

BASED ON TRUE STORY

# CIPHERMAN

A JOURNEY THAT JUST BEGINS  
An experience that can change the World



BIOGRAPHY OF A LIVING MAN

OLYA AMAN

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**A Journey that Just Begins. An Experience that Can  
Change the WORLD**

**Olya Aman**

This book is based on a true story. Main events depicted as close to the reality as possible. Certain names have been changed for the sake of a storyline. A few characters are a product of the author's imagination and any resemblance with a true person is entirely coincidental.

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### **Chapter 1. Newspaper life**

All five years of study in the department of Journalism, I'd been dreaming of the day when I would sit down at my own workplace in a newspaper's editorial office - namely, a newspaper like Lois Lane's, but in Nizhny Novgorod - and publish my first article. I would begin, of course, with small stories about local events, but very soon my talent would be noticed, and the first page would be a permanent place for my stories. What kinds of stories would be there! Sensational stories, interviews with famous people, journalistic investigations...

But having received the coveted diploma, I realized that everything was not as easy at work as I'd been imagining. The fact that I was fortunate enough to find a journalist's place in a small periodical turned out to be wonderful luck. Many of my peers were forced to work at jobs not connected with our profession at all. But Lois was very far away from me!

However, I do not want to complain - I fell in love with our editorial office



immediately, as soon as I entered the cozy shady courtyard. It was nothing special, but I imagined myself passing under an old arch every day, passing the door to the publishing house, which, actually, used to print mostly forms and our newspaper. Then I open the heavy iron door and go up to the second floor - and it blew with calmness and warmth immediately. It did not look like the pathos evoked by the building of "Daily Planet", but was so typical for my beloved city!

Our editor Victor Ivanovich liked me right away: he was a retired colonel, who, by virtue of his active nature, did not want to simply sit at home and spend his pension, especially since he was barely fifty years old. When I got somewhat used to the editorial office, I understood one more reason for his love for the workplace. The fact was that the wife of our chief - Lidia Petrovna was an extremely jealous woman and used to only completely trust the secretary Lyubochka. It was interesting that everyone used to call her a woman who has already left the Balzac age far in the past. She did not take offense at this and was if not a friend, then at least a confidant of Victor Ivanovich's wife.

However, one glance at Lyubochka was enough to understand that she could not be a cause of jealousy.

I was subject to an inspection by Lidia Petrovna, who was alarmed by the appearance of a young employee, on the third day after receiving the treasured entry in my employment history book. She seemed to have accidentally run in to make a photocopy, and Lyubochka brought her to me, so that I would render this service to the boss's wife:

- "Katya, the copy machine is broken in the waiting room. Lidia Petrovna needs these papers urgently".

While I was copying the documents, I felt like I was being examined under a microscope. For some reason, I was not recognized as a threat. Somehow this was even insulting ... However, it gave me the opportunity to quietly "take root" in the office and find out what has never been taught in the institute, or our teachers themselves did not know.

Due to his activity and, to some extent, probably because of his wife, Victor Ivanovich used to dedicate all his time to the newspaper. Nobody knew when he used to come, because, no matter when employees appeared at the workplace, the boss was already sitting in his office. He also used to leave last, unless his wife called, reminding him of another important family event. I must say that

there were too many such events in their lives.

Details of Victor Ivanovich's life before he became an editor were not known, and I did not ask much, afraid to seem like a curious magpie.

The rest of the personnel consisted of men. Oleg Nikolayevich, who led a political column, at first glance seemed to be a strict man, but in fact turned out to be very friendly. The sports journalist Taras was an unusually frivolous person and was fond of breeding some strange spiders. Leonid Alekseevich, a fellow editor of our service, used to write a little bit about everything, but specialized in culture.

These three were not friends, but used to share a common room and periodically organize evening gatherings.

The designer Sasha was a completely inconspicuous creature. All he was interested in were computer games and delicious food. His legendary laziness was comparable to his legendary leanness. No matter how much Lyubochka, who obviously had a feminine weakness for him, used to feed this puny creature – his jeans and a T-shirt hung on him like on a poorly constructed mannequin.

Plus, just six months before I came to the editorial office, from somewhere in the world an advertiser Enver came to it as well. He was an avid music fan who used to take off his headphones only when it was necessary to call a client. However, most of the questions Enver managed to solve through social networks, email, and Skype, so that he used to spend almost all working day in his headphones. He even hung them around his neck at the planning meeting, and, from time to time, guitar riffs or scraps of songs in English were heard.

The female copy editor used to work remotely, which allowed the newspaper to save some finances, so I have never seen her. The same was with accounting - all financial issues were handled by a consulting firm.

I almost forgot about another Sasha, who was responsible for all interviews. Smiling and sociable, he knew how to attract people instantly, so that his conversations turned out to be interesting and lively. The only thing was that I had to decipher them...

The editorial office of our newspaper used to survive mainly through advertising, although subscribers also helped a lot. And yet, the main income was generated by advertisements, so Victor Ivanovich used to pay a solid

premium for a good advertiser. Therefore, everyone used to hunt for them, except for Sasha the designer (and that because of his laziness, which has become a catchword). And, unfortunately, that's why I was needed. My more experienced colleagues didn't always have time to prepare materials for proofreading and printing. So I was instructed to decipher the interviews for Sasha, and type for everyone else. Periodically, I also used to make small promotional texts, but it was still impossible to call it journalistic work.

Nevertheless, I had my own office, which only had a table and a small locker, but at the same time the window was facing the courtyard, and in general, it was very cozy.

I must say that nobody in our editorial office had their personal "cubicles". Either Victor Ivanovich did not want me to distract colleagues from important matters - after all, I was the only girl, or for some other reason, but I was immediately seated separately.

Another advantage of my space was that the courtyard could be clearly seen from its window. In those rare moments when I looked away from the monitor, I could see people coming in and out, and the courtyard itself was quite interesting.

I liked to watch the girls from the publishing house who went out on the balcony to smoke, and I invented small stories they told each other. The habit that I started as a child, periodically led me into the frightening jungle of my own imagination, that I had to stop staring out of the window and start working again. I also had an exit to the balcony, but it was for dangerous emergency conditions, so our respected housekeeping manager simply closed the door there with a bolt and took off the handle.

It was not that I wanted to go out, it was just that sometimes this door seemed to me a metaphor for my life – there was not even a handle, which I could pull to go out on the balcony. It didn't matter that it was dangerous, because the reward for my courage would be the opportunity to look at the world directly, not through glass. Instead, I continued to sit at my tiny desk and reprint other people's texts, or even type in advertisements if the client was completely lazy. And not just the client.

However, I was trying not to lose heart. I set myself the goal of proving to the strict boss that I could be a real journalist. And to begin with, I used to do every

job as well as I could. For three months since I started work I had never been late, which was even highlighted at one of the Monday planning meetings. However, this, too, could hardly be considered a brilliant achievement, which would bring me closer to a Pulitzer by at least half a step.

I could, of course, try to write an essay about life in our courtyard. I could write about the gray stones and wooden windows of the building, the old trees, which may have threatened to break the foundation, but created a thick and cozy shadow, which could not be over-appreciated in those days when the sun was especially hot. Actually, at a moderately hot time it was great too. In addition, people say that looking at the foliage is useful for the vision, and all the "tenants" of our modest courtyard somehow used to spend most of their working day behind monitors, which did not have the best effect on this very vision. Actually, I've been wearing glasses since the age of three. Due to the characteristics of my retina I have not switched to contact lenses, so I could not face a professional deformation of this kind. But the trees still pleased me. It seemed that I was in some amazing shelter in the deepest forest.

However, returning to earth, I again found myself in a tiny room in the editorial office of a newspaper, which was not the most famous in the city. And, despite the beautiful view and the wonderful staff, nothing remarkable was evident in my professional life.

So it was not surprising that at some point I was again overcome by sad thoughts. The future with its carefree youthfulness was not bright for me anymore. It seemed to me that I would sit in this office till the end of my life, reprinting other people's texts and watching the next young journalist succeeding with envy and sending articles, one more sensational than another. The outlook, mildly speaking, was not the best...

And, as often happens in novels, at the very moment when I imagined my funeral procession, at which it is dryly said that I dedicated fifty years of my life to my favorite newspaper, the telephone rang, and Lyubochka informed me that Victor Ivanovich was waiting for me in his office. Come immediately!

I threw aside an interview that I was deciphering/transcribing and hurried along the long corridor - the boss's office was located at the opposite end, and Victor Ivanovich hated to wait. Patience was not one of his virtues.

I was very worried, even my palms became sweaty. Until now I had never been

in his office except for during general planning meetings. I was afraid that I accidentally made some mistake and a breakdown or even dismissal for not keeping up with the high demands that the boss used to assign even to Vitalich - the old man who used to repair everything that used to break in our old building. Actually, everything used to break in it. Distracted by the thought about the housekeeping manager, I calmed down, but having seen Lyubochka, who made terrible eyes, my heart pounded like crazy as soon as I entered the reception room. I even had some noise in my ears. This had not happened to me for a long time...

I shook my head uncertainly towards the door of our director and Lyubochka nodded meaning "yes". I knocked trying to straighten my shoulders to look a little more confident.

- "Come in!" - Victor Ivanovich was obviously waiting for my arrival, and, judging by his tone, he was waiting quite impatiently. My knees began to tremble suddenly - just like at my first university exam, when I was the first one in the course to answer to the strictest of our teachers. Then I, of course, got the highest score, but this was not a university and I wasn't taking an exam ... I smiled a little uncertainly.

- "Did you want to see me, Victor Ivanovich?"

He gestured towards a chair, and I sat down unnaturally, but hoping that I was not very noticeably trembling. I did not understand why I was so worried, but the situation was quite atypical. And only then I noticed another person in the office. I became confused and said hello almost automatically. A man in his sixties put a cup of tea on the table and smiled affably.

- "I have an assignment for you." - the editor, as usual, with military frankness, brought my attention to him. - "You haven't been working with us for a long time, but I see that you're diligent and responsible, so I will give you a chance to prove yourself."

- "And what kind of work?" - I even stuttered a little when I asked this question. It was somehow even scary, either because of the general incomprehensibility of the situation, or because of how strictly Victor Ivanovich looked at me from under his reading glasses.

- "I mean, I want to say that I agree in advance, but if you explain the general idea to me..."



- I would explain the general idea to you, Katyusha, if you give me a chance to do it.” - somewhere far beyond the severity there was a hint of laughter. This used to happen quite rarely, and so it didn’t scare me any less then. If the boss wanted to relax me, it all turned out exactly the opposite.

- "Excuse me." - I squeezed my skirt and lowered my eyes.

- "It's all right. I used to be young and inexperienced. However, we have no time for memories. Let’s talk about business.

Actually, I always loved stories and would have listened to Victor Ivanovich's memories with pleasure, but still nodded.

- "So, Sergei Vasilievich," - the boss nodded toward the elderly man in the armchair, - "told me a very interesting story about an unusual person. This story interested me a lot. I think, our readers won’t be anything less than curious. Your task will be to interview this person and arrange the interview for publication. Judging by what you do for Sasha, you are more than qualified

I did not know what to say. Honestly speaking, I just gasped, so I used to nod like a blockhead. Well, what kind of journalist was I if I could not say a word? I have to admit I was terribly pleased with the proposal. Actually, I was really delighted!

- "I'm ready to start tomorrow, even right now! My voice recorder is already covered with dust.” – having blurted out such nonsense, I was ready to clamp my mouth with both hands, but it was too late.

- "Then get ready for a business trip." - Victor Ivanovich said casually, glancing quickly at his guest. He looked at him attentively, not changing his expression.

- “For a business trip?” - I was so surprised that I could only ask again. – “What do you mean?”

- “I mean business trip. The person about whom Sergei Vasilievich told me does not live in Nizhny Novgorod, or even in Russia. If you agree, you need to pack your things and go abroad.

I was not ready for such an outcome. It turned out that this interesting person was a foreigner. And our picky boss, who sometimes used to scold even the most experienced journalists so much that, as my friend used to say, only the forest roared, was sending namely me for a business trip abroad. Why? No, I was flattered and happy, but wasn’t it strange to rely on the most inexperienced

person in the editorial office for such an important matter? Or was it not so important? It seemed that every new question was "exploding" in my head louder and more destructively than the previous one, so I even had to shake it a little to come to my senses.

I could not believe that he was serious. Moreover, my more experienced colleague used to always go on business trips abroad himself.

Having become compassionate, Victor Ivanovich put a glass of water in front of me and condescended to normal explanations.

- "The name of the person to whom I want to send you with an editorial assignment," - oh, how sweet this phrase sounded in my soul! – "is Alymbek Mombekov. He is the person you have to write an article about. Your own great material."

But it was not a joke. Our boss was really sending me to gather information about a man who, according to Sergei Vasilievich, could change the idea about the surrounding world. He said that this was a unique opportunity to be at the forefront of the popularity of an unusual person, perhaps even to conduct bold innovations into ordinary life. A lot of praising epithets were addressed to some Alymbek Mombekov, but I was barely listening. It was a great chance to prove myself. After articles about local minor incidents and rare reviews of movie premieres and performances, this was a breakthrough in my career.

My eyes became so huge that they could have contained all this unpublished material. My own article! Well-written and perfectly designed, with photos and full of exciting stories. Even if it wasn't on the front page – at least it would have my initials below. I was trying not to fall into a sweet euphoria, but I could only smile not too stupidly. At least, I hoped so.

- "Sergei Vasilievich, would you please give my colleague the details?!"

The man in the chair nodded and spoke. He had a nice voice, a bit dull, but not rattling, as it happens with elderly people. It was deep and confident. Listening to him, I myself ceased to worry so much.

- "As Victor Ivanovich has already said, this man's name is Alymbek and he is Kyrgyz. So, you will need to go to his homeland, to Kyrgyzstan."

He saw that I opened my mouth to ask a question and interrupted me with an impatient gesture.

- "Anticipating your question, I will say that you will not have problems with the language. Most of the people, including the person I mentioned to Victor Ivanovich, know the Russian language well enough. As it is in most places in Central Asia, by the way. These are former USSR countries. A visa is also not needed."

I nodded, unable to part with the dream of my own article, even for a few seconds. Of course, I knew that there was such a country as Kyrgyzstan, and I even remembered approximately where it was located from lessons of geography in the school, but still, I was tangibly excited by the prospect of traveling there.

- "This person", - Sergei Vasilievich continued, - "has a very unusual gift, but you should know the details right away."

I nodded again. At some point, for a moment, I disconnected from what was happening, reminding myself of a fish in an aquarium: I saw my boss and Sergei Vasilievich say something, or, to be more accurate, I saw how their lips were moving. I was smiling and nodding (obviously in the right places, judging by the lack of strange views in my address), but I did not perceive the information at all. Even if I missed some important facts, it was silly to ask again, and I still had no idea what exactly I was missing.

I was watching instead of listening. Trying to be inconspicuous, I was examining the person, because of whom I had to take a train to Kyrgyzstan the next day and whom Victor Ivanovich evidently trusted quite a lot. The guest, as I said, was not older than sixty years old at first, second and third glance. He was quite tall and at some time was obviously slender, but the years took their toll and a small abdomen was hanging over his belt. The years were compassionate. Sergei Vasilievich was almost bald.

Mentally, I was already forming an interview plan in accordance with all the rules of journalism, when the editor's voice brought me back to reality:

- "We are a little tight with finances this week, so, Katya, you will go by train. Google will help you with directions to Bishkek. Mombekov's address and phone number are written here." - he handed me a sheet with a logo and continued. - "The secretary is already preparing an order for you. Also, go to Sasha, he'll explain to you how to arrange a business trip. So, I expect an enchanting article from you. Go, get ready."

I warmly assured the editor that I would justify his trust, make every effort to

meet with Alymbek, get the best interview and write an article worthy of our wonderful newspaper. Somewhere in the depths of my soul a worm of doubt was crawling, but I diligently choked it. The dream about my own material was drowning out any fears, and even the voice of reason, which was usually very strong.

All this was certainly good, but somewhere in the depths of my soul there was another dream. I must admit that the main purpose of these joys was not really my surname at the end of the article and not to please the editor-in-chief of our editorial office. If everything goes as it should be and many people like my article, this would be my chance to announce myself to other major publishing houses. My article might interest, for example, Moscow newspapers, and who knows, maybe they would invite me to work for them, and I would embark on a dizzying career.

Yes, it was an offer that could not be abandoned - the last sentence sounded too definitive. My head was boiling, like our practically constant editorial kettle. I did not want to go by rail when there was the very unobtrusive service of a comfortable and fast flight, But I did not dare to argue with my boss about financial matters. You give me train – I go by train! "At least, I'll sleep properly!" - I encouraged myself, trying to follow my favorite rule to put a positive spin on any situation.

I told Lyubochka that I would be reachable via mobile phone, and, having specified all details about the trip from Sasha, quickly reached my room.

Then the whirlwind with the planning of the trip started, plus, the material of the non-deciphered interview was to be submitted today completely ready.

When I was hurriedly doing the remaining work, Vitalich, the housekeeping manager, glanced in my office. He was updating the fireproof posters and checking the expiration date of the extinguishers. He already knew which way I had to go, and smiled encouragingly:

- "Boss is baptizing you. But, listen to my advice. Better buy tickets for the plane yourself. It's crazy to go by train so far. Especially this eastern train, which has two borders to pass. Customs, registration of documents... In short, a sentry."

- "It's Ok. It may be useful for further work."

- "Well, Katyusha, it's up to you. Bon Voyage!"

I completed the interview and took it to Sasha. He cheered me up, saying that everything will surely end well. I just had to believe in myself and feel sincere interest in my respondent. "You can do it, Katya. Remember that if a person does not want to say something, leave him alone. An interview is not an interrogation. It's better if you let people tell you about something extraneous, but from the heart, rather than they will get rid of you by common phrases. The readers are only negative about such template interviews." I thanked my colleague. Leonid Alekseevich and Oleg Nikolayevich also gave me some valuable advice, and Taras even offered to lend his convenient suitcase on wheels. It was strange for me. I did not even know that my colleagues had been noticing me. It was very pleasant and my nervousness decreased noticeably and almost disappeared.

Despite the day spent in the turmoil, I fluttered from the editorial office in the most elated mood. I grabbed my purse and went out into the street even more quickly. The sun was shining. Our yard keeper Ivan, who was hiding in the shade of a tree, was sorting the bottles and waste paper, putting them into a wheelbarrow in an order, which was known only to him. Everything was as usual, but I came out of the office not just to buy something in the store or to get a snack. Life continued, and I had to go to Kyrgyzstan.

Suddenly it became cold, I even wanted to put something warm on, but I did not have anything with me. The cold was coming from somewhere inside. I shook my head and drove away the unbidden anxiety and went through the courtyard to the archway. My worries were quite understandable. In the end, so far, I had not traveled much outside my native Novgorod, and in general I had never traveled alone. I decided to walk home. I thought about what things I had to take with me. I worried that I would forget something and immediately began to dictate to my phone, making a kind of voice list. I also added the item "call my parents", because if I had to choose between the panic of my mother who lost me and my mother who knew where I was - the second option was still preferable.

I reached home deep in my thoughts and started with the tickets.

It turned out that everything was more complicated than I thought with my travel. There was a direct flight to Bishkek from my native Nizhny Novgorod, but there was not much rail service. The train with the strange and incomprehensible name 018CH with the destination I needed left from Moscow, but it did not pass our glorious city. Thanks to the availability of online booking,

my preparation for traveling from an intricate quest with several unknowns turned into rational planning and usual calculation of time. So, I had to get to Moscow and there get on the long-distance train with the maximum possible comforts, in order to arrive at the capital of Kyrgyzstan in three days. There was another option to try to get on the train at Ruzaevka station or in Samara, but there was less chance to buy the ticket successfully. I did not want to risk it, so I chose a longer way.

## **Chapter 2. Voyage**

I successfully booked the tickets to both the Russian and the Kyrgyz capitals with ease.

The next item on my list was a call to my parents. I told them about the trip, trying not to go into details. I had to listen to a dose of woeful lamentations and warnings to dress modestly from my mother - "Otherwise someone will kidnap you!" I did not have the strength to argue and prove that there were no such customs in Kyrgyzstan. I repeated, like a parrot - "Yes, Mom, Ok." – I was glad when the conversation was over.

The only thing that was left was to quickly pack a bag with a minimum of things, to load the books, for which I have always had no time, into my e-book, and to go for a long journey.

The way to Moscow was familiar to me - I used to go there often, starting from when I was a teenager. I have always loved and I still love to see Moscow, which is no more white-stoned, but rather concrete-glassed. I love to penetrate this hurried rhythm, watching it with typical provincial curiosity. This time, I had a catastrophically short layover to walk around the city, so I spent it sitting in the waiting room. The pulse of the white-stoned there was just crazy. Finally, landing was announced.

In addition to me, there was a couple - Victor Vasilievich and Marina Petrovna, who were heading for the salt lakes of Sol-Iletsk, - and a woman, whose name was Muniza in the compartment. She was traveling to Bishkek, like me. As it later turned out, she was a native inhabitant. My companions were about the same age as my parents, but it did not bother me at all. I did not want to hang out, but to have a little rest from the hustle and bustle of work and to prepare for the interview. The main thing was that the bedclothes smelled fresh. On my top bunk it was comfortable to read an e-book or to wander through the Internet



searching for entertainment.

But the most fascinating occupation, which shook me to the depths of my soul, unexpectedly turned out a banal, at first glance, observation of the flashing scenery and the noisy traffic of railway stations. Nature, as an incredible artist, most likely working in the genre of impressionism, placed the accents of color, having divided the regions of the country with broad strokes. The greens of the Moscow region, Mordovia and Samara regions were abundantly crossed by rivers. From the height of the bridges, their water seemed to be dark blue, almost black, with mirror-like specular highlights on the tops of the waves shining in the Sun's rays.

The first day of the journey was over, and gradually the riot of colors began to descend. Green shades gave way to yellow. It was like the landscape seemed to fade from time or from some factors beyond my understanding. Our train was entering Orenburg. Marina Petrovna pointed out a bridge on which the symbolic border between Europe and Asia was painted. I was slowly but inevitably approaching my goal. At this point, no documents were required from us – the customs officers and border guards were ahead.

The lengthy procedure of filling out the forms was a little tedious, but there was nothing to be done, it was good that the internal Russian passport was still enough. Having gotten through the red tape and sincerely stated that there was nothing illegal with me, I stuck to the window again. The boundless, almost deserted steppes of Kazakhstan stretched beyond it. A line from Yesenin's poem involuntarily came to my head, and began to spin almost without interruption - "golden drowsy Asia rested on the domes." But I began to understand it in a completely different way. The desert, beyond which, in some distance, peaks of dome-shaped mountains could be seen like a mirage in a haze, seemed to be golden for me. Because of monotony of the landscape I was falling asleep.

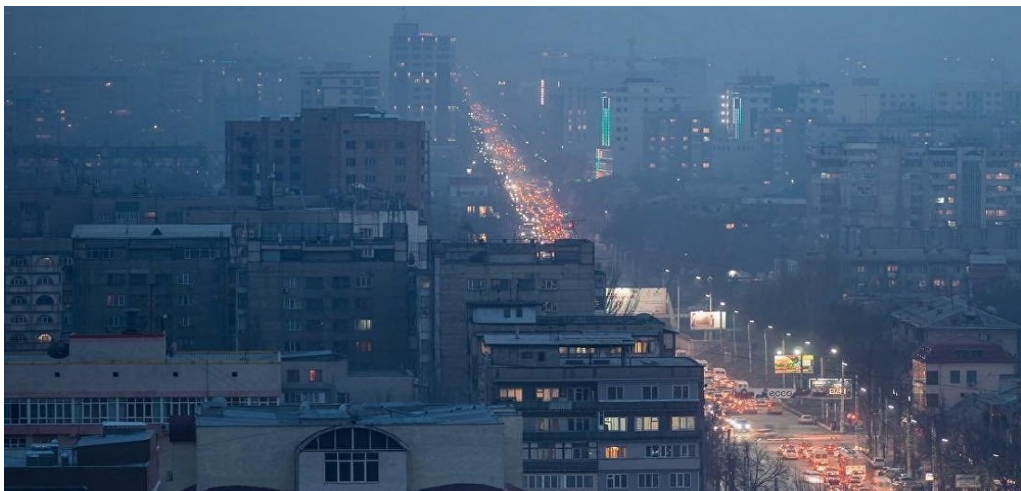
The variety was brought only by the herds of squat, pugnacious horses and tiny houses, which we were encountering on the way. It was difficult to tell by their appearance if they were inhabited. I remembered the movie called "Needle" with shots of the protagonist Moro, wandering with Dina on the ship in the middle of the desert, which once used to be a sea. A strange sensation of stopped time, stretching like golden sand, was broken by coming to the border. This time it was Kazakhstan with Kyrgyzstan.

Muniza was carefully watching her compatriot and after he returned my passport

to me, she said something quietly to him. I understood only the word "stamp". He lazily took my card, which I had not even had time to remove, and put a stamp in the corner. Later I learned that the absence of the stamp theoretically could cause me trouble in the form of a fine. I do not know if he forgot this or there was some kind of intent. I strongly regretted that I did not know Kyrgyz language at all. An unusual thought came to me: all guest workers working in Nizhny Novgorod at construction sites, at shops and markets are considered to be illiterate. To tell the truth, I myself used to laugh over the name of grapes called "kish-mish", but the people, who arrived in the country with a different language, succeeded in learning it. Perhaps this could be one of the ideas for an article, which I will offer someday to the editor for publication.

After reflection and another study of the plan for the future interview, I almost did not notice how the train came to the station of my destination.

The Bishkek-2 train station was like a portal to the past, especially if you recall the pompous recently seen Moscow station and the futuristic grandeur of the Samara station. Starting with the station, this city was demonstrating that the population here did not just respect, but revered the memory of past times. Muniza, who became my volunteer guide, showed me the majestic vault of the station, where a symbol of the Soviet times was still on display, and showed me the exchange box with a not too predatory exchange rate. Then she took me to the shuttle bus stop, easily paving the way through the fence of the station taxi drivers. The caring woman ignored my reassurance that I could manage myself and did not leave me until she put me on the minibus with the correct number, having said something to the driver in the Kyrgyz language. He nodded and at one of the stops informed me that I arrived.



It was not difficult to pretend to be the "local one": everything seemed to me really familiar in Bishkek. Probably, this impression was created due to the fact that almost all inscriptions on the signs were in Russian, and there were Soviet high-rise buildings everywhere. The spirit of the Soviet Union was hovering here in general. If the truth is said that Belarus is a natural reserve of that time, then Kyrgyzstan certainly was its true incarnation.

It was quite a distance between the station and my temporary home, so I managed to get an impression of the capital of Kyrgyzstan. There was a lot of greenery here, which decorated this city greatly. We even drove past the main square, and I saw a statue on a high pedestal. It seemed to me something like a statue of Liberty, but was a muscular man.

Probably, from the fact that at the beginning everything was developing too well or from the fatigue accumulated because of constant noise, but I practically did not worry about the success of my trip. The road, albeit far, flashed in contemplation, reflection and sleep completely imperceptibly.

My fellow traveler Muniza helped me to rent an apartment too. She made a couple of necessary calls to her friends. At the indicated address I was met by the hostess of the apartment. To my surprise, she turned out to be Russian. The room she was renting was small, but very clean. The furnishings were austere: a bed, a wardrobe, a chair with an ottoman and a small TV. I did not need more.

In addition, the hostess offered an "all-inclusive" service in terms of food for a modest price. It was more than appropriate: the per diem amount was quite modest, and preparation of food would waste too much time. Not knowing how many days I would spend for the execution of the editorial assignment, I agreed with the hostess that I would pay her every day. This humble and polite woman agreed to all my conditions and kindly told me that the dormitory of the educational institution, namely the Polytechnic University, where Alymbek Mombekov lived, was only two blocks away.

Pleased with the fact that I would not have to go far, and recalling Muniza with kind words, I gave the hostess money for the first day and asked for something to eat for the road. Literally in ten minutes (I did not even have time to unpack my suitcase), she brought a tray with a plate with warm fried dumplings, a traditional borsch, and some unusual snack that reminded me of koumiss. She said not to be shy if I needed anything, and immediately ask her. I decided not to delay the visit, and immediately after a fresh homemade meal, which seemed

more delicious than all the restaurant meals after the train, I sincerely thanked my hostess, and went to find the required address.

But as soon as I went out into the courtyard, I realized that I hurried a little bit - it was starting to get dark, so it was better not to risk it and return to the apartment. However, curiosity prevailed. Having carefully remembered the address, I went for a walk, but I tried not to go far not to get lost.

Again, the feeling that my house was far away and everything around was alien, did not come. Except for the boys playing in the yard and other people of distinct Asian appearance, nothing reminded me that I was in Kyrgyzstan. It was a typical suburban district, just like at home. The layout of the courtyards was similar. I immediately recalled the famous "Irony of Fate" and thought that, on one hand, coming to an unfamiliar city was rather nice. But on the other - how many more such cities are on the former territory of a huge country that used to occupy such an important place in the world. Twin towns were now separated. This gave rise to some strange and even slightly eerie sense of déjà vu mixed with nostalgia. However, it passed quickly. All emotions were replaced by fatigue, and I decided to return to the apartment.

The hostess had given me the key to the apartment, so I did not ring the doorbell. Entering the room, I saw that the bed was already made, and there was a plate of biscuits and a glass of sour milk on the table by the window. Reminding myself "to thank the hostess", I took a towel that was folded on the pillow and went to the shower. Illumination came to me right under the hot streams - I did not even ask her name. Mentally reminded myself this as well I hurried out. After three days in the Spartan conditions of the train, the shower was the best pleasure. The warmth and pleasant aroma of the liquid soap thawed me, and I even seemed to doze off. I reached my room yawning and automatically organized my stuff so that everything would be reachable. Without thinking about what I was doing, I chewed two fragrant cookies, drank the milk and lay down. Sleep came as soon as my head touched the pillow. It smelled with freshness, some tender herbs, was very soft and pleasant, and lulled me.

Although I got tired the day before like I had never been since my student days, when for some reason I decided to work in the summer on excavations, the dream left me rather early. I stretched slowly, but did not wallow. I decided to let the sun into the room. The apartment where my room was located was on the seventh floor, but yesterday I did not have a chance to look out the window. And

here, as soon as I opened the curtains, I was simply overwhelmed by the view that opened before me: there were mountains very near, at first glance, only about twenty kilometers away. The mountains were beautiful! Peaks, from which the green grass seemed to spill, were beginning to turn slightly yellow. The peaks were beckoning me. At the same time, they seemed to be accessible and caused the desire to reach the top. How I love mountains! Even at a distance they gave me strength. It seemed that my lungs were inhaling not the city air, which was actually surprisingly clean, but the intoxicating hop from the peaks. They attracted me so much that I could hardly resist the desire to ask the hostess (what was her name, again?) how to get there. Vladimir Semyonovich in his song told the whole world that only mountains where you have not been yet can be better than other mountains. I completely agreed with him.

I overcome the temptation with a sigh and pulled on my jeans, a T-shirt and went into the kitchen. The hostess was already busy there. I sincerely thanked her for the evening treat and asked her name with some embarrassment. She smiled and answered that her name was Olga and that there was nothing to be embarrassed about - most of the guests did not even think about such trifles. For breakfast, I had delicious oatmeal with milk and buns with apricots, and Olga urged me to take a few with me. The fragrant scent and the hostess's courtesy constituted a combination against which it was impossible to resist. I agreed.

### **Chapter 3. First encounter with a mysterious man**

A morning shower, teeth brushing, more official clothes (strictly speaking, my only severe pants suit), voice recorder, notebook - and I was ready to perform my first assignment from the editorial office. I said goodbye to the hostess and went to the university by the road she indicated yesterday. The streets were also green and generally quite clean, although a chain of cigarette butts was constantly running along the road. In general, many people were smoking right on the streets, and the drivers were not hesitating to throw their butts out of the windows of the speeding cars. Such low-profile observations distracted me from the terrible excitement.

The closer I was coming to my goal, the stronger my heart was beating, and when I saw the building, my hands even became sweaty.

The university stood out from the surrounding landscape with its whiteness. Golden plates in Kyrgyz and Russian were shining on the sides of the doors, and the wooden doors seemed to be inviting me to enter. But, unfortunately, I was

interested in another little building – the dormitory. It was not far, but somehow it got lost in the greenery surrounding the temple of technical science. However, I orientated fairly quickly and immediately went to it. It seemed to be much more confident from the outside than it really was.

The dormitory was a pretty typical Soviet building. Our university had almost the same one. It was a gray five-story building with wooden windows. It was obvious that the building had been repaired more than once, but, at the same time, the repair was never an overall one, so that eventually the walls acquired different shades of gray and looked rather strange. The wooden front door was cracked, and there was another one made of plastic and glass behind it.

There was a small "hallway" inside with a blue velvet sofa and a booth on a small podium. The old woman, obviously a guard, gave me an incredulous look, but still answered my question about Alymbek. The purpose of my entire trip and my ticket to the front page used to live in room 424 on the fourth floor. I stayed a couple of seconds near her booth, having seen the inscription - "Dining Room". But the swinging doors under it were not just closed - there was a padlock. Wherever the students living in the dormitory ate, it clearly was not here. I decided not to annoy the old woman, pulled myself together and went in search of Alymbek.

It was only a five-story building, so there was no elevator. However, it was interesting to climb the floors, so I even walked along the corridors, choosing one or another side staircase instead of just walking along the central staircase. The first floor produced a rather pleasant impression: fresh paint on the walls, clean windows, and new doors. But already one floor above everything was much less beautiful: the walls had not been painted for so long that they looked like a very old fresco. The wooden floor was already broken and in some places was covered with indelible stains of an unpleasant kind. I even was not sure if somebody used to clean here at all. It looked as if a cleaning cloth had not been wiped across it for at least a month.

Walking on the third floor made me wonder if it really was a student dormitory. I almost stepped on a yellow rubber ducky without a bill lying right in the middle of the corridor, and in one of the sections there was an old stroller in the corner. Such strollers have not been manufactured in twenty years, but it looked like a working one. The slippers in front of the doors were also very different: very tiny, the bigger ones for a teenager, and the bigger ones obviously for



adults. Perhaps, this dormitory, like many state buildings, was privatized in the 1990s by someone enterprising and now was simply leased to everyone in a row, without bothering to bring order to this place. And why, if people pay anyway? In this case, it would be logical to assume that the first floor, renovated and located under the vigilant supervision of the guard, was occupied by the local "elite". I involuntarily recalled the movie "Skyscraper" and came to the conclusion that since Alymbek Mombekov lived so high, his material and social position was "not so good". However, it was already a pure Sherlock Holmes method flavored with dreaminess. Or, perhaps, a journalistic flair woke up in me? It would be good if it was the latter, but there was not much hope for it. In any case, I would not distinguish it from a premonition.

Although, perhaps, I was not so far from the truth - the fourth floor produced a much worse impression than the previous ones. There was the smell of stale food, and the floor almost stuck to the soles of my shoes. There were already not just traces of the presence of children, but there were kids, who were running with loud screams along the corridor. The children all had short haircuts so that I could not distinguish boys from girls. Plus, for some reason, they all were grimy and messy. I wondered if they had a problem with water here.

Some man was smoking in the corridor wing at the window. He looked as if he came from Soviet films about antisocial elements: a stretched T-shirt and training pants with pads on the knees. His face was unshaven. He was smoking some kind of muck, which immediately locked my throat. It was interesting that his appearance was quite Slavic, while the children around were all swarthy and narrow-eyed. No matter what, there obviously was no segregation by nationality in this dormitory.

The smells of cooking came from several closed kitchens (obviously shared), but they did not cause even the sign of an appetite. In general, what I saw shocked me. Even though I've never lived in a dormitory, I often went to visit my girlfriends to prepare for a session or just for a party. There was a completely different way of life: cleanliness, new shower cabins, daily cleaning. Of course, it was in the same Soviet-era buildings, but it looked much better. Here, the impression was rather depressing and caused a desire to escape as quickly as possible.

I came to the room 424. A dilapidated door, which once was, apparently, painted with standard white paint, now acquired fifty shades of gray. The TV was on

very loudly in the room - it was audible in a couple of sections before I reached my destination. Obviously, Alymbek was not worried much about privacy - the door was ajar, so I decided to peek a bit (honestly speaking, to spy) before knocking. After all, studying the interviewee before the interview is a part of the duties of a journalist, and I really did not have such an opportunity.

There was not much to see - the metal bed was old, but the mattress on it was new, orthopedic. For some reason, the bed was not made. Perhaps the owner of the room was going to do laundry. But apart from this mattress, everything was very old, and there was the typical single-man's disorder in the room: crumpled T-shirts lay on a bedside table near the bed, shoes were haphazardly piled near the window, dirty dishes and mugs were everywhere, mostly on the floor.

I changed angles a little and saw a hand covered with dark hair, which was stirring something in a cast-iron frying pan. I wondered why Alymbek - and it was obviously him, because I did not notice a second bed in the room - was not cooking in a shared kitchen. However, I had no time to think about it - it was time to knock. Usually I did not hesitate, but this time it was scary. I inaudibly inhaled with a full chest and knocked.



Soon I saw the man I with whom I had to conduct my first serious interview. The short-haired man in his sixties, judging by appearance, opened the door without even asking who came to visit him.

- "Hello, Alymbek Dzhamankulovich. My name is..."

The door slammed shut literally in my face before I could introduce myself. All that I succeeded in seeing were some incredibly tired eyes on the slightly puffy face of the owner of the apartment, who was dressed in a sleeveless shirt, commonly called a "wife beater."

To say that I was at a loss was to say nothing. I absolutely did not know what to do next. “Ring the doorbell” again? Dial my boss’s number and report the situation? Turn around and leave? What even just happened now? And the most important question, which I had to ask myself, was why, like an arrogant idiot, since I arrived at the station or at least in the morning, I had not thought of calling, but without warning went straight to the apartment?

Everything seemed to turn upside down in my head. I already greatly regretted my agreement to come here, thousands of kilometers away from my home, to complete an editorial assignment and interview a person with a mysterious gift.

I even thought that, perhaps, the choice of journalism as a profession was a mistake after all. So, will everyone shut the door in my face so that I will stand and worry? Dozens of other thoughts were spinning in my head, but there were certainly no joyful thoughts among them. Basically, I imagined how I would be returning to work in Nizhny Novgorod with shame, an empty notebook and a blank voice recorder. Imminent dismissal seemed to be the least evil. Being surrounded by the local "sharks of the pen" at work would be worse. They, probably, would not poke me in the nose like a guilty kitten with this failure at every opportunity. Maybe they would even encourage me, and my boss would not excoriate me. But I do not need compassion! I had no right to fail the very first drafting task. I tried to cheer myself up, but it did not turn out well.

It's hard to say how long I was standing in a stupor before the slammed door. Perhaps 2 minutes or 22 - I did not know. It seemed to me that the bag with a journalistic minimum of things that hung on my shoulder became insanely heavy. Lowering my head, I was about to head downstairs, but the door opened again.

The man smiled embarrassedly at me, and the stern expression on his face became kind.

- “Hello! Excuse me, I wasn’t dressed.”

Indeed, his appearance changed a little - he put on a polo shirt. A smile appeared on my face, as if something incredible had happened. I could not remember when I was so exultant from the fact that a door was opened for me.

I held out my hand to him:

- “Alymbek Dzhamankulovich, my name is Ekaterina Vorontsova. I am a

journalist from a regional Russian publication. I came by the order of my boss, to..." – I saw bewilderment in the man's eyes, for a second I interrupted my speech, which I memorized almost by heart. – "You are Alymbek Dzhamankulovich, aren't you?"

He looked at me warily, and from an attentive careful look I felt uncomfortable. He only nodded to confirm his identity, but remained silent. I began to speak hurriedly, scared that the door in front of me would close again:

- "Do you know Sergei Vasilievich?"

Having heard this phrase, the man smiled again and invited me into his apartment:

- "Come on in! Come on in! I'm sorry that I'm so not hospitable. Unfamiliar girls do not often come to my doorstep. To be more exact, journalists have never come".

I stepped over the threshold, feeling glad that I hadn't left. The standard layout of the buildings, built when the Soviet Union existed as a temporary solution to the housing problem, was familiar to me from childhood. The owner ordered me not to take off my shoes, and there was something in his voice that I just did not dare disobey. He invited me to sit on a chair with a gesture.

My knowledge of the uncomplicated housing construction of the past was confirmed, and if I was internally ready for the diminutive dimensions of the apartment, the chaos, which people usually semi-ironically call "creative disorder," simply amazed me. What I saw glimpsing through the half-open door, fully appeared to me.

An incredible amount of papers with numbers, lines, arrows and strange drawings - either diagrams or graphs - were placed on the wall, scattered and even hung on the wall that appeared right in front of my eyes. Leaflets were on the desk, on the coffee table, and in the armchair. They were carelessly covering the modern orthopedic mattress, thrown on the Soviet iron bed. Once upon a time, jumping on the armored grid of this peculiar trampoline was excellent entertainment for the kids, most of whom now have grandchildren. Specifically this bed continued to fulfill its direct purpose, but the mattress, which was much larger, hung from the edge like a snowy top.

Some leaflets were crumpled and lay on the floor. "What a mess!" - I thought

looking at the room. It seemed like a tornado had passed through, leaving scattered papers in its wake.

The owner of the apartment was obviously excited and gave me a chair, which stood next to the desk, which was hidden by incomprehensible pictures.

- "Have a seat, miss. If you do not mind, I'll finish frying the potatoes."

Indeed, the breathtaking smell of fried potatoes, filling the entire small living space, was emanating from this small room.

- "Sure, Alymbek Dzhamankulovich!"

He hurried back to the process of frying potatoes near me, and I continued to look around. The feeling of being cramped in the room only increased from the abundance of things. It seemed that 10 square meters housed a bedroom, an office, a library, a dressing room, a living room, a dining room, a kitchen and a medical hospital. A desk, a coffee table, and a small old locker were lodged here. Books lay randomly in different places. A TV set and an electric kettle on a pedestal with two doors were in one corner, and an apparatus for artificial ventilation of the lungs was standing near the bed in the other corner. I have seen similar in the hospital when I was working over one of my articles, and I thought that it was not without reason for my prospective respondent to have such a thing. Probably because of health problems. Maybe, the swelling of his face was a result of some illness. It was so crowded that it seemed I could take a sheet from the bed and vice versa without getting up from the chair. The more I looked around, the less I hoped to get a clear interview from the owner of this room cluttered with papers. Even a thought flashed in my mind that Victor Ivanovich, who had sent me here, had simply decided to laugh at me, having announced that Alymbek Mombekov was a person with unique talent. I was brought up so that the workplace should always be tidied up. And here... Cups and some saucers stood even on the table among the papers. "Anyway, I had to give a warning about my visit. Then, probably, I would not find such a mess." - I tried to think up an excuse for the owner, but then, looking around once again, I realized the scale of the abundance of paper, and finished the idea, - "But it is unlikely that this would radically change the situation."

Probably, I was thinking too loudly, because the master of paper disorder turned in my direction and began to put the leaflets from the coffee table into a neater pile, obeying some kind of his own system, and collected all the dishes.

- "I became fascinated, excuse me. Plus, I did not expect anyone to visit me."

I felt uncomfortable, and I also began to clumsily make excuses.

- "It was me who was supposed to first negotiate on a meeting with you, Alymbek Dzhamankulovich."

- "Call me by my name. Otherwise, it's too formal, Ok?"

I nodded, but unhappy thoughts crept into my head again. "Where did my boss send me? It would be better to go to some conference or symposium. But no, he needed an exclusive – a conversation in an informal atmosphere with a man whose development could help to study the secrets of the universe and change the future". Yes, that's exactly what Victor Ivanovich told me, giving the last farewell instructions. Change the future! No more no less. I looked around the room once again: "It is possible to have a paper extravaganza!"

The host interrupted my thoughts again:

- "So, did Sergei Vasilievich send you here? How is he doing?"

- "Not really. But, I can say, I'm here thanks to him. Victor Ivanovich, the editor-in-chief of the local newspaper in Nizhny Novgorod where I work knows him. Sergei Vasilievich told him about you, and he sent me here."

An unintended thought leaked into my head again: "And I for some reason agreed and came here."

- "Oh, Sergei Vasilievich is a very good man. He has a sharp mind and a very kind heart. He literally saved me when I was living in Russia. I owe him a lot."

I just looked at him and smiled slightly, not knowing what to say. For some reason, the journalistic habit my boss and I so carefully developed to listen attentively to the interlocutor did not work. I had no desire to show a special interest in informal live communication in order to establish good human contact and become imbued with the history of the respondent.

My excitement disappeared somewhere, and though I did not like it at all, it was all the same to me who had once been saved and how exactly. To be honest, I just wanted to get the answers to the prepared questions faster, as long as I was already here, and get out of the paper den. It was very uncomfortable and even difficult to explain why. Either I was strangled by the tightness of this room, or disconcerted being in the epicenter of the chaos that was going on around me.



The owner of the room stood in the middle, wiping his hands with a towel along the way. He sat down on his bed and, having carefully wiped his hands once more, held out his hand to me:

- "Alymbek! Alymbek Mombekov!"

I responded with a slight shake of my outstretched palm, wondering at the thought that, probably, it was a tradition in Kyrgyzstan, and repeated my name:

- "Katya."

- "So, what does dear Sergei Vasilievich want?"

- "I was sent to interview you for a newspaper. The editor-in-chief is sure that you are a unique person."

I announced my boss's assumption about the possible influence of my interlocutor on the future development of civilization word by word.

Alymbek smiled embarrassedly:

- "I don't know how unique I am. Many people just take me for a madman. Yes, I have a gift that I did not ask for from God. And still I do not know definitely – do I have to rejoice or to cry from what I have. It happened not by my own will, but the will of God. I don't know either if I have to take it as a gift of fate or as a curse. Sometimes I'm very grateful to God for this gift, when the light of a solution appears to me, and sometimes I say, looking at the sky: "Oh God, why did you do this to me? I want to live like a normal person." Many are surprised at this, but a human is such a creature that we do not believe in anything until we see it with our own eyes, until we feel it."

Honestly speaking, I did not understand much of what was said. But it was obvious: Alymbek was a very pleasant communicator. He was keen by something unusual that could be perceived not by everyone, but at the same time – he was very simple.

Perhaps, because of this misunderstanding and rejection by others his eyes became so tired? As soon as my excitement from the rough start of the meeting passed, I began to fall further and further beneath the spell of Alymbek's strong and unique personality. From the first moments of our real communication, I stopped paying attention to the disorder around me, and although the subject of research was the person opposite me it wasn't clear if I was ready to listen to him without taking a breath.

It was amazing that his monologue about his gift or curse could move me so much, because initially I only thought about how to escape his cramped little room. I decided to think about this phenomenon later, pulled myself together and opened my bag to get a voice recorder, a notebook with the prepared questions and a pen.

- "If you don't mind, tell me about yourself from the very beginning. Starting from childhood. For me and, probably, for all readers, it will be interesting to know how you started, how you obtained your gift and what it is in general. Tell me what you think is necessary."

- "Sure, although I honestly don't know who would be interested in the details of my biography. For me, only the second half of my life deserves attention. But first of all - I want you to try my fried potatoes. It is not customary for a guest to sit at a bare table."

- "Thank you very much, Alymbek! Don't bother. I'm full and I'll wait until you're free."

- "Even if you are full, you must at least try this dish. Moreover, I didn't ask if you will eat or not." - He smiled as he got up from the bed.

- "Excuse me, but where can I wash my hands?"

- "The wash basin is at the end of the corridor."

Alymbek took a clean towel from the closet and handed it to me. I went to the closest bathroom, bypassing the series of rooms. There I was once again surprised by the conditions in which the local inhabitants were not just surviving, but also raising their children.

When I returned to the room, a simple, but very fragrant lunch was spread out on the coffee table. Golden fried potatoes were on two plates, and in the center were tomatoes, cut into quarters, which were attractive with their bright color.

- "Sit down, Katya. We will eat a bite, and after the meal I will tell you my story. Bon Appetit!"

- "Thank you, it smells really delicious!"

I took a fork and tried the fried potatoes. It could be called a gastronomic delight. Honestly speaking, I only ate such magnificent potatoes in my childhood. My grandmother used to cook them and always put a glass of milk near each plate. Cold and so tasty. But the main delicacy were crispy chips,

inside of which was a starchy fried flesh. Oh, how delicious this potato was - without meat, without any vegetables, even without onions. I hadn't tried this dish anywhere else. Shaped like fries from McDonald's, but nothing no taste in common. Even my mother does not know how to fry potatoes like my grandmother did, and create a culinary masterpiece from banal food. And now, many years later, I was again eating and experiencing a taste from my childhood. "Indeed, the person sitting in front of me definitely had one extraordinary talent!" - I thought, savoring each piece. I was ashamed, because I came here not to eat, but it was beyond my strength to tear myself away from this delicacy.

When the last piece disappeared from my plate, I did not even try to hide my enthusiasm and quite bluntly blurted out:

- "Alymbek, it's just awesome! You know, I have only eaten such a delicious potato at my grandmother's. Thank you very much!"

- "You're welcome, Katya. Now I'll make tea. We will drink it quietly, and I will tell you about myself."

The host flatly refused my offer to help with doing the dishes and, turned on the electric kettle standing in the room and took the empty plates away somewhere.

Soon he brought two elegant bowls and a teapot. Alymbek poured the boiling water from the electric kettle that had just turned off into the teapot. The host put a small round plate with sweets on the table. I had never even seen some of them, although I have had a sweet tooth since childhood. Alymbek was doing all these movements, pretty clever considering his slightly obese figure, in complete silence. I had a feeling that he was gathering his thoughts. He was thinking about what could be told, and what could not be told.

Alymbek sat down on the bed and poured an amber-colored drink into both cups. He did not fill them up to the very top, but about three-quarters. This feature finally attracted me to the respondent. I had already seen this custom among many Eastern peoples. Especially honorable guests, with whom they plan to talk at length, are poured an incomplete cup. It was like an invitation to pour more and more. If the tea is poured up to the very edge of a cup or a bowl, it means not generosity, but a hint to the visitor: "Drink and leave more quickly." I sincerely thanked the host for this gesture of disposition, not the first time during our meeting.

- "Thank you, Alymbek. I am touched by your care and attention. But I am really

eager to discover your amazing story.”

The man before me smiled slightly and said:

- “Well, Katya, you drink tea. And I'll tell you my story. You can probably already turn your voice recorder on.”

I attached the device to the table, clicked on the button and my host began his story.

- “My name is Alymbek Mombekov. I was born on April 15, 1955 in a relatively small Leninpol village of the Kyrgyz SSR. Now this place is called Bakay-Ata district of the Talas region.” - Suddenly he fell silent. – “You know, it's difficult to choose any points that may be interesting and useful for readers of your editorial office.”

I did not even need to look at the journalist's notebook to suggest questions. During the time on the train, I seemed to have learned them by heart.

- “Please, tell us about your parents. About your childhood. Maybe some bright events or unusual stories that happened to you?”

Alymbek nodded, and I noticed how his face shone when he began to tell me about his native people.

- "My father's name was Dzhamankul. Once, thanks to his character, he became a very influential person in his small homeland. He loved hunting and was so successful that people were surprised. People were secretly and openly saying that he alone could save the whole village. He regularly shared his prey. When hard times came, he fed all the inhabitants, including the families of unsuccessful hunters.”

My father rarely spoke about that episode from his life. He never boasted of his heroism. I learned about it from a neighbor. There was a bad harvest that year. The drought burned everything. A terrible famine was coming. But luck did not leave my father, as his skill was always with him. He went hunting and returned with prey. It repeated many days in a row. Finally, everyone survived. No one died from malnutrition. Yes, my father was a real hero, a hero of that time. Glory paced ahead of him, there was no man in the whole area who did not know him. He used to be, as it is now said, a “boss”. Everyone knew and respected him, as well as feared of him a little.

He had a lot of nicknames, which were not insulting or offensive, but rather

eulogizing. It was a recognition of merit or tribute. People used to call him "Dzhamankul the hunter" because of his heartfelt predilection for hunting. He was also often called "Kazakh-hero" as the mighty power was hiding in him. He was keenly interested in wrestling. Once a competition was held in Kazakhstan. He took first place, having won among 40 of the strongest fighters. How can I not be so proud of such a father! All my strength, enthusiasm for sports and the will to win are from him."

My interlocutor became silent and I didn't speak a word either. There were images from the past before my eyes. There was a man dragging the carcasses of animals to feed his fellow villagers. Then he was clutching an equally strong opponent, lightly performing a combination and winning. It seemed that Alymbek could not dare to continue to talk about himself, not considering himself as worthy as his legendary father. These were the seconds of silence dedicated to the real hero. Alymbek took a sip of tea. Then he turned his gaze from me to the voice recorder and, having convinced himself that the recording was continuing, he spoke again.

- "My father's first wife could not give birth for a long time. They lived 30 years but had no children. As my father somehow confessed to me, when I was already an adult, they worried a lot. A family without children was not considered to be a family. Of course, nobody was pointing at the "Kazakh-hero" and was not using offensive words to refer to him. There were no such courageous suicides among the surrounding people, who could even joke about the futility of his wife. She, apparently, was feeling even more despondent. I don't know how long she spent thinking, but one day she decided and suggested her husband take a second young wife, so that she could bear and give birth to many healthy children. That way, the glorious genius of Dzhamankul could be continued."

The situation was so contrary to my understanding that I exclaimed quite unprofessionally:

- "That is a real woman! I would never be able to do this."

Feeling embarrassed, I stopped, but Alymbek did not become angry because of my rough, but unintentional interference and began to talk about his mother.

- "The second wife gave birth to me. My mother's name was Ardak. Translated from the Kyrgyz language, this means "respected". But in the village she was often called by another name - Kuralai - for her unusually expressive eyes and

beautiful character. She knew how to pacify quarreling, to calm suffering and sincerely share joy with others. Trust me, Katya, this is usually the hardest part. We use the word "kuralai" to call one type of wind. It seems refreshing and cool during the hot summer, and in winter it warms, not allowing the newborn lambs and goats to freeze. My mother's "folk" name completely reflected her tenderness towards us, her children, and towards others.

Thanks to the efforts of our father, we used to live in relative abundance. There were no excesses. We used to live the same as people usually live in the remote villages - in poverty! Not as beggars, of course. Everyone was trying to get out somehow. We used to grow a lot of stuff ourselves. The deliveries to the village shop were regular. Once every two weeks."

Alymbek smiled:

- "Not as it is now. Every day a few cars unload at the nearby store."

I nodded. It seemed that all supermarkets everywhere were the same, unified and almost impersonal, whether in Russia, or in Kyrgyzstan. Solid trade in a foreign style, slightly flavored with the local flavor. Mombekov narrated so vividly and interestingly that it was very exciting to listen to him.

- "Ice cream for children had never been delivered to us. They were probably unwilling to send refrigerators to our land. But there was no such thing. It was necessary to go to the regional center to get this delicacy. I remember how the saleswoman from the cafe used to put the ice cream scoops in a loose tin bowl and top them with shavings of fine chocolate, which melted on the tongue.

The saleswoman, like a sorceress from a fairytale, used to give us, children, sweet happiness. In our province, we even had no sweets like caramels. They snatched away almost everything in the regional center. My mother used to boil sugar with water and pour it on a smooth plank. It froze and turned into light brown glass. My mother used to crush a smooth layer into uneven chips and indulge us, her four children, with such candies. So we did not suffer too much. No sweets – no questions. But when sweets appeared on the table it was a holiday. We were not starving and that was the main thing for our parents.

Our family was not different from the others who lived next door. Our parents probably had some disagreements, but they have never argued in front of us. Yes, we did not always live in prosperity, but still, we lived in friendship. My parents had four children including myself, and brought us all up rather strictly,



but with infinite love.”

I took advantage of another pause in Alymbek's story, which was a little prolonged, with the prepared question about his most vivid childhood memory.

- “In general, when I recall childhood, for some reason the memory of how we had to work with tobacco always surfaces. We did not grow it ourselves. It was "an order from above" from the district administration - to cultivate a special sort of tobacco in our region. It was believed that the content of nicotine in it was lower as a result of a combination of the species and the climate. Huge areas were plowed up to sow tobacco. Everyone who came to help to collect it was paid a little money. Katya, have you ever seen how tobacco grows?”

I had to admit that I had no idea what this plant looked like. I had never in my life been interested in what it was like, and did not think about how it grew. All my knowledge about the flora of Kyrgyzstan, which I had thanks to the books of Chingiz Aitmatov, were limited to the fact that cannabis containing narcotic substances grew in the Chui valley.

- "Next I'll tell you a little about how this drug, which is quite legal for a lot of people, grows. Imagine a huge endless field full of plants with large yellow-green leaves. The smaller ones were 80 centimeters high. Others were probably taller than a meter. There were relatively small interesting flowers at the top of some plants. They looked like a lot of gramophones gathered together.

The yellowish-green plain waved in rows everywhere you looked. The edges were not visible even on the horizon, where the sky kissed the earth. The backs of the collectors flashed sometimes. At the time of my childhood, these were basically women and children. It was necessary to tear the leaves, which already reached a technical stage. There were special instructions, and we knew by heart all the signs of a "ripe" leaf by heart as if they were a poem. Mechanical collecting was excluded. Each plant required a special approach. Not even a plant, but each leaf! So we used to tear them off. Two or three from one plant, rarely more. The working conditions were...”

Alymbek hesitated and continued:

- “Honestly speaking, there were no regulations. We used to begin to work when the dew was completely gone and only during the days without precipitation. It was important that there was no outside moisture on the future raw materials for poison. So, in short, we used to work at the heat. All the conditioned leaves were

neatly torn off near the stem, folded into something like baskets and carried to the receiver.



This was the chief official in the field! He was as important as the king, because whether all the baskets from the collector would be accounted for properly depended on him. Hence, it meant how much money would a woman or a child, who were spilling their sweat on the ground receive.

During the tobacco harvest season, we used to go to the field every day. My mother was not tall and used to always take us, her four children, to the field. The chiefs of management used to call my mother "Small, but fast". She treated the tobacco plants very quickly. Almost always, our "team" consisting of mom and us, children, used to drag the biggest amount of tobacco to the acceptance unit. I was a teenager and was in the 7th or 8th grade, but I remember everything as it was yesterday.

We had a whole ceremony. Every morning, initially at the reminder from my mother, and then myself, I used to pour milk or buttermilk into a bottle. Mother used to put some flatbreads into a bag with the bottle. And all together we used to go to this hard labor. Our hands became oily and sticky from the tobacco leaves very quickly. And there was no way to get rid of the special smell, which filled all the surrounding air.

We used to dine carefully, so that bitter fingers, soaked with the juice of tobacco leaves, would not ruin our appetites. We used to hold the bread with slices of paper that substituted for napkins. Dairy products saved us from the emptiness in our stomachs. Now I understand that my mother cared not only about our hunger.

Modern advertisers would say that it was a means for detoxification from harmful substances. Almost the whole day we'd been in contact with the nicotine-filled juice of the leaves. You know, it turns out that I became so sick of this tobacco, that even now, talking about it, and recalling those days, I realize how difficult our life was. I became so tired of going to the field, that after all these years I still remember these feelings. That smell, the feeling of heat, the oily coating on my hands, fatigue... We used to come home exhausted. At night, when I used to go to bed, I closed my eyes and saw the endless tobacco leaves."

Alymbek interrupted for a minute to refill the kettle and boil water. The hospitable host refilled the drink in the cups. He sat down back on his bed and said embarrassedly:

- "Excuse me, my childhood memories overwhelmed me. This information, probably, will not be useful for you, Katya. I don't even know what to say about leading up to the moment when an incredible meeting took place in my life."

- "Oh no, do not worry! All this is very important. It's like a novel from a very recent life. Perhaps there are reasons for your uniqueness. It is important for me to learn everything from your childhood - family, studies, hobbies - to understand if there were any background for what happened to you."

- "Well, I was an average student. I was not particularly successful. Moreover, I never thought that numbers would become so important for me. I never thought about it. Probably, no one who knew me as a child could even guess that my fate would change so much. I was very fond of sports. Like my father, I liked wrestling. I specialized in Greco-Roman wrestling and achieved a certain success. I wanted our family name to sound loud in the world of sports. I used to win awards at different competitions at various levels. The success did not come immediately, of course. In the beginning I became a candidate for a master of sports. Later, when I already was at physical education institute, I achieved what I wanted and what I was so eager to get - I received the title of "Master of Sports"."

Now, judging by Alymbek's appearance it was difficult to say that the man had been seriously engaged in sports. However, I had already met athletes who ended their careers, so I was not surprised by the fact that he was infatuated with wrestling. In addition, something elusive in his manner of carrying himself, posture or movement, revealed that his body was familiar with the loads not at the level of "pull up a couple of times for a lifetime and run a cross at the lesson

of physical education". Becoming distracted from my reflections, I began to listen carefully to Alymbek's story.

- "Honestly speaking, I could never boast success in my studies. I had no craving and absolutely no incentive for it. I, actually, was not stupid, but I was an average student. My parents, of course, were trying to influence me somehow, but without much success. Probably, no children in the world ever listen to their parents. In general, I was only thinking of finishing school, as soon as possible, to never again remember what they were trying to put in our heads. I did not have much knowledge in my head. Frankly speaking, in mathematics I was practically an absolute "zero". Of course, I knew the multiplication table and the simplest rules, but the remaining moments, even the system of equations, were incomprehensible for me, and seemed completely unworthy of my time.

I was learning the methods of Greco-Roman wrestling with great bliss, and was keenly studying the remaining techniques of close combat. Knowing that I was spending most of my time playing sports, some teachers used to do me favors. Of course, not always deservedly, but with great reserve they used to give me "satisfactory" marks. At that time a teacher, Makil Sulaimanov, was working at our school. He was the strictest one. I was still arrogantly counting on indulgence, a "satisfactory" grade on my report card and a new, adult life in the city. I was not going to linger in my native, but infinitely dull Leninpol, where I had no special prospects and development of a sports career.

But soon I was very surprised, even shocked, as they say. I don't know whether it was so accepted at school, maybe for some specific indicators, or for some other reason, but it was necessary to leave someone behind. Or maybe, we, the pupils, really were awful about the subjects. In general, to my misfortune, in the 10th grade, out of 43 pupils the teacher Makil decided to leave me behind. Can you imagine? A second year that should have been a senior!"

I certainly did not expect this in the biography of a person making striking mathematical discoveries. The sincerity of the person sitting in front of me was simply fascinating, but the rest was even more surprising.

- "I was very upset. At least, he could give me another chance to retake the exam a week later. It was a bitter day. All my classmates were getting diplomas, and I was just watching them. I was trying with all my might not to burst into tears right there in the assembly hall. Then I quickly tried to get out of school in order not to see anyone even among my friends. I've never felt so hurt before..."

I remember how I came home in tears. I went to my father, told him about this humiliating situation. He patted me on the shoulder and said in consolation: “It's okay! You will study one more year and will also get your diploma”. - Probably, I was waiting for some other support from my father, but when he said that as if nothing unusual happened, I felt even worse.

I took the rope hanging on the hook at the front door and threatened him – “I'll go, hang myself! I do not want and will not live with this shame”. - Oh, I really wanted to do this. My father stopped me – “You're completely out of your mind, Alymbek! Where is your head? What will you do? And what about your mother? Fool! You cannot be so unfeeling. All right, wait. Sit at home and throw the nonsense out of your head! I'll go to school or even to his home, if necessary. I'll meet with this Makil. I'll talk to him and find out how everything can be settled.”

Alymbek rubbed his face with his hands, as if he was still ashamed of the events, which happened more than forty years ago, but he courageously told me about the solution to a situation that was clearly unpleasant.

- “I gave my father a real ultimatum: either he goes straight to Sulaimanov that day and resolves this problem, or I would hang myself! Mother heard our loud conversation and, of course, was very upset. She did not let me out of her sight even for a moment. She followed me, so that I would not commit an irreparable stupidity. My father stabbed a goat and took a few liters of koumiss with him. With this, frankly speaking, bribe, he went to school. Then, as my father told it, I learned how this meeting went.

The teacher Makil confessed that most likely by mistake, they brought only 42 blank diplomas to the village from the city. All, which were available were already filled out and handed to graduates. I remember how I expressed my indignation to my father, saying that because of someone's mistake, I would not get a high school diploma, even if I studied more successfully. Of course, my father did not agree with this very poor excuse.

Sulaimanov rightly remarked to him that if I had not been such an across the board flunker, he would have concerned himself and requested the missing copy of the blank diploma in the district. And for now he recommended that I accept the situation and study harder next year. My father told me that in desperation he told the teacher about my crazy idea, although he did not want to reveal this weakness of mine. I can only guess what words he found, but the teacher Makil took pity on me and our whole family. He gave my father valuable advice - to go

straight to the city of Talas, and to ask for an urgent appointment with the head of the district Mister Kabaev.

You will do anything for your children. My father wounded his pride. He went to the city of Talas to bow to the chief of the district. I never found out how my father managed to meet with Kabaev. It was obviously a big chance that he took. After all, he could have been absent, have been on some business trip in the district and even beyond. Let's say in Moscow! But, apparently, the fear of losing me helped my father, moved him forward and, of course, something more endowed him with benevolence.

He found an audience and told the most important person in the district about the suicide I planned. Despite the high-ranking position, he turned out to be an understanding and not indifferent person. Apparently, he saw in my father's eyes such terrible despair that he realized the seriousness of the situation.

Kabaev encouraged my father, who later would retell this part of the story with a kind and embarrassed smile. "Well, Dzhamankul the hunter," - he said, - "I am obliged to save your son's life, although it violates certain instructions. But his case is still exceptional. I have two spare blank diplomas in my safe in case someone makes a mistake or somehow ruins the certificate when filling it out. I will give you one as an exception for your beloved son."



That's how my father gave me life for the second time. Now this story seems ridiculous to me, but then I could not believe my happiness. The teacher

Sulaimanov gave me a "satisfactory" grade for mathematics, and executed everything as needed. He handed the diploma to me in school without pomposity and loud speeches, but I did not need this external tinsel! The main thing for me was to get the coveted diploma.

The teacher Makil was, actually, a nice person, although I hated him at first. He sincerely asked me about my further plans. Having learned that I was going to enter the institute, Sulaimanov was very surprised. Then he made me promise that I would take the process of learning seriously in order not to disgrace him personally and our village as a whole. Being happy, of course, I promised him this. Subsequently, I was trying to fulfill the promise made to the teacher Makil with all my might. Actually, there was a benefit in that situation. This trouble knocked pride out of me and taught me a lot. The feeling of shame that, actually, I received the diploma in advance, always served as a reminder of the need to try in all directions and pay attention not only to sports. Even when I had obstacles to learning in the form of romantic circumstances, I remained true to my oath."

Alymbek noticed that, being carried away by his story, I completely forgot about tea, and made a gesture with his hand to stop the recording.

- "Katya, drink your tea before it gets cold. Cold tea is a crime against this wonderful drink."

After the man's next gesture, I continued the recording.

- "Almost immediately after receiving my diploma, I flew to Frunze. This was how Bishkek was called at that time. In addition to the high school diploma I received I took with me all the prizes and trophies awarded to me at competitions and very few things.

I had chosen the institute a long time ago. Of course, it was not technical and not humanitarian. I knew the address, and I dreamed of studying at the State Institute of Physical Culture. Now it is proudly called an academy. An interesting coincidence was that the institute was founded the year of my birth.

"Satisfactory" grades in general subjects did not embarrass the admissions committee too much. Apparently, such grades for young athletes were an ordinary occurrence for them. Plus, that year there were a lot of applicants with "satisfactory" grades. An important or even basic role was played by documents confirming my achievements in sports. So, I entered the Institute of Physical Culture without any problem, without anyone's help. A few days later I turned



from an applicant into a freshman student. A new town. A new setting. Everything was new... Gradually, I got used to the educational rhythm. I did not become a brilliant student, but I tried not to disgrace myself. And then, I occasionally met an amazing girl.



A couple years later my classmate and I were going for a vacation to our hometown Talas. We wanted to buy plane tickets at the airport as usual. For one reason or another, it turned out that we did not take care of this in advance. Biplane An 2 used to serve domestic flights at those times. Initially, these biplanes, similar to a bookstand were created for all sorts of agricultural work. Later, slightly upgraded, they turned into a small aircraft. They used to serve well, but had very few seats. There were seats for 10 passengers in the so-called salon, and there were two pilots sitting and controlling the biplane in the cockpit.

There was a line at the cash register, as always. We noticed two young girls, who wanted to return their tickets to the cashier. We asked how much they were selling their tickets for, and the girls offered them to me and my friend at a good price. We agreed and bought the tickets from them.

In our dreams we already were surrounded by our relatives, but suddenly they announced that all flights for that day were canceled as the weather was bad for flying. The girls' names were on the tickets. The name that I got was Aliman Sharshenova. Usually many people ask about the name, as it sounds like a male name."

Alymbek's attentive eyes were looking with curiosity as if he was examining me. I willingly explained that I read the "Mother's Field", where the main character had this unusual and beautiful name. The man seemed to be happy with my explanation, because his story went about very personal and intimate



things.

- "So it turned out that on that day we did not fly to Talas. We could not officially return the tickets as our names were not written on them. Our purchased tickets just "burned".

We still needed to go home. There was still an option. Without hesitating for a long time, my friend and I went to the bus station. If not by plane, we were going to get home by bus. This would take longer, of course, but what could we do? We entered the station, and these two girls were already there! They were standing in line at the cash register as if nothing had happened. I was a little angry at these girls as, in fact, they hadn't sold us valid tickets, only papers.

I approached them and began to express my complaints. We bought tickets for 7 rubles, and at those times it was decent money! We were compassionate about them, but the way they deceived us was offensive. My friend was calmer. He was standing beside me. I told them: "Girls, why did you deceive us and sell us your tickets. The planes aren't flying at all today. Why didn't you tell us about this?" - Aliman answered me, - "Listen, guys. Did you ask why we were returning our tickets to the cashier? No! You asked for how much we would sell them for! We, of course, were not right and should have warned you. But it turned out this way. We are sorry." It was impossible to be angry with them for a long time. Plus, the girls' turn at the ticket window came up, and they let us go before them to reconcile. At the same time Aliman had to very politely explain herself to the woman from the queue, who was loudly outraged by the "arrogance of the youth".

In the end, in order not to delay the line, I immediately bought 4 tickets and we finally got on the bus to Talas. The girls sat down in front of us and gave us the money for tickets. My friend and I got settled in the rear seats.

I really liked Aliman that day, although the beginning of our acquaintance was not too romantic. After a while I approached her friend and asked to trade places. Judging by her communication with me, Aliman obviously did not like me. Although I was dressed decently, and even had a beautiful tie, apparently, she was embarrassed by my shaved head.

One of the long stops was in Djambyl. The bus stopped, so that people could stretch a bit, have a snack, rest from the constant drive, clean themselves up. I got off the bus and noticed the tulips growing nearby. A mischievous thought

came to my bald head very quickly. I plucked a few flowers and approached Aliman with a satisfied grin. Presenting this improvised bouquet, I said that I fell in love with her, if not at first sight, then from the second for sure.

Talking to each other, we reached Talas and went home. She lived in another village, and I went to my home in Leninpol. Aliman told me her address, but apparently I confused something. A few days later I decided to meet her again. I went to her village, but could not find her. I was asking the local taxi drivers for the address "Titovsky 13". Everyone shook their heads, explaining that there was no such street in their village. I didn't know what to do. Couldn't Aliman deceive me again, like with tickets to the biplane? Suddenly an elderly taxi driver said: "Wait, friend, maybe, Litovsky 13?"

I had no choice but to check this version. We went to this address, and luck was waiting for me. She was there! She was surprised to see me and I noticed that she was overjoyed. From that day we began to date. We walked together. Not in an embrace, of course, because at those times such, actually, innocuous walks, could be condemned by idle people as debauchery. Not all girls were allowed by their parents to meet guys. Some weren't even allowed to leave their house or talk to their peers from the windows of their own houses. The times were different, education was different. Even holding each other by the hand was something sacred, almost intimate.

It took all my boldness, because of the character of "my Aliman", as I used to call her in my dreams, was harsh. If she considered that I was going to offend her, she could be offended so much that I, the master of sports, would get hurt. But I was really fascinated by her and so I could be patient, constantly amazed at what a wonderful girl she was, not only internally, but also externally.

Smooth black hair glistened brilliantly in the sun with such noble radiance that it warmed my heart. Her velvety eyes had the amazing color of strongly brewed tea. Her eyelashes, oh, they stabbed me right in my soul - long, slightly curved upward. One day one of them fell on Aliman's cheek and I, after asking her permission, removed it, touching her velvet skin for a moment. The standard compliment, which is given to a girl that she is like a peach, did not fit my beloved. She was much, much more tender...

Despite the usual uneasy life of those times, Aliman had a face like a movie star, who never knew any hard domestic work, or the hard labor in tobacco fields, where Aliman was also sent every season. I was rejoicing like a child if she was

smiling at me, or was looking at me with her extraordinary eyes. And if her palm was in mine, I was ready to fly up to the clouds. Yes, it was another romance. Everything was not as it was now. I could not say if it was better or worse. Just different...

Our meetings lasted almost a year. I used to spend all my free time with Aliman. I used to study mostly on the road to the girl or from her. Can you imagine? I memorized everything that was written in notebooks and textbooks. That's what motivation means! The fear of appearing before my beloved as a fool or ignorant added to the promise that I had given to the teacher Makil.

In May of 1975, after almost finishing the 4th course, I married Aliman. Nature at this time of year is like a ready decoration. Everything is in bloom! Happiness decorated us from head to toe. I'm sure, my girl - my beautiful Aliman, was the most beautiful bride in Kyrgyzstan.

One of the brightest moments of the holiday was a song that my brother, Sagynbek Mombekov, presented to us. He had been creative since childhood, creating beautiful melodies and lyrics. They touched the heart. The song dedicated to the creation of our family was very touching, despite the fact that the main focus on which he used to work and the main motive of his songs were oppositional statements.

He had always been a rebel among all of us, younger Mombekovs. When grew up, he used to often suffer because of his straightforwardness and honesty. The government never liked the content of his songs. They oppressed him, tried to block him in every way possible. The outlet for beautiful songs with an honest text on television and radio was closed. Even if the editors agreed with him about broadcasting, at the last moment everything was canceled. In private conversations Sagynbek was told that there was a call "from above", from someone in the government or their faithful jackals. The editors were strictly forbidden to let "this performer-oppositionist" be broadcast and on the front pages of newspapers under a threat of dismissal and physical violence.

My brother was deprived of access to concert grounds and at the same time the general public knew his creative work. His songs were distributed spontaneously, they were copied from each other on tape recorders, the lyrics were written into notebooks, memorized by heart. Because Sagynbek hated lies, did not tolerate injustice in any of its manifestations, and furiously protested against the fact that the officials brazenly violated their people. It was not

populism, but, as people say, a sincere civic position. The ordinary population, which suffered enough from the arbitrariness of the local czars, completely agreed with the lyrics of his songs. The most famous composition called "Sat, sat", which is translated as "Sell, Sell," was still popular in our country. After all, there was always a person in the government, who doesn't care about the people, but only about himself. And then, after 20 years, and 30 years, the voice of an honest performer, exposing the corrupted people, was needed. Oh, Katya, my brother deserves a separate story. It would be nice if someone wrote about him."

I promised Alymbek that in the article dedicated to him, I would certainly mention Sagynbek and his work. The brothers were a classic, textbook manifestation of two opposites - "physics" and "lyrics". But at the same time, there was so much warmth and fraternal pride in the words of my interlocutor, that it became clear - Alymbek really respected his relative not only as a brother, but also as an extraordinary person.

- "Sure, Alymbek. After all, this is really a very interesting moment, showing that brothers can have such different talents!"

The man smiled, nodded gratefully and continued his story.



- "The family life that Aliman and I had created flowed in due course. In 1976, our first child was born. Our son was named Nurlan. It means "bright, good" and

he fully justified his beautiful name. For all of us his appearance was a joy that illuminated the house.

I had to leave the village often because of my studies. Aliman never complained, though we missed each other while we were separated. My parents accepted her very well. But how could such a beautiful and hardworking girl be rejected? My father loved his grandson Nurlan so much! I did not even suspect that he had such a spare reserve of kindness after having four children. He even barely used to let Nurlan's grandmother towards him. My father loved to mess around with him, explaining and showing something to him, while he was a little baby. We used to laugh kindly, saying that the kid did not understand anything at that age. But my father used to strictly look at us and say quietly: "You don't understand anything, but my grandson is clever." My father almost never let Nurlan from his sight. Aliman used to say that her task was only to feed the child and, blossoming from communication with his grandson, Dzhamankul was ready to continue to play with him. Our son grew up in his mighty hands. My father and he have always had special, lasting relationships and some kind of intuitive understanding. Adult Nurlan could tell what his beloved grandfather wanted by just looking at him.

When I successfully graduated from the sports institute, I returned to my native village with a diploma in my hands. At those times it was necessary to work after graduation from the university at the place where they sent you. I was very lucky - I was sent home. I got a job at the school, which I had known since childhood. Can you imagine? I became a colleague to the teachers, who were just recently "inflating" grades out of pity for the young athlete. It turned out that they were the same people with weaknesses and virtues. They accepted me, a low-performing pupil, who was almost left behind, quite well. After all, no one provided a serious physical education for the children, and, in the broadest sense, I became not just a teacher, but a coach at the local school.

In the fall of 1976, after a family meeting with Aliman and my parents, I decided to voluntarily enroll for military service in the Soviet Army. I wanted to repay the debt, despite the fact that on absolutely legal grounds I was given respite, not even for one reason, but for several reasons: elderly parents, a small child, working as a teacher at school. At those times it seemed to me a shame to not serve, hide from the military enrollment office. But at the same time, I didn't want to miss my son's childhood when he needed me next to him.

I thought like this: I still needed to serve, otherwise I would not respect myself. So, it was better to do it now, otherwise the child would grow up, and I would be enrolled. The most necessary time for the boy's upbringing would pass. And so far Nurlan had enough care from his mother, grandfather, and grandmother.

With such thoughts I went to the military enrollment office. I said I was ready to serve immediately. I expected to get into the base in Germany, as many of my classmates used to serve there. Voluntary recruits were always welcomed. The medical examination for me, a young athlete, was simple. The members of the medical commission did not even seriously examine me. One of them, as I understood the head of the commission, picked up my personal file, flipped through and asked - "What achievements do you have, athlete?" While I talked briefly, but with a well-deserved pride about my conquests and victories, my medical card was completely filled. There was an inscription "able-bodied" in front of all specialists, which paved the way for the Soviet Army.

Feeling delighted, I was already counting on going abroad. I was dreaming that I could buy some technical equipment. But, as it often happens, everything went wrong. My dreams came to an end! After the "training" and taking the oath, I was not sent to Germany. I had to serve in a completely different territory - distant Khabarovsk. In winter, the frost used to reach 40 degrees below zero. Then I became acquainted with all the "charms" and features of the Soviet Army from within. No, we, of course, were clothed and, contrary to all rumors, fed fairly well. However, the diet was universal, not taking into account the characteristics of each soldier. It was especially hard for the larger ones.



Physically, the burden was extreme. It was hard even for me, who was

physically trained. After all, "civilian" food was totally different. In addition, it was very hard to get used to the uniform and boots. A heavy overcoat did not protect me from frost. My face was getting the coldest. We, comrades-in-arms, looked after each other so as not to get frostbite. It was easy to catch a cold. Plus, the sick ones were not kept in the hospital for a long time. Once, my friend was discharged after pneumonia in a week, and the next day he was running five-kilometers with the rest of the troops on skis. Luckily, he was all right. And no one could object to the commander - orders could not be discussed! During summer and spring it was easier. In general, I don't want to talk about this long. I served, and that was good. Although, frankly speaking, even I, a trained wrestler, did not become healthier."

I imagined a young guy newly-discharged from the hospital running through the snow. The idea immediately came to my mind that, perhaps, the presence in the room of a medical device for breathing was also a consequence of the callousness shown many years ago by some subhuman in epaulets. Alymbek shook his head slightly, as if driving away the unpleasant memories of a difficult two years of his time in the army, and went on with his story.

- "After demobilization, I returned to my native village. Since there were no plants and factories, I continued to teach children at school. By the way, the army training helped to fill in some of the gaps, lessons which my father did not teach me and which were not taught at the institute. So, the skills from the army also helped me to improve my own methods of instruction. I knew what awaited these guys in the army. I understood how food affected the sports' success. Now, if desired, you can find special protein shakes. You can drink all sorts of nastiness, pour them into your body, and become some kind of mutant. All this, of course, was nothing in comparison with real sports training. In the late 70's I had to invent something and write my own recipes.

I was training the promising young men hard. I was trying to develop in them the abilities, which they had originally. Many of them achieved athletic heights later. I am happy that I gave them the main things - the ability to count their strength, to be on the boundary of opportunities, to catch the moment of the "second wind", sports anger with cold reason. As for the feeling of pleasure from the victory the most skilled experienced themselves. Without this, you cannot become a successful wrestler. You know, it is so great to hear a few years later that somewhere your pupil won a gold medal, silver, and even bronze, it does not matter. After all, the feeling that you put a drop of yourself into the game is

priceless! I am infinitely grateful to my fate and God for such moments in my life.

How can I explain this feeling when you are standing on a pedestal, even if it was hastily made up of some scraps of found boards covered with a cloth in order to hide the external ugliness of a shaky construction? It's like you are standing on the top of a mountain, and the air is intoxicating you... About 10 of my pupils from 3 neighboring villages became famous athletes. And even if they were promoted further by professional coaches, these guys thanked me, too, for the fact that they won gold and silver medals and became champions of Kyrgyzstan. You know, it's an amazing feeling to see a boy with a medal who you trained and was learning to fight not only with a rival, but also with his own fear and laziness. It's more like treating the pupil as your own son whom you look at with admiration and endless pride.

After returning from the army, I worked at the school not too long. In 1980, I was invited to work at the police department of the city of Talas. One of the fathers of my students helped me. I guessed who it was, but even after a direct question this person very evasively answered and did not confess. For me it was a kind of a career growth. I could not spend my entire life working in school! No, of course, I had no complaints for the school's administration, I was quite pleased with my work. Talas is a district center. There were more opportunities for Aliman, too. I did not hesitate a long time and went to serve in the internal affairs departments. I wanted to improve the world and to eradicate vices. It was, probably, the influence of my Soviet education combined with my character.

At first, taking into account the coaching experience with young people, I was entrusted as a senior inspector for juvenile affairs. The situation was not easy. The problem of drug addiction was not being advertised, but it did not disappear because of this. I used to walk along the city outskirts, search for dens, find the neglected young people, and put them on the police register. I used to try to attract some of them to the sports, conduct preventive work at the school lessons.

I used to serve in good faith and soon began to gain experience. I read the laws and began to understand some legal issues and solve small problems on this subject. I knew my constituents well and sometimes used to help the guys from the criminal investigation department, if the suspicion was of youngsters who got out of hand. Very soon, in 1981 I received my first credentials and became a lieutenant.



I remember when, for the first time in my life, I put on a policeman's uniform with badges of distinction and came home. Everyone was so happy. Everyone was looking at me with pride and with great hope. I remember that my mother cried. My staunch mother was looking at me smiling, and tears were flowing down her cheeks. She hugged me and kissed me on the cheek like her little child. She was so proud of me and worried about me so much. After all, she was my mother...

I was not trying to get credentials. I was trying my best to adopt the methods of work of more experienced colleagues. Frankly speaking, everything was going slowly. The absence of juridical education affected this. But my irrepressible desire to master this profession, help the young men, and change their lives for the better compensated for this. I did not have any particularly major cases, but, to my surprise, the bosses noticed the fresh lieutenant's zeal for re-educating the young guys and confused girls.

Later, I was transferred to work as a precinct policeman. It was more difficult, but the difficulties ceased to frighten me long ago. There were also more serious criminal cases among the ordinary cases.

One day, on the very recently officially instituted Day of Soviet Police, I was solemnly awarded the "Best Precinct of the Year" award. It was my moment of glory, as in sports competitions. And my rivals were not colleagues. I believe that I was fighting against crime in a position entrusted to me. Then my portrait had been hanging on the "Board of Honor" in the building of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for a whole year. It can be said that I had a successful climb up the career ladder. Not particularly fast, but fast enough.

By the age of 33, I had already received the rank of captain and was serving as the head of the special commandant's office of the Criminal Investigation Department in Talas. Then, in 1988, an unusual event happened to me. I connect all the subsequent changes that affected my life with this event.”

The rays of red-yellow sunlight, torn into pieces by the leafy tree shaking outside the windows began to enter the small room where the improvised interview was taking place. Bright spots were wandering on the walls, leaflets with numbers, and were dancing their bizarre dance on the table. The summer sunset in Bishkek was like in my native city, but at the same time, was something subtly different. It was difficult to understand what was different, but it was.

Alymbek suddenly interrupted the story and asked:

- “Katya, are you planning to stay long in Bishkek?”

I realized that the proud man, most likely, was already tired from the interview, which, judging by the flashing light of the discharging voice recorder, had lasted for quite some time. I was very curious about what happened many years ago, but insisting on the continuation of the interview was not at all human.

- “I wanted to stay for a couple of days, not to bother you with long questions.”

The hospitable man was frankly pleased to learn that the evening of memories was coming to an end.

- “That’s great! Have you already settled somewhere?”

- “Yes, I rented a room from a woman not so far from here.”

Alymbek looked at the clock on the lower tier of the table.

- “20.15. I would show you the most beautiful places of Bishkek with pleasure, and show you the heart of this city, but it will get dark soon. Unfortunately, most of the beauty will not be visible. I’ll call a taxi for you. Can you come tomorrow, let’s say, at 11 o’clock?”

- “Of course. I came here just for this!”

- “Then, tomorrow I will continue my story. Honestly, I have never told anyone anything that long.”

He called a taxi via an out-of-date mobile phone. The taxi arrived very quickly, which was extremely surprising to me. According to my feelings, it took only about five minutes. I just had time to ask Alymbek for a rough draft with numbers. I wanted to take a leisurely and more detailed look at the unusual matrix of digits, and I got two variants - the digits organized as a square and a circle.

- “Here, take it.”

- “Thank you, Alymbek. I’ll bring them back tomorrow.”

Saying goodbye at the door, I thanked him for the time, the delicious food and the taxi. Perhaps, my poor experience influenced me, but I could not refrain from an enthusiastic exclamation:

- “You know, Alymbek, it’s like a great detective story – you stop at the most interesting place in the plot.”

Warmly smiling, the host reminded me:

- “Katya, I’ll be waiting for you at 11 o’clock. See you tomorrow!”

#### **Chapter 4. Night in a foreign town**

The taxi immediately drove me to my accommodations. Twilight was already reigning in the city, which was very old by its age, but, as I had time to see during the day, surprisingly green and associated with youth.



Neighborhoods full of low buildings with spacious squares, tall trees with monuments, shops with blossoming flower beds were decorating Bishkek. This city fascinated me with a combination of incongruous and vintage atmospheres, which it was impossible not to notice. The sensation, which I experienced immediately after my arrival, became even stronger. It seemed that each of the epochs left its imprint on the streets of the Kyrgyz capital, and it was easy to move from the 21st century to the 20th, and maybe even further. Definitely, the time here was clearly flowing according to its own laws!

I went to the rented apartment taking a parallel street to get acquainted with Bishkek. On the way I found a hostel, which was more like an old three-storied modern mansion with characteristic round windows. A street passage - a corridor covered with modern honeycomb polycarbonate was visible from its wide-open gate. The space in front of the building was decorated with flowers. The air was filled with the light aroma of roses, which were rising proudly in the flowerbed. I also sensed the familiar smell of petunias. I couldn’t make out the rest of the

fragrance.

I did not want to sleep at all, and even a long day, full of impressions, did not exhaust me. I ate the dinner Olga cooked with pleasure. She treated me like a good acquaintance, and she was just a superb cook. The hostess reminded me that if necessary, there was a kettle in the kitchen and tea, coffee and sugar next to it. In fact, the atmosphere was cozy and I was really comfortable.

I was astonished to discover that I had more energy after eating. Perhaps the time difference was affecting me. It was 3 hours earlier in Nizhny Novgorod. Or I was just overwhelmed by impressions. The most likely was the version that the story of Alymbek captivated me. It was difficult for me to forget my thoughts about an unusual turn in his life, and it was absolutely impossible not to think about the upcoming second part of the interview.

I turned on my phone's alarm clock. I was stretching time out as much as I could. I was eager to start typing the text. And not only to quickly report to the editor-in-chief. I really wanted to know what happened next as soon as possible, and my most global goal was to quickly acquaint my readers with the unusual fate of Alymbek. The materials I got were already rather informative, but something was telling me that something special was waiting for me tomorrow.

I regretted for the first time that I didn't take my laptop with me. When I typed on its keyboard, my thoughts arranged themselves. Now they were galloping across the memories of the events that occurred that day.

I turned on the voice recorder to be charged. Listening to the recording, I began to make notes in my notebook and sketch out the outline of the future article, but stubborn thoughts jumped on the ordinary sheets of paper before my eyes.

With anticipation of something special, I plunged into contemplation and began to listen to my own feelings. I looked at the sheets of paper dotted with digits and lines. I read them out loud and looked again, turning the papers alternately in all directions, following the lines. It was some kind of strange harmony, which I could not comprehend, but the harmonious columns and the lines crossing them were simply mesmerizing. The round chart with digits was even more amazing. Even to me, the liberal arts student from birth and by education, there was something harmonious in these sheets of paper. The lines ran in parallel, made a turn, intersected, passing through the cell with the same number, and again dispersed, in order to make another turn, met again.

The choreography of the lines was beautiful, and the digits complemented the picture. That's just what they meant - could not understand. I recalled how at the institute we were enthusiastically counting the so-called "matrix of Pythagoras" with friends. All that was required for this was to take the date of birth, perform a series of calculations, and then spread all the digits on a square delineated by 9 cells. We used to count our birth dates and the birth dates of our relatives and friends, fill nine squares and interpret the resulting tablet on a notebook sheet, with a handwritten interpretation of digits. It was supposed that this way the strong and weak sides of a character could be revealed. I do not know how scientific all this was, and, in general, probably had nothing to do with the ancient mathematics. I was not treating this seriously, and thought it was a kind of girlish divination.

After a couple of hours I decided that without a cup of tea I would not be able to fall asleep. I boiled water, easily found a box of tea bags. With a cup of tea in my hands, I settled comfortably on the bed and continued to listen to the recording, and looked at the leaflets I received from Alymbek. It was possible to create a rich and independent story of a variety of genres from each episode of his life. There was a social drama and a beautiful love story in the part of the interview that I had already conducted.

Quite unnoticed, the dream crept up on me. I dozed off, and woke up from the melody of the alarm clock.

## **Chapter 5. Fascinating story**

I gathered myself quickly and hastily had breakfast, so that before the time appointed by my interviewee I would have time to run into the store, which I noticed in the evening just outside the apartment. It seems that yesterday, after my long journey to the monotonous clatter of wheels, all the rules of sounding good flew out of my head. After all, I went to a strange house empty-handed and without warning. Today I wanted to prove myself before Alymbek. I took a small handbag with me, having put a voice recorder inside, a notebook with a pen, a purse, and a passport. I carefully put the leaflets with digits into a magazine of the appropriate size borrowed from Olga and went to the store.

The supermarket in Bishkek was the same as in Nizhny Novgorod. There were also the ubiquitous Coca-Cola, and the shelves with other recognizable tea and grocery brands. I filled a basket (obviously sister-twin of the one from Nizhny Novgorod) with sweets, sliced cheese, and meat, and hurried to the cashier. I did

not understand what the charming young girl in bright brand name clothes told me, but everything was obvious and customary: a greeting, a question about a bag and a declaration of the purchase price. Similar training of employees of the supermarket and a digital cash register, deployed to the buyer, helped me to make a purchase without problems. In addition, I noticed that the women standing in the queue behind me, spoke Russian, and I realized that the problem would not arise.

It also wasn't difficult to reach the destination. I remembered the route from yesterday. Now the main thing was not to admire the surrounding beauty too long and skip to the continuation of the interview.

The time was approaching 11 o'clock, and I took a quick step towards the dormitory where Alymbek lived. I was no longer surprised by the wretchedness of the structure. I had no time for it. Curiosity was flaring up in me!

My second meeting with Alymbek was strikingly different from the one that happened so recently. When I went up to the floor, the door was already opened:

- "Hello, Katya, come in!"

After his greeting, I entered the room. I gave Mombekov his sheets of paper, delivered intact and safe, I suddenly experienced difficulties with handing him the bag with the groceries. I did not even suspect that such a problem could transpire.

- "Excuse me, please, for my behavior yesterday. I fell like snow on your head. You demonstrated your customs of hospitality, and I completely forgot about the upbringing I received. I was taught since childhood that I should come to visit with at least a little surprise. No one from our family ever came to visit with empty hands. I was the only one who excelled and I'm very ashamed. So do not deny me the opportunity to let me show you the customs I have and, if possible, let's continue the interview. I'm very curious about what happened to you. I could hardly sleep until midnight. It is very interesting to learn the secrets hidden in these digits."

Alymbek finally accepted the package. I was back in his room and the papers were ordered - stacked in small piles. But the amount of them was still amazing. At the signal of the host I sat down on a chair and asked permission to turn on the voice recorder. The interviewee quite unusually proceeded to continue his story, which was becoming more and more interesting.

Mombekov looked at me attentively and asked:

- "Katya, do you believe in UFOs?"

I hesitated, but decided that it was better to tell the truth:

- "You know, not really. I am probably from the breed of people who need to see with their own eyes, and even better - to feel. But for some reason, I believe in your story. After all, it seems that meeting this object, whatever it was, has become fatal for you?"

The man smiled.

- "I can say so. Although it sounds somehow very serious and too formal. I myself have never believed in any aliens. Moreover, I have never been interested in this topic. In the 80's, no one was talking about UFOs, and the newspapers were not publishing news about UFOs. A little later, a real boom and fashion for reports about aliens began. Although, even now, almost no one takes UFOs seriously. At those times, they used to look at a person who dared to declare that he saw something inexplicable in the sky as if he was mad. Moreover, if any daredevil declared that he was inside the unidentified flying object or communicated with humanoids he was mad as well.



In the summer of 1988, I was called by the chief of the regional police department, Felix Sharshenbaevich Kulov. He was a rather young man. He was about 40 years old at that time, but everyone knew him as a leader, who could be very tough and unbending in decisions. That day he set a difficult task for me - I needed to detect a string of thefts from a brick factory located nearby. Someone was steadily stealing building materials. Kulov was not too verbose: "Every day,

the director of the brick factory, Ozgorush, calls me. They have an emergency situation there - someone steals the finished products, and in large batches. If you want to work and get the next rank on time, the incident of theft must be disclosed! So, go and work!”

There’s no need to say that it was clear at once that obviously not one person was stealing, dragging, roughly speaking, a brick in a bag. The scale of the regularly identified shortages pointed to a well-organized criminal gang. I tried to explain that I needed to develop a plan of operative measures for this purpose and, possibly, more employees might be needed. They were needed in order to arrange a full survey of factory workers and local guards, to organize a full ambush at last. To which Felix Sharshenbaevich answered me - "There will be no additional operatives. Cope with the forces of your department. And if you do not want to work, there's nothing easier. Write a resignation notice and go to all four sides.”

He was such a strict leader and as far as I know, he remains the same today. His character is like reinforced concrete. Perhaps, thanks to this, my then-chief later became a famous politician, and has even been the prime minister of Kyrgyzstan for some time. But it was later, and then I sent my subordinates to the factory several times. But they used to come back to me without results.

Later it turned out that the guards were taking bribes from the thieves for their silence and found their influential methods on all the police officers sent there. This is only in the tele-performances like "Investigation was conducted by experts" the investigator comes and immediately sees the main villain - thief of socialist property. The thief begins to rush and disclose his guilt with evidence. In real life everything is completely different” - Alymbek sighed, - “a lot of people at this enterprise were, if not relatives, then personally familiar to me and other police officers. How could we start suspecting somebody or insult someone with accusations?

Finally, I decided to sort everything out. It was necessary to solve the case, otherwise I could lose my job – if Kulov kept his word, I would be dismissed in two counts, as if at my own request. Professional pride boiled in me - I firmly decided to catch these greedy and brazen thieves. I came up with an idea to organize an unofficial ambush on the road, by which criminals would not be able to pass.

One night, around 1:30, I left the house dressed in civilian clothes. I sat down on



my "Ural" motorcycle. I went to catch them. I decided to let come what may. I decided to go to the factory as long as it would be necessary to track them. There was nothing else I could do!

I left Talas, but practically in the middle of the road to Ken-Aral, my motorcycle stopped. It stopped and was not starting. It was dark around. I took it to the side of the road, switched on my flashlight and tried to find out what the problem was. Suddenly, I heard a rumble from somewhere. I looked around, but there were no cars. In addition, in the darkness on an even stretch of road, the headlights would be visible from afar. I thought that the sound was coming from above. I looked at the sky and froze. A huge metal disk was hanging about 500 meters above me. Its diameter was about 50 meters. Most of all, it looked like a hat or an inverted soup bowl. I had seen this only in fantastic films before. I always used to switch the channel or completely turn off the TV, not wanting to see this nonsense, as I thought of it before.

I realized in a moment - it could only be a UFO. No aircraft or helicopter known to me was similar to this disc. Round lanterns were burning along the whole circumference on the side of the lower rim. Surprisingly, the movies showed "flying saucers" of exactly the same shape and form as this object. Later, analyzing the whole situation, I had two versions. Either my brain drew this picture itself, based on once seen shots, or filmmakers were painting UFOs exactly as described by eyewitnesses. Each of the options was quite possible and I alternately was entertaining one or the other.

Then I did not know what to do. I thought it was just a dream. In a moment, I felt myself beginning to rise. It seemed that some unknown force was pulling me up. I tried to resist. But I could not move.

I felt how much I sweated from my efforts. I miraculously managed to grab the wheel of the motorcycle. But the two hundred-kilogram "Ural" was rising with me. This was impossible according to all laws of nature. My stupor did not pass. I squeezed the steering wheel and the bike was on my side, as if we lost weight and were rising to the sky like steam from the ground. Soon I was inside the flying saucer.

There was no one inside. I did not see any gray humanoids with big eyes and oval heads. There were no green men either. In general, there were no inhabitants in this UFO. There was only a luminous long pipe that looked like a cramped tunnel. It was bright and straight. No matter how hard I tried, I did not

even have the strength to try to reach the walls. I was just flying, clutching the steering wheel. My legs did not touch anything. I was hanging right in the middle of the tunnel. At the same time, I was moving without any visible external influences and against my own will. I did not turn over, as if I was carried in a stream with the motorcycle. I was moving along the tunnel. I could not see what awaited me ahead, because there was too much light around me. It seemed that bright rays were emanating from the walls of this tunnel from above, below, and the sides. There was too much blinding light, as if I found myself inside a fluorescent lamp, similar to the one that was hanging in my office. I absolutely was not understanding what was happening. I had only one thought – “That’s it. It seems like the end of my life is here.”

Judging by my feelings, the flight inside this tube-tunnel lasted around five to six minutes. Then I was thrown back to the ground along with the motorcycle. I got out of the glowing tunnel and was again on a hard surface. I felt the ground under my feet and could not believe what had happened. I was standing on the same spot on the side of the road. I recalled this place by an unusually shaped stone. It was not hot, but the sweat poured from me. I was all wet, as if I had just dipped into a lake in my clothes and got out of it. Water was dripping from my hair and from my clothes.



The flying saucer was hanging right over me. The rumble was smooth, the disk was sparkling with lights. The sound did not change, even when the disc tipped sharply and flew towards Dzhambul in just a second. Then the disc blazing with lights and the rumble simply disappeared. Fearful, I pressed the pedal of the motorcycle and suddenly it started. I turned the Ural on and drove home at high

speed. I wanted to leave this place as soon as possible. There was no question of an ambush for the plunderers! I didn't care about thieves at all!

I rushed home excited. I could not calm down. I began to wake my wife - "Aliman, get up! You will not believe what happened to me now! I was born lucky! God saved me! I was almost kidnapped by a "flying saucer". I flew inside the glowing pipe together with my motorcycle!"

My wife looked at me and looked at the clock. She put a hand on my forehead - "Alymbek, are you sick? Did you look at the clock?" - I looked at the clock and fell silent. The time shocked me. It was 04:45 am. I did not expect that. How was this possible? I had stayed inside the light tunnel for only five minutes. Maximum six minutes. I could not understand anything.

I put my head in my hands and sat on the edge of the bed, having forgotten that my clothes were all wet. My wife was half-awake, but apparently she felt that the blanket was getting wet. She sat up in bed and attacked me with accusations - "Alymbek, confess. You must be coming back from some party. Which girl were you having a bath with? Why are you wet?" - I tried to refute her suspicions, but she did not believe me. In a whisper, trying not to wake the sleeping children, she scolded me. I swore by God and health, but Aliman did not seem to believe me. Finally she said: "Okay, let's talk tomorrow." Already getting back into bed, she took a dry blanket and tiredly whispered that after visiting the bathroom I have to wipe myself off and must not watch all kinds of nonsense on the TV. It seemed to me that she did not understand what I told her, and certainly did not believe a single word. Soon my wife fell asleep, but I could not think of sleeping.

My head refused to accept the fact that this unexplained incident lasted about three hours. It seemed to me that no more than 20 minutes could pass. This was including the road to the place where I met the UFO, the journey inside it and the race home on the dark highway. I slowly changed wet clothes for dry ones. This was the only proof that something had happened to me. I went to bed, tried to sleep, but I was only suffering. I could not doze off until dawn.

In the morning I examined myself and the motorcycle - no damage or marks. My clothes had dried. There were no marks or stains on them. I even sniffed my shirt - Alymbek smiled, remembering that episode, - But there was not even the smell of sweat. My clothes were dry and clean. Aliman asked how was I feeling - "So, you didn't catch cold after your nocturnal adventures? You probably don't have

to go work today? At night you were telling me such nonsense. I even thought that you had a delirium or a fever. You were all wet.” - I listened to my inner sensations. There were no changes in my health. I was not dizzy, my head was not spinning and was not hurting. I had no appetite, and even without breakfast I went to the special commandant's office.

At the very beginning of the workday, without waiting for Kulov to call me, I went to his office myself. I told him everything as it was. I did not hide anything. He just laughed at me, of course. I would have mocked a person who told me a similar story.

The chief did not believe a single word – “Alymbek, are you crazy? What kind of UFO? What are you talking about? What kidnapping? You probably drank something stronger than tea last night.” - I was sorry to hear such an assumption, and I said – “Felix Sharshenbaevich, I want to report this to the local newspaper and to television.” Of course, he did not support me in these desires. He didn’t need to bring such attention to his employees. He said, minting the words - "I'm telling you for the first and last time. If you go to the mass media, I'll have to write and I will write an order for your dismissal. You should search for the thieves from the brick factory, and do not tell me tales here. If you don’t want to work, go and tell everyone your crazy story! You will see, where you will go.”

After a long story, Alymbek sighed. Without saying a word, he went to the electric kettle and turned it on. The situation in which he got himself into so many years ago was complicated. Even today when news about a UFO was published, or a person claims that he had contact with aliens or talks about a visit to a "flying saucer" he is considered crazy or wanting to become famous in such an unusual way. I understood that it was very difficult for Alymbek. Even remembering was probably not easy.

- "Katya, I think we should take a break for tea, if you don’t mind."

Of course, I could not refuse the owner of the apartment. My journalistic nature was struggling with the usual empathy. As a professional, I should have broken the interviewee so that he revealed emotional details. But I just thanked him and agreed:

- “With pleasure, Alymbek. Your tea is magically delicious!”

The welcoming and generous host brought from the kitchen a tray of offerings, as well as those incredibly delicious sweets that he treated me with yesterday.

We were drinking tea with either sweets or flour products abundantly flavored with sugar-honey syrup and nuts that melted on the tongue. When the recorder was off, we spoke about the most common things, like what the weather was like in my hometown. Alymbek asked about my life and if I liked working as a journalist. I had a feeling that a relative, whom I had not seen for a long time, was talking to me. He sounded like a father. I felt that he knew how to communicate with youth, and that he was lacking communication. After having many cups of tea, Alymbek came to the culmination of his story.

- "I took Felix Sharshenbaevich's threat about dismissal seriously. I could not survive without work. After all, Aliman and I already had five children by that time. They needed to be fed, clothed! So, I did not turn to the mass media. I continued to serve in the police force. Everything was as before. Except for one circumstance - after this incident I began to see all sorts of numbers in my dreams. I did not understand their meaning. Did they mean something or not? I did not understand why I always saw digits in my dreams. All the items that were in my dreams had a pattern of digits. Mountain peaks, silhouettes of people, houses, furniture - I saw everything in digits.

I did not tell anyone about the encounter with the UFO, or about these strange dreams. I clearly understood that the stories could only lead me to one place - to a psychiatric hospital. Aliman occasionally recalled my words that night, but I turned it into a joke. I did not want to worry her.

Kulov did not remind me of what I told him either. My journey inside the light tube remained in the past, leaving behind only the numbers in the dreams. My work continued. By the way, I slowly detected a gang of thieves from the brick factory, although it was difficult. The chain was long. There were many people in the group. Therefore, the scale was large, and it was not easy to uncover the chain of thefts.

I continued to conscientiously serve and received the next titles. I became a major, then a lieutenant colonel. My secret remained with me. My dreams with numbers were joined by a story about the flight. I felt like I was floating among digits under the influence of an incomprehensible force without waving my arms. Everything around me was in digits. They were everywhere in my dreams. But for a long time, I didn't have a chance to think about them.

The career paths that Kulov and I had begun to diverge. He gradually switched to politics. I got a new boss who knew nothing about what happened to me in

1988. It seemed to me that the encounter with the UFO was a dream. In addition, I could not be sure that I was dreaming about the numbers because of the aliens. Maybe the endless reports were to be blamed?

Very soon life changed for absolutely everyone. The ruling elite of a huge country, through stupidity or malicious intent, betrayed all ideals, which had been loudly uttered from the tribunes. The Soviet Union was treacherously broken from the inside.

The majority of the population including myself could not even imagine such a development. Values that were previously held were now mocked. Speculators and black marketers, against whom raids were conducted previously, began to be called fashionably: businessmen and entrepreneurs. They became the respected people.

My native Kyrgyzstan was feverish. Order was to be kept by the same police, under any regime. It was difficult. The staff used to work hard. In spring of 2005 we had the "tulip revolution". You have probably heard about it.”

I nodded, although I had only a general idea about what happened in Kyrgyzstan. I knew that there was a struggle for power, and therefore, for access to resources, as always happens. Alymbek explained a little:

- “The opposition overthrew Askar Akaev, and Felix Kulov was one of the central figures in those events. We had to deal with instigators, brawlers, marauders and other jackals.

In 2007 I resigned from the ranks of the police. I retired when I reached the rank of lieutenant-colonel. But I did not want to sit at home without work. I started to serve in the border troops. This work was also necessary for my home country.

A year later, when I was already 53 years old, I suddenly realized that I was not really needed by anyone in Kyrgyzstan. My children grew up. The love story that Aliman and I shared slowly disintegrated. I still cannot say at what point it happened. Probably, while I was working, I did not have time to pay attention to her. My wife got tired of everything. Unfortunately, Aliman and I could not save our family and parted.



One day my colleague, Sadiev, came to me. He saw that I was suffering, and suggested - "Alymbek, you need to go to Russia. My friend went there and now he is very happy. You will live there for several years, get citizenship. Finally, you will get a good pension instead of the crumbs that they will give you here. Plus, they can accuse you, saying that you have been abusing your official position. You know, even if it's not your fault, it can happen."

I listened to his words. Indeed, nothing was keeping me in my native land. On the contrary, I wanted significant changes. Without a long hesitation I decided to go to Russia. So, it turned out that in 2008 fate threw me to Samara. A beautiful city on the Volga river, though dusty for some reason. People say that there was a third unofficial capital during the war. Did you know about this?"

- "Yes." - I answered shortly so as not to interrupt Alymbek. It seemed that the story was going to become even more incredible, although after Mombekov's encounter with the UFO and his dreams it was hard to imagine what it could be.

- "In the 40s different design offices evacuated from other cities were based in Kuibyshev, as Samara was called then. All the most important industries, including aircraft and rockets were there. Even today they have a lot of things connected with outer space. They even have a museum called Space Samara. It is very original. They installed an old carrier rocket "SOYUZ" in the center of the city at the intersection of Lenin Avenue and Novo Sadovaya Street. It stands looking into the sky, and trams, buses and cars pass by. A strong impression is

made by a rocket in the city. And Samara surprises. It is not a capital, but a big city with different personalities. Luxurious high-rise buildings stand next to tiny wooden houses with utilities in the courtyard. Blocks built-up by Khrushchev-era apartments and palaces of gypsy barons in the nearest Zubchaninovka. It is a city with character!

I was incredibly lucky there. As Sadiev said, I was able to obtain Russian citizenship. And this procedure passed almost without issues. I was a handyman, and then I got a job at a security company. I passed the exams for carrying arms and medical board. I managed to get a security guard license. I received a job from the company to guard the branch of Mosoblbank. I had a standard schedule one in every two days. They were paying 1,000 rubles per shift. At those times it was pretty good money.

I remember the date when it all happened - on December 18<sup>th</sup>. I dozed off in the workplace, and again I saw numbers in my dream. Many, many numbers. I woke up because the phone was ringing. I was ashamed – I had fallen asleep at the workplace. I was ashamed and scared. What if they call the firm and cause them to fire me? I picked up the phone and tried to say in a cheerful voice - "Mombekov the guard is listening." I heard someone from the bank's management yell at me - "What the hell? We watch the guards on video cameras from time to time. You were sleeping an hour and a half for our money!" - I tried to defend myself saying that I just dozed off a little. But the telephone interlocutor was strict - "Guard of Mombekov, listen. We'll fine you a thousand rubles! And this is the first, and the last time, when you got off with money. Next time we'll just drop you off the site!" – What could I do? It was my fault. I apologized, promised that it would not happen again, and thought - "Ok, today I am working for free."



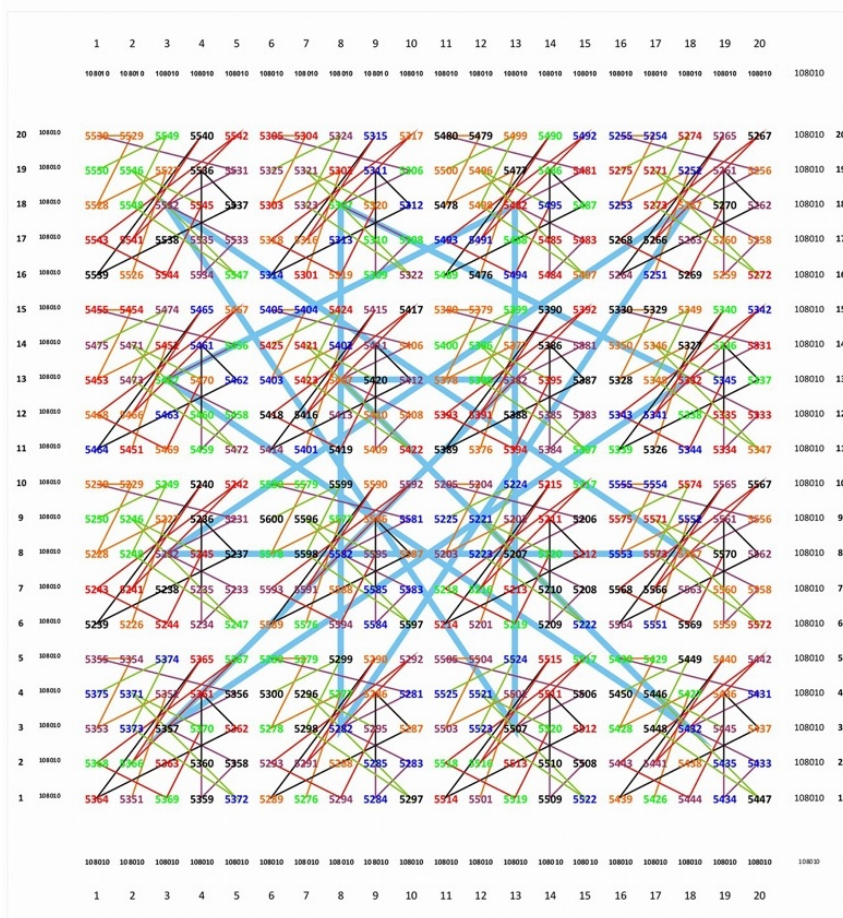
## Идеальный магический квадрат волшебные цифры точки и фигуры “Курал”

$5 \times 5 = 25 \times 25 = 625 (7825)$

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
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24 7825	186	511	30	401	301	183	510	30	400	300	192	517	42	407	307	190	504	29	404	304	196	523	48	473	373	
23 7825	88	486	311	138	538	85	485	310	135	535	92	492	317	142	542	79	479	304	129	529	98	498	323	148	548	
22 7825	261	161	588	111	438	260	160	585	110	435	267	167	592	117	442	264	164	589	104	429	273	173	598	123	448	
21 7825	611	61	388	288	211	610	60	385	285	210	617	61	392	292	217	604	54	379	279	204	623	11	398	298	223	
20 7825	420	345	245	570	20	414	339	239	504	14	421	346	246	511	21	408	333	233	508	8	402	327	227	532	2	
19 7825	195	520	48	470	370	188	514	38	484	384	196	527	48	477	377	185	509	41	469	369	177	502	27	482	382	
18 7825	95	495	320	145	545	69	489	314	139	539	76	496	321	146	546	62	487	309	134	534	71	477	302	127	527	
17 7825	270	170	595	120	445	274	174	589	114	439	271	171	594	121	449	285	184	584	109	459	289	159	577	102	427	
16 7825	620	70	395	295	220	614	64	394	294	214	621	71	394	294	214	604	56	393	293	208	602	52	377	277	202	
15 7825	407	332	232	597	7	401	326	226	591	1	413	333	233	595	13	405	331	231	592	25	419	344	244	599	19	
14 7825	182	507	32	457	357	176	501	26	451	351	184	513	36	464	364	209	525	36	475	375	194	519	44	469	369	
13 7825	82	482	307	132	532	76	476	301	126	526	80	485	313	136	536	100	484	305	125	525	84	494	319	144	544	
12 7825	257	167	582	107	432	251	161	576	101	426	258	163	581	113	431	254	164	584	126	436	269	169	594	119	444	
11 7825	607	57	382	282	207	601	51	376	276	201	613	56	386	286	213	625	75	406	306	225	619	69	394	294	219	
10 7825	424	349	249	574	24	418	343	243	569	16	425	348	248	575	5	412	333	233	562	12	408	331	231	556	6	
9 7825	199	524	49	474	374	191	519	41	468	368	195	505	31	463	363	187	512	37	462	362	181	506	31	456	356	
8 7825	90	490	324	149	549	65	485	319	144	544	70	490	329	149	549	71	481	312	137	537	81	481	308	131	531	
7 7825	274	174	599	124	449	279	179	593	119	443	275	175	593	105	436	282	182	582	112	437	287	187	581	106	431	
6 7825	624	74	399	299	224	619	66	394	294	219	605	65	393	293	205	612	62	387	287	212	608	59	381	281	206	
5 7825	403	328	228	593	3	422	327	227	572	22	409	334	234	599	9	416	341	241	588	78	415	340	240	585	15	
4 7825	178	503	28	453	353	197	522	47	472	372	194	509	34	459	359	191	516	41	468	368	190	515	40	465	365	
3 7825	78	478	303	128	528	91	467	322	147	547	84	464	309	134	534	91	461	316	141	541	90	460	315	140	540	
2 7825	253	153	578	103	428	272	172	597	122	447	259	159	584	109	434	266	166	591	116	441	265	165	590	115	440	
1 7825	603	53	378	278	203	622	72	397	297	222	609	59	384	284	209	616	66	391	291	216	615	65	390	290	215	
7825 7825																										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	

The most mysterious thing was that I could not understand what was happening to me. It seemed that I woke up, but the numbers in my eyes did not disappear. This has never happened in my life before. They used to always disappear after I awoke. I could not understand what was needed from me and by whom? What was happening to me? Nothing hurt, but I felt uncomfortable. Then, right in my head, an unfamiliar voice ordered me to record the numbers and not chaotically, but in a certain order.”

## Магические точки и фигуры “Курал”



- "As a medium." - I gasped, forgetting that it was very unprofessional to interrupt the respondent. He just smiled and nodded.

- “Yes, in one of the articles I was called a medium. I have heard a lot of words in my address. I still do not have a precise definition for myself, so I cannot object or agree completely.

I began to rub my eyes to wake completely. Some digits were still in front of me. My eyes were open. Quite certainly I was not sleeping! I began to rub my eyes again and again. I went and washed myself with icy water. The digits did not disappear. I looked around, but still they did not disappear. Suddenly I heard an echo in my head:

- "Remove!"

– “Remove what? How? If I knew how to remove these digits in front of me, I

would gladly remove them! I cannot remove them!” - I said aloud, although I was scared to talk to emptiness and the voice in my head. Then the voice ordered - "Write!"

I could see nothing but digits. They flew in front of my eyes. They approached and then retreated. Guided by the orders of this voice, I began to write down these digits on a sheet of paper in the order, in which they flashed in front of my eyes. First I wrote them in line. Then I like sensed what was needed. On one side I wrote 20, on the other also 20, in total I wrote 400 digits. I realized that I should write them the way I see them. It was strange, but the digits appeared one after another. Soon there were less of them. But when the digits came to an end, after I wrote all of them on the paper, a new part appeared. It was as if someone saw that I finished the recording, and simply turned the page, offering the next batch of numbers.

Dawn almost broke. It was 8:00 according to the clocks. A new working day was beginning, employees began to come. I stopped making notes only when they opened the bank doors. I looked at the sheets lying on the table. It turned out that from 2:00 am to 8:00 am I wrote 10 pages of digits.

Suddenly, I seemed to come to my senses as if I woke up from delusion. I stacked these papers into a pile. I did not understand what happened to me that night. I'm not crazy, am I? Then why did I hear a voice? Whose voice was it? Why did I see the digits and why did I obey the voice?

I ended my shift, answering the questions inadvertently. I was completely perplexed. I walked down the street inhaling the frosty air. I was looking at snow, at cars, at people, and was asking myself the question - "What is happening to me?" I came to my rented apartment. Lying on the bed and looking at the ceiling I was endlessly going over what happened in my head.

I spent my two days off thinking without the numbers and the voice in my head. I had to go to work, but I was afraid. I was very much afraid that these digits and this voice would haunt me again. Because of this fear, I even thought about changing my job and looking for another one so as not to be alone for a long time. I had no explanation other than that I was going crazy because ghosts appeared in the bank's ancient building. But I had no choice, and I went on duty. That day and night nothing happened. I already began to rejoice. Early! After two nights, these digits reappeared. I knew for sure that I was not sleeping. I clearly saw them in reality just like my hands and everything else around me.

The digits were near and were appearing in their order. As I understood it, my task was to record them in the order they appeared, and I stopped resisting it. During five years, from 2009 to 2013, I filled a lot of pads with these digits. Totally I had 12 folders 400 pages each.”

I involuntarily looked around. Now the sheets of papers didn't look like garbage as they had yesterday - it was a kind of monument to Alymbek's selfless labor.

- “I could sit at night, and in the afternoon, as soon as the digits were coming – I immediately wrote them down. And the digits were colorful and symmetrical. I do not know why, I began to count the sum of the digits. Each line was equal to 4010. Not more. Not less. I looked through paper after paper. I began to see the system in these records. I looked at the bars and lines, but I didn't have enough knowledge to understand what it was. I tried to figure it out. I looked through all kinds of books on mathematics. I was carried away by the search for the meaning of these papers, although I did not understand much. To be more precise, clever phrases and equations from books seemed completely incomprehensible to me.

The conclusion I came to was that I should calculate using a calculator. Once I went to my friend with a computer, so that he would check the digits. He opened some program divided into squares. I gave him the paper with digits.”

According to the description, I understood that it was "Excel", and listened attentively, waiting to find out what happened. Was there an error in Alymbek's calculations?

- “My friend entered the digits in the boxes, did something, checked by rows and columns. The amount remained unchanged. What was it? Later I found that I recorded eight and a half thousand squares with digits. I was struck by the magic of these digits. I was selectively taking sheet after sheet of paper and counting. Everywhere the amount was 4010. After this I was not just feeling, but became convinced that there should be practical meaning for people in the digits, which I was writing down.”

The information that Mombekov had just reported was so amazing that I also wanted to check the amount at any of the randomly selected sheets of paper:

- "I'm sorry, Alymbek. May I also count? Probably, this is stupid of me. At night I have been spending a long time looking at the sheets of paper that you kindly gave me, but I did not come up with the idea to add the digits. It's not out of

mistrust, please, don't get me wrong, but out of curiosity”.

The man in front of me smiled. Apparently, this request was very predictable, because he handed me a few sheets of paper covered with moderately-sized squares filled with digits and a calculator. Having pressed the pause button on the recorder, I started calculating. After about 5 minutes, I said in astonishment:

- “It's just incredible! And you filled 8500 such magic squares?”

Alymbek nodded.

- “I was as shocked as you, Katya. Moreover, the world of mathematics has never attracted me.”

We continued recording the interview.

- “Flights among the numbers were simple dreams, but when I was writing them down, they were becoming an instrument, which I did not know how to use. With each recorded square I became more and more involved in this work. You can say that I went into excitement. My curiosity surprised me.

It seems that hardly anything was accidental in my life. Long years of work as a policeman left me with the habit of analyzing the situation. I understood that the encounter with the UFO and moving to Samara were links of one chain. I don't know what would have happened if I had stayed in Kyrgyzstan. First, obeying an incomprehensible impulse, I drew the symmetries in these digits. I was calculating the sum of these lines. The "voice" inside my head was telling me not to be mistaken. I was trying my best to be very careful. I was putting every digit in a strictly defined place, the way they were running before my eyes, the way the "voice" wanted and not a millimeter away from the desired location. I was told not to change the shape and to mark each point that appeared. Otherwise, all the calculated symmetry was destroyed.

Probably, there were mistakes in my first squares because of my excitement and quite natural fear of what was happening. In the beginning, here and there the symmetry was becoming less precise, the amount was shifting, but, having carefully recorded the corrected sequence, I achieved harmony. Over time, I got a handle on it and I already began to draw these lines professionally.

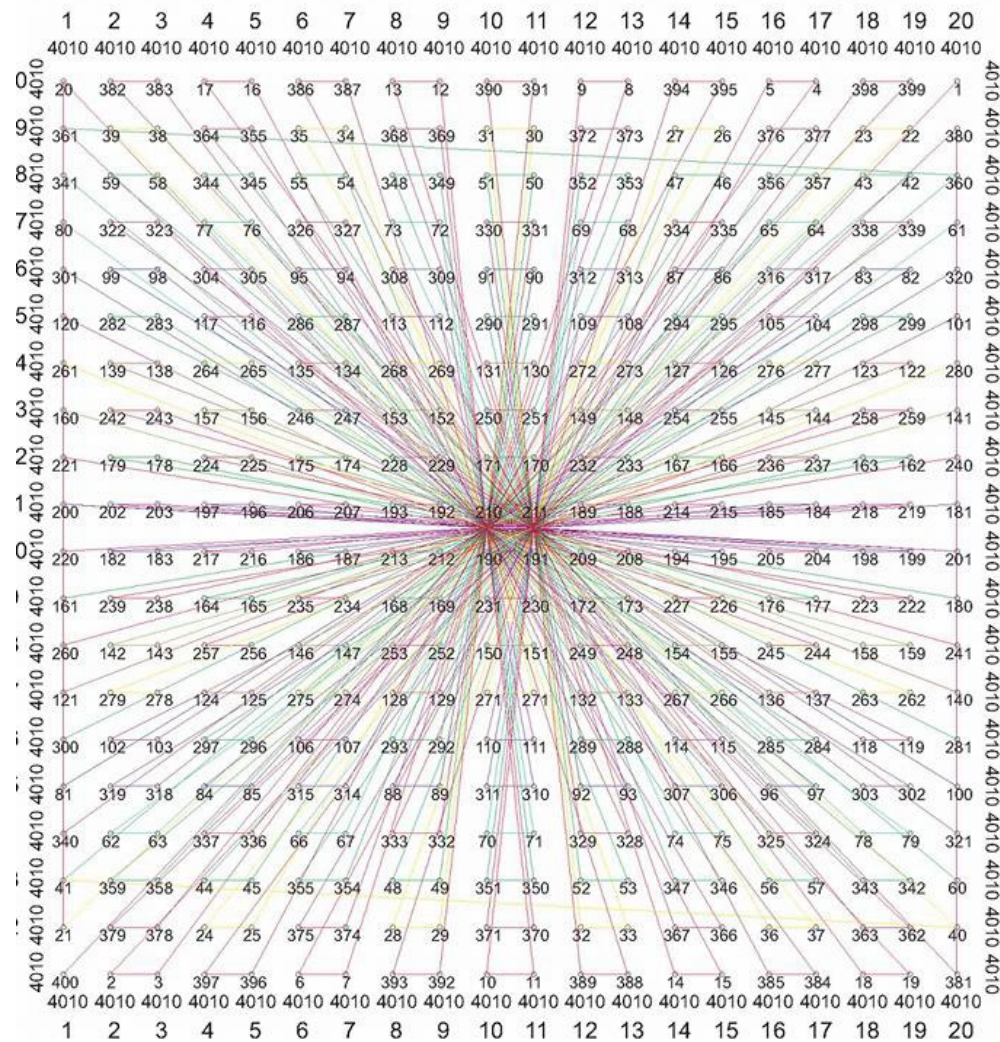
I saw these numbers everywhere - at home and at work. It was especially inconvenient to have visions of them on the street. I used to write them down mostly at night. This way no one was distracting me or interfering. I had no time



for anything but notes and my attempts to sort them out. I was not watching TV, was not reading the newspapers. I was flipping through the books on mathematics, filling the squares again and again, drawing the lines between the digits. And almost constantly I counted the sums. They always came to 4010.

Магические точки и фигуры.  
 Пентакли, планеты - Волопас.  
 Знаки зодиаков - Антогонисты.

$$20 \times 20 = 400 (4010)$$



I was scared to share my strange hobby with anyone since I had not even chosen it for myself. But it was difficult to keep everything to myself. Moreover, my colleagues noticed that I was constantly writing something on the sheets of paper. I made fun of it, but in order not to go completely insane from the stress of the need to keep a secret, I somehow shared it with my friend and guardian.

The UFO that I met in Talas wasn't the only thing that I talked about. He took the calculator and checked the amounts, just like me, and like you, Katya. Then he advised - "Listen, Alymbek, take your records to the Academy of Sciences. You know, people say that Mendeleev discovered his famous periodic table of chemical elements either in a dream or in a vision. Now children study it in schools. Maybe you also discovered some table? The numerical oddities of Mombekov, for example. Isn't it a good name?"

So, having spent several years in Samara, I decided to take my folders with all my notes and go to Moscow. I had nothing to lose. I thought - "I will show these squares to scientists. Let them tell me what it is, and determine if my notes can be useful for something."

It seemed that luck that I had been saving up had come to an end. The Russian capital was completely unwelcoming.

I came to the doors of the Academy of Sciences, but the guard stopped me. He was not polite and said - "Hey, worker, where are you rushing? What do you need here?" - I did not expect such a reception. I told him that I have Russian citizenship and that I am a retired lieutenant colonel. I showed him my Russian passport and explained briefly that I wanted to show the scientists the numbers, which came to me as visions. The guard's partner came to him. Together they began to mock me. That day they did not let me in and did not even call one of those scientists, who could have examined my records. I explained to them that I also used to work as a security guard and I knew that they were obligated to answer the visitors' questions correctly. I tried to find out the phone number of a person with whom I could talk about my problem, but these two dunces just laughed - "Go away and tell your tales somewhere else. Here people are working on serious problems." Of course, I did not leave. I rented a room. The next morning I went back to the door. I stubbornly came to the Academy three days in a row and walked around it. Every time I approached guards on different shifts. I repeated again and again that I was a Russian citizen, a retired lieutenant colonel, and that I had the right to communicate with the scientists of my country, because I had incredible tables with digits that might have been interesting to scientists. I even threatened them that I would complain to whomever I could, from their immediate superiors in the security office to a visit to the UN. I don't know what influenced them. Either they were afraid of my perseverance, or simply got tired of me. Maybe they just took pity or found out who might be interested in the folders with my sheets of paper covered with

digits.

On the fourth day they let me in. They issued a pass to someone named Ashpiryan from the Institute of Mathematics. I found an office in the corridors with the number I needed and met this person. I introduced myself to him. I took the folders with leaflets out of the package and gave them to him. He had not been looking through their contents too long. He flipped through them hastily, mumbling something to himself, glimpsed at my drawings, squares with digits and all sorts of polygons, which were formed by the order of his voice. He didn't even open all the folders.

Soon he broke away from my sheets of paper. He looked at me and asked with a disgruntled tone - "So, Mombekov, you didn't think I would understand where you got these digits from? You copied them from the Internet, right? Why did you do it? We are not fools here." - I tried to explain to him that I wasn't familiar with the Internet. Moreover, not only did I not know how to work on a computer, but I didn't even know how to turn it on. He grinned. He didn't believe a single word - "You just multiplied the numerology. This is not a discovery. You're late by about 200 years. It was then that such works first appeared." - All my attempts to prove my point were useless. He did not believe me at all. In my opinion, he did not even want to listen to me. Ashpiryan got angry, began to threaten me and switched to a negative tone - "Listen, don't test my patience. Go home. Throw out your papers, there's no use for them. So will you go away on your own or will I have to call the police?" - He reached out his hand to the stationary phone and wanted to dial the number. I don't know what happened to me, but I snatched up the phone and pressed the reset button. I began to argue with this arrogant scientist - "Who are you to call the police? Why don't you even try to believe me, but just want to kick me out? I give you my word of honor that I did not copy these digits. They are all from my head."

Ashpiryan was very unhappy with my obstinacy. I was holding the phone. He reached out for the phone, but I didn't give it to him. I clung to it and held it. It can be said that we struggled with him a little for the phone. If I knew what it would lead to!

The scientist left the receiver of the stationary phone and made a call via his cell phone with a short phrase - "Come to my office. Urgently!" - there was a table between me and him, and I didn't have time to react. I don't know who he was calling and did not even take it into account.



He spoke to me in an even more sarcastic tone again - "Mombekov, you are sick! You don't have to come to the Russian Academy of Sciences. You'd better visit a psychiatrist. You'd better get medical treatment instead of wasting my time at work." - It was very unpleasant for me to hear that. It was the influence of the fact that I had to try for this meeting for so long and for this obvious lack of attention to the materials I had brought. In a rage, I began to repeat to him that the digits, which I recorded, should mean something, and that they came to me not occasionally. And this skeptic - he just laughed in my face. How scornful and unfair it was!

In the heat of the dispute, I did not notice that the door to the office opened, and closed very quickly. I didn't pay attention to it. I was standing with my back to the door, and when the police patrol appeared in the office, I did not immediately understand what was happening. Ashpiryan came up to me, snatched the receiver from my hand, feeling my helplessness before him. The young sergeant handcuffed me like some kind of hooligan or rowdy teenager. I was taken to the nearest district police department in a police car with bars that separated the back seat. I was put into a detention unit. My package with folders, my personal things - everything was taken away. I was sitting there without the ability to write down the digits, which were coming to me. I was fingering along the wall, drawing the digits. Paper and a pen were not given to me. I was blaming myself for getting excited! I have never been on the other side of the law and now, in my old age, I was detained for an administrative offense.

I was given not very serious sentence - "hooliganism". But, I did not feel better because of the leniency. I was trying to be the ideal temporary detainee. I told the policeman who was questioning me almost the whole story. Of course, I didn't mention the UFO and the voice in my head. I already understood what such complete frankness could lead to. Three days later I was released. They gave me all my stuff, documents, and did not even touch the money. It came out that Russian servants were slandered in vain. Normal people could be found everywhere.

A man was waiting for me in the corridor. I later found out he was Sergei Vasilievich. He had one of my folders in his hands. Yes, it was the same man, who facilitated your arrival in Bishkek. He got me out of the detention unit, and I'm still very grateful to him for this."

No matter how hard I was trying to remain a simple listener, I could not restrain

myself from asking the question:

- "How did he manage to get you out of there, and why did he decide to do it? Had you met him before somewhere?"

Alymbek smiled.

- "He persuaded Ashpiryan to take his charges back. It turned out that at the time when the law enforcement officers took me away, one of my folders remained in the scientist's office. Ashpiryan was laughing with his colleagues about an obsessed Asian who copied the numerical squares from the Internet or from books and was trying to say that these were his own inventions. He was snickering at my claim that I had been guided by a mysterious voice in my head. He showed everyone the folder with my notes, which I forgot in confusion. That's how it fell into the hands of Sergei Vasilievich. I don't know by what words he managed to convince his colleague that my ardor was provoked by Ashpiryan himself and that I did not deserve punishment.

I began to thank my savior and took my folder. That was how I met Sergei Vasilievich, by chance. When we left the department, he suggested to me - "Let's go to the Russian Academy of Science. We need to talk about your visions and the digits that appear." - I tried to refuse very politely, although there was a storm inside of me. Never again! I didn't want to step into this Academy with even a single foot. I was afraid they would put me in prison or send me for compulsory medical treatment in a special institution.

My new friend assured me that this would not happen. He profusely apologized for Ashpiryan. He told me that he had studied all my papers that he had in his hands. Sergei Vasilievich said directly to me - "I believe there are great opportunities in them. These numbers promise many new discoveries for humanity." - He invited me to a conference called "Space and I". I didn't have the money to register as a participant. It cost 8,000 rubles - almost the whole monthly salary that I used to get as a security guard. Sergei Vasilievich agreed with the organizers to give me a free opportunity to speak on the exceptional basis. Not for long, not even for a whole hour. He also prepared me to speak about my digits, and together we chose those variants of squares, which could interest the participants the most and convince them of the importance of the information that I recorded.

The conference lasted several days in the 26-story hotel "Alpha Beta Gamma". A

luxurious room, like in a movie about foreign life, was reserved for me. It had all amenities in the room: air conditioning, refrigerator and TV. I was given three meals a day. Every day there were performances. Professors, doctors of sciences, academicians of various industries were giving presentations. It was, needless to say, not easy for me to be among them. In addition, I almost did not understand the meaning of their speeches. It seemed that the words were familiar, but the phrases were completely incomprehensible to me.

On the third day it was my turn. I was performing under the number 196. I had never talked about my discoveries in front of a large audience. In addition, after an unpleasant incident in the Academy, I was too anxious. I warned Sergei Vasilievich in advance that I would not be able to speak in Russian, and would speak in Kyrgyz. I had a household level of Russian. But even here Sergei Vasilievich helped me out - he found an interpreter who spoke Uzbek fluently and a little in Kyrgyz. The woman was able to do the translation, because, in fact, the languages are similar. Can you imagine, Katya, almost 500 scientists listened to my speech. I told them everything as it was. I told them how I used to work for the police, how I encountered the UFO, how digits began to appear to me, first in my dreams. Then I told them about the "voice", which appeared in Samara. I told that the voice was telling me to write down the digits in a certain order. In short, I told them everything.

They did not believe me right away. One German woman raised her hand and asked:

- "How much will be 200 multiplied by 200?"

I answered without thinking:

- "40,000."

She continued:

- "Can you now arrange 40,000 on this board?"

I took a felt pen and I started writing:  $4*4=16$ ,  $5*5=25$ ,  $6*6=36$ ,  $7*7=49$ , and so on. I arranged everything in squares. Some people in the hall stood up to see if I arranged the numbers correctly. Some of those who were listening to my report pulled out their calculators. I was skillfully working without a crib sheet – two is here, three is here, 10 must be here. As a result, everybody was convinced - everything was right!

Shouts sounded from the audience - "Terrific! Incredible! He is a genius!" - There were also skeptics who said that I had a microphone hidden somewhere and somebody was telling me the answers, but the majority believed me. After my speech, academicians followed me - "Let's go to St. Petersburg. Your folders need to be studied carefully." - Sergei Pushkin, who worked in a restricted military institute, was especially persuasive. He simply took my hand and took me aside - "Listen, Alymbek, this will be a great discovery. I work in the military academy. We specialize in submarines, more precisely - we are designing torpedoes. I visited Kyrgyzstan somehow. We were testing the prototypes in your Issyk-Kul Lake."

It so happened that we became friends. He invited me to stay at his apartment in St. Petersburg. He allotted a whole room for me, provided all conditions for work, and showed me the city. He was a respected scientist, a professor, but he treated me like a partner. We talked a lot, ate together. He introduced me to other scientists and professors. Everyone was inviting me to their institutes. I visited Komi, returned to Moscow again. It was amazing how everyone began to treat me - very respectfully and politely. All of them: doctors of science, professors, and academicians communicated with me as with an equal. They were saying - "Alymbek made a breakthrough not only in the science of Kyrgyzstan and Russia. He raised the science in general several steps and opened a new "spatial vision".

I could not understand what that meant. They tried to explain to me that the French scientist Galois discovered the 16-step equation, but my equations in three places along the horizontal, vertical, diagonal and spiral were something new as the next spiral of the development of science. They were almost preparing me for the Nobel Prize. I would be considered an author, and they as co-authors. Sergei Vladimirovich Pushkin once said - "Did you notice that your symmetries intersect and, no matter how many of them you have, they always come to one sum from different sides? Ask your "voice", can you put them in a circle?"

At night I was waiting for advice from the "voice". The voice confirmed that the digits could be arranged in a circle. In the morning Sergei Vladimirovich received an answer to his question. I arranged the digits from the squares into a circle and made a new discovery. I discovered the secret of generators and why they were not able to fly. After that, he became even more interested in me."

It was really an extraordinary story. I used to think that such a confluence of circumstances could happen only in the movies. I listened intently to the story of Alymbek's return to Kyrgyzstan.

- "One day my friend from Dagestan, Zamaev, warned me - "Alymbek, be more careful with your discoveries. You know what they do with people like you? They'll take you and lock you in some lab. You'll be writing down digits until the end of your life. And these kind scientists will confiscate all your discoveries and proclaim themselves the authors. You'd better go home. Make your discoveries on the territory of your homeland. You will bring your country more profit this way. Do you really want to be a puppet in the hands of these academicians? " What would you do, Katya?"

This question caught me off guard.

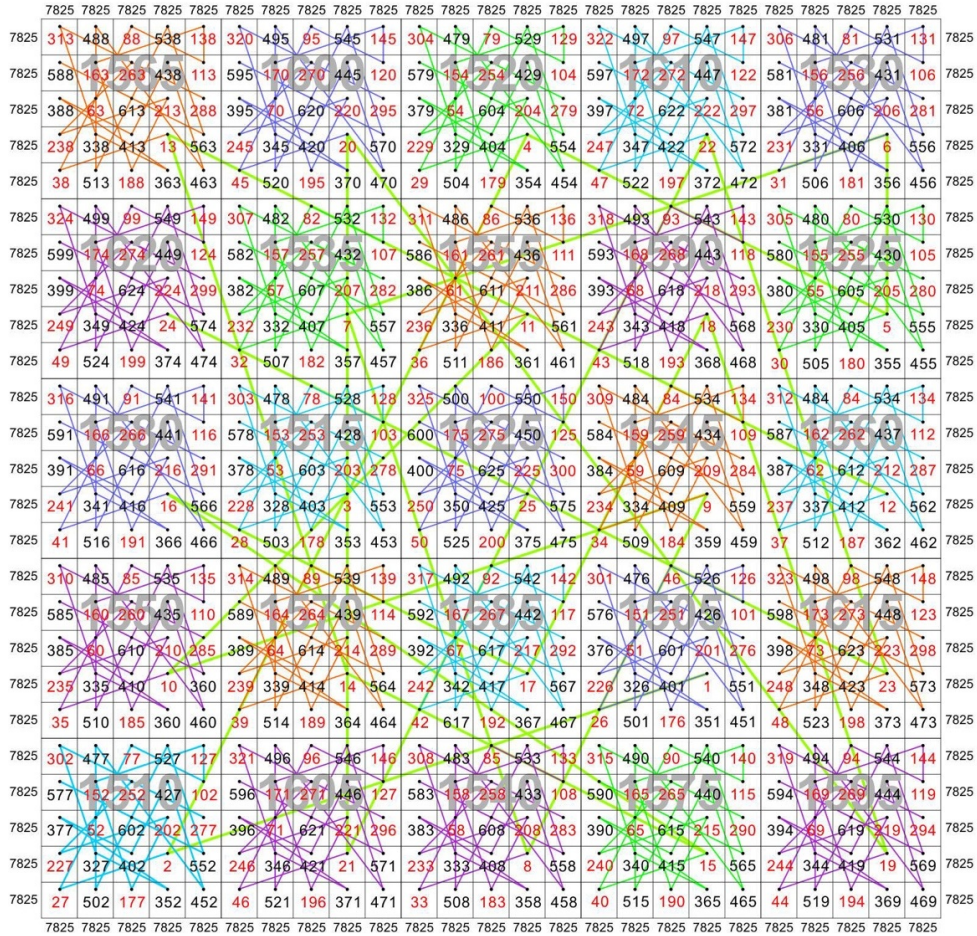
- "I? I don't even know. Probably, I would be afraid of being used as a laboratory rat. But I don't know for sure. I have never had such choices. And, I hope, I won't."

Alymbek nodded, as if he was approving of my answer, and smiled, though his eyes remained sad.

- "I don't know whether I did right or wrong, but I listened to Zamaev's words and decided to return to Kyrgyzstan."

Sergei Pushkin told me - "Your digits can make miracles. This is something new. They are something that is beyond the power of the human brain and even the most powerful computers. It is not yet available ... Thanks to these digits it is possible to make an apparatus that will be flying at a frenzied speed from 25 000 km to 50 000 km in a few minutes." - I laughed and asked - "How can this be possible?" - The professor explained to me something about the magnetic fields.

### 5x5=25x25=625(7825)



I still did not understand how these digits would turn into a magnetic field or what kind of field it would be and how it would help the apparatus to fly. I asked - "For how many hours can I get on this machine, let's say, from St. Petersburg to Bishkek?" - Sergei Pushkin did not think long and answered - "Not hours. You will get there in 16 minutes. But I must admit that the world has not yet come up with material that would endure a flight at such speed. There is no such element with suitable properties in the periodic table. Although this may be the case for the near future. I think the breakthrough will be accomplished after the empty cells that are available there are filled. So far no one has been able to fill them. But we must find this material. Then it will be possible to design a miniature aircraft. Initially, for 2 people, then for 4, 10 people, which will rise to the air directly from its spot. This is connected not only with aviation, but also with cosmology, scientific technology, computer technology, architecture, medicine. Even more, your digital circles refer to the quantum field. This is a

multidimensional system, which can only be deciphered so that it becomes a part of ordinary life for the benefit of civilization. TV sets, computers work on a binary system: zero and one (0 and 1), and your digits show 2, 3, 4... 100 dimensional systems. Can you imagine what this means? This is a great, truly global space for discovery. An unplowed field, which must be worked on.”

My brain simply refused to comprehend the information about some atomic molecules, scientific formulas, magnetic bio-field, and gravity, because I still didn't understand this, although I was trying to read smartbooks. Everything that Sergei Vladimirovich told me about were just dreams. Science fiction with almost instantaneous movements in space. Was teleportation, which I saw in one Hollywood movie, possible? Pushkin was urging me to stay in Russia - "We know how to make your work useful and how to start processing the matrices which you already have. We have talented programmers who can process your records with the help of powerful computers. You just need to give us your numerical combinations. We'll do the rest ourselves. We will register a patent for the discovery. You will be the author, and we will be the co-authors. We only need digits from you. You have them, but you do not want to give them. Tell me, Alymbek, why don't you agree to cooperate with us? Isn't it good to let the results of your amazing gift be studied so that the conclusions based on your records lead to even more incredible discoveries?"

I confess honestly. Yes, indeed, I changed my mind about giving them the information. Either the sense of patriotism began to play in me, or I realized that I wanted to make a discovery in my homeland. In addition, I seriously feared what Zamaev warned me about. I didn't want to turn into a puppet in someone's hands abroad. I was scared that they would take away the records, which I had.

So, I went home. I came to the local Academy of Sciences. I showed my papers to our scholars. But none of the professors and scientists understood the meaning of the digits I wrote down. Nobody could decipher even the simplest equations or see the potential in them. That's the level of our scientists in the field of mathematics! It turned out that Russian scientists were much stronger in science. It was even frightening to imagine what would have happened if I had originally come to the Kyrgyz academicians. Most likely, I would have just been taken to a psychiatric hospital. I'm not a physicist or a mathematician. I don't understand anything in my records. I have a feeling that there will be benefit from them, but I don't know in what way and how to use them. And what could I explain to the scientists? It's a shame, but I could not do anything but tolerate giggles during

my presentation. I regret that I was unable to explain to them the importance of the information contained in these digits from the very first time.”

For the second time during this amazing interview, I showed my not quite professional habit of inserting the remarks, but it was impossible to remain silent.

- "You don't have to blame yourself. After all, even the scientific luminaries of your home country could not comprehend these systems of digits! Is it you who are to be blamed for surpassing them in terms of knowledge?"

Alymbek replied after a short pause:

- "I confess, sometimes I have thought that maybe I should not have denied the offer the Russian academics made. I told this story to my close friends. Everyone told me - "Alymbek, you did everything right! God gave you this gift so that you would be useful to your people foremost and after that to the mankind! Do what your heart tells you. There is no need to stay where you don't feel comfortable. You had a difficult choice. You could become rich. Probably, could even become a millionaire through this gift, but you chose a different path. You have nothing now, but you have dedicated your gift to your home country." - I even found a colleague. Publicist Melis Aryl-Bek called my records the "Equation of the Universe." He tried to convey the perspective of numerical matrices to the authorities in order to get funding. It had not been very successful. But I learned to go ahead and not fold. The voice inside my head said - "Spread this knowledge."

Experienced by a clash with Ashpirian, I ordered myself to conduct a conversation without emotion and came to the Academy again. Only old people worked there and I, having already prepared for the presentation with the help of the draft left from the Moscow conference, showed them the most convincing calculations and told my story again. I spoke quietly, so that they would believe me. And this time I was finally heard! Scientists said that the possibility of kidnapping by UFO was quite possible. There was partially-confidential information about such situations, the reliability of which could not be doubted. In addition, approximately the same year and in the area, where I was kidnapped by a "flying saucer", but on the side of Kazakhstan, there was a crash of a UFO. One of the academicians was even a member of the commission for examining the fragments of an extraterrestrial origin.



However, they all definitively refused to believe in the voice and my "dreams" with digits. They argued that such an effect could not appear even after kidnapping by the aliens. They said – “We don’t believe and that's it!” - Observing the vow I had given to remain calm, I said - "Ok. I'm not going to prove anything to anyone. But I told you everything as it really happened." - They suggested that I publish my digits and formulas in some scientific journal so that scientists could pay attention to them. They said it as if they themselves were not scientists. I said nothing, not to annoy them, but I refused to disclose such information simply " nowhere".

I immediately wrote statements to the highest powers: to the President, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education. I thought that they would assess the prospective opening for Kyrgyzstan? I turned to the Ministry of Culture. Tugolbai Kazakov promised to allocate money for me to publish my book with formulas, because for the money from my pension I could not afford even the smallest edition. However, I'm still waiting.”

Alymbek smiled sadly.

- “I did not wait for the answer from the Ministry of Education. I could not stand it and came to the reception myself. I told the officials that I have experience working at a school, even though it was a long time ago. I told them that I am good in communication with minors, and that I used to informally teach the children of migrants from Kyrgyzstan in Russia. It was not easy for them to adapt immediately after moving as everything was new for them. But after my lessons, the children began to study well, especially mathematics and geometry.

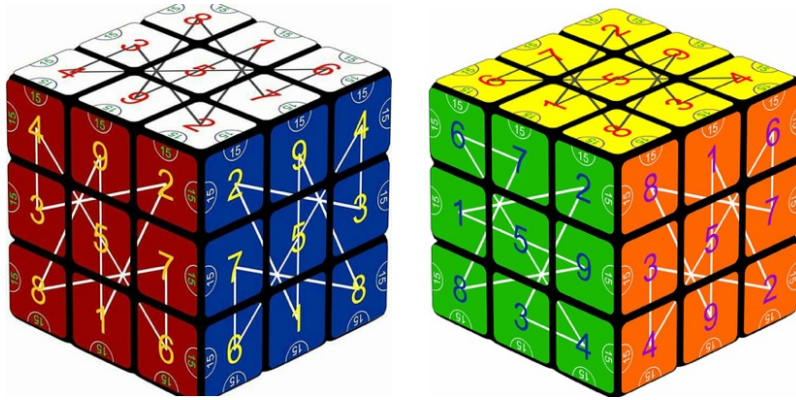
They decided to check me. They brought to me a boy, who was about 12 years old to test my method. A couple of classes were enough to see that my lessons helped to comprehend the information, which was not in the high school curriculum.

The officials were surprised and asked how I managed to do this. And I could not answer them myself. Several professors from the Ministry of Education of Kyrgyzstan listened to me attentively. They formed an official conclusion that the method of Alymbek Mombekov was effective and was of great importance for mathematical education of young people. They allowed me, who was constantly getting poor marks in mathematics, to teach a lesson on "Kuraldoku".”

- "Excuse me, on Sudoku?" - I asked, thinking that I misheard.
- "No, Kuraldoku. But, you are right, I came up with the name by analogy with the Japanese digital puzzle."
- "Alymbek, I know that Sudoku means "a digit standing separately", and what does your term mean?"
- "When I was a child, at home and in my home village, I was often called - the son of Kuralai. Then, eventually - just Kuralbai. According to the passport I am Alymbek, but I don't think any of the villagers remember this name. Everyone knows me as Kuralbai. Hence, I invented this name - Kuraldoku.

Now I'm teaching "Kuraldoku" in the 61st Bishkek school with a physical and mathematical bias in the order of elective classes and on a voluntary basis. I do not get paid for it. Now I have more than 45 students of different ages. Parents of these children write me letters of thanks. The students show amazing results. No one gets grades less than "good". I myself ask the director to give me children who are lagging behind like I did when I was at school. I am sure that after classes on kuraldoku, the children will become good students. Classes are held twice a week. Gradually, step by step, everything moves for the better. I was allowed to sell a book, which I managed to publish a few years ago.

I also teach children to collect the "Kural's cube". Once in Moscow, I was looking at an ordinary Rubik's cube. It is square. And visions also come to me in the shape of a square. I thought - "why not put digits on them?" I invented a method, and got a "Kural's cube". The first time I released 3 pieces. The idea is to arrange the pieces so that vertically, horizontally and diagonally, the total number will be 15, and the digits are scattered over the cube in different places from 1 to 9. I decided to try the invention and went to the club of "geniuses" who collect the usual Rubik's cube. They were mostly teenagers and young guys. I gave my Kural's cube to them and the cleverest of them solved it in 1.5 hours. Everyone was surprised and asked me with interest how I came up with the idea to create this vitamin for the brain. The option with a sum of up to 15 was the simplest possible.



I even found an investor among my compatriots, who lives in China. He was interested in producing such cubes with digits. But I had to refuse him as he was too greedy. He offered me only 1% of the sales. I would have agreed, but at least for 30%, so that I could fund my next ideas. He refused and went to China. Now I'm saving money to go to the plant where the cubes are produced and to negotiate directly with the manufacturer, without intermediaries. If I succeed in arranging the production of such a mathematical puzzle, I will not only get rich myself," - Alymbek laughed, and added seriously, -"The whole Kyrgyzstan could rise sharply in economic and scientific development."

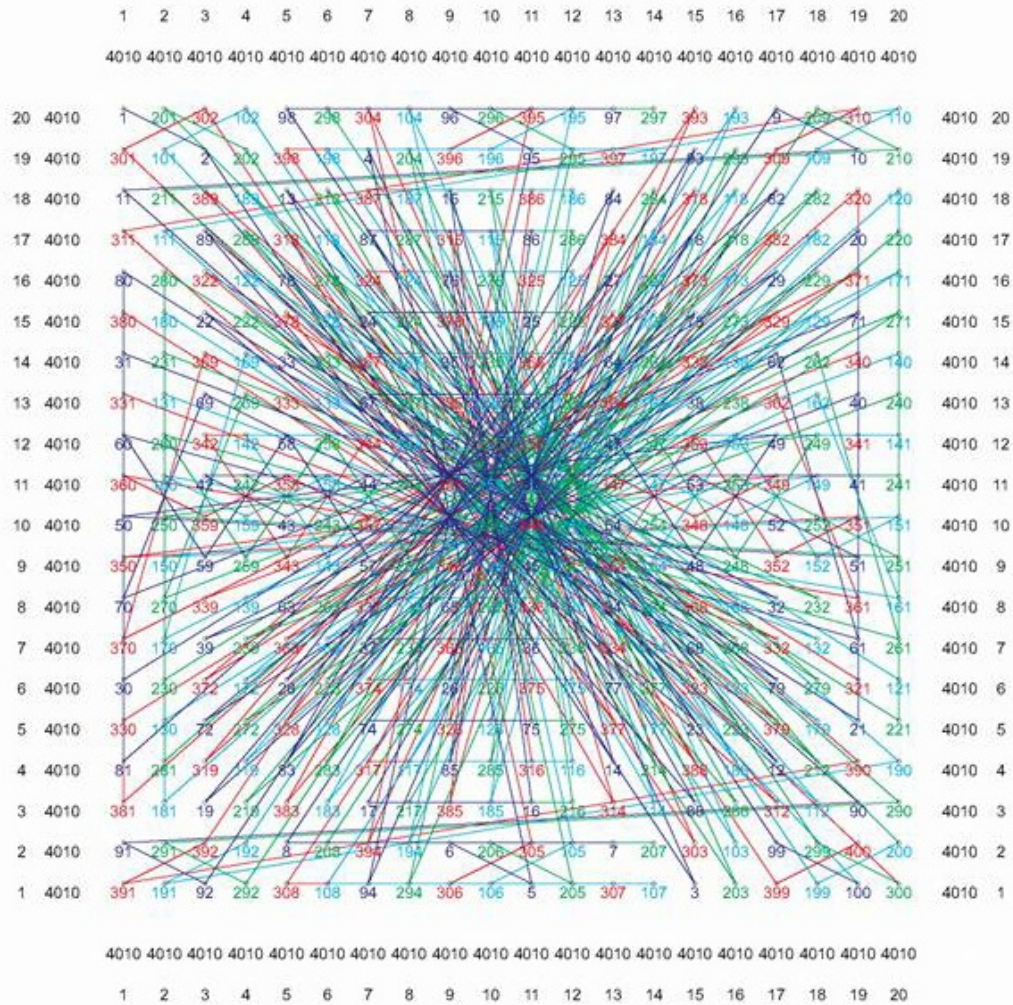
I decided to ask the question that tormented me from the very first meeting:

- "Alymbek, but it is a lot of work to write down so many digits. When do you do all this, and plus give classes at school?"

- "I just do not sleep a lot. Approximately two hours a day. I go to bed at midnight, and wake up automatically at two in the morning. I see the numbers, sit down at the table and write them down. The digits come in symmetries. I write, as the "voice" speaks or sometimes corrects. Sometimes I question if I wrote the number correctly."

# Магические точки и фигуры “Курал”

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- “Did you try to clarify anything from the mathematical field? Did the voice respond you?”

- “I did. Sometimes I mentally ask the "voice" a question and get an answer to it. This applies not only to digits, although often the answer contains some digit. Look here, recently I asked the voice about the future elections.”

I copied a name and a surname, which were unfamiliar to me, as well as the number next to it, into a notebook. Alymbek continued.

- "In addition to schoolchildren, I now give classes on "Kuraldoku" and the deciphering of these digits to several young guys as an experiment. The Polytechnic University provided space for classes and its rector gave me permission to use this apartment. The students are already showing good results. I hope, with God's help, one of them will invent the unusual flying machine from a fundamentally new material that can withstand the ultra-high speeds. By the way, tomorrow I have another class at 9 o'clock. If you want, Katya, you can attend."

Although the next morning I was planning to be at the station on my way home, I could not refuse such a proposal, which was really unique. I thought - "At the very least, I'll fly by plane. I can't miss this chance to listen to the essence of the incredible discovery from the inventor," - and said aloud:

- "With pleasure! Although I will, probably, not understand anything, I'm an absolute liberal arts major. But I'm very interested. Where should I go?"

## **Chapter 6. Trip home**

We agreed to meet right outside the university building. I thanked Alymbek for the time and prepared to leave, but he seemed to have freed the whole day for me and took me on a wonderful excursion along Chui Avenue, the nearest squares, and the noisy eastern bazaar. He showed me where I had to go tomorrow morning. He treated me with incredibly tasty lemonade from the machine, installed right on the street. I also could not refuse the offer to eat at one of the cafes. It was an amazing day, and I will always remember Bishkek with its greenery, taste of lemonade and tender pilaf, but most of all - the fatherly attitude of Alymbek towards a not very experienced journalist. Although children and teenagers surround him in his truly missionary educational activities, and his native children do not forget him, I felt that I became one of those he voluntarily chose to mentor. Without the voice-recorder, Alymbek told me many nuances of his life, which, at his request, would never be published anywhere.

In the evening, having reached Olga's apartment, I easily booked a plane ticket via her computer. Even with a layover in Moscow, I would be at home even earlier than on the previously planned train. The flight was in the evening and it was comfortable for me. In the morning I collected all my stuff to go to the airport right after the lecture.

Olga made me a wonderful and nutritious breakfast. She even wrapped an impressive package with sweet pies and sandwiches with jerked meat, which does not fear the heat. "Take it, Katya, when you have a minute, have a snack. The prices in our airport are too high." - I was sincerely touched by such care. I thanked her from the bottom of my heart and asked her to convey my gratitude to Muniza, whose phone number I didn't have. Olga laughingly rejected my attempt to pay more than we agreed - "Oh, Katyusha, I can see what a nice person you are. I will not take a single extra *som*! Go, my girl, don't be late." - I hurried to the University, and in the bag were the cakes baked by my hospital hostess, warming my heart with kindness.

It is interesting that all universities, in whatever city of the world they are located, are similar in mood. Young, fresh, purposeful. The University was very harmonious with Bishkek itself. Funny girls glanced sideways at loudly laughing guys. Modest guys and girls, buried in their notebooks and textbooks, tried to learn everything that was needed in a very short time. Teachers hurried with briefcases or leaflets in their hands. This particular atmosphere fascinated me, but everything was forgotten as soon as Mombekov began his class.

He asked one of the students to translate the text for me, and the information made me feel dizzy. The magic of digits was incredible!

After the class, I sincerely thanked Alymbek:

- "Thank you for giving me such an opportunity to be immersed in your discoveries. I'm leaving today, but as soon as the article is published, I will certainly send you a copy of our publication. From the bottom of my heart I wish you success!"

Alymbek warmly said goodbye to me, and asked me to say hello to Sergei Vasilievich, if I happened to meet him.

I arrived at the Manas airport in a taxi, looking at the velvety mountains, which flashed beyond the window. I went through the screening, customs control, and ticket processing procedures. Then I settled on the second floor, intended for international passengers. I sat down and thought about Alymbek's life. An amazing gift led to desperate attempts to prove to others the practical benefits of the digits that came to him. That kind-hearted person lives, more precisely - huddles in a tiny apartment. He is lonely, despite five children and students, surrounded only by infinite digits written in different versions.

I suddenly realized that such people are superheroes. Most often, no one knows about them during their lifetime. Their popularity comes too late, but the knowledge left by this scientists-superheroes changes the world. However, for the cost of Alymbek's gift turned out to be too high.

The landing was announced. About 8 hours of flights were ahead. I mentally smiled at the fact that, someday, thanks to the dedication of Alymbek, the flight would last only about 16 minutes. Probably, then the travelers would not even think about saying "thank you" to this modest man, Alymbek Dzhamankulovich Mombekov who pays for the comfort of the future generations by sacrificing his personal happiness and health, fighting with misunderstanding and insomnia. Perhaps, even right now he is recording the digits in rows and columns.

- "Miss, are you ok?" - an airport employee asked me, bringing me back to reality from my sad thoughts. Only then I felt that my cheeks were wet with tears.

Already in the airplane, I realized that my future article would be about a real hero. I opened the notebook and in capital letters wrote the title - "MATH WHIZ" on top of the outline of the article.

## **Epilogue**

Several months have passed after my first serious editorial assignment ended with a business trip to see an incredible man. Sometimes I experienced something like longing for the scenery of Bishkek and the mountains, which could be seen from the window.

I showed the draft of the article-interview to Sasha. He smiled approvingly and said - "Well done! It's a great text and with your own character. I knew that you would succeed. Go to Victor Ivanovich." Then I realized why all respondents disclosed all their secrets to Sasha - when talking, he convinced the interlocutor that he or she was an exceptional person, and the respondent's wings grew because of this.

The published article was recognized as unequivocally successful by all colleagues. And even the editor-in-chief praised me, although it was not his habit.

Autumn came, as always, suddenly, having cut off the Indian summer in mid-sentence. Nizhny Novgorod was swamped with leaves and I often thought -



"How is it now in the remote Kyrgyzstan? How are the people whom I met on my way: my good fellow traveler Muniza, Olga, who gave me shelter, and, of course, Alymbek, who was incredible and so open? Is he all right with everything?"

After the initial success, they began to load me with very interesting tasks, though this time within Nizhny Novgorod and the region. One evening after work - the next visit to the site and an interview with builders of the stadium for the World Cup - I somehow made it home. I switched on the TV, because the profession makes me obligated to be aware of all events. On the news channel, I saw a message in a running line - "On October 15, 2017, Sooronbai Jeenbekov won the presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan. His result is 54.77% of the vote. His closest competitor...."

I jumped on the spot, rushed to my purse, and found a notebook. I flipped the pages to the notes made during the interview with Alymbek. Among other records there was a name "Sooronbai Jeenbekov". Number "54,772" and the question mark were next to it.

I was looking at the sheet of paper, smiling in amazement. Since, with the help of a mysterious voice this result was predicted by Alymbek with such accuracy, he would surely find a way to realize his dream.

- "Good luck, CIPHERMAN!" - I whispered to nowhere, - "Everything will be all right with you!"



