kill the Viking, open to him a skull, and you learn what his disease consisted in».

It was told so resolutely as if Wagner already looked that he becomes in the head of the sick Viking. And Wagner even on jumps was not.

The owner Vikinga obeyed this council and, having killed a horse, opened a skull. And what was found? Vikinga did not have part of a brain. Obviously, the veterinarian bribed by someone did this operation at night and so successfully sewed up places of section on the head of a horse that nobody noticed operation traces. Thompson denied this crime. But as a result of a careful search proofs were found, and eventually Thompson confessed. Lately he received so many the menacing letters that he in prison felt more safely, than on freedom.

After this case the name of professor Wagner became known also in England...

(It is reported to t. A. A. K.)

* * *

Ivan Stepanovich Wagner wrote on a reverse side of the last leaf of this manuscript:

«Inventions. Nothing similar with me was. In May, 1926 did not go abroad. During bilateral removal of frontal lobes of a brain such strangenesses could be found in a horse, as well as in a dog (over which I conducted experiments), really: the animal (of course, and the person) deprived of frontal lobes finds fragility of static coordination, inability to turn here and there thanks to what the dog operated thus always runs in the direct direction and, having hidden in a corner or in the close back street which is not able to leave it without assistance.

As you can see, all this is similar to a case with the Viking. But... first, I glanced over the London newspapers during this time and did not find anything similar to the case described by your acquaintance. Secondly, if this case occurred, then in London there would be many scientists who could understand the disease of the Viking which is not representing anything mysterious for anything who studies reflexology. And in England it is studied not less, than at us. Thirdly, the disease of the

Viking, of course, would be found on the first turn from its stable, and the jockey would not be on jumps with such horse».

III. ABOUT FLEAS

Once there arrived professor Wagner to Paris. He was invited to himself for scientific consultation by our compatriot doctor Voronov, that which deals with a rejuvenation issue. There is Wagner across Paris from hotel to Voronov and sees on one street the house, and on the house a sign:

«Here scientific fleas give representations».

Professor Wagner decided to pay a visit to the scientific colleagues. Fleas were really remarkable. Danced a quadrille, moved pushechka, rolled each other in cardboard crews, boxed and even rode tiny velosipedika.

The owner of flea troupe, when learned that his moustached visitor – the scientist, got to talking and showed to Wagner the best numbers. In conclusion of a session the director fed all troupe on own hand and released to have a rest. After a lunch the flea likes to have a sleep.

– One is bad – the owner of flea theater said, my actors are very small growth. Now seldom at whom good sight occurs. If the audience very low bends, then their actors in a nose click, and published very few people sees. Through lenses it is inconvenient to look too: the flea moves and will leave a field of vision, will leave focus. But what strong and clever animals! They pull the weights in several honeycombs of times exceeding the weight of their body. And their jumps! The ordinary human flea has in length: 2,2 millimeters male and three-four millimeters female. Well and in millimeter height two – two and a half. And fleas can jump up on the whole meter. And forward almost on as much. It means – almost in five hundred times more the growth! What would be if the flea was growth from the person?

– Yes ... – Wagner told and thought.

So, thoughtful, and to doctor Voronov came.

Voronov was delighted to dear visitor. Shows all the novelties; the young man of years of eighteen – the former old man – and the chest old woman. Perelechili her trifle, and it turned into the chest baby.

– But it nothing – Voronov says – she at me will grow up soon and will begin to speak. Here only I do not know whether it is necessary to teach it to languages anew. It the good linguist was.

Wagner listens, and so through moustaches: «Yes, yes, yes...» And then speaks:

– All this is very good. And you can make a flea in human height?

Ravens even the mouth opened.

– What for? – asks.

– For the sake of science, for experience.

– No – Voronov says – I will directly tell, I cannot.

And itself even reddened with shame.

– So I also thought. And I will make – Wagner declares. – Give me only the room yes of fleas more.

Also Wagner began to do experiences. Parisians brought fleas to it, and he fed these fleas with extracts from some glands and izhitsa vitamins.

Wagner grew up dozen growth of fleas from a black cockroach and presented to the owner of flea theater. Very much the owner thanked Wagner. All Paris went to look at exotic fleas, there was no small trouble yet: one flea cockroach hit a forehead to mister president of the republic why in his head public affairs of foremost importance were mixed. The seditious flea was killed, and chains put on the others that too highly did not jump. Wagner because of this flea from France was nearly sent. However escaped.

On a full human outgrowth Wagner let only two fleas that is one sterns less than money left. Also these two fleas began to grow before the eyes. He kept them in a cage on a chain, and fed with blood. Every day from slaughters in barrels blood was brought.

You imagine what is a flea if to increase her time in one thousand? There is no animal more terribly! Even the watchmen from a menagerie put to these fleas shivered with horror. And when fleas stretched the feelers and stings through rods of cages, at watchmen of a leg were turned in and they from the room ran away.

And there was misfortune. When length of a flea female was equal to hundred seventy seven centimeters (the male had growth a little less), and muscles and jaws became stronger than lion's, the flea female jumped out of a cage. Tore chains, gnawed through in a night a back wooden wall and through a hole – прыг! – skipped away.

And it was just on the night of July fourteenth – a national French holiday, capture of the Bastille. This day all Paris on the street. And suddenly such incident! The flea in human height too as if destroyed the Bastille, broke off chains and прыг on the street! And on the street the people since early morning already crowd.

Wagner's «menagerie» was located on Kyuvye Street, near a zoo. The flea in several jumps crossed all Paris. She jumped one jump through wine warehouses which take the whole quarter, the second jump jumped through Notre Dame de Paris on other side of Seine, then moved back, in two-three jumps reached the Nursing home, jumped over it, the following huge jump flew through the Eiffel Tower. Three hundred meters of height did not make any difficulty for a flea. It flew over a tower two hundred meters higher, and in air nearly faced a flock of the parading airplanes. Yeny Square and Etual Square were the following stages. Having taken seat on the Triumphal arch, she decided to have a rest.

The public with delight welcomed in the beginning emergence of winged «animal». All were sure that it is one of the most remarkable numbers of a street carnival. Perhaps, some inventor decided to give this day to the nation a surprise – the new aircraft like gelikopter with vertical rise and descent. For bigger effect the inventor gave to the device such terrible look. However, knew all Paris about Wagner's experiences. But nobody assumed that the flea looks so terribly.

Soon, however, the delight of crowd was replaced by horror. A flea, having had a rest on the Triumphal arch, unexpectedly jumped off on the street in a thick of crowd and suddenly, having seized some having fun citizen with the shchupika, stuck a sharp proboscis into the left shoulder. The Parisian desperately cried. The crowd was captured by such horror that all stood several minutes as fossilized, and then took to the heels as if they were picked up by an outflow wave. The flea quietly exhausted grams seven hundred blood and, having taken out a proboscis, jumped on an arch. The Frenchman who turned pale from loss of blood and a fright fell. Fortunately, the flea did not exhaust all blood, and it in veins of the Frenchman was 5740 grams. Loss of two thousand grams would threaten with death. But the flea was satisfied with smaller. Perhaps, so it was easier for it to jump. And she preferred to suck blood less, but is more often.

In a few minutes she flew from an arch again, attacked some old woman and thrust it in a back a proboscis. Having tried old-womanish blood, the flea took out a sting and turned the look on the very young milliner. The flea became real the blood-sucker.

On the scene the group of police already hurried. But police officers did not manage to fire a volley as the flea jumped on an arch though already and not so easily as before.

Having jumped through group of police officers, the flea jumped on the Champs Elysée, flew through the Place de la Concorde and fell by a lawn in the garden Tuileries.

Professor Wagner already knew about incident. He hurried to make the order somewhat quicker to kill the second huge flea male. If and the male crashed out, then it would be bad. What if these fleas bred?

The message about a terrible predator quickly flew about Paris. Streets as became extinct. Inhabitants barricaded windows, being afraid that the flea did not jump to them into the house, having broken glasses. The armed groups chased a flea, but she one jump disappeared from them. Airplanes could do nothing too. Not to lay down a bomb over the city!

And the flea very well felt in the city. Human blood was pleasant to it much more, than cow with which fed her in the conclusion. And it continued the raids.

Paris was frightened. The flea turned into some terrible Minotaur [80] demanding the human victims. But there was no hero of Tezey who would exempt the city from a fright. Candidates for Tezei were. But they did not manage to kill a flea.

Many began to say that Wagner is guilty of everything that, maybe, he even with malice aforethought grew up and let such flea to Paris. Here and Germans began to assume airs. This is not a simple flea...

And Wagner did not sleep – he never sleeps – and thought both halves of a brain, as if to correct the mistake. Very much everything left unpleasantly, and Voronov laughs.

The mayor of Paris summoned Wagner and speaks to him:

– Our patience was exhausted. I give you twenty four hours on an udavleniye of a flea. We already became awfully anemic from a flea.

– To press fleas – Wagner answers, is not my specialty and how to catch a flea, I can give advice. The flea will be caught only by the person who will be able to jump as a flea. I constructed such tools that the person could jump in a flea way. Let's go to the Field of Mars, I will show you.

Went. Professor Wagner brought with himself a suitcase, and in a suitcase some springs and the red suit similar on a bug lie.

– These springs – Wagner says – it is necessary to screw on hands and legs, and a suit from rubber, pneumatic, is put on a body not to rasshibitsya if without habit you fall sideways or on a back. Who wants to try?

– I!. And I!. I!.

Wagner chose one. Put on it a rubber suit, to soles and palms attached plate thongs with big spiral springs like matratsny, put the person on all fours and inflated a red rubber cover. Directly huge bug which got drunk blood turned out.

– Jump! – Wagner speaks.

The young man raised forepaws, cavorted, overturned on a back, jumped up two times and lies on a back as the bug, waves paws.

– I cannot – says – from the earth to rise. Better from height.

Turned «bug», brought three tables, put the friend on the friend, and upward put «bug».

– Jump!

«Bug» jumped, rose up and again on a back. Time, another, the third jumped up – lies.

– Nothing, will learn – Wagner calms.

And again carried «bug» on a table. And that, «bug» got skilled at. Jumped, hit on all four pads and rose up that your flea, is higher than the house. Again hit springs against the earth and jumped up even above.

– Bravo! – shout.

And he when for the third time on the earth went down, suddenly itself shouts:

– How I will stop now? – also uprygnut.

Honestly. There is a task! He can jump, and is not able stop.

– Hold me! – shouts.

Ran behind it and where there! In three jumps all Field of Mars flew by.

– The boy was gone! Now and will jump around the globe...

However, on the happiness, it got into the river Seine. To the bottom dived, then the rubber bubble on a back took out it, and people caught.

As badly it was necessary to the daredevil, from a flea it was necessary even worse. And the young man, and behind him and other young people began to learn to jump in a flea way and reached big art soon. Even in a system could jump. Very much it was pleasant to the Minister of War.

– A new type of military forces – says – jumpers! Through entrenchments very easily can jump.

Jumpers began to hunt for a flea. Exhausted it completely. From Paris expelled. Did not allow to drink-eat, all drove. The flea in Arzhanteyle died. And twenty young people Tezeev brought a skin of «Minotaur» to Paris.

On pleasures the president awarded the order to professor Wagner of the Honourable legion.

– Only – says – depart from Paris with the first airplane!.

(The story is written down according to two persons – tr. N. A. P. and K. E. N. They told almost at the same time, interrupting and supplementing each other: from here some unevenness of style.)

* * *

Remark of professor Wagner:

«Again inventions! With me it was not. But similar I read something in some magazine several decades ago. Apparently, begin to attribute me legendary feats.

The assumption that if the flea was growth from the person, she could jump through the highest houses, is absolutely incorrect: is overlooked that the attraction of Earth increases in direct ratio to body weight or in proportion to a cube of linear increase. Despite all anatomic fitness of a flea to jumps, the flea increased before human growth would jump almost the same as the person, or is slightly higher.

I have one project concerning jumping, but absolutely in other sort. I thought of jumping through abysses and the rivers of cars and even trains to which the known dispersal by a reorganization of a profile of a way would be reported. It will not be necessary to do bridges. Principle of the American mountains. Why not to arrange such jump of cars through English Channel? Perhaps, it would be more favorable, than construction of a tunnel near English Channel. I looked after also the town: the bottleneck of the channel – only thirty three kilometers. Coast are abrupt, rocky. I only have no time to do calculations. I am going to fly for Novaya Zemlya. If ask – why, you speak: to breed ostriches.

Your Wagner».

To breed ostriches! It is, of course, a joke. Perhaps, from such jokes of professor taken seriously and added with imagination there were also apocryphal stories about its inventions...

IV. CHELOVEK-TERMO

Rubtsov is I. Ilya Ilyich. Twenty four years old. It is ruddy, cheerful, mobile. Companions call me the Siskin.

Companions are Pronin Ivan and Dashkevich Kazimir, it Kazya. Pronin is similar to me, he is also young, cheerful and mobile. And Dashkevich is not even always similar to himself. It as spring weather: a rain, snow, the sun, clouds, warmly, it is cold – only little by little. Казя – high, thin, angular. It is healthy, but is hypochondriac and often finds in itself (himself) nonexistent diseases.

The destiny abandoned us very far – on islands of Novaya Zemlya. We worked as radio operators at the meteorological station. For me Novaya Zemlya was the newest. For Dashkevich news of Novaya Zemlya is considerably obsolete. Kaza was bothered by monotonous «film sessions» of the polar lights, frosts, winters without the sun bothered.

– There is enough, three years has on duty – he said – and that will do! With the first steamship I leave from here. And if some hydroplane incidentally visits us, by all means I will depart. I am sick. I am absolutely broken. Me is in a fever. At me all body as though aches...

– As though you «were friendly embraced by a polar bear». Heard. Do not repeat, Kazya! – Pronin told. – You turn sour the third day. Go to professor Wagner, he, likely, will cure you.

– Wagner is not a physician – Kazya answered.

– Professor Wagner is the Encyclopaedist, comprehensive mind. Go to it, and it will very quickly cure your disease. Here the Siskin will see off you.

Dashkevich indecisively looked at me, sighed and told:

– Nurses are not necessary for me. I will reach also... And well as Wagner will banish me! Will tell: I to you not the doctor...

Pronin grabbed Dashkevich's cap and pulled down to him on the head. At the same time I threw to Kaza shoulders with a fur-coat, Pronin opened a door, and we pushed out our companion on a forty-degree frost. Having finished this philanthropic act, we took seat for devices and went deep into work. I accepted, and Pronin sent meteorological bulletins.

There passed hour, and Dashkevich still did not come back. Professor Wagner lived near us, in only ten minutes of walking. It would be time to return to Dashkevich. I already began to worry. Also Pronin worried.

– A hard case – he told. – Wagner, obviously, finds it difficult to make the diagnosis. It is visible, our Kazya seriously ached...

At this time the frozen door awfully cracked, began to creak and opened. Puffs of vapor for a moment filled all room, and when they dissipated, we saw our friend who left a frosty cloud as Venus from sea foam. We attentively looked at each other: Dashkevich on us – with mysterious humour, we on it – interrogatively.

At last Pronin did not sustain and asked:

– Was?

Dashkevich with the same mysterious smile silently nodded.

– Cured?

Dashkevich did not answer. His face was very red, and he quickly and often breathed. Obviously, his fever amplified. Even it seemed to me that from it radiates with heat, as from our iron oven when it is heated.

– Perelechil me professor Wagner! – with laughter Dashkevich answered and quickly passed to the room.

– Nasty! – Pronin said in low tones. – If Wagner did not help, then Dashkevich not to survive...

We went deep into work. Suddenly the door from Dashkevich's room opened and it left him, but... in what look! It was in a sports beskostyum. All red as if just took a steam bath in a bath

to the seventh sweat, Dashkevich quickly passed through the room, without paying to us any attention, opened a door... and came to a forty-degree frost.

It was ridiculous, unexpected and terrible. Dashkevich's act was equivalent to suicide. Several minutes it will freeze to itself (himself) hands and legs and will fatally chill lungs. Poor Kazya, he could make it only delirious! However that we sit? It is necessary to run to the aid, while the getting is good! I quickly rose and began to put on the fur-coat. For nervousness could not get a hand to a sleeve in any way. Pronin already put on and helped me.

– Rather, rather!

We ran out for a door.

There was a light moonlight night. From the house the road went down, to the small lake from which we took ourselves water. On this road we saw an extraordinary phenomenon.

On the road the huge sphere from puffs of vapor slowly slid. On a frost of couples turned into hoarfrost which made as if an external mobile cover of a sphere. Moonlight was reflected in the sparkling crystals of hoarfrost and gave iridescent auras. Behind a sphere the tail from snow flakes lasted. It was possible to think that on the road the small planetka who came on a silver platter together with the atmospheric attire slides. But we understood at once what the planetka is: the strange phenomenon left clear and quite deep prints of bare human feet on snow. It was our Kazya shrouded in a cloud of steam who brought down from his body excited with fever.

«Perhaps, this steam – I thought – protects Dashkevich's body from burning action of cold a little, is perfect the same as the atmosphere protects Earth from action of absolute cold of interstellar depths. But whether for a long time his internal heat can be enough for Kaza? It will disappear from his body before Kazya reaches the lake».

– Казя! Казя! Stop! – we shouted, pursuing the cloud sliding on the road.

We could not consider Kazyu in this cloud of steam.

Dashkevich answered nothing to us, but quickened the pace. Small blizzards began to spin behind it. He already ran up to the coast of the lake, stepped into ice, stopped and suddenly desperately cried. Over the place where it stood, the whole column of steam rose. We ran on shout, entered dairy steam and is careful, blundered about to that place from where Dashkevich's voice was heard. This voice reached from below.

– Devil take it, ice thawed under legs! – Kazn shouted. – I failed and now I cannot get out. When I grab the edge of ice, ice thaws and turns into water...

I made out a vague spot of the Kaziny head and grabbed at random a hand. Yes, it was the hand if only I did not grab for burning голову: heat of this hand was felt even through my fur mitten. «However what temperature of his body has to be?» – with surprise I thought.

We pulled out our friend on the coast. From an ice bathtub on a forty-degree frost! But unfortunate Kazya delirious and fire of fever did not feel cold and danger. It was stirred up as the bear who got out of water and ran from us along the lake. It was easy for it to run. He ran on the trampled-down road with a speed of a dog, we in our fur suits could not catch up with him. The shining sphere of our «steam» friend sparkled on a hillock soon and disappeared.

What to do? To run after Dashkevich? But we could not leave radio station for a long time. In our work and so there was a break. We decided that one of us has to go to work, and another will be engaged in searches of the run-away patient. But as Dashkevich was stronger than each of us separately, we decided to invite to the help of professor Wagner. Pronin hurried on radio station, and I rushed off to Wagner.

– What did you make with our friend? – I asked Wagner.

Professor looked at me with one eye and answered, without coming off the lamp transmitter:

– I nothing to it made bad. And what our patient? How he feels?

– Ran away! – hasty I answered. – Ran away when it has probably not less than forty degrees temperature. Naked ran away!

Professor Wagner smiled.

– Good feature? – he asked, pointing to the device. – You did not meet such design yet.

The device was really entertaining, but to me had no time for it.

– Korotkovolnovik? – carelessly I asked and, without waiting for the answer, continued: – Listen, professor, leave your experiences and help me to catch and return our escaped friend until he died finally.

– At a usual order of things – Wagner answered, without moving a little – companion Dashkevich had to die long ago. And we would need to search for his dead icy body only. But as companion Dashkevich feels excellently...

– From where you know it?

– From your own words. Dashkevich did not die, even *покупавшись* in the lake. He breathes in couples as the engine, and walks in shorts behind the Polar circle as though it on the beach in the Crimea. Do not worry about your Kaz, you sit down here here and listen. You asked what I made with Dashkevich.

– But, professor, now not time...

– It is a high time! You sit down. I assure you that with Kazy nothing bad happens. Experience was successful.

– Again experience? – with astonishment I asked.

– Well, certainly.

Wagner unexpectedly squeezed my hand at an elbow. I screamed.

– Painfully? I and thought. You are hurt by joints when you work with the regenerative receiver. You feel temperature increase. Well, opened radio, but still did not study character of this animal at all. The fact that we know about radio, is just baby talk. Our knowledge and scope of radio extend every day. You know that doctors for treatment of some diseases began to use short waves now, artificially lifting radio waves the body temperature of patients. And here the thought came to my mind: and why not to heat artificially human body by means of short radio waves?

– But the human body is naturally heated – I told.

– Yes, but it is not enough. The healthy person possesses automatic change of temperature in only five-seven tenth degrees throughout days. On a disease the human body reacts increase or fall of temperature to two-three degrees against norm. Extreme limits of fluctuations make only six-seven degrees.

– Stability of our temperature – big progress – I told. – Not therefore whether many large animals died out what they were cold blooded – their blood had almost identical temperature with air?

– My thought does not contradict yours. Listen to me up to the end. You know what extreme temperature limits of life of human bodies. The elementary organisms transfer very low temperatures and can be restored to life. Without special error it is possible to tell that even centigrade cold is not quite killing for living beings. Heat as though is transferred more difficultly: at a temperature over fifty five degrees Celsius squirrels curl up. But the dehydrated proteins, for example chicken, can transfer temperature even to hundred sixty – hundred seventy degrees above zero. And so I delivered to myself a task to expand limits of fluctuations of temperature of a human body, to subordinate these fluctuations to will of the person and, of course, to make them harmless to an organism. Each warm-blooded animal has the more or less constant temperature: at the person it is equal 37°, at a monkey – 38°, at a horse – 39°, at a bull – 39,7°, and at pigeons and hens even 42,5°. This constancy has the inconveniences, and the person has to overcome them. Biological progress is not finished. The human body has to develop in the future the ideal regulator of temperature.

We do not know what was the body temperature of the cave person, but it, of course, was higher, than at the modern person. Warm dwellings and suits even more promoted fall of temperature of a body. It is already progress. The person has to possess ideal heating of a body. And then the climate will not have for it any value. Such person – thermo will be able to go in sports shorts to the

North Pole, without feeling any cold, and on the equator he will idle in hot sands of the desert. You understand what prospects it will open for mankind! It will not be necessary to build houses. The clothes are not necessary. The housing crisis does not exist. You can sleep on the ice-rink even without shirt...

– But I can kindle «bed» and fail in water as it was with Dashkevich.

Wagner attentively listened to my remark.

– It is necessary – he told – to put shoes on in shoes or galoshes not to fail.

– Means, after all not to do without dress?

– Subsequently it will be possible to regulate temperature of separate parts of a body. And now at us not all parts of a body are warmed equally. The ends of legs can be cold, and a trunk – we heat.

– And here such person – thermo you made Dashkevich?

– Not absolutely. Spontaneous regulation of body temperature is a business of very long-term future. I made Dashkevich artificially the person – thermo, increasing his temperature by means of short radio waves. In it there is nothing unusual yet. Radio waves increase body temperature even then when we do not wish it. My task came down to finding means to expand borders of change of temperature, without doing to a harm organism. You saw Dashkevich. How he feels?

– Apparently, well. But he very strenuously, often and deeply breathes. And from it brings down such steam as if it from a hot bath ran out on frosty air.

Wagner nodded.

– At temperature increase of a body and when cooling a body with effect of external air consumption of oxygen increases. Dashkevich should work strenuously lungs to supply cellular fabrics with oxygen. But one lungs it is difficult to bring to an organism the necessary amount of oxygen, and breath of skin comes to the rescue.

She breathes in all fifteen thousand square centimeters of the surface too. That is why Dashkevich went to walk by naked: the frost is not terrible to it, and the naked body can cope with skin breath better. And, judging by steam emitted by Dashkevich, he breathes skin perfectly. Everything is all right. Would you like to follow Dashkevich's example? I can and make of you «the warm guy» – the person – thermo, and you will move off in searches of your friend in a swimwear, only in galoshes and with a blanket under the arm. You can not care for food. You should not cook food: your stomach will have sufficient temperature in the best possible way to weld crude and even frozen fish. You will need to care only for one – to go in a radio emission strip. I will act with the directed radio waves. You can take with yourself a compass. I will specify the direction. You wish to do experience? I assure you, you will not undergo any troubles. You will need to prepare the organism only. I will enter to you into blood the solution of salts invented by me. You agree to it?

– Yes, but me it is necessary to replace Pronin soon.

– I will be on duty for you on radio station. Do not worry. We will cope with Pronin, and you go for Dashkevich. It will not be difficult for you to find it as, like you, it will not leave a radio emission strip. I repeat: To Dashkevich the frost is not terrible, and your friend will not catch a cold, but nevertheless I will be quieter if you find it and will bring home. It left without weapon. Bears can attack it, they gad in local places much. So on hands?

In a few minutes I already stood in shorts in the middle of the room.

– How do you feel? – Wagner asked.

– As though my body begins to be poured by fire. Awfully hot!

– You will get used. You breathe more deeply and more often. It at you will become a habit soon. Heart? Let me listen. Pulse? Hundred. Now it is normal. I to you to two hundred will catch up with it. Really hot will become the sky! Well, march! Go!

Wagner widely opened a door, having let in clouds of cold steam. To me it was a little terrible, but I overcame indecision and went outside. And immediately steam shrouded me.

– I see nothing – I told, helplessly turning.

– When you go, steam will not disturb you – Wagner told. – Kind way!

With a blanket under the arm, in rubber galoshes I went on the road, glancing at the compass brought to the eyes. On all my body and on the person hot sweat streamed.

Dogs of our small settlement, увидав a strange show, desperately began a bark and then in panic horror escaped from me. «If animals also are afraid of me, it is quite good» – I thought, going down to the lake.

The moon did not come several days for the horizon, it beat about the bush on the sky, filling with illusive light polar night. Wagner was right: when I went, steam not really prevented me to see. I watched prints of legs of Dashkevich on ice along the coast of the lake. Poor Dashkevich! Without galoshes it is probably hard for it to go. Where it stopped, traces went deep: hot legs melted ice. And Dashkevich had to go, without stopping at least over lakes and the rivers.

Strange thing: I did not pass also hour as felt infernal hunger and thirst. Thanks to high temperature in my organism there was a strengthened combustion, and the organism demanded fuel, that is food. Yes, I could not worry about preparation of hot food: to me was rather crude fish.

I descended on lake ice, spread a blanket, laid down and put a hand on ice. Ice began to thaw soon, and the hand went to ice more and more deeply. I had to lower a hand almost to a shoulder before fingers touched water. To the outlet done by me the great number of fishes came soon. I directly was enough them with hands and ate raw materials. Never in life I ate so much. It is surprising as soon as could sustain my stomach!

And I drank, drank without measure. But it had not to be surprised. I read that the person under tropics, working at the sun, allocates up to twelve liters of water in days and thus the amount of heat, six thousand five hundred liters of water, sufficient for heating, by one degree releases. A certain natural regulator of a body, obviously, by release of water tried to lower temperature to normal thirty seven degrees. The strengthened release of sweat caused the increased thirst.

Having sated and having got drunk, I went further, but again felt hunger and thirst soon, again was accepted to fishing, ate twice more than former and drank nearly half of lakes. I became is gluttonous as the muskrat eating every day so much food how many his body weighs. Interestingly, than Dashkevich who had to have the same terrible appetite, as well as I ate? Dashkevich had no galoshes and a blanket how he could catch fish? However I noticed a hole ashore and the hole which already semi-froze in lake ice soon. Obviously, careful Dashkevich melted snow and ice to the earth and carefully crept up to the region of the coast. Yes, it was difficult for it to get food. It is necessary to hurry to it to the aid.

I quickly went along the lake. Traces of bare feet of Dashkevich were clearly visible. It, as well as I, went on a compass. The moon shone brightly. It slowly moved ahead in the sky, taking a detour over my head as if wished to look from all directions at an extraordinary show – the steam sphere sliding on the ground.

Circle it was desert and it is silent. Only my noisy breath broke silence as heavy sighs of the engine at the lonely abandoned steppe station.

The ice plain extended endlessly, and Dashkevich everything was not visible. I began to be tired, and I wanted to sleep. Judging by position of the moon, there came midnight for a long time. It was necessary to think of a lodging for the night. I went, choosing the suitable town. In the north the horizon darkened. From there was a cloud. And stars at its approach as if fell in a huge black bag and disappeared. Here black бредень clouds collected stars from the half-sky and approached the moon. It is a little more, and the moon was the swallowed dark mouth of a cloud. Darkness came.

Snow went. But, getting on the hot steam cover surrounding me flakes of snow turned into rain drops, and they fell on my naked shoulders and a back as on the heated plate, and evaporated, and from legs flew down on the earth hot then. Yes, as it is strange, being behind the Polar circle in ice cold winter night, I got under damp tropical heavy rain. But this heavy rain existed only for me. Around the blizzard stormed.

And as it happens in the north when the sky becomes covered by clouds, air became warmer. Temperature from forty degrees below zero rose probably up to five below zero. I experienced the real heat. I could not regulate the temperature still. Short radio waves heated me so that I felt, as at burning noon under the equator. Drops of a rain heated up before reached my body, and could not cool awful heat. I several times rushed on the earth to be cooled, and felt how I plunge into snow which literally melted from my excited body.

At last the snow snow-storm stopped. Black бредень clouds began to shake out stars back. The moon looked out soon. I looked back and saw the ice strip sparkling on fluffy snow which was left by the rain freezing behind me which is flowing down from my body.

It is time to have a rest. I spread out a blanket on snow – it was damp from a rain – and stretched on it. But I did not risk to catch a cold, the blanket began to dry quickly, only my body touched it; from a blanket steam, as from damp clothes which are ironed too hot iron went.

I strong fell asleep. Having opened eyes, I saw nothing: obviously, clouds tightened the sky again. However I never before saw such black, impenetrable darkness. Attentively looking round, I, at last, noticed a star over my most-headed. That for strangeness! As though clouds covered all sky, except for a small circle in a zenith. I quickly rose and went forward, but then hit against an ice wall. Turned aside, took several steps – again a wall. It was unclear. I well remembered that I fell asleep on absolutely flat and open place, and now I was in some ice cave.

I went back and fell in a hole which was in the middle of a cave. Having reached walls, I bypassed around. Walls were smooth, ice and had no exit anywhere. The ice floor of a cave had a slope to the center and in the center – a big hollow. All cave had a hemisphere appearance with a small opening in a ceiling. Perhaps, this dwelling of some locals who found me on ice and brought to themselves in a yurta. But this yurta had neither doors, nor windows, and besides in it was nobody, except me.

How I got here? Only only through an opening in a ceiling. It was over my head at the height of four meters. It is surprising how I not расшибся if I was dumped from there! Yes, I in a trap. In this mousetrap I will starve to death if I do not get out from here. But how? To a hole in a ceiling not долезть. Walls? I knocked in walls. They, probably, were very fat. Unclear history! I sat down on the earth and the forehead began to rub to itself. Under me there was no blanket, and I felt how my body slowly plunges into the snow thawing under me. Suddenly I slapped myself on the head and burst out laughing.

Well, of course! Everything is very simple. I set myself in this prison. When I fell asleep, my hot body kindled snow around me. Despite a blanket, I slowly plunged into snow, it was not lying on the stony soil, as if in the center of a funnel yet. Steam which is coming out my body froze together and fell around me hoarfrost, forming an ice ring. It gradually accrued, turned into a wall which became isolated from above the arch. Hot breath punched in this arch a hole absolutely the same as in a den of the bear who is filled up with snow. I appeared in the center of an ice dome. From warmth of my body of a wall of this hemisphere melted inside and were increased outside by hoarfrost into which the warmth leaving an opening turned.

It, however, is surprising! I quietly fell asleep on the naked ice plain, and woke up in own ice house, such strong that any bear will not get into it. The house which grew self-building. It is very convenient. Unfortunately, the architect did not provide the door device. However, this business reparable.

I approached an ice wall of the self-harmonious house and, having bent the head, pressed a cinciput to ice. From a wall steam tumbled down, and on the earth water began to flow. Ice quickly thawed. I felt soon that my head passed through a wall. The window was ready. I twisted the head, expanding a hole, then pulled in the head back and looked outside.

Before me there was a same snow infinite plain which is filled in with moonlight. I turned the head on the left, to the right. Suddenly saw a polar bear not far. No, it is a she-bear with two bear cubs.

She-bear raised the head and expanded nostrils involved steam which was coming out the window made by me. Warm fur and a thick skin, obviously, did not protect bears from action of the directed short radio wave. From a she-bear and bear cubs brought down thick steam. Animals felt Unusual and, probably, unpleasant feeling of heat. They wound the head, were rubbed the nose during snow, rose by hinder legs and waved lobbies, as if blowing in themselves, then suddenly fell on the earth and began to ride in snow. Bear cubs roared such dense bass what could not be expected from babies them age, at least and a bear origin.

All respectable family, probably, was very hungry. And I was hungry not less them. We with big appetite looked at each other. I wanted to have dinner bear's flesh, they – human flesh. The ice wall divided us, and we could only lick lips, looking at each other. Steam proceeding from my body probably was extraordinary pleasant for sense of smell of a she-bear. It rose by hinder legs and put a muzzle in a window. I seized her by a nose. The she-bear began to roar, started back from a window, but did not escape. So tactless address irritated a she-bear, and it is known that any irritation at simple natures only stimulates appetite. Carnivorously glancing at me, the she-bear thrust a paw into a window and began to break a wall. Ice was quite thick, the wall not easily gave in, however the piece behind a piece flew away under mighty blows, and the hole extended.

Business took for me a nasty turn. The she-bear had much more chances to have dinner me, than at me – to regale on bear's flesh. It was necessary to think of flight. I approached an opposite wall and began to protaivat the second hole. My work progressed quite successfully, but also the she-bear did not linger. It worked already two paws. It is a little more, and the hole will extend so that the she-bear will be able to get into a lodge. And then end...

Came up one more effort, and my head for a wall. Now it is necessary to expand a hole. I was put by shoulders to an ice wall. It is ready. It is possible to get out.

But I was not in time and to promote half as involuntarily screamed and was involved back: I was faced by a she-bear. The cunning animal understood my maneuver. She-bear, seeing that I get out of a lodge, ran all over around and met me by oskalenny teeth.

When the tidbit leaves from under a nose, the nose, naturally, follows a tidbit. The she-bear tried to follow me. But the hole for it was narrow, and a she-bear, having thrust in a hole with running start the head and the right paw, stuck in a window. Temporarily she was imprisoned. It should be used. I got out through the first window expanded with a she-bear and ran.

No, I did not run, I flew with a speed of gale of ten points. The moon well lit to me a way. I ran on the smooth ice path left the rain which was flowing down from my body during a blizzard. However this path came to an end soon, and I ran a virgin soil.

I looked back. Far behind the black point moved, and behind it – two it is less. Medveditsa was released from the trap and caught up with me with the bear cubs. Now there was a competition on speed, and life was a rate. Whether I will manage to reach to the house?. From time to time I looked back and with horror noticed that преследовавшие_меня points all increased. I could already distinguish figures of a white she-bear and her cubs soon. I winded by bystry running. Besides I did not eat long ago and weakened for hunger. But the fear gave me force. I already approached the lake which was near our house.

If to cross the small gulf, then it is possible to reduce a way. But on a trouble during this mad run I lost galoshes. It was very dangerous to run without galoshes through the lake on ice: I could fail as Dashkevich. And I decided to turn aside. But I did not manage to run off also ten meters as I felt burning right hand pain. Pain and burn. I could not understand in what I business, and continued to run. Some more steps to the right, and me were captured by ice cold. Involuntarily I curtailed to the left, and again beneficial heat spread on all body.

Several times this feeling repeated. When I run out from a radio wave beam, temperature of my body goes down to normal, and I begin to experience surrounding cold. Air temperature, has to be, not less than thirty degrees below zero. For the naked person – not a joke!

I am forced to run in the direct direction. But this direct direction conducts me through lake ice. I looked back. Until I stopped and reflected, the she-bear managed to overtake for me considerably. She ran the equal rolling-over amble as though slow, but very spory.

I started running again. Here and ice. If to run very quickly, it will not manage to melt. I run. Solid ice under mine of a stupnyama turns into soft treacle. The leg goes to swill, complicating run. Several times my legs coordinated up to an ankle. It is good still that ice thick... And the she-bear comes nearer.

Now I run almost on an equal basis with a she-bear. Here it overtakes me. Crosses a straight line between me and the house. I am cut off... Medveditsa approaches me. I rush aside and I shout, I shout with all the might lungs. I run on snow zigzags, climbing a slope of the hill on which there is our house. The she-bear runs for me. I am forced to deviate a direct way. Burning cold grabs with the heated nippers my body. But I run, I run, choking, knocking teeth and trembling all over. I hear for myself stumps of a she-bear. One more effort... Bp!. As it is cold! Few steps away from the house I get to a hot stream of a radio wave... Door. If only it was not closed from within!. She-bear near me. She rises by hinder legs and wants to embrace strong me as dear friend. I open a door and I run in the room. I fall on a floor and I faint...

She-bear, obviously, did not touch me because I hear as if in the sleep, voices of professor Wagner and Dashkevich who, likely, returned before me.

– Such disease, of course, cannot be caused by action of short radio waves – professor says. – Companion Rubtsov caught a cold. Wow! Forty and three tenth.

«How I could catch a cold? – I think. – Of course, having only left the sector of the directed radio wave. In it the main inconvenience of artificial heating of a human body. When people learn to regulate randomly the temperature without external influences, then really it will be possible to walk safely in Adam's suit along the Polar circle».

(The story is written down according to t. I. I. R., recently arrived from Novaya Zemlya. The answer concerning this story is not received from professor Wagner yet.)

Flying carpet

For the first time I learned about professor Wagner many years ago. In one magazine for which it is difficult to find now I read an amusing story – «A case on jumps».

On the Moscow hippodrome there was a big day. Posters notified on «the grandiose program», on high monetary prizes and precious prize-winning cups, on participation in jumps of the best horses, equestrians, Russian and foreign, on a meeting of world champions. The congestion of public was extraordinary. Frequenters of races and races pointed to beginners to the famous equestrians and prize-winning horses, beautiful, vykholenny to gloss, told their sonorous names, remembered their family tree, victories, records, playfulness, names of owners and the plants – the word, everything that can interest the inveterate admirer of the totalizator.

And suddenly among representatives of the horse aristocracy brilliant, proud of the beauty someone noticed an old jade. It was so extraordinary thin that it was possible to count easily at it all edges. The injured legs swelled up in knee joints and are bent. The head is sadly hung, the lower drooped lip moved as if the jade whispered, complaining of the destiny. On a jade the famous boy jockey, barefoot, in a red print shirt sat to nobody. Someone's sharp-sighted eyes were noticed that the boy is attached to a horse.

Soon an awful jade as if run away from a knackery, also other audience uvidat. People laughed, surprised, asked, were indignant. How this horse could get here? Who allowed such unprecedented mockery? What madman possesses it? You look: it it becomes impudent in the first row with the best racers of morning... The person in the cylinder waves a tag. Copper pipes of regimental orchestra

glint in the sun and rend the air march sounds. The start is given, and... the most extraordinary begins here, fantastic...

The boy jockey in a red print shirt low bends to a back of a horse and strong squeezes a rychazhok on saddle onions. At the same moment the jade begins to move legs with such speed that it seems the fantastic centipede rushing a whirlwind on a hippodrome. The best prize-winning horses did not manage to depart from the starting line on three-four cases as the strakhovidny jade ran all over a circle, broke off a breast a tape at the finish, without stopping, rushed around two more times and, at last, stopped as driven, having low hung the head with the drooped lip; at the same time something several times slapped as a cracker. The jade won, and its owner had to take a dizzy prize.

Minute thousands of the viewers were in catalepsy, and in following the hippodrome turned into the bubbling volcano. People went mad, shouted, swung hands, hysterical squealed. Around a jade the bawling crowd quickly gathered. The indignant shouts were heard:

- Deception! Fraud! Down with!
- You watch, under a belly the motor...
- Size about a cigar box...
- And thin levers are attached to legs.
- Who owner of this jade?
- To kill! To tear to pieces it! Where it?
- Here it, in a hat... the inventor Wagner...
- Though physicist, and swindler. Beat him!.
- Misters! – tried to outvoice crowd of people in a hat. – Calm down. I did not put on the jade.

I was not going to beat you... Also wanted only...

Shouts of indignation muffled its voice. Over a hat fists, umbrellas, canes rose. It is unknown, than it would come to an end if Wagner did not lift the sphere which brightly sparkled in the sun size about billiard.

- Bomb! – he screamed. The crowd in horror jumped aside. The inventor disappeared.

Such is there was an event described in the magazine. I became interested in Wagner, found for him and, having got acquainted, started talking about a case on a hippodrome. The young inventor hopelessly waved a hand.

– My next nonsense. Nonsense. How many times I promised «to go not that street» – not to rasshibat a forehead a wall. And here the next cone ... – And it rubbed a forehead on which really there was a cone. – Donkikhotstvo.

– It could be worse – having burst out laughing, I told. – You were saved by resourcefulness. But about what wall and about what donkikhotstvo you speak?

– About a wall of stagnancy, dullness, conservatism of our government and our public. We hopelessly lagged behind in the technician from Europe and America. We still did not leave a plow. Fundamentals of our power still are natural horse backs. From all this it is possible to come to a despair. I cannot reconcile with it, well and still donkikhotstvy. I take each convenient and inconvenient opportunity to convince these people that the small motor can be stronger than a big horse that the self-moving crew will overtake any trotter. – Wagner's eyes derisively blinked the eyes. – This jade whom you saw, not live is the automatic machine, a mechanical toy. They did not even notice it. Saw only a motor and levers. Isn't that so, it is well made? – cheerfully he asked, having seen the amazement mixed with admiration on my face. After this he sighed. – I did not manage even to explain. They are mad about money, about the totalizator... Villains! They suspected even that I just wanted to beat them. However we will turn this sad page and somewhat quicker we will forget about it – Wagner already with usual good nature told. – I am occupied now by one fascinating idea... one invention ... – And it rubbed the cone on a forehead again.

- It you on a hippodrome was so decorated? – I asked.

– Yes... is not present, it I itself. One idea holds apart the head, and here cones. On a forehead and on a nape. You come more often, a guest you will be.

I used this invitation, became constant visitor at Wagner and every time found it with the new cone on the head and grazes on hands. «Idea» as a disease, came to light. Wagner laughed away and did not open the true reason of these wounds. Once he met me with the bandaged head and the tied-up right hand. Cheerfully smiling, he offered to me the left hand and told:

– The idea ripened. Yes, it seems to me, it is time to reap the harvest.

– Whether not to wait until it is possible to remove bandage? – it is sympathizing I asked.

– Trifles. If you help me... Perfectly. I also did not doubt you. And so, come to me on the dacha tomorrow, and you will see... Yes you will see that you will see ... – And Wagner cunning blinked the right eye – left was bandaged.

The next day early in the morning I descended from the train on the thrown substation and walked on the desert country road. Around neither dachas, nor wood. Quite sad, desert town. On the horizon gray country huts – the village Kolodezi – the purpose of my travel. In the village many wells with high cranes were valid. Sign: near the highest crane, in a «pure» half of a country hut, Wagner lodged. He met me already without bandage, treated with strong tea with cream and rye flat cakes with oil and told:

– Well – with if you were not tired, an idemta.

The inventor took a small suitcase from a table, in an outer entrance hall took an oar, two rods and came to the dusty street.

– And rods and an oar what for? – I with astonishment asked.

– Masking – Wagner winked at me. – That for us were not coordinated curious, увидав that people with suitcases go not to the station, and in the field. And so all will decide that we go to fishing.

I about this masking had a dissenting opinion: if as could excite curiosity of natives, so it is rods. I knew well that on three tens kilometers there was around neither river, nor the lake where fish would be found. Fortunately, the village as if became extinct – all were at field works. To us only one ancient old woman who crept out met to get warm in the sun. Having seen rods, she long saw off us the surprised eyes, having slightly opened a toothless mouth.

We went beyond a village fence and vigorously walked to the so-called old ground remote of kilometer on four from a small village. Here once there were military of the camp. The huge field overgrown with weeds, on the one hand was fenced with the lop-sided old fence, with another – became isolated an earth shaft. Near a fence and behind it huge heaps of dry horse manure towered. Wagner stopped near these «Augean stables», threw rods and took seat on a suitcase. He all road kept silence. I was burned with curiosity, but did not ask, knowing that Wagner himself will reveal to me the secret soon. And this moment came... The beginning was unexpected.

– How it seems to you whether the person is well made? It seems to me, badly. Worse than a flea. You laugh? In vain. A flea – an insignificant insect. So. And she jumps in tens and hundreds of times are higher than the growth. The person – a universe wreath – jumps in height on two meters and in length at three-four meters, the most bigger. Unless it is not offensive for human dignity?

– And you decided to correct this injustice of the nature? – I asked Wagner, beginning to guess.

– Yes, I dare to think that I will manage to correct this subquality work. The person learned to cross oceans, to rise in air, to skate, ski, get on smooth cable columns. Why don't it learn to jump in a flea way if not in hundreds then is tens times higher also further the growth? How? Using the muscular force of hands and legs and small adaptation.

Wagner opened a suitcase and took out four springs resembling matratsny from there. Springs were attached to plates, on plates there were belts. Two springs were big – for hands – the inventor explained – and two it is less – foot. Wagner quickly tied plate belts with springs to legs and asked me that I helped to bind springs on hands.

– All this is still primitive. Test of the principle. The main difficulty – to calculate balance – he said while I tightened to it belts. – I thank you. Now you will help me to get on a fence. Here we and an oar need.

The newborn person flea got on a fence. To be more exact, I with own hand raised and seated him as with the springs it was absolutely helpless.

– Well – with, so, we begin. Attention! Time, two, three!. – Wagner jumped. The spring on a leg was hooked for the acting fence board, and the inventor fell sideways.

– Better luck next time – he good-natured told.

– Judging by your cones and scratches, it is not the first pancake – I noticed.

– On these springs – the first. Latest model. Help me to rise, please, and again to climb up a fence.

It became tiresome.

– So, we begin.

– We continue – I corrected.

– All question in successfully to jump on all fours. It is easier for flea to jump, she has six legs – Wagner told. – And well, hop!

Already how it fell – the head down, I guessed that the jump will be unsuccessful again. And it is valid, the first blow – all weight of a body – fell on hands. Threw Wagner up and back. Having described an arch, he disappeared behind a fence.

I found the unlucky inventor on a heap of horse manure. Wagner lay on a back and potted about as a bug who vainly tried to turn over on legs. To my astonishment, Wagner's face brightened with pleasure.

– Springs, springs what, and? As threw! This time there will be a sense.

And, when Wagner jumped for the third time, there was a sense. Even, perhaps, bigger, than the inventor expected. «Flea» managed to fall by all four legs and to make a jump. Wagner, apparently, used muscles of legs as the second jump was higher and farther. The third, fourth is even better. And suddenly I heard uneasy shout:

– Hold me! I cannot stop!

Unfortunate! He also did not think of it. I rushed behind it, but where there! Wagner as a huge flea, huge jumps quickly moved away from me. The high earth shaft blocked it a way. The jumper could not turn aside. Some more jumps – and Wagner hit the head against an earth shaft, turned over head over heels and fell.

– I did not punch a hole in earth to a shaft? – slowly, hardly moving language, Wagner when recovered asked me. He still could joke.

* * *

I did not see Wagner several years. Unexpectedly he reminded of himself, having called by phone. He invited me to himself to the dacha so simply as if we left it only yesterday.

«There are news. If you allow, I will come for you on the car».

Did not pass also hour as I already went with Wagner by his car on the magnificent highway Moscow – Minsk. Externally Wagner changed a little, only his beard became as though is longer and more dense. He drove the covered car of the extended, well streamline shape. The car flew with such speed that I could hardly distinguish counter bridges, beautiful hotels standing at the road in picturesque corners – on woody hills or on the river bank. After an hour of such mad driving Wagner reduced speed, turned from the highway to the good highway, about half an hour flew with a speed of fifty kilometers per hour and, at last, stopped near a lonely cottage.

– Here we and houses.

We have hastily breakfast in the cozy dining room with a wide Venetian window. Wagner unexpectedly took out from where from under a table the massive glass and stretched to me:

– Hold!

I accepted a glass and was very surprised, without having felt its weight. Put on a table, but did not manage to unclench fingers as a glass flew up to a ceiling and there remained. Has to be, I had a comic because Wagner burst out laughing look and told:

– Well and a look at you! Though on the screen. However from what you will drink apple cider? Are guilty. I have no other glasses.

– You, maybe, after all explain to me, professor, this focus? – I asked.

– I am not a conjurer and not the wizard – he as though having a little taken offense answered.

– The glass was, apparently, metal. In a ceiling there was probably a hidden magnet. I guessed or not?

– Everything will speak in due time. Weather is excellent, to an idemta to breathe clean air. But before I want to weigh you on scales. – He weighed me, for some reason suggested to put 800 grams in a pocket of the weight weighing 1 kilogram and told: Punktum.

We left the house and went to a big field which was seen behind a birchwood. It seemed to me that among the field there is a lake: between white trunks of birches I saw a brilliant surface, and, having only approached closer, I was convinced of the mistake: the most part of the field was covered as if with brilliant felt, equal and smooth. Published this «carpet» with opaque gloss of light gray color it was similar to a water surface.

Wagner safely walked on «lake», I is absolutely timid – behind it. In the middle of «carpet» the area several honeycombs of square meters I saw a small cross as it seemed to me. When we approached it closer, it turned out that one «crosspiece» represented a crack in a carpet, and another – the bolt turned across a crack sitting on a core. From this central cross the brackets resembling door handles dispersed extensively.

Wagner turned a bolt so that it became against an opening. At the same moment I felt that we rise, as on the flying carpet.

– Hold brackets! – Wagner shouted to me. I grasped the handle, and in time as strongly rocked our «plane». Fortunately, wind gusts did not repeat any more, and we so smoothly rose that I could not get off impression as if not we go up, and the earth, the field, a birchwood, Wagner's dacha slowly fall.

– Our flying carpet would rise quicker if not the resistance of air – Wagner told. He sat against me, holding the bracket similar to the door handle. We were divided by a crack through which when the flying carpet was on the earth, the bolt holding the plane from rise as an anchor was passed.

– Yes, our aircraft of not too streamline shape; at least, when flying down – I responded, hardly forcing itself to speak: to such an extent this extraordinary adventure stunned me.

– Now you will not tell that over us a magnet which attracts us? – Wagner asked, having cunning blinked blue eyes.

– Alas, it is higher than my understanding – I answered. Wagner loudly laughed loudly.

– A difficult task – at last he told. – You can imagine that I invented some kevorit-screen protecting bodies from terrestrial inclination. But kevorit – the most blank and impracticable imagination. You could imagine that I loaded our flying carpet with electricity, of the same name with a terrestrial charge, and the flying carpet jumped aside from the earth as a buzenny ball...

– I imagine nothing – I objected. – Now interests me as highly we will rise. We are dressed as in summer, and we have no oxygen devices.

– You can be absolutely quiet – Wagner answered. – Carrying power of our flying carpet is very small. Its ceiling has only two-three hundred meters. You see, our rise is already slowed down. And when there will come evening, temperature will go down, humidity of air will increase, and our flying carpet will begin to descend. My calculation is absolutely exact. Punktum. Not without reason I verified your weight. There now. For now... we have a lot more time, and I can explain you a secret

of our flying carpet... You watch how many boys ran together to look at us. And from where only they undertake?. Shout, wave caps...

Slowly carried us for a grove. The river and crowd of children passed out of sight ashore soon.

– And so – Wagner continued – all these miracles were born from scientific works on physics of thin films, little-known to general public. I advise you to get acquainted with this subject. In sum, our flying carpet is made of a so-called firm chain. This body consisting of a set of cells bubbles. Alloy of magnesium and beryllium. The size of cells is less than one millimeter, and thickness of walls – one ten-thousand millimeter. Emptiness of cells are filled with hydrogen. At a thickness of walls – thin films – in one thousand millimeter weightless material already turns out, and at a thickness of one ten-thousand as at us, metal becomes flying. At the known size of the flying carpet from such metal it, as you can see, can lift not only itself (himself), but also additional freight. Forgive, but I will take off boots – got used to go at the dacha barefoot – he interrupted the explanations, took off boots and put near himself. – So – he told...

But at this moment it is unknown from where flew a wind gust, rocked our flying carpet, boots departed on the earth, the facilitated plane rushed up. Wagner screamed, and this shout resembled groan more. I understood: alas, now we will not be helped by neither night dampness, nor fall of temperature. We could not produce gas to decrease as aeronauts. Gas of our flying carpet was deeply hid in artificial «foamy» structure. We could not operate the movement of the plane neither down, nor across. We were helpless. We had no radio station. We had no stocks of food and water. This Wagner is a quite good inventor, but very impractical person. I was angry on it especially as to me thirst already having felt hungry and tormented.

– Whether our situation reminds you an old story of the person who took in head to jump in a flea way? – Wagner angrily breathed heavily, but kept silent. – There is nothing to tell, we got into pretty situation – I continued to saw it. – There can come the storm at night, our flying carpet will turn, and we will break. Or we will eat each other for hunger as castaway. Or we will die from thirst, and our bodies will be rasklevana birds...

Wagner loudly burst out laughing.

– I did not know that you such cheerful person also are able to joke in the most difficult circumstances! – sincerely he told, and it became a shame to me. – But our situation not so tragic as it seems to you. Fortunately, my flying carpet is welded from solid foam which is pretty fragile. We can break off pieces from our carpet, it will decrease in sizes and will fall as the raft under excessive weight falls. It is rather for work!

Wagner began to break off pieces of porous foam, since edges of a crack in the center of a carpet. I followed its example. We threw the broken-off pieces aside and down, but they steadily emerged upward and vanished somewhere in blue of the sky.

– Alloy expensive, is a pity to lose these pieces, but my familiar pilots will catch them in network. All these pieces will fly at one height, it is not higher than ten kilometers. You see, we already decrease. Some more pieces... Wait to throw, under us, apparently, the lake. Indeed. It is necessary to drop the ballast. Take off boots!

We safely landed in thickets of a hazel grove and bound braces and belts the spoiled flying carpet that it did not depart. Came back home barefoot, hungry and excited...

Devil's mill

– Directly from the station it is passed through all settlement the big street – Soviet. On it you also go. Dachas will terminate, the field road will begin, go on it by the sports ground down, to the small river. The small river will also have a village of Stryabtsy. Go down the street on the left all the way villages. The second house at the left – pay attention to huge oak gate – it is and there will be my giving. The hostess, Anna Tarasovna Tulikova, lives on a mill in the summer. And to a mill no

distance. Just in case you descend to the hostess on bow – she is a woman strict. Tell that you came to visit me, you will spend the night and that I will arrive later.

With such parting words Ivan Stepanovich Wagner supplied me, inviting to himself to the dacha situated near Moscow. This year professor Wagner lived in Moscow as the trust of exact mechanics by its order finished a construction of some difficult device and Wagner's presence it was necessary. Wagner spent nearly all free time in trust workshops, seldom coming out to the dacha. But this day – Saturday – works in workshops terminated early, and Wagner promised me to arrive and spend with me Sunday.

I without effort found Wagner's dacha and went to get acquainted with Tarasovna. Despite evening, was very hot. The summer and fall that year were exclusively hot. The small rivulet Ilevka on which there was Tarasovna's mill absolutely dried up. Without reaching a mill yet, I heard a female voice of force and height extraordinary. The voice is this, belonging to the widow Tulikova, it was remembered to me well – it directly contused eardrums. Besides Tarasovna had ability to issue so many words in a minute that even the awarded stenographer would not be able to write down and half. This time Tarasovna brought down all the machine-gun eloquence on the head of the peasant who brought rye for a grinding. The peasant scratched a shaggy beard, and Tarasovna, упершись fists in wide hips, shouted:

– You do not see, perhaps? Chicken fords the small river, and it – to grind! Here frogs took rest from the land, and you – to grind! A samovar to put waters you will not gather, and it – to grind! Yesterday the Bug drank up the last water, and you – to grind!.

«And it – to grind», «and you – to grind» – sounded as a refrain. The peasant listened long and attentively, then grunted and began to gather in a way back.

Tarasovna paid attention to me. Having learned that I am a guest of her summer resident, she lowered a voice on several tones why its shrillness did not decrease, and with forced affability invited me «to be as at home».

– Really really will not even be enough for a samovar? – I asked, cautiously glancing at the small river and feeling what in a throat at me dried up.

– Will be enough, will be enough, do not worry. We have a well. Vaska! Deliver a samovar to the guest.

I turned back and saw the guy of years of eighteen lying on a grass; it was Tarasovna's son and her assistant – adding on a mill. Vaska it is lazy rose, stegnut a rod a grass and started wandering to the house, and Tarasovna tormented to me ears with a shrill voice for a long time, complaining of a drought, of the dried-up Ilevka, of god, of the whole world. Its mill stood, and the mill feeds it with children, feeds all year.

– And that for the people irresponsible! See: to a mosquito to get drunk will not be enough, and they – to grind. As though I refuse bread!.

– The samovar began to boil! – Vasily from the yard shouted.

– Welcome.

I did not manage to drink tea in a garden among mean apple-trees yet as I heard a familiar voice of Wagner:

The village where Evgeny missed,

There was a charming corner...

– You miss? – Wagner took seat for a little table near me. He told me that he becomes in the city, I to it – about the impressions.

– Yes, Tarasovna should help. Go after tea to it to a mill – professor offered.

And we went. Wagner was in the most cheerful mood.

– It is possible to look at the device of your mill? – he asked.

Tarasovna graciously resolved, and we with professor entered the twilight of a mill. Wagner examined its simple mechanics.

– For one and a half thousand years mills were under construction B.C., it is not enough what differing from this – Wagner told. – How many it at you in day of a namalyval?

– How many will bring, it is so much and namalyvat – Tarasovna answered. – Fifty centners, and even it is more when there is a lot of water.

– So, so. – Wagner thoughtfully nodded. – I do not promise fifty centners, but ten can be ground. For a start. And then we will look.

– Hundred! If at least hundred! – Tarasovna sighed. Wagner stood some more minutes over millstones, tried a shaft, thought and told:

– Here that, Anna Tarasovna. I will deliver you the small engine. It will only be necessary to rearrange millstones – these will be great for my engine. I will fit your old, it will be possible to make small of them. Vasily will help me. But only a promise is a promise. My engine will be in a box. Do not open this box and you do not watch what is in it, otherwise you will damage the engine, and then I will help nothing to you. Goes?

– Really! Yes of course! Yes unless I?. Be mercy!

Wagner turned to work. Vasily and I helped him.

I decided that, most likely, Wagner wants to put the small kerosene or oil engine. But why such mystery?

We worked almost till midnight. When we with Vasily fell down for fatigue and strong fell asleep, Wagner continued to work: it did not need rest.

Having woken up in the morning, I went to a mill. Wagner was there. He established quite voluminous box over millstones and now was busy with the fact that removed an iron pipe through a ceiling.

– Help me – he told.

– Chimney? – I asked.

Wagner lowed in reply something uncertain, but eyes so derisively and cheerfully glanced at me that I solved: Wagner starts something curious. It is not similar to the gazolinovy engine.

– What is in this box? – I asked.

– Engine.

– What?

– Crippled.

– Eternal? – I asked again, thinking that I misheard. But Wagner answered nothing. It strongly began to knock the axe, cutting through a hole in a ceiling. Through this hole it removed a pipe. Then Wagner asked us to leave and, having remained one, was engaged in the last preparations. In a few minutes I heard as millstones zavorochatsya slowly. I looked at the pipe rising meters by five over a roof, but did not notice over it the slightest sign of smoke or steam.

Wagner opened doors of a mill and invited us to enter.

– The mill works – he told, addressing Tarasovna. – You see this handle on a box? When want to stop a mill, turn the handle.

– Why to stop? It is more than enough of grain, I will grind day and night.

– Well also grind on health. Only you remember an arrangement: not to open a box.

Tarasovna began to thank Wagner.

– For the present there is nothing. When you collect flour for a grinding, then thank. We go – he addressed me. We went outside. – Now I go to Moscow – Wagner told. I will arrive back by a lunch by very interesting car.

– Car?

– D-d-yes – Wagner stretched. – Autofugue. Samobezhka, so to speak. Yes here you will see.

Having waved me at parting a hand, Wagner went to the station, vigorous, fresh in spite of the fact that worked all night long. I went to a garden, found for the town in a shadow of a shed and went deep into reading. However this day I was not fated to enjoy rest.

Bloodcurdling women's scream sounded from a mill. As if two corkscrews made white-hot bored through to me eardrums, and at the same time and a brain. The violent cry which broke off silence sleepy Stryabtsov could be made only by vocal chords of the respectable widow Tulikova. Possibly, the bishop Gatton alive eaten by rats did not shout so before death as cried out Tarasovna. But what could frighten her so? On a mill was many rats and mice, but Tarasovna got used to them. I did not manage to rise from the earth as shout unexpectedly stopped on the choking note as though to Tarasovna someone squeezed a throat. I ran to a mill.

After a bright sun in the twilight of a mill at the first moment I could sort nothing. Everything was silent. Millstones continued the work. I took several steps and was hooked by a leg for something soft. My eyes already got used to the twilight a little. Having bent, I saw the heavy body of the widow Tulikova lying prone on a floor. Her one hand was rejected aside, fingers are convulsively compressed in a fist, other hand was pressed by a body... Murder?. Sudden death?. I turned Tarasovna's body, took a hand and groped pulse. It was hardly notable. Tarasovna, probably, was in a deep faint.

I took a ladle and ran to the small river to gather waters and to sprinkle a little on Tarasovna. It seemed to me that I returned very quickly. But during this time Tarasovna already recovered. I did not manage to approach to the wide doors of a mill as from there ran out with the same violent shout of Tarasovna. As the enraged cow, she flew on me, brought down from legs, and the water from a ladle intended for its reduction in feeling poured over me. My side was decently hurt by the heavy foot which ran on my plunged Tarasovna's body, the nape strongly hurt. I lay on the earth probably for about a minute while, at last, had an opportunity to think. At the end of the village, about the Village Council, Tarasovna's shout interrupted by abrupt exclamations was heard. I hardly raised the head and took seat on the dusty road. On the occasion of a holiday peasants were at home, and members of the Village Council, sitting on a zavalinka at the chairman's log hut, peacefully discussed public affairs when Tarasovna's shout blew up before them as a bomb. The chairman поковырял in ears as if taking the got stuck Tarasovna's squeals from there, and something told her. She began to chatter loudly again. Then all rose. The chairman called to the militiaman, and all moved to a mill. I noticed that Tarasovna, the woman not of shy ten, went in the thick of crowd, probably, being afraid to act forward. I rose, shook off and welcomed authorities.

– Well, show where it? – the chairman asked, shortening a stride.

– Yes here a box over a millstone, you see? – Tarasovna told, without entering a mill.

The chairman, probably, was afraid, but «noblesse oblige». It carefully approached a box.

– Here it piece what. How this box opens? Well, maybe, you understand better? – he addressed the militiaman.

The militiaman, the young guy in freckles, approached a box and bravely lifted a cover. At the same moment of Tarasovna shouted and ran out on the street. After it also the crowd of curious which jammed into a mill took to the heels. Only authorities remained on a mill. But also they involuntarily started back, having glanced in a box. I approached closer and when uvidat that is in a box, was struck not less the others.

In a box the end of horizontally rotating shaft was concluded. The wheel with the handle is attached to a shaft. A human hand – a live hand! – strong held this handle, and, probably, it rotated a wheel, and together with it and the shaft setting in motion through millstone gear wheels. In an elbow joint the hand was attached to the metal cylinder. This cylinder was connected to the pipe coming to light. Besides, two glass tubules and, apparently, the electric wires leaving a box were inserted into the cylinder it is less. On the same small box the galvanometer and the manometer were established.

Yes, with an ulterior motive Tarasovna so shouted. A strange and terrible impression was made by this working live human hand. Tarasovna, as well as her legendary progenitress Eve, curiosity ruined. Wagner was the same bad expert on female psychology, as well as bible god. Do not tell Wagner Tarasovne what in a box cannot be looked, she would not take an interest in the mechanism setting millstones in motion, quite satisfied with the fact that they spin. But Wagner forbade it to look

and it excited insuperable curiosity. And now she learned the terrible truth: its millstones spin with a hand of the dead person!

Authorities were stunned. They did not know how to react to such case which is not provided by the law.

– Citizen! Get out from a box! – the militiaman shouted, assuming that if the hand moves, then she belongs to the living person who, obviously, is hidden in a box. But the hand continued to twirl a wheel, and no citizen appeared.

– There is no place to hide to the person here – the chairman told. – You see, the shoulder in bank is moved, and it is higher than one small box.

– Violation of the code about work – was thoughtfully told by the chairman's son-in-law, the weigher of the railway station. – Without labor exchange uninsured is employed and, probably. Violation of days of rest and working hours. It is possible to appeal against the resolution.

– Whose hand? – the militiaman asked, having quickened.

– The summer resident my Wagner attached to me. His hand! – Tarasovna answered. – «I – say – to you I will use a mill, only do not look in a box». Unless I knew? Fie! That hands to earn bread by mortuaries? I do not want to work at a devil's mill!

– And than badly? – the old man with the cunning blinked eyes asked. – It is not necessary to feed, it is not necessary to pay, and works day and night. And to a braid such piece to fit it or, say, to thresh. You lie on the furnace yes you eat kalatches, and it...

– And you be silent! – angrily the militiaman told. – Do not force down. I ask, a hand whose? Perhaps, here the smertoubiystvo occurred. Perhaps to the person the hand was cut off, and he without hand goes now and looks for where a hand.

– Good gracious! – Tarasovna began to wail. – Well, as will come yes here will shout: «Give my hand!»

– Here that and it. It, citizens, not a joke, but a crime under the article of the Criminal code. Where your summer resident Wagner?

– In Moscow. Today has to be.

– Here we will arrest him and we will remove interrogation from it. From where it got a human hand and on what code operates it? To stop a grinding! Illegally.

– Ah, fathers! – again Tarasovna screamed. Now she bitterly regretted the curiosity, and it is even more in what in a temper stirred up about the hand which frightened her. – Unless you will stop it? Shout at it do not shout – will not hear, there are no ears. Twists and twists.

– Well and let twists, and do not fill up grain.

Talking loudly, all left a mill. I remained to look what will be done by Tarasovna. She did not dare to disobey an administration order did not fill up grain in a funnel any more. But she regretted a hand which now in vain a millstone spit or maybe it was a pity for millstones, and Tarasovna stopped work of a hand, having turned a rychazhok on a box.

– You did affairs! – I told Tarasovna, becoming angry about her for the fact that her curiosity and garrulity will give now a lot of trouble to Wagner. I for a minute did not doubt that Wagner did not commit any crime.

– You did! – she answered with irritation. – All mill was befouled! Here and people speak: devil's mill.

The chairman of the Village Council and the militiaman returned with the press and sealing wax. The militiaman remembered that measures to protection of traces of crime are not taken.

– Ceased to grind? – the militiaman asked.

– Poshabashila – Tarasovna answered.

The chairman set the seal to doors of a box in which there was a hand, and Tarasovna awfully was afraid that the chairman did not burn a mill. But everything was safely. The second seal was set to a mill door.

I met halfway on Wagner Road, intending to warn him about events of day. However my maneuver was not successful. The militiaman called to me and suggested to return. Anything else did not remain to me how to go to a garden and to continue the interrupted reading.

The village worried and hooted as an alarmed beehive. All with impatience expected Wagner's arrival, and he forced itself to expect long enough. Already began to get dark when the boys guarding on the road cried:

– Goes! Goes!

All hurried on the road. Wagner really drove up to us. But on what crew! Imagine the long office table covered with the cloth which is going down to the earth. Above at the edges «table» is fenced with a board or iron wall of centimeters fifty height. It, obviously, was also that «samobezhka» about which Wagner spoke to me.

Because of the mountain the gray cloud rose. Wind twisted small tornadoes of dust on the road. The rain, long ago zhdanny Tarasovna came.

– Sit down! – Wagner shouted, having seen me. It stopped the extraordinary cart, I jumped and took seat near it. At this time the crowd, predvoditelstvuyemy the chairman of the Village Council, already approached a samobezhka.

– The citizen, climb up, you are arrested! – the chairman told.

Unexpectedly the wind gust lifted the edge of cloth which veiled a samobezhka. Shout of horror swept on crowd, and she started back as if not a light breeze, but the strongest hurricane suddenly struck it. Shrill squeal of Tarasovna covered all voices. Several minutes proceeded this confusion which reason I did not understand.

Wagner quietly looked at crowd, undertook a wheel of management, and... the crowd screamed even more loudly than former again. Samobezhka rose by racks as a horse whom the skilled equestrian forces to turn all the case on hind legs. Then Wagner directed the crew uphill, without paying attention to shouts of crowd, the chairman and the militiaman. The militiaman rushed after, but Wagner translated the speed lever, and the samobezhka with extraordinary ease began to take rise.

The militiaman remained behind, but he did not want to be reconciled with the defeat. He ran after us. To the station was nearby. We went not at a full speed yet. In a few minutes after we passed the station and came out to the highway conducting to Moscow, we heard for ourselves a motorcycle crash. Obviously, the militiaman who got from where the car, decided to continue a pursuit. Wagner smiled.

– Here I will show you all qualities of my samobezhka now.

He continued to drive at the same speed, without paying attention to the approaching persecutor. And when the militiaman already almost overtook for us, Wagner turned... is not present, did not turn, and such bend who is absolutely impossible for the ordinary car made. It suddenly stopped a samobezhka and then somehow moved it all case to the right to the roadside as if the samobezhka could run not only forward, but also sideways. It was made so unexpectedly that the militiaman did not manage to constrain the motorcycle and slipped forward.

But Wagner was not satisfied with this effect. It started up a samobezhka forward again and it appeared ahead of the militiaman soon, as if setting on him. At this time the rain went. On the highway the big pools which were flowing down in quite deep ditches on both sides of the highway were formed. Wagner admitted the persecutor even closer and suddenly, having abruptly turned, sent a samobezhka across the highway, to a ditch. I involuntarily grasped overboard. But my fears were vain. Samobezhka as the small tank, safely crept through a ditch and ran on the pitted, kochkovaty field. The militiaman with the motorcycle, of course, could not follow us. He would break the car in the first ditch.

– Here you see! – Wagner himself, probably, delighted with the invention told.

– Perfectly! – I exclaimed. – But how this samobezhka is arranged and what frightened crowd when it uvidat your crew?

– The pursuit lagged behind, we can have a talk – Wagner told. – Bend and raise cloth.

I raised cloth and screamed from surprise. Cloth covered... three pairs of naked human legs!

– Have fun, and there is enough – Wagner told, laughing. – It is necessary to comply also companion militiaman, he honestly fulfilled the duty. We go back and we will give up in hands of the authority. We will return on the dacha and we will explain all incident. I have documents that all hands and legs are taken by me for scientific experiences from dissecting room; it is clear, that I did not commit any murder.

– But what image these legs and the hand rotating millstones...

– And here wait – professor interrupted me – now we will do a ceremony of surrender, and then I will tell you.

And when this ceremony was done, Wagner, continuing to go on the samobezhka under escort of the militiaman accompanying us on the motorcycle began the explanations:

– I will be short. They say, life is burning. However the last observations over vital processes showed that it absolutely not so. Life is not burning, but without burning life cannot last long. Found special substance in muscles a glycogen which from the chemical point of view represents almost the same, as sugar. And so, at muscle work in it lactic acid and warmth, that is free energy are formed of this sugar. It is calculated that upon transition of sugar to one gram of lactic acid hundred seventy calories are released. Thus, muscle work, or if you want, her life, happens without oxidation or combustion. But when in the working muscle heat (energy) was generated and the glycogen appeared, without oxygen this lactic acid cannot disappear, and the muscle not in forces farther to work. But transfer you such tired muscle to the atmosphere of oxygen, and lactic acid immediately will disappear, oxygen will be absorbed, and carbonic acid and heat, as are emitted at any burning.

Where lactic acid disappears? It turns into sugar again. Only the fifth part it disappears completely. Thus, one may say, that a muscle – the car working due to chemical energy which arises upon transition of bodies with more complex structure in bodies simpler due to falling of potential of chemical energy. Means in order that energy of a muscle was restored, it is necessary to supply it with oxygen only. In the atmosphere of pure oxygen under the known experimental conditions the muscle becomes tireless.

Here on it I also built the invention with the hands and legs which are cut off at corpses. Why to them to vanish if they can bring useful work? You know that members of the body can live, separated from a body, vaguely long time if only to feed them properly. They can function, that is perform the usual work. Human muscles are the perfectly constructed cars. Why them not to force to work after the death of the owner, exciting reduction by electric current?

You know that my muscles also do not know were tired. But I went in fight against fatigue of the muscles in a bit different way. I invented fatigue anti-toxins. With a hand on a mill and legs under this crew I arrived differently. First of all I provided them with food. The special physiological solution very close to composition of blood (notice: strenuously saturated with oxygen), feeds hand muscles on a mill and these legs. Plentiful supply with oxygen does muscles tireless. Electric current causes their reduction.

– And why you suited a pipe on a mill?

– I was afraid that flour dust can get to a vessel with nutritious liquid and will condense it, having made unusable for «feeding» of a hand. On a pipe oxygen directly from air turns out. This my invention which considerably is reducing the price of operation of muscular strength of the person. You only think what prospects are opened by my invention! Over time all people, as well as I now, will not know muscular exhaustion. Productivity of human work will increase extraordinary. But it is not enough: we will force to work also the dead. Just imagine: millions of years it was required to the nature to create such perfect mechanism as a human body, and here death forever destroys this magnificent car! Unless it is not ridiculous? If we are not able to win against death absolutely, then

we will prolong, at least, muscle work. Imagine factory which cars are set in motion by the human hands which are cut off from a body.

– Terrible picture!

– Anything. The advantage would force people to look other eyes at this picture soon. Here I put a hand on a mill. Tarasovna was frightened. But benefit is clear for it. And eventually she would probably not refuse that her late husband continued to give her help the hands... Arrived.

Rain expected to fall. At our entry into the village from all log huts the people who surrounded us began to run out. «Court» terminated quickly. Wagner showed pieces of paper from Moscow, and they were convincing. Tarasovna asked it to take away somewhat quicker from a mill a dead hand. She was afraid that this hand sometime will strangle her at night. However, in a hand there was no need also. The heavy rain lifted rechonka water, and it was ready to replace a hand of the dead person. And this hand, despite Wagner's protest, was carried at the cemetery and dug. (It is told P.E. Yakimenko.)

Concerning this story Wagner wrote:

«The scientific explanation of the fact is offered quite correctly. The muscle of an animal or the person, even cut out from a body, really possesses some stock of potential chemical energy thanks to the fact that in it there are materials capable for disintegration. If such muscle to irritate with electric current, it can perform the known work. After work in a muscle there is a lactic acid. But at oxygen food lactic acid disappears, and the muscle becomes capable to work again. Thus, in the atmosphere of pure oxygen the muscle can become tireless. I really conducted such experiment with a tireless muscle at the dacha. By means of electricity I forced to move a hand of the person which even performed some work. Experience continued only several minutes and was repetition of the experiences which are already done in some scientific laboratories. But such «posthumously working muscle» cannot have practical value. Game will not cost candles – oxygen costs much. Of its direct getting from air how it is done by lungs, I only think. Perhaps, I will use the mechanism of lungs and hearts motors. You will understand now that in the story from science and that from the imagination.

Wagner».

Over a chasm

I. MYSTERIOUS GIVING

During the walks in the neighborhood of Simeiz I paid attention to the lonely giving standing on a steep slope of the mountain. To this giving it was not carried out even roads. A circle it was enclosed with a high fence, with the only low gate which was always densely covered. And neither the greens bush, nor a tree was seen over a fence. A giving circle – naked ledges of yellowish rocks; between them sickly junipers and undersized, curve mountain pines grew here and there.

«What for the imagination came to someone to mind to lodge on this wild, naked rock? And whether somebody lives there?» – I thought, wandering around giving.

I never before saw that somebody left it. My curiosity was so big that I, admit, tried to glance on the yard of the mysterious dwelling, having climbed up on above the lying rocks. But giving was so located that from where I came, I could see only a small corner of the yard. It was also empty and is not cultivated, as well as the surrounding area.

However after several days of observations I managed to notice that on the yard there passed some elderly woman in black.

It interested me even more.

– If there live people, then they have to support though some communication with the outside world, well, at least to go to a market behind products!

I began to inquire among the acquaintances, and at last I managed to satisfy my curiosity. However, nobody knew authentically about inhabitants of giving, but one acquaintance told me that, by hearsay, there lives professor Wagner.

Professor Wagner!

It was enough absolutely to rivet my attention on giving. I by all means wanted to see the extraordinary person who did so much noise by the inventions. But how?. I literally began to spy on giving. I felt that it was bad and nevertheless continued the observations, for hours and hours at different times day and even night staying behind a juniper bush, near giving.

They say, if the person persistently pursues one aim, then sooner or later he will reach it.

Somehow early in the morning, when just it is light, I suddenly heard that the treasured door in a high fence creaked. I all pricked up the ears, contracted and with bated breath began to watch, what will be farther.

The door opened. The tall person with a ruddy face, a fair-haired beard and the hung moustaches left and attentively looked round around. Of course, it it, professor Wagner!

Having convinced that around nobody is not present, he began to rise slowly up, reached the small mountain platform and began to be engaged in some exercises, absolutely unclear for me, there. On the platform stones of various size were scattered. Wagner approached them and did attempts to lift them, then, carefully going, passed to the new place and again undertook stones. But all of them were so big and heavy that even the professional athlete could hardly get moving forward them.

«That for a strange entertainment!» – I thought. And suddenly I was so struck that could not constrain involuntary exclamation. There was something improbable: professor Wagner approached a huge fragment of the rock, the size of more human growth, took by the acting keen edge and lifted a fragment with such ease as though it was the piece of a cardboard. Having extended a hand, it began to describe arches this fragment of the rock.

I did not know what to think. Or Wagner had supernatural force... but then – why he could not lift stones small rather, or... I did not manage to finish thinking about the thought as new focus of Wagner struck me even more.

Wagner threw a block up as a small stone, and it departed, having risen by height of two tens meters. With nervousness I expected as this block on the earth will bang. But the fragment fell back quite slowly. I counted ten seconds before the block fell down. And, when it was above the ground on the ball human growth, Wagner held up a hand, caught and held a block, and his hand did not even tremble.

– Huo-ho-ho! – cheerfully Wagner burst out laughing with the Basque and far flung away from himself a block. It, having flown by some time parallel to the earth, suddenly abruptly changed the line of flight on steep, quickly fell and with a terrible roar scattered in pieces. – Huo-ho-ho! – again Wagner burst out laughing and made an extraordinary jump. Having risen meter by four, it flew by along the platform in my party. He, obviously, did not calculate a jump as with it the same story, as happened to a block: unexpectedly it began to fall quickly. And if not a slope where it fell, Wagner probably *расшибся* to death. It fell near me, on other side of a juniper bush, moaned and swore, having grasped a knee. Having stroked the hurt place, he made attempt to rise and again moaned.

After some fluctuation I decided to find the presence and to give it the help.

– You very much *расшибились*? Whether not to help you? – I asked, leaving a bush.

Apparently, my emergence did not surprise professor. At least, he showed nothing him.

– No, I thank you – he quietly answered – I will reach. – And he made new attempt to rise. His face was distorted from pain. He even leaned back back. The leg in a knee quickly swelled. It was obvious that not to do it without assistance.

And I began to act resolutely.

– Idemte, until pain weakened you even more – I told and lifted him. It obeyed. At each movement the sore leg inflicted on it suffering. We slowly climbed a steep slope. I almost carried Wagner on myself and itself was exhausted under weight of his quite heavy body. But at the same time I was extremely happy that I thus had an opportunity not only to *uvidat*, but also to get acquainted with professor Wagner, to visit his dwelling. However, maybe, having reached a gate, he will thank me and will not let in to himself? This thought disturbed me when we approached a high fence of its giving. But he told nothing, and we crossed treasured line – hardly he could say yes something. To it it was absolutely bad. From pain and concussion he almost fainted. I fell for fatigue too. And still, before entering it into the house, I managed to dart through a shoulder an inquisitive glance at the yard.

The yard was quite extensive. In the middle there was some device similar to the device Moraine. In the depth of the yard, in the earth, some big, laid by thick glass round opening was seen. Around this opening, the metal arches which were from each other at half a meter distance acted from it to the house and in several directions from the earth.

Any more I managed to consider nothing. Towards to us the house left the scared elderly woman in black – his housekeeper as I learned then.

We put professor Wagner to bed.

II. VICIOUS CIRCLE

To Wagner it was absolutely thin. He panted, having closed eyes, raved.

«Really this ingenious car – a brain of professor Wagner can be lost from concussion?» – I thought with concern.

The patient raved mathematical formulas and from time to time groaned. The become puzzled housekeeper stood helplessly and only repeated:

– What will be now? Fathers, what will be now?.

I had to give to professor first aid and to look after the patient.

Only for the second day by the morning Wagner recovered. He opened eyes and looked at me quite consciously.

– I thank you ... – he poorly spoke.

I allowed it to drink, and it, having nodded me, asked to leave it. Tired with troubles of yesterday and at sleepless night, I, at last, decided to leave the patient of one and came to the yard to breathe fresh, morning air. The unknown device standing in the middle of the yard drew my attention again. I approached it and gave a hand.

– Do not go! Stop! – I heard for the muffled, scared voice of the housekeeper. And at the very same time I felt that my hand suddenly became extraordinary heavy as though to it hung up the huge weight which jerked me with such force down that I fell to the ground. The invisible weight pressed down a brush of my hand.

With big effort I took away a hand back. She was ill and was red.

Near me there was a housekeeper and grievously swung the head.

– And as it you... Unless it is possible?.. You do not go on the yard better, and that and absolutely will flatten you!

Without understanding anything, I returned to the house and put a compress on a sore hand.

When professor woke up again, he looked already absolutely vigorous. Obviously, this person had extraordinary healthy organism.

– What is it? – he asked, pointing to my hand.

I explained to him.

– You were exposed to big danger – he told.

I very much wanted to hear rather from Wagner an explanation of all extraordinary that I had to endure, but I kept from questions, without wishing to disturb the patient.

In the evening on the same day Wagner, having asked to move his bed to a window, itself began to say about what so occupied me.

– The science studies manifestations of forces of nature – he began without preface – establishes scientific laws, but knows essence of these forces very little. We speak: «electricity, gravity». We study their properties, we use for the purposes. But they reveal final secrets of the nature to us very reluctantly. And therefore we use them far not fully. Electricity in this regard was more pliable. We enslaved this force, having seized it, forced to work for ourselves. We overtake it from place to place, we save in a stock, we spend as required. But gravity is really the most tenacious force. We have to get on with it, adapt more to it, than adapt it to the needs. If we could change gravity, operate it voluntarily, accumulate as electricity, then what powerful tool we would receive! To seize this rebellious force was my old desire.

– And you seized it! – I exclaimed, beginning to understand all event.

– Yes, I seized it. I found means to regulate gravity voluntarily. You saw my first success... Oh... progress sometimes costs much!.. – Wagner sighed, rubbing the hurt knee. – In the form of experience I reduced gravity on the small site near the house. And you saw with what ease I lifted

a block. It is made due to increase in gravity on small space of my yard... You nearly paid with life for the curiosity, having approached my «vicious circle».

Yes here, look – it continued, specifying by a hand in a window. – Towards giving the flock of birds flies. Perhaps, at least one of them will fly by over a zone of the strengthened attraction...

He became silent, and I with nervousness watched the approaching birds... Here they fly over the yard...

And suddenly one of them a stone fell to the ground and did not even break, and directly turned into a spot which covered the earth with a layer probably not more thickly than tissue paper.

– Saw?

I shuddered, having imagined, as the same destiny could comprehend me.

– Yes – he guessed my thought – you would be crushed by weight of own head and would turn into flat cake. – And, having again grinned, it continued: – Fima, my housekeeper, says that I invented fine means to keep products from vagrant cats. «Absolutely you do not ruin them – she says – and that paws stuck: at times will not be!» Yes ... – he told after a pause – there are cats, even more unruly and dangerous – biped, armed not with claws and teeth, but guns and machine guns.

Imagine what protective means will be a subdued gravity! I can suit a protecting zone on borders of the states, and any enemy will not cross it. Airplanes will stoop down as this bird. It is more than that, even shells not in forces will be to fly this protecting zone. It is possible to make and vice versa: to deprive of the coming enemy of gravity, and soldiers at the slightest movement will highly jump up and to dangle helplessly in air... But all this trifles in comparison with what I reached. I found means to reduce gravity on all surface of the globe, except for poles...

– And how you will reach it?

– I will force the globe to rotate quicker, that's all – professor Wagner with such look as though business went about a top answered.

– To increase the speed of rotation of Earth?! – I could not refrain from exclamation.

– Yes, I will increase the speed of its movement, and then centrifugal force will begin to increase, and all bodies which are on the earth will become is easier. If you have nothing against to stay for a while with me some more days...

– With pleasure!

– I will begin experience as soon as I get up, and you will see a lot of interesting.

III. «SPINS»

In several days professor Wagner recovered absolutely, except for the fact that he limped a little. He for a long time left in the underground laboratory which is in a yard corner, providing the home library in my order. But in laboratory he did not invite me.

Once, when I sat in library, Wagner, very brisk entered, and still immediately shouted to me:
– Spins! I started the device, and now we will look, what will be farther!

I expected that there will be something extraordinary. But there passed hours, there passed day, nothing changed.

– Wait – professor in the hung moustaches smiled – centrifugal force increases in proportion to a speed square. And Earth – a decent top, you will not shake it soon!

Next morning, rising from a bed, I felt some ease. To check itself, I lifted a chair. It seemed to me much easier, than usually. Obviously, centrifugal force began to work. I came to a verandah and took seat with the book in hands. On the book the shadow from a column fell. Involuntarily I paid attention that the shadow moves quickly enough. What could it mean? As though the sun began to move quicker on the sky.

– Aha, you noticed? – I heard a voice of Wagner who watched me. – The earth rotates quicker, and change of day and night becomes shorter.

– What will be farther? – bewildered I asked.

– Time will tell – professor answered.

The sun this day set for two hours before usual.

– I represent what alarm was made by this event around the world! – I told professor. – It would be interesting to know...

– You can learn about it in my office, there is a radio receiver – Wagner answered.

I hurried in an office and could be convinced that the population of all globe is in extraordinary nervousness.

But it was only the beginning. Rotation of Earth everything increased. Days equaled to only four hours.

– Now all bodies which are on the equator lost the one fortieth part in weight – Wagner told.

– Why only on the equator?

– There the attraction of Earth is less, and the radius of rotation is more, so and centrifugal force works stronger.

Scientists already understood imminent danger. Great resettlement of the people from the equatorial areas to higher latitudes where centrifugal force was less began. But so far simplification of weight brought even benefit: trains could lift huge freights, there was enough weak-willed motorcycle motor to carry the big passenger airplane, the speed of the movement increased. People became suddenly easier and stronger. I tested this everything the increasing ease. Amazingly pleasant feeling!

Radio began to bring also more sad messages soon. Trains even more often began to derail on biases and curves of a way, however, without special accidents: cars, even falling under a slope, did not break. Wind, lifting clouds of dust which did not fall by the earth any more, passed into a hurricane. From everywhere came to conduct about terrible floods.

When the speed of rotation increased by seventeen times, objects and people on the equator absolutely lost weight.

Somehow in the evening I heard awful news on radio: in the equatorial Africa and America several cases when the people deprived of weight under influence everything the growing centrifugal force fell up were noted. Soon also the new terrifying news came: on the equator people began to choke.

– Centrifugal force breaks an air cover of the globe which was «attached» to the earth by force of terrestrial inclination – professor explained to me quietly.

– But... then we will choke? – with nervousness I asked Wagner.

He shrugged shoulders.

– We are well prepared for all changes.

– But why all of you made it? Same world accident, death of a civilization!. – I could not refrain from exclamation.

Wagner remained unperturbable.

– Why I made it, you learn then.

– Really only for scientific experience?

– I do not understand what so surprises you – he answered. – At least and only for experience. It is strange! When the hurricane blows over or there is a volcanic eruption and ruins thousands of people, comes to nobody to mind to accuse a volcano. You look at it, as at natural disaster...

This answer did not satisfy me. At me to professor Wagner the feeling of not goodwill involuntarily began to appear.

«It is necessary to be the monster, not to have heart that for the sake of scientific experience to doom to death millions of people» – I thought.

My hostility to Wagner increased as my own health more and more worsened and was from what: these awful, extraordinary messages about the perishing world, all this accelerating flashing of day and night though whom will enrage. I almost did not sleep and was extremely нервен. I had to move with the greatest care. The slightest effort of muscles – and I flew up up and fought the head about a ceiling – the truth, not really painfully. Things lost the weight, and it was harder and harder to cope with them. It was quite casual to touch a table or a chair, and heavy furniture flew away aside.

Water from a wash basin flowed very slowly, and the stream also deviated aside. Our movements became are gusty. Members of the body which is almost deprived of weight twitched, as at the cardboard clown set in motion by threads. «Motors» of our body – muscles – were too strong for the facilitated body weight. And we could not get used in any way to this new situation as weight decreased all the time.

Fima, Wagner's housekeeper, was angry not less me. She resembled the juggler when she cooked food. Pans and frying pans flew up, aside; she tried to catch them and did the ridiculous movements, danced, jumped up.

Only one Wagner was in great mood and even laughed at us.

I decided to come to the yard, having only filled the pockets with stones that «not to fall into the sky». I saw how shallowed the sea – drove water on the West where probably it filled in coast...

In completion of all I began to feel dizziness and suffocation. Air became more rare. The gale-force wind blowing all the time from the East began as though to weaken... But temperature quickly went down.

Air thins... the end soon... I had such disgusting health that I began to think of what death to me to choose: whether to fall into the sky or to choke. It is the worst death, but I will watch to the end that will be with Earth...

«No, after all it is better to finish at once» – I solved, testing heavy suffocation, and began to take out stones from a pocket.

Someone's hand stopped me.

– Wait! – I heard Wagner's voice. In the rarefied air this voice sounded very poorly. – It is time to go down to us in a vault!

He took me by an arm, nodded to the-headed housekeeper who stood on a verandah, panting, and we went to a yard corner, to big round «window» in the earth. I lost the will and went dreamily. Wagner opened the heavy door conducting in underground laboratory and pushed me. Fainting, I softly fell to a stone floor.

IV. UPSIDE DOWN

I do not know whether long I was unconscious. My first feeling was that I breathe fresh air again. I opened eyes and very much was surprised, увидав the electric bulb strengthened in the middle of a floor, near the place where I lay.

– Be not surprised – I heard a voice of professor Wagner. – Our floor will become a ceiling soon. How do you feel?

– I thank you, better.

– Well, so get up, it is enough to lie! – And he took me by hand. I flew up up, to a glass ceiling, and very slowly fell down.

– Go, I will acquaint you with my underground apartment – Wagner told.

All room consisted of three rooms: two dark, lit only by electric bulbs, and one big, with a glass ceiling or a floor, I find it difficult to tell. The matter is that we endured, obviously, that moment when the attraction of Earth and centrifugal force made our bodies absolutely weightless.

It extremely complicated our travel on rooms. We did the most extraordinary pirouettes, clung to furniture, made a start, jumped, flew on tables, sometimes helplessly hung in mid-air, giving each other hands. Only several centimeters divided us, but we could not overcome this space while some smart trick did not bring us out of this unstable balance. The things shifted by us flew together with us. The chair «soared» among the room, glasses with water lay sideways, and water almost did not pour out – it gradually flowed round external walls of glass...

I noticed a door to the fourth room. There something hooted, but Wagner did not let me in this room. In it, obviously, there was a mechanism accelerating the movement of Earth.

Soon, however, ours «the interplanetary travel» terminated, and we fell on... a glass ceiling which from now on had to become our floor. It was not necessary to move things: they moved, and the electric lamp strengthened on a ceiling as it is impossible more useful was at us over the head, lighting our room in short nights.

Wagner really provided everything. Our room was well supplied with the air stored in special tanks. We were provided with canned food and water. «That is why the housekeeper did not go to a market» – I thought. Having moved to a ceiling, we went on it as freely, as on a floor though, in usual sense, we went headfirst. But the person gets used to everything. I felt rather well. When I looked down, under legs, through thick, but transparent glass, I saw under myself the sky, and it seemed to me that I stand on the round mirror reflecting in itself this sky.

However the mirror reflected in itself sometimes extraordinary and even terrible things.

The housekeeper declared that she needs to go to the house as she forgot oil.

– How you will go? – I told it. – You fall down down, that is up, faugh, the devil, everything was mixed!

– I will hold brackets in the earth, professor learned me. When we did not turn the heads down yet, we had brackets in that house, in a ceiling, and I learned «to go hands», grabbed them and went on a ceiling.

Professor Wagner provided everything!

I did not expect such heroism from the woman. To risk itself, «to go hands» over a chasm because of some oil!

– But nevertheless it is very dangerous – I told.

– Not as you think – professor Wagner objected. – The weight of our body is still insignificant – it only began to increase from zero, and absolutely small muscular force is necessary to keep. Besides I will accompany it; by the way, I need to take the notebook from the house – I forgot to take it with myself.

– But outside now there is no air?

– I have caps with compressed air which we will put on the head.

And these strange people, having dressed space suits as if they were going to fall by a sea bottom, went to a way. The double door slammed. I heard knock of an external door.

Lying on the glass floor, I pressed the person to thick glass and with nervousness began to watch them. Two persons in round caps, standing head over heels and clinging to the brackets attached to the earth quickly «went hands» to the house. Whether it is possible to imagine something stranger!

«Really, it is not so terrible – I thought. – But nevertheless it is the extraordinary woman. Suddenly it will begin to whirl the head?.» Wagner and the housekeeper proceeded in the same pose on steps on a verandah and passed out of sight.

They appeared back soon.

They already passed halfway as suddenly there was something what I grew cold with. The housekeeper dropped to bank with oil and, wishing to pick up her, broke and departed to a chasm...

Wagner made attempt to save it: he unexpectedly unwound the rope attached to a belt and, having hooked on it for a bracket, rushed after the housekeeper. The unfortunate woman fell quite slowly. And as Wagner a strong push gave to the body more bystry movement, it managed to catch up with it. He already gave to it a hand, but could not get: centrifugal force rejected its flight a little aside. And it separated from it soon... Wagner hung for a while a little on the dismissed rope and began to rise slowly from a sky chasm by the earth...

I saw how the unfortunate woman waved a hand... her body quickly decreased... The come night as a curtain, covered this picture of death...

I shuddered, having imagined her last feelings... What will be with it?. Its corpse which is not decaying in Universe cold will rush eternally forward if some star passing close does not attract this corpse.

I was so busy with the thoughts that did not notice how Wagner entered and fell near me.

– Fine death – he told quietly.

I clenched teeth and did not answer it. In me suddenly hatred to Wagner awakened again.

I with horror looked at the chasm which is spread under my legs and for the first time with extraordinary clarity understood that the sky – not blue space over us, and a chasm... that we «live in the sky», having stuck to a mote, Earth, and with the big right therefore it is possible to call us inhabitants of the sky, «inhabitants of heaven», than inhabitants of Earth. Insignificant inhabitants of heaven! Inclination of Earth, obviously, affected not only our body, but also consciousness, arresting it to Earth. Now this communication tore. I felt fragility of our terrestrial existence... Our consciousness arose together with the earth, in sky chasms, in chasms of infinite space, and in the same place it will die away...

I thought, and before my eyes something extraordinary was created... Stones came off the earth and fell up... The whole blocks of rocks began to come off soon... Day and night were replaced quicker and quicker... The sun rushed on a chasm sky, and there came night, stars rushed with the same mad speed, both again the sun, and again night... Here, in the light of the sun, I see how the fence broke and fell, having opened the horizon. I see the dried sea bottom, the devastated earth... I see that soon the end...

But people still are on Earth... I hear how tells a small loudspeaker of our radio station...

The earth is devastated almost to poles. Everything perishes... It is the last escaped radio station, on Wrangel Island. She gives signals, waits and does not receive the answer... Radio waves fly to dead emptiness... Earth is silent, also the sky is silent.

Days and nights so quickly replace each other that everything merges in a haze... The sun, flying by on the sky, draws a fiery strip against a dark background – together with the last remains of the atmosphere Earth lost the blue bed curtains, light of a heavenly azure... The moon decreased in sizes, Earth cannot hold more the satellite any more, and the moon moves away from Earth...

I feel how thick glasses of our glass floor napruzhitsya, became convex, shiver... They will not sustain soon, and I will fail in a chasm...

Who it grumbles near me?. And, professor Wagner.

I hardly rise: mad speed of Earth filled with lead my body. I pant...

– You!. – I address maliciously professor Wagner. – Why you made it? You ruined mankind, you destroyed life on Earth... Answer me! Now reduce the movement of Earth, differently I...

But professor silently negatively swings the head.

– Answer! – I shout, clenching fists.

– I cannot do anything... obviously, I made a mistake in calculations...

– So you pay for this mistake! – I exclaimed and, having absolutely gone mad, rushed on Wagner and began to smother him... At the same moment I felt how our floor cracks, glasses burst, and I, without letting out Wagner, I fly with it to a chasm...

V. «THE NEW WAY OF TEACHING»

Before me smiling face of professor Wagner. I with surprise look at it, then around myself.

Early morning. Blue bed curtains of the sky. The sea becomes blue in the distance. At a verandah two white butterflies peacefully flit. By me there passes the housekeeper with a big piece of butter on a plate...

– What is it?. What does all this mean? – I ask professor.

He smiles in the long moustaches.

– I apologize – he says – that I without your permission and even without being with you a sign used you for one experience. If you know me, then you probably know that I work on permission of a question long ago as to one person to contain the huge mass of modern scientific knowledge. I personally, for example, reached that each half of my brain works independently. I destroyed a dream and fatigue...

– I read about it – I answered. Wagner nodded.

– It is better for those. But it is available not to all. And I decided to use hypnosis for the pedagogical purposes. Eventually and in usual pedagogics there is a hypnosis share... Having come today early in the morning for walk, I noticed you... You are on duty not the first day behind a juniper bush? – he asked with a cheerful sparkle in eyes. I was confused.

– Well, here I also decided to punish you for your curiosity, having subjected to hypnosis...

– How, really all this was?.

– Only hypnosis, since that moment as you uvidat me. Isn't that so, all of you worried as reality? And, of course, never in life you will forget endured. Thus, you had an opportunity to receive a lesson of visual instruction about laws of weight and centrifugal force... But you were very nervous pupil and at the end of a lesson behaved a little heatedly...

– But how many time the lesson proceeded?

Wagner looked at the watch.

– Minutes two, no more. Isn't that so, productive way of assimilation of knowledge?

– But allow – I exclaimed – and this glass window, these brackets on the earth!. – I gave a hand and suddenly became silent. The area of the yard was absolutely equal; there were neither brackets, nor glass round «window» ... – So it... there was a hypnosis too?

– Well, certainly... Confess what you not really missed behind my lesson of physics? Fima – he shouted – coffee is ready? Idemte to have breakfast.

The person who does not sleep

1. STRANGE RESIDENT

– Dez... I will not transfer its loss! Dez – my best friend... I am so lonely...

The citizen Shmeman wiped a lacy kerchief red weak-sighted eyes and a long nose.

– I assure you – it continued, having plaintively sobbed – that this work of professor Wagner. I saw more than once how it brought on a string of dogs into the apartment... What does it do with them? My God! I dread to think! Perhaps, my Dezi is dead... Take measures, I ask you!. If you do not make it, I will go to militia!. Dez, my poor baby!.

And madam Shmeman began to cry again... Her thin old cheeks became covered by red spots, the lower lip drooped.

Zhukov, the chairman of housing association, abruptly turned on a chair and clicked fingers. It lost patience.

– Calm down, the citizen! I assure you that we will take measures. And now, forgive... I am very busy...

Shmeman deeply sighed, bowed and left. Zhukov breathed a sigh of relief and turned back to the secretary of board Krotov:

– Faugh!. Exhausted! There are such annoying women!

– Yes ... – Krotov thoughtfully responded. – Mischievous old woman! And case should be investigated. It is the fourth case of loss of dogs only on our yard. Neighbors complain too. What for a dog pestilence? I will not be surprised if really it turns out that dogs are stolen by professor Wagner. Only why the hell they are necessary to it? Does collars on a fur coat? Strange person! Suspicious person!

– Professor!

– That that professor? Perhaps, he clips the coin.

– From dogs?

– You do not laugh. There were cases! Dogs – special article. You pay attention: it has in the room all night long light. On a window curtain its shadow is often visible. Is unsteady about the room... Night-bird!

– Yes, strange person... The other day I go home by the tram. I look, professor Wagner opposite sits. According to the book holds in each hand and at once reads both. I in books glanced. One – the Russian, all figures different, and another – German. And here that surprisingly: each eye at it separately on lines runs: one eye reads one book, to others – another. The conductor approached it. «The ticket – says – take!» He on it raised one eye, and another in the book looks. She and gasped. And the public all stared at it. Look, mouths opened from surprise, and it thought that...

– Perhaps, he went crazy?

– Everything is possible...

The door knocked. The room was entered by Fima, the old housekeeper of professor Wagner.

– Hello to you! My barin for the apartment sent money.

– There were bars and all left! – Zhukov told.

– Well, owner, perhaps, Wagner.

– And here she will tell us!.

– Tell us, Fima what your «barin» with dogs does.

Fima hopelessly waved a hand.

– It is a lot of dogs at it? Tell the truth!

– How many at it dogs, I cannot tell: it does not let me in the second room where they at it. And dogs are. It is heard as bark. At the night of times I spotted in a shchelochka. Well? The dog attached on a short collar sits. Cannot lay down. To sleep it, it is visible, death as there is a wish. The head and hangs. And he sits near yes it so tenderly under a neck tickles: does not allow to sleep. And he does not sleep. He never sleeps!

– How so does not sleep? The person cannot but sleep.

– I do not know as but only does not sleep at all. And long ago threw out a bed. «That it – says – and the rank was not! A bed – says – only to patients it is necessary».

Zhukov and Krotov bewildered looked at each other.

– There is a madman!

– Not otherwise, as the madman – Fima willingly agreed. – Only my habit: fifteen years live I at it, and that would leave him long ago... There was a person as the person, and already for about a year absolutely to himself is not similar. Just like not in.

– What it began at it with?

– Who knows it? Perhaps to a malefice?. He started it seems anew as to do gymnastics. You will come to it to the room, he as if dances: the right leg it seems as the Pole, and left – it seems as a waltz. And hands differently beats off. And then began to mow with eyes. Sits in front of the mirror and mows with eyes. Once I look at it, and at it one eye in a ceiling looks, and another – on a floor. I so also banged all ware on a floor – was stupefied.

– The doggie shmemansky is known by you? Dez klinut.

– White, kudlastenky such? How not to know!

– And so, whether your owner and this doggie dragged off?

– To see did not see, and everything can be. I was chattered, and there the iron will cool down... There is money!.

– What so it is not enough?

– The barin speaks, my owner that he in TsIKAPU is written down and has the right for the additional area.

– What such TsIKAPU? – asked Moles.

– TsEKUBU! – Zhukov guessed.

– Let the certificate will present for now still has to pay. And report.

– All right! – And, outdoing edge of an apron, red-cheeked Fima ran out from the room.

– It is necessary to report to militia. This madman still will set fire to the house or will bump off whom!

2. ON «DOG BUSINESS»

Case on charge of professor Wagner of theft of dogs collected a packed house of public. Acquaintances, meeting each other, asked:

– You too on «dog business»? According to the agenda?

– No, out of curiosity!. Professor – and suddenly steals dogs!. What he, eats them?.

– And I according to the agenda. Witness. And my Jolly-boat was gone! Good dog. I think to make the civil suit...

– I ask to get up!.

Judges enter the hall.

– Case on charge of the citizen Ivan Stepanovich Wagner of theft is heard...

Professor Wagner approached a table. By sight it could give no more than forty years.

In his nutbrown hair, in a broad fair-haired beard and the hung moustaches it was possible to notice only a few silvery hairs. Fresh complexion, rosy cheeks and shining eyes breathed by force and health.

«And about this person said that he does not sleep at all!» – the judge thought, bewildered inspecting the defendant. He expected to meet the emaciated old man. And already with a keen interest the judge began to ask formal questions.

– Your name, middle name, surname?

– Ivan Stepanovich Wagner.

– Age?

– Fifty three years...

In public with astonishment exchanged glances.

– Occupation?

– Professor of the Moscow university.

– In labor union you consist?

– I consist. Workers of education.

– Party?

– Non-party. Under trial did not consist.

– Citizen of the USSR?

– Yes.

– He is married?

– Widower.

– You plead guilty?

Professor Wagner vaguely shrugged shoulders.

– No, I do not recognize.

– But you abducted dogs?

– Allow to offer an explanation after interrogation of witnesses.

– Well. Write down – the judge addressed the secretary. – «The defendant did not plead guilty».

Call the witness, the militiaman in the beat Sitnikov! What can you show on business?

– Applications from citizens of Bondarny Lane about loss of dogs came to our police station.

At the citizen Polyakov very expensive setter, at Yushkevich – a pug, and at Deryuginykh – even the Persian cat was gone. Dogs disappeared completely. Their corpses were not found. Obviously, someone stole dogs.

– You made search?

– The dog – business not big was gone. To admit, we had no time in each case search to do. But when complaints of the citizen Shmeman to the citizen Wagner and the statement of board of housing association arrived, we began to inquire. Almost all victims pointed to professor Wagner. It in general

strange some. They say, at night does not sleep. Or works at home, or on streets is unsteady. The janitor of their house saw several times as Wagner came back home with a doggie on a lasso at night. In the room of his dog bark, squeal. Proofs were serious.

Therefore, owing to the arrived statements, we decided to execute a search and dredging of its papers at professor Wagner. A search was executed by me in the presence of the chairman of the board of housing association, the janitor and the citizen Shmeman.

Nothing reprehensible was found in the first room of the defendant, except various tools and cars of an unknown origin. In the second room we found six dogs of various breed, gender and age. All of them were tied to a wall on short thongs. At some of them the heads hanged down, as if died or were tired very much. And on a table the white doggie, lokhmatenky, with the hole punched in a skull so brains were visible lay. The citizen Shmeman identified the doggie in a corpse, cried and fainted...

In the courtroom reserved sobbings Shmeman were heard.

– Dez, Dezi!. – she whispered, sobbing.

– The taken-away papers are brought by me into court – the militiaman finished.

– Undersign. Witness Zhukov!

Zhukov, the chairman of the board of housing association, confirmed testimonies of the militiaman.

– To execute a search – he added – we were forced still by that circumstance that professor Wagner is very unclear resident. Residents think that they it the mad, and are even afraid to let out children. In order to avoid panic and disorganization of the population I would ask to subject Wagner to psychiatric examination.

Perhaps, it is dangerous – having for some reason been confused, Zhukov added – and he should be moved.

Professor Wagner smiled.

– What is it dangerous by? – the judge asked.

– As in general abnormal! And neighbors complain: something hisses at it in the room, buzzes, and that explosions suddenly... Still the house will blow up!. And dogs howl the whole night... Inconvenient resident, in a word.

– Citizen Shmeman!

– Mister judge! – she began with the shivering voice, wiping a tear scarf, and immediately recovered: – Citizen judge!. He is a murderer! – She pointed a finger at Wagner with two wedding rings. – I am a widow... I have nobody... It killed my best friend... My Dezi!. – And Shmeman began to cry again.

– You make the civil suit?

– What claim? For what?

– For a doggie... You about it ask in your application...

– Nothing will reward me for loss!. – tragically she said. – I do not know what there is written...

Other witnesses did not bring something new. The janitor in detail told how dogs on their yard vanished as also the «ostatny» doggie of Dezi was gone as he saw Wagner bringing into the house of dogs...

One of witnesses identified the dog among «victims» of professor Wagner. The dog was live, but she looked extraordinary tired and, brought home, overslept three days deeply.

– Among papers – the judge when interrogation of witnesses was finished told – from professor Wagner magazines with various records, obviously, about the experiments conducted by it over animals were taken in search time. I will announce some of them.

Here – there began the judge – records of professor Wagner about experiences:

«Skilled animal: Diana, a setter, a female, weight is twenty two kilograms. Viscosity of blood during wakefulness – two whole eighty nine 100-th. Viscosity of blood in the period of exhaustion sleeplessness – one and forty six 100-th».

There is also a number of such tables:

«Krioskopichesky point: the normal state – fifty nine 100-th degrees; a condition of imperative requirement of a dream – fifty eight 100-th degrees.

Density: the normal state – one and sixty four thousand; a condition of imperative requirement of a dream – one and fifty seven thousand.

Viscosity: the normal state – two whole seven hundred eleven thousand; a condition of imperative requirement of a dream – two».

Defendant professor Wagner! Testimony and the announced documents, I believe, your guilt is quite established. Why you do not plead guilty? Explain to us...

– Judge's citizens! I do not deny the fact of kidnapping of dogs, but did not plead guilty, and that is why. Any theft assumes the mercenary purpose. I had no such purpose. You announced documents from which the court could be convinced that I pursued exclusively scientific aims. I conduct the experiences having enormous value for all mankind. That advantage which these experiences have to bring is incommensurable to insignificant harm which I did.

– What it is experiences?

After some fluctuation professor Wagner told:

– I work on a problem of fatigue and a dream. To win against fatigue and to destroy requirement of a dream – here what task I set to myself.

– And you successfully resolved it? Whether the truth that you already do without dream?

– Yes, truth. I do not sleep any more and I can work without exhaustion twenty four hours a day.

In public there was a movement. The surprised exclamations and a whispering were heard.

– Why you did not publish your achievements?

– I continue to improve the methods.

– But whether you why you considered it necessary to resort to such strange and illegal ways of getting of dogs for your experiences explain? If experiences are of value, the government would provide you to all necessary for work!

Professor Wagner hesitated.

– These experiences are too courageous. They could seem even fantastic. I believed in success, but on the way inevitable failures lay. They could ruin both business and my reputation before I would achieve positive results. And I decided to make them in calm of the office, at own risk. But I had few personal funds for acquisition of dogs for experiences. To refuse them when the task was half resolved, I could not. And I was forced...

– To steal dogs? – with a smile the judge added. Professor Wagner became straight and answered with tone of deep belief in the correctness:

– A dog century – some twenty years. The cost of a dog – rubles, is a lot of – tens of rubles. Having destroyed several dogs, I will extend mankind life three times, at the same time I will treble also the value of human productivity. If for it I deserve punishment, judge me! I have nothing to add more.

Judges left to confer. The public rustled as an alarmed beehive. In all corners small groups arguing on the forthcoming sentence were formed. Separate shouts were heard:

– Theft remains theft!

– But its experiences can do much good for mankind!.

– Not to sleep at all?. – some smiling fat man spoke. – The servant is obedient! Allow to refuse this blessing! Still Turgenev told that all our life – a dream and the best in life – besides a dream!.

– Perhaps, he lies?

– Who? Turgenev?

– Well, Wagner as if he does not sleep at all. The person cannot do without dream!.

– Court all right!.

At breathless attention the sentence was listened. Admitting the theft fact established, the court awarded professor Wagner by a month of imprisonment without strict isolation. «Taking former non-conviction of the defendant and lack of the mercenary purposes, punishment to apply conditionally into account, having established the annual term of test...»

– Case on the claim of housing association is heard...

The public rushed from the hall, discussing a sentence which, probably, satisfied the majority: formally Wagner is punished, actually bailed.

Only some criticized a sentence.

– Means, it is possible to steal and kill with impunity? – defiantly loudly Shmeman asked, looking around at supports.

– If there is no self-interest, then there is no theft also! Wagner should submit the cassation! – told others.

Under cross views doctor Wagner made the way along the corridor vessels. But he did not pay to anybody attention. It was ozabochivat by a thought:

«From where I will take dogs, necessary for experience, now?..»

3. THE PERSON WHO DOES NOT SLEEP

Trial had unexpected consequences for professor Wagner: to its popularity, perhaps, came earlier, than he wanted it. On court session incidentally there was a correspondent of one small Moscow newspaper. In several days in department of the judicial chronicle there was a note with the intriguing name «The Person Who Does Not Sleep». In a note trial of doctor Wagner was described and it was reported that professor «won against a dream»: he does not sleep at all and can work tirelessly twenty four hours a day.

Result of this note was the fact that in several days the housekeeper reported on Wagner on arrival of the correspondent of Izvestia. Wagner discontentedly frowned: he got used to preserve the mystery of the works. But, having thought a little, professor decided to use visit of the representative of the press: if it is impossible to catch more at night dogs, it is necessary to resort to government aid. To continue experiences secretly it was not represented possible any more and in it there was no big need also: with what it reached, it was already possible to act publicly. The correspondent was accepted.

Making the way via the heated-up machines and devices, the correspondent Gorev uvidat professor Wagner and in amazement stopped. Wagner stood at a high desk. From a nose of professor there were two rubber tubes coming through an opening of a window frame to light. These tubes as if integrally connected professor with the cars surrounding him as if also he half turned into the car. And one more struck Gorev: the left eye Wagner checked some book and did of it by the left hand of an extract, and the right eye it directed on the visitor and gave it the right hand.

– I ask to sit down! – kindly Wagner told, without stopping working the left hand.

Gorev, worldly-wise as any skilled correspondent, was so struck that forgot all usual approaches of the journalist and is silent, with full bewilderment looked at the left eye of professor running according to the book and the manuscript, at tubes in his nose.

Professor noticed this puzzled type of the visitor and smiled.

– You are surprised by these tubes? – kindly it began. – But it is so simple: I too value the time to walk. Meanwhile clean air is necessary for health of a body and lucidity of mind. And here I made small adaptation: I removed outside, over a roof, two tubes which ends with special adaptation are inserted into a nose. At inhalation of air one valve opens, at exhalation this valve is closed by pressure of air, and another which lets out the air fulfilled by lungs opens. This small adaptation gives me the chance all the time to breathe fresh air, and see what rosy cheeks at me! The trifling invention, but it can bring big benefit. Present patients who cannot be taken out from the room. And modern ventilation leaves to wish a lot of the best. By means of this device all patients can breathe clean air. I expect bigger: if still ancient Romans were able to carry out water for hundreds of kilometers, having created the monumental aqueducts, then why don't we create «aeroduka»? It would be possible to deliver on pipes, for example, mountain or sea air. Eventually, it would be cheaper, than to send patients for the sake of air for hundreds and thousands of kilometers. The central pipes with the special supercharger will give air to our cities, and there it will be distributed. The mountain, sea, steppe or given to drink by needles air will be available to all...

Professor Wagner spoke quickly, without ceasing to write with the left hand. The right eye he continued to look at the visitor.

Gorev, at last, found gift for speaking.

– Tell how you can do it?. – And he looked at sloping eyes of professor and his left hand.

– To write with the left hand, to operate each eye separately, to work and to talk at the same time to you? The matter is that at me both brain hemispheres work absolutely independently and almost independently from each other.

But I have to explain you, so to speak, my starting point. As you know, officially I am professor of biology. Not less to you, I hope, also the fact that modern scientific disciplines extremely quickly break up to independent parts is known. Before our eyes the biological chemistry grows. Each new scientific branch, like the atomic theory, quickly grows in independent scientific discipline. Years are necessary to comprehend each of these certain scientific areas.

And meanwhile, to go forward, it is necessary to know also interdisciplinary sciences: the biology and physiology, chemistry and electricity, even geology and astronomy – all of them intertwine, mutually influence at each other. Some comprehensive mind is necessary to capture all this mass of knowledge. And life human is so short! To me for fifty. Ten more – another years, and the end. Before me enormous tasks which I want to resolve. Means, the first that I had to make for the purpose, it anyway to extend life. At first I thought of experiences of rejuvenation. What is already reached helped me: I look much younger. Perhaps, I will also return to these experiences. But so far I stopped that to me he was more familiar on the works on a brain.

The first that to me came to a thought, it to develop ability to work separately with each brain hemisphere. Unfortunately, I cannot stop in detail at these works: it would take too much time. I will tell only that here the major role is played by a training. You, maybe, had to see rhythmic gymnastics of Dalkroz? Kids quickly seize ability to operate the asymmetric movements: the right hand they can beat three time, left – two, besides at various rates, at the same time making various movements and legs. Something similar was made also by me, by the way, to full bewilderment of my housekeeper.

More difficult it appeared to seize the device of eyes. At us each eye has an independent control system, but owing to what we better see, fixing both eyes on one point, we developed a habit to coordinate the movements of eyes. Heredity of these skills complicated fight for «autonomy» in the movement of eyes. However such independence of the movement of each eye is quite possible. The chameleon can be an example of it. I was engaged in exercises. You see results. To learn to write and work the left hand did not represent work. It was necessary to pass to the last: to learn to perform at the same time two mental work, for example, to write with both hands two scientific research on different subjects at once. On it several years left at me. I achieved the. Thus I doubled the brain production.

But and it it seemed to me a little. Eight hours of a dream! We lose a third of human life on that helpless, half-dead state. Here what revolted me. To exempt mankind from a sleepy duty. What extraordinary prospects, what opportunities!. How many great works still great thinkers would give us if to present to them all nights for creativity! How many unfinished great works would be finished! As progress would move! The worker, having fulfilled the put hours at the machine, would spend night behind the book or public work. At us would not be illiterate. It is more than that, all would have an opportunity to become quite educated people. What with great strides progress would move! Here of what I thought...

Professor Wagner was animated. His right eye burned with enthusiasm. Apparently, nervousness was transferred also to other half of a brain: the left eye also flashed and the left hand began to write falteringly.

But Wagner noticed it, and the left eye as though went out, having gone deep into work, the left hand methodically zastrochit while the right eye continued to burn with enthusiasm and the right hand led round wide circles.

– And now it is possible! – professor told. – A dream – not the so normal phenomenon, but the disease which is result of gipnotoksinama poisoning: these are special poisons which are excreted by a brain during the work. Poisoned with these poisons, the person falls asleep, that is gets sick.

When the person sleeps, the brain does not produce new toxins; for the same time the organism destroys the toxins which collected for the working day.

Thus, having had a sleep, the person recovers, but – alas! – again to ache by the evening, and it is forced to go to bed again. Unless it is not awful?!

If you want, the dream is infectious. I did such experience: forced a dog not to sleep.

When its organism was poisoned with gipnotoksina, I took them and injected to well slept and just woken up dog. She immediately fell asleep.

All task was in finding «antidote» – antigipnotoksina. And I managed to resolve a task more widely, than I assumed: found me антигипнотоксин kills not only toxins of a dream, but also others. Therefore, it improves all organism. There were many obstacles, but they are won. I overcame a dream. I threw out a bed – this symbol of hospital. I do not sleep any more and I work almost day and night. Antigipnotoksin I accept together with food. On meal leaves at me one or two hours a day.

All this was so extraordinary that Gorev continued to sit silently, listening carefully to professor.

– But how you felt at first? – at last he asked.

– Yes, I had to tinker with a habit to sleep a little. There was no wish to sleep to me at all. But this continuous, infinite working day – with the sun behind a window, with a dark veil of night – worked somehow strange. I, however, got used to it soon. But as it is well worked in calm of night! I will not cut out one selfish thought: I am afraid that when all people begin to lead a sleepless life, it will not be so silent at night.

– And it does not seem to you that not all can like prospect of life without dream?

– I am confident even in it. – And professor smiled. – I offered somehow in the winter, in the remote village, to one country guy who was surprised that I do not sleep to try on itself my means. He agreed. Next morning I ask it how he feels. «It be wrong! – the guy speaks. – From melancholy nearly died! All village sleeps. One dogs bark. Went, went – a toshchishcha! Climbed on the furnace – a dream as sober as a judge. Thought, night of this and the end will not be!»

Exempt people from habitual work – professor continued – they will start missing too. But all this only at the lowest steps of culture. This culture quickly rises at rational use of «sleepless nights».

– One more question. You say that you do not sleep almost all twenty four hours. But how you are not tired?

– Very simply. The fatigue is the painful phenomenon too. The working brain excretes gipnotoksina, the working muscles excrete kenotoksina – poisons which cause feeling of fatigue. I import antidote – петардин, and the fatigue as did not happen. Mine петардин also interrupts a course of disease, the called fatigue as interrupt returnable typhus now, having entered into an organism диоксидаминоарсенобензолдихлоридрат – a tongue twister Wagner spoke.

At Gorev took the breath away from this long word. He asked professor to repeat the exotic name on syllables and wrote down in a notebook. «Such words give to article scientific weight» – he thought.

– And now count – professor Wagner told. – Working with two halves of a brain, I double the production. Working as twenty four hours instead of eight, I triple working hours. Means, I work for six, besides without any harm for health. Therefore, in thirty years of working life of people she will be able to perform work of hundred eighty years. Still in other words, in an every half-century the mankind will move forward on the way of progress for three centuries at once.

How you believe, costs it heels of narrow-minded dogs?. – with a smile professor finished.

4. «DICTATOR»

The capacious drawing room of the banker Goldzak who bought recently baronial title was trimmed with heavy magnificence. On the walls trimmed with the carved oak panel horns of deer and the coats of arms of the newly appeared baron flaunted. In a corner the knight in armor and with a sword of the 13th century – doubtful «ancestor» of the baron was located. At windows with narrow lattices color glasses represented the same baronial coat of arms: on a yellow board the hand bent in an elbow chained in armor squeezed an iron glove a sword. Over a hand – five dark blue stars.

In the middle of the room around a big round a black oak table on oak chairs with high carved backs members of the central committee of the German political organization «Diktator» sat. On a chair with higher back, with a carved German state eagle at its top the chairman of the meeting – the old general, one of «heroes» of imperialistic war, the Kaiser's friend sat. A rough face of the general as if cut by the axe from a piece of a tree, densely compressed bays under the moustaches raised up spoke about big will power. From under the hung gray-haired eyebrows the inquisitive, seldom blinking eyes looked out. On its uniform frock coat only «the iron cross» flaunted.

On the right side from the chairman the host – the baron Goldzak, in a black dress coat, with absolutely bald head, shaven, with a monocle in an eye was located. Further in a strict order, on a rank, members of the committee were located. The general with a narrow forehead, deeply put eyes and an outstanding chin. Something cruel, animal was in this head. Still general... Officials of the ministries, deputies... Large manufacturers and bankers closed a circle.

The young-looking person in a dress coat, with the person and the diplomat's manners – the secretary of committee – did the report. On a table about it issue of Izvestia with Gorev's article «Victory over a dream and fatigue of professor Wagner» lay. Here a translation of article into German.

– We did not check up to the end reliability of the data provided in article yet, but, according to the data which are available already for us, apparently, she answers reality.

I should not speak about value of this discovery. If it is used by the Soviet Russia, the ratio of forces between it and other states of the world considerably will change. In some five years power of the Bolshevism will extraordinary grow.

Simultaneous work as both brain hemispheres, fortunately, demands time and a training and therefore it is not absolutely available to masses. But one victory over a dream and fatigue already triples physical and intellectual forces of our political opponents, at the same time and their material resources. Their scientific forces and skilled workers will work three times and even six times more. Production of the industry will increase. In several years they will have new shots of well trained staff in all areas of the equipment. In a word, their power will grow is unceasing. They will work when the whole world sleeps. They will work when we are forced to have a rest after day of work.

– Well, growth of the industry will happen not so soon – the manufacturer told. – Let's put, all their plants and factories will work day and night. But further?. It will be not so easy to get the credits for construction of new factories and plants to them. You, the baron, will not grant them the loan? – with a smile he addressed Goldzak.

The baron answered with the same smile and started up a smoke ringlet.

– But there is other danger – the hoarse voice of the general was heard. – I speak about military power of Red army. What if only eight of sixteen «additional» hours a day it is used by them for military training of workers and peasants? It is equivalent to creation of multimillion army. Further, during war they will have fighters who do not need rest. They should not replace soldiers in entrenchments. They will be always sharp-sighted, vigilant, fresh while at us two thirds of soldiers temporarily fail for a dream and rest. Their pilots who are not knowing were tired, will be able to make distant flights... Their command structure, their headquarters will be able to direct operations, without producing threads of management for one minute for rest and a dream. It is

possible that they use means of professor Wagner also over horses. Their wagon trains, their cavalry will not know fatigue. All this is too serious!.

The speech of the old general made a great impression on a meeting, in particular on military. Generals frowned, nervously drummed fingers, dragged on cigars more deeply...

– But the most dangerous – the secretary rose again – consists in political value of the fact. Already now the Bolshevism shakes the world, keeps the governments of all countries of the world in constant nervous tension. Wagner's means triples, or perhaps even ushesteryat number of Bolsheviks. Here, in the circle, we can be frank. We do not know how to cope with one leader of Communistic International. What will be if this leader has an opportunity to work six times more? We will have six such leaders, the Komintern six times increased, millions of Russian Bolsheviks who are not knowing were tired, propagandizing and decomposing masses day and night, day and night, for twenty four hours a day!!

These arguments made a tremendous impression. Hands of the audience shivered, scarfs wiped cold sweat on foreheads and bald heads...

– It is awful!.

– Nightmare! – uneasy voices were heard.

There came terrible silence. It seemed, terrible ghosts got suddenly into this office and filled it with chilling breath of death.

At last the chairman of the meeting shook the head and knocked a hairy fist on a table.

– It cannot be allowed! – hoarsely he shouted. – By all means we have to eliminate the menacing danger! Before the invention of professor Wagner becomes property of Bolsheviks, we have to seize a secret of professor Wagner!

And, induced by fear and hatred, the meeting passed to discussion of a question of how to make it.

One baron Goldzak did not take part in a meeting. To it already grandiose plans were drawn. He thought of that how many it is possible to benefit by opening of professor Wagner if the secret of this opening appears in his hands.

5. «FAN OF SCIENCES»

After trial all schedule of occupations of professor Wagner was violated. To it correspondents of newspapers and magazines, professors, students and just curious public wishing to try «powder from a dream» were. Professor Wagner already got used to these visits and therefore was not surprised when he heard as behind a door someone with a German accent asked for permission to enter.

When the door opened, professor uvidat the young man with a chubby, pink face and the short curling fair hair. Big «fashionable» tortoise points somehow did not go to this young face. The perfect suit gave to the stranger the European look.

– May I introduce myself, dear sir professor!. Herman Taube, member of the Berlin society of fans of natural sciences. From this society I also came to you... Your opening extremely interested us. And society addresses to you with the most obedient request: you could not give in our circle several lectures about your works?

– Unfortunately, I have no time.

– Oh, it will not take a lot of time! – the young man began to fuss. Its female voice was raised to the highest notes, eyes looked prositelno through tortoise hoops of points. It even inclined the head on one side and squeezed hands. – If only you agreed!. If only agreed! For us it will be such holiday! I am the not scientific, but passionate fan of science. My father is rich... is very rich... If you wished, you would find at us all necessary for your works... We would equip to you fine laboratory... tens, hundreds of dogs would be at your disposal!.

Wagner smiled.

– You are very kind, but, unfortunately, I have to reject your offer. I am not going to leave Russia.

– What a pity!. Oh, what a pity! It seemed to me that here to work... what there to work... But you will not refuse to give at us several lectures! It will take only several days. We will go in the air way, on the passenger airplane of the new company of air traffics «Uenshetlikh унд Bekvemkhey» – «Safety and convenience». Quite justifies the name... Successfully competes with Deruluft... I undertake all efforts on vising of passports. We will not speak about expenses and the fee... We, of course, undertake everything...

– I could spend for this business no more than three-four hours. I too value time. Do not forget that I have sixfold productivity. If I spend only two days, then for me they will be equal to loss of twelve. No, I cannot accept your offer!

– I am extremely upset. And the head of our laboratory professor Braude will be even more upset. It works in the same area, as you. But its method a bit different...

Professor Wagner quickened.

– Here is how! In what its method?

– He tries ... – Taube was confused a little. His face expressed the thought tension as though he wanted to remember something. – It works on method which will give the chance to the organism to produce toxins against гип... гип...

But Wagner already guessed a thought.

– Just I work on it now! Our newspapers exaggerated my progress on this way a little...

– I not from newspapers! – broke at Taube. It reddened from disappointment on itself (himself). – Professor Braude works several years in this area. He so wanted to get acquainted with you and to share experience!. It is very a pity that now it is necessary to upset him...

– It changes business! I think that loss of time will be rewarded... Professor Braude?. I did not hear something about it.

– Young and extremely modest... does not love advertizing... But it is scary ingenious!.

– I agree!

Taube rushed to professor and began to shake his hands.

– Thousand thanks! And I will take care of departure. You will not waste minutes the precious time!

And, having fawned, it was behind a door.

«Strange young man. Dogs wanted to bribe me!» – professor Wagner thought after his leaving.

6. «UENSHETLIKH UND BEKVEMKHEYT»

Early in the morning the passenger-and-mail airplane was removed from airfield and quickly began to gain height. In a cozy cabin on easy leather chairs took place: professor Wagner, Herman Taube, the diplomatic courier of the French Embassy in Moscow and the employee of the Soviet trade mission in Berlin.

If the hum of the motor which is not weakened by the advanced muffler yes smooth rocking, it was possible to think that you sit in a compartment of the car. Through mirror windows the panorama of Moscow with the coiling tape of the river below was seen. As toy, the Kremlin sparkling the domes seemed. And ahead the infinite carpet of fields and the woods which is cut up by yellowish lines of roads and blue windings of the rivers was already spread. Yellow squares allocated fields of the ripening rye. Here and there, as ants, moved on roads and people and animals potted about on fields.

But professor Wagner not for long admired these bird's-eye views. As the miser worries over each kopek, so Wagner valued every minute of time. He took out books, attached on a lap a folding lectern and turned to work. Reading the book, he at the same time continuously wrote something to notebooks with shorthand signs.

Having noticed an inquiring look of Taube, he explained:

– I write only shorthand. It is my own system. I reduce and I simplify work where it is possible. I created own system of mnemonic – this great assistant to whom, unfortunately, pay attention a little. By means of mnemonic I am able to store extraordinary large number of figures, formulas, names in memory. Business is facilitated by the fact that thanks to purity of my brain from which the toxins poisoning him are emitted it works with indefatigable clarity and force. All this increases productivity of my work even more. Without exaggeration, I work for ten...

And Wagner became silent, having gone deep into work.

Taube looked out of the window on a tableau vivant of the country, so unclear for it, such poor and at the same time powerful, peace in the developed pictures of work of peasants and the terrible that force which will organize millions of these strong hands...

Some river seemed in the distance. On high coastal hills the city was stretched. On the right coast the city was surrounded with ancient gear walls of the Kremlin with high towers. Over all city the huge five-domed cathedral reigned.

– Dnieper!. Smolensk!. Our first stop!.

The airplane flew by over the wood and smoothly fell by good airfield.

Have breakfast and started on a further journey. The sky tightened clouds. The gusty head wind shook the airplane as the ship on big ocean waves. The movement of flight was slowed down. Kovno nevertheless reached safely. It is the last stop in front of Königsberg. Despite the increasing bad weather, the airplane went to a further way. Wind passed into a squall. Threw the airplane in the parties, abruptly lifted on counter air waves. Sometimes, as if having lost wings, the device promptly fell down.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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