

Fairy-tales of dreams

By **Alexander Aldali**

Alexander Aldali is a 12-year old boy. He won Podsolnushek (The Little Sunflower), a literary contest for young talents run by the Russian Union of Writers. He also received the Griboedov Medal for the best literary debut of 2009.



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“Fairy-tales of dreams”
The book that teaches how to dream!
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I'd like to invite you
to my fairy-tale land,
where everybody
becomes a child.
Like children,
you can be happy
about each new day,
hop, run, jump, have fun,
believe in miracles
and be happy!
My fairy-tale land is a land
of happiness!



A fairy-tale About the First Star



This fairy-tale was told in secret
To me by an old prudent Gnome
I'd like to show its joyful spirit
You'll keep no matter where you roam

Let joy become your guide and follow
To show you light and teach you love
To find the words that cast all sorrows
And give you blessing from above

You'll walk on the Milky Way, be proud
to see the Sun, his shiny place
You'll fly like Eagle over clouds
And find the key to happiness

No matter whether young or old
Be fast and grab this shiny key
Your heart is made of pure gold
Live in your dream, create, be free!



Once upon a time in a faraway snow land lived a small, slender girl. When she turned five, her Mom brought her to a ballet school. Very soon she turned out to be the best ballerina there. The girl had been working really hard to achieve perfection. Her dream was to play a part in a fairy-tale performance.

On Christmas Eve, after she'd returned home from the ballet school, very tired and happy, she was waiting for the clock to turn twelve, and for the Christmas Night to start. The girl put her toys in order on shelves, hung the garland, decorated the Christmas tree and took the tutu out of the wardrobe. She put the pointes on and started to play a record of her favorite ballet.



After having danced the Adagio, she sat on a sofa with her pointes on, charmed by the music. She covered herself with a plaid and kept on listening to the fascinating sounds.

The charming music, fatigue and long waiting immediately carried her into a magical dream, where she turned into a small frog with emerald eyes. Her name was Iglissa. She lived in a remote, thick forest near a deep lake. Night cast a veil of its piercing silence over the fir tops, covering the crystal glass with a silver shroud.

Covered with a velvet blanket of moss on the century-old fir, Iglissa couldn't help but gazed at the Milky Way simmering with silver.

Once, on a sunny afternoon, basking herself in the first rays of the early spring sun, she saw huge white birds that had flown to her lake from faraway places. They were having an argument!

Overcoming her fear of these big birds, she leaped from tussock to tussock despite the danger she was in, sat near the birds, hiding, and suddenly heard their amazing story.

The largest bird told the others this incredible story that would soon change Iglissa's entire life!

– “Once I was nestling, my mother told me about an Eagle that visited the sun.”

The birds carefully listened to the story. The little Iglissa held her breath. She was even afraid to wink since thinking that the rustle made by her eyelashes could scare off these magnificent birds.

“The Eagle was the bravest. With each flight, she would go up higher and higher in the sky. When other eagles couldn't stand the rays of the burning sun, the Eagle, despite the unbearable pain from the scorching rays, would strive to ascend higher and higher.

Once when she was getting ready for her next flight, an old Gnome came up to her.”

“Hello, brave Eagle,” he said. “Hello, dear Gnome,” she replied.

“I know everything in this world. Everything, that has happened and everything that will happen. I know that you are striving to reach the sun. I can make your dream come true. Just trust me, but you have to lose the most precious things you have, that is, your wings. Are you ready to do that?”

The Eagle was scared, but her desire to reach the sun was so strong, that she said, “So be it that I won’t fly anymore, but I want to reach the sun, so I agree.”

The wise Gnome said that in exchange for her wings he would give her this opportunity.

“You have to take off to the sun at midnight. You have to reach the sun before sunrise, because the sun has a secret.

When he sleeps, he cannot harm you. Remember, you can't stay visiting the sun longer than the time it takes for him to wink three times. If you stay longer, you will never return to the earth."

The Eagle would do whatever it took to make her dream come true.

She slept for three days and three nights.

Then, at midnight sharp, she woke up. Flying up to the highest rock, she spread her snow white wings and got ready for her swift flight. Her heart was beating regularly, there was no worry: she knew that any doubt or hesitation could destroy her dream for good. She closed her eyes for a moment and imagined herself illuminated by the sun and bathing in its rays. She received much energy from this thought and started her swift flight. Without looking down or back, without hearing the shouts of the black crows, she swiftly flew up to that which

she'd been striving all her life. She'd been flying for three days and three nights. Finally she saw the Sun's palace. It was surrounded by a high fence shining with magic lights, made of golden rods, with beautiful ornaments.

Each interweaving shone with amber, each curve shone with a diamond and each water lily under each diamond was scattered with pearls. But she needed no diamonds, no treasures, no, golden domes of the palace.

She only dreamed of meeting the Sun. At that moment, her glance was attracted to the furthest door.

All of a sudden, marvelous sounds started to fill the palace. The sounds were rising. Then her dream came true, for she saw the Sun in all his beauty and magnificence! He was beautiful. She forgot the old Gnome's warning that she was not supposed to stay at the Sun longer than the time it takes him to wink three times.



The Sun was very surprised at the unwelcomed guest.

“White snow queen, what brought you to me?” he asked.

“Oh, mighty star, since the day I was born I saw you awake and drive away evil, I saw night obediently followed by day, I saw everything on the Earth bloom and become beautiful.

All my life I wanted to thank you, one so powerful and great for inspiring us with faith in life!”

The Sun said nothing, but a smile shone on his face. He looked at the bird, whose heavenly beauty bedazzled him, and sparked gentle feelings for her that each moment were becoming stronger and stronger. Trespassing all borders, the Sun’s boundless love drew his shiny rays to her wings, without noticing them catching fire.



Enveloped in flames and stretching out her wings to the Sun, the Eagle did not realize that her wings were consumed.

She started to drop like a stone.

The Sun became aware of his powerlessness and prayed to heaven. The solar eclipse occurred, and the Sun returned his beloved one. They were given just one day and one night. After the sunset the crescent appeared in the sky, and the beautiful white eagle turned into the moon.

Separating herself from the birds, Iglissa gazed at the high pines and the distant sun. She decided that someday she would definitely make friends with the sun and move from her dark green forest to the beautiful sky.

Iglissa became very interested in the story told by the white bird. Twilight fell and she returned to her lake. Deep in thought, she looked up and saw a starry sky. Surprisingly, she saw the Milky Way which reflected in her lake.

Peering at the sky, she saw the young moon, playfully swinging in the dark blue high above. Having looked at the lake surface, she saw the moon's reflection in the water and the moon's path studded with diamonds of stars. With no thought, she rushed into the water towards the moon. She'd been trying so hard with all her strength to deliberately swim up to her, but the

moon was becoming more and more distant. Bitterly, she realized that it was just a reflection in the lake.

She was not supposed to be the eagle who can fly up into the sky!

After reaching the shore she was exhausted and drifted into a wonderful dream. She dreamed of the young moon, who was the silver Prince holding his arms around the star. She felt relieved and joyful. After she woke up, she was upset, since instead of the prince, the lake was visited by the cold, round moon that was changed by the waning moon. Over and over again Iglissa was looking closely at the silver shine of the lake's dull mirror, and returned to her remote forest in grief. She was lonely, and only after long, painful waiting, in the silver halo appeared her prince, the New Moon.

Once, the old gnome came up to her.

-“Hello, little Iglissa,” he said.

-“Hello, dear gnome,” she replied.

“I know everything in this world. Everything, that has happened and everything that will happen.



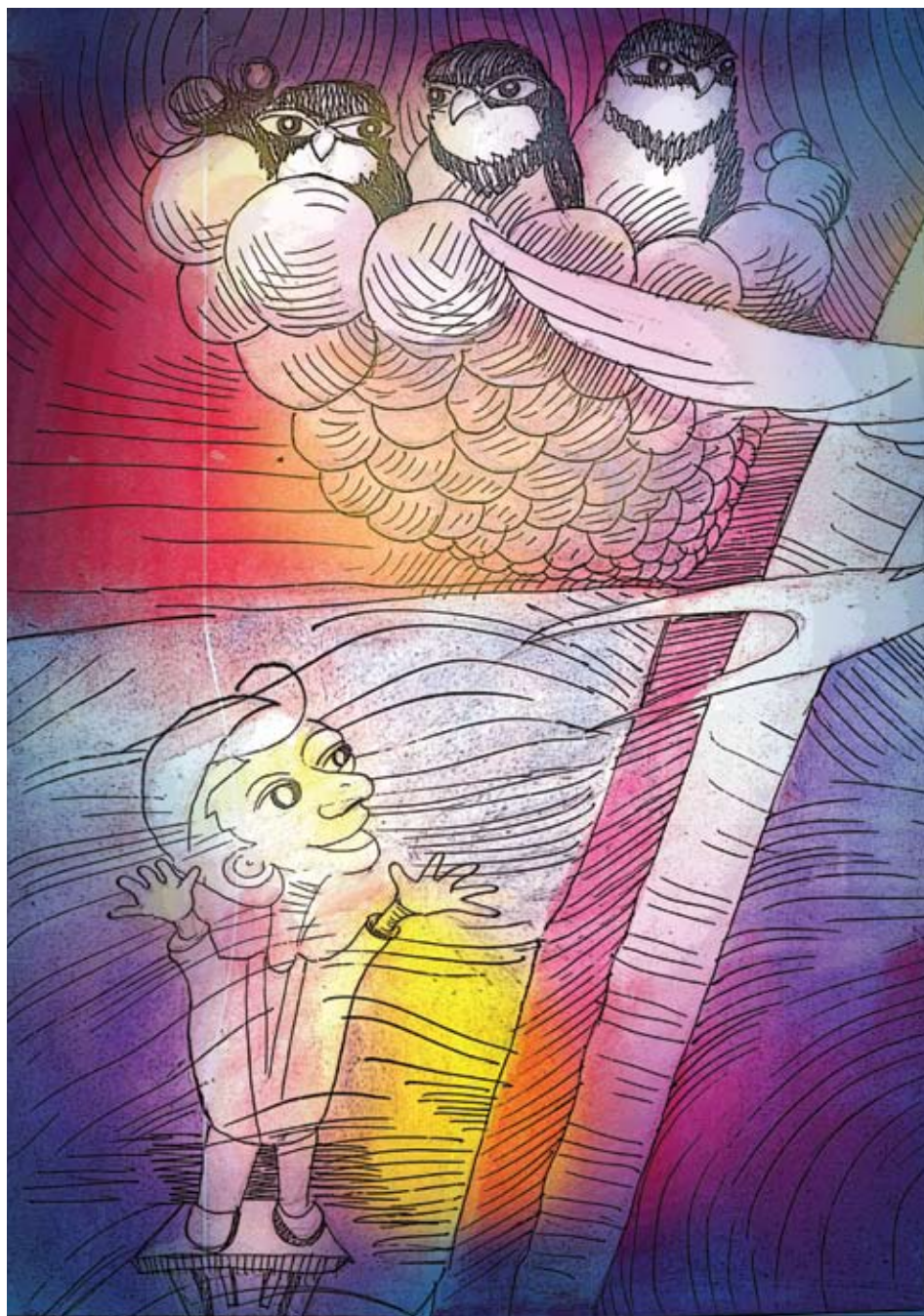
I know that which you wish the most. I can make your dream come true. But trust me, you will have to lose the most precious thing you have! Are you ready to do that?"

The little Iglissa did not get scared, her wish to turn into a star was so strong that she said,

-“I want to become a star!”

The Christmas night began. The girl dreamed a marvelous dream. She woke up at sunrise, opened the window and saw the new moon with his first star.

Paper Swallow



Through window gleamed the sunshine beam
There was a bird immersed in dream
He flew down over a cloud's edge
And landed on the window ledge

I spent a joyful day of rest
And watched the swallow's build a nest
I had another week to spare
A swallow couple settled there

We children never understood
That only grown - ups do good
Since childhood I have always thought
That, children's hearts are made of gold

I wrote this story for my friends
My happiness here never ends
Let all your families be blessed
Like swallows settled in this nest

On his last day in the home city, the boy felt tired of commotion and streams of people. The winter didn't want to leave the city despite that the calendar said it was March. The sun attempted several times to melt the dirty snow, but the wind, from out of nowhere, blew away the warm but yet weak sun rays with its gusts. The slight frost at night proved to be right. Everybody craved warmth, but coldness settled outdoors and inside people's souls. In a hurry to catch the plane, without saying goodbye to the capitol city and his friends, or bringing along his favorite books and toys, the boy impatiently looked at the old clock. Time mercilessly flew without leaving the room for sorrow.

Crying along with the strings of his inner feelings, and biting blind raindrops hit against the windshield, the boy fell asleep on the plane after watching the clouds.

He had been dreaming of warm countries. In the morning he went out on a terrace, and the

choral singing of the birds made startled him. The little stone house with carved shutters was located in the recreational district of a small Southern town.

In the morning mist he clearly saw fir trees. Everything around him was wrapped in fresh green vines that twined up the terrace and the roof against the background of rich spring flowers. Not far from town he saw snow-covered mountains. After inhaling crystal clear air he felt a burst of energy. He was watching the soil breathing, and for the first time in his life he felt Nature letting him into its secrets. After walking around the house and meeting its inhabitants he was happy. The path near the fence crossed mountain springs and led into a mysterious forest.

A lady who lived next door told him a fairy tale about a swallow who borrowed from God's mother a pair of scissors and a ball of thread. Since then swallows got a forked tale that could wind up thread into balls, therefore the swallow was considered a sacred bird.

When the lady was saying good-bye to the boy, she told him that a swallow building a nest over one's window meant great luck. Soon the old-timers saw a surprising thing. Above the little stone house, where no bird had been living for decades, swallows began to build a nest.

The boy was very surprised after he'd seen a bird slightly less than a sparrow that was sitting on the ledge. The bird's back was dark blue and the lower parts of wings were white. He opened his favorite book, the Bird Encyclopedia, and was turning the pages in haste. "A prolonged body, a flat head with a short beak and feet covered with white fuzz...city swallows!" he exclaimed.

The boy started to write down his everyday observations on the beautiful birds in a special notebook. He saw the birds gluing little dirt balls that looked like peas to the wall. He noticed that one bird was near the nest all the time while others flew to bring construction materials, and he heard loud twitter.

Once looking through the window he saw the

swallow fighting sparrows who wanted to occupy the swallows' nest. The swallow was really brave defending the nest, but it couldn't defeat the importunate sparrows. Fortunately, another swallow returned, and the sparrows didn't have a choice but to fly away. The rainy days started. The clay that had not fully dried began to chip away. The swallows that were in a hurry to finish building the nest didn't have any rest. Catching small wool pieces in the air, they lined the nest with them.

Gradually, the birds built a closed semi-sphere above the window. In the upper part of the sphere there was a small slot-like entrance. In a couple of weeks, the nest was ready.

Once, under the weight of the clay, the lower part of the nest fell down. After the boy woke up and came over to the window, he got really worried at the sight. The nest bottom broke and fell down. It left some feathers and clay particles on the window sill. In the broken nest the boy saw several white eggs. They were plain, with no lines on their shells.

After coming out, the boy ran over to the window. After seeing what happened to the nest he fretted. Feeling helpless, he tried to attract the swallows' attention. The birds were making loud sounds and flew over the nest in circles.

After returning to his room, the boy couldn't fall asleep. His thoughts were about the nest. At night he was startled whenever he heard a noise and got up and came up to the window. Staring out the window he saw nothing but darkness. Only did his faith in the victory of light instill hope.

Later in the park he picked up twigs, selecting the most appropriate ones for the nest. In the river bank he found some blue clay, and rolled small balls out of it. As meticulous as a sculptor, he made these balls and wrapped them in a large green leaf. Hurrying home, he looked at the ground trying to pick up everything that could be used in the nest construction.

To his delight, the swallows restored the nest fast and hatched eggs. The female swallow did

not leave the nest for two weeks. The male swallow took care of her and brought bugs to the nest. The helpless nestlings could not hatch. The boy saw the swallows breaking the egg shells with their beaks. In early morning, the boy ran to the window. Pulling the curtain, he saw the heads of the nestlings stick out of the nest. Watching them, he shouted, "They are so cute!"

Although he needed fresh air in the room, the boy didn't let anyone open the window in order to not scare the swallows away. Each night before going to bed he would pull the curtain slightly to enjoy the birds' twitter.

In his spyglass, he saw that swallow preyed on bugs, flies, butterflies and grasshoppers. He watched the swallow feed the nestlings. He wanted to see the feeding more closely, and he was surprised at the amount of prey the swallow carried in its beak to the nest.

Once a nestling opened its beak wide and stretched to waiting to take food from the coming swallow.

But the swallow all of a sudden made a U-turn in the air. The nestling, his beak still open, walked back. The swallow flew up to the nest again, and the nestling stretched to the prey the swallow carried. But the swallow abruptly turned, and the nestling fell down. Crying while falling down, the nestling tried to hold on to the nest or the swallow's wing. All of a sudden for itself, the nestling spread its wings and flew. After it realized it could fly, the nestling carefully copied the swallow's movements. Uncertain how to ascend and descend, the nestling did not manage to return to the nest at once. But soon it learned to fly from one branch to another. It was weak but managed to return to the nest.

Soon almost all nestlings started flying. The boy noticed that most of their lives swallows were flying, lifting and lowering both their wings at the same time. Watching the birds, he immersed in the beautiful world of nature.

In the foothills where the boy lived, the weather changed all the time.

Even if there was no single cloud in the sky and the sun began to shine, a light wind might bring black clouds, and first raindrops drew their diagonal patterns on the window panes. Happy to see this change, the bubbles danced on the newly born puddles.

The boy noticed that the swallows did not prey when it was rainy, but waited for the good weather to come. Looking up in the sky, he saw the rain clouds that shrouded the sky chasing one another. Then the lightning, the queen of bad weather, showed off her fire raincoat in swirling in a sparkly dance. The grass fell down under the weight of raindrops, the sun was covered by the clouds, and the lightning invited the thunder to the dance in a ring.

Over a short time, grey water flowed along curbs. It seemed to live its own life. The streams furiously merged filling ravines and roadsides. A fierce wall of water noisily moved along the streets and did its best to knock down a passerby who didn't expect such a storm.



Then like a kid who was fed up with his favorite toy after playing with it for too long and getting to like the next one, this harmonious ensemble of water, wind, thunder and lightning calmed down as fast as it had started like nothing ever happened. Soon the clouds crawled away, and bright rays of the sun went for a swim in the water flow to later dry up the puddles and cheerfully reflect in the wet asphalt.

The summer passed by. The swallows were leaving their nests. While watching his favorite birds, the boy got worried when he saw a swallow leave the nest after flying up and down and cheeping. The boy saw that the swallow flew away and left a nestling that still couldn't fly.

The boy's helpless little friend was in trouble, and he felt responsible for the nestling and decided to bring up the nestling himself. He was catching the butterflies and flies with a net, collected them in a jar, and then carefully with pinchers gave the food to the nestling.

He realized that he took the responsibility for its life. Now his only dream was to teach the nestling how to fly.

He made a paper swallow and hung it to a branch with a thread. Day after day, he lowered the paper bird hoping that the nestling would copy its movements. Much to his disappointment, the nestling was afraid to leave the nest.

Later the boy understood that the nestling did not notice the white figure. He made a new swallow and carefully colored it so it looked real. Losing hope, the boy kept on piloting his invention. Suddenly he saw the nestling falling out of the nest and making its first circle in the air.

“Here’s my luck”, he thought. The boy patiently waited when the nestling was practicing its circles in the air, following the paper bird over and over again.

Again, the spring began in the foothill town. After the winter, the swallows started returning

to their nests. Each day the boy expected the bird family of his nestling to come back.

Early one morning he seemed to hear a twitter outside his window. The boy thought it was a dream, and was lying in bed without opening his eyes, afraid to scare this dream away. But the twitter outside was growing louder and louder. After realizing that it was real, the boy sprang from the couch overfilled with joy, his hands outstretched.

The first sun rays were blinding. Squinting and rubbing his sleepy eyes, the boy saw the familiar silhouettes of birds that flew in circles over the nest through the window pane covered with dew. Hastily wiping the foggy pane with a sleeve of his pajamas, the boy did not believe his eyes. “My dear swallows, you came back!”

All of a sudden, the boy saw his paper swallow’s silhouette in the nest. Brushing off unexpected tears and pressing his forehead on the window pane, he kept gazing at the happy dance of swallows outside.

The Boy and the Stray Dog



The boy moved from the city to a little foothill town. Since his childhood, he dreamed of a big four-footed friend. But his family lived in a rented apartment; he was not allowed to get a dog.

The only thing that reminded him of his dream was colorful encyclopedias on animals. Of all animals, he liked dogs best. In great detail, he studied all books on German shepherds and their training. He easily distinguished among different breeds and knew everything about their origins. He was really surprised to have learned that the first animal that was domesticated and most loyal to man was the wolf.

Gradually the years passed and the man turned the wolf into a dog. The boy was also fond of the books on history, he read a lot on how dogs helped soldiers during the First World War. At that time, German shepherds often were on the front lines front lines. The boy really wanted to get a dog. His Mom promised him to bring a dog from a shepherd breeder.

Once, a stray dog who was expecting puppies entered the basement of an old apartment building. There in the corner of the basement, it gave birth to six puppies. They were pitch-black, and the sixth one turned out to be a cute red puppy. Later on the family abandoned the basement, and accidentally left the red puppy there.

Soon the building residents saw the little red ball make its first awkward steps walking out of the dark basement and sniffing. The puppy scrunched up its eyes trying to gradually adjust his vision to the daylight. The smell of fresh spring green contrasted to the basement dampness. For the first time in his life, the puppy saw the blue sky with fluffy clouds. Before this, its world had been restricted to the basement.

Looking around, its naive green eyes were watching each movement of leaves shaking in the wind with interest. Pricking up its ears, the puppy listened to the rustle of grass.

No one was there in the yard. The birds flew from branch to branch with a cheerful twitter.

The puppy advanced in the bush near the pavement. Everything looked new and unexplored. All of a sudden it stopped, its gaze attracted by a motley butterfly with yellow circles on the wings. It was sitting on a flower slightly waving its wings and cautiously moving up and down its feelers. The butterfly waved its wings and flew away. The red puppy tried to follow. Its weak legs were not used to running fast. The butterfly was flying further and further till it was out of sight. The red puppy didn't understand why it could not fly as high as the butterfly.

When the puppy grew, it barked at the passers-by guarding its territory. There was a sandbox in the yard. The entrances of the apartment building were like kennels. Rain puddles served as a water source. Fruit trees in the yard shaded from the heat.

The puppy watched the children lined up to wait for their turn at the only swing in the yard. He watched the children swinging up and down.

As time passed, the puppy was developing into a grown-up dog. The days were too short to research the unexplored. Each day there was a new adventure.

The fluffy Red (that's what we'll call him) was small and kind. At the same time, it was brave. Barking loudly, it never stepped back. It always won. There was no resident in the yard who didn't love the dog. Every man was like a friend. Yet, Red felt free. His day was really busy. Sometimes Red stood near certain shop windows, later he travelled to different shops. All the inhabitants of the little town liked the dog. Everyone tried to treat him with something delicious. After eating, the dog returned to his own yard.

One day a taxi arrived. As a boy helped his parents with the suitcases, the first thing he saw in this unfamiliar town was Red. The small red dog was sitting in front of the car and gazing at the boy. When the boy finished unloading all the suitcases, the dog ran over to him, wagging its tail in greeting.

Leaning forward, the boy looked into the dog's eye. Suddenly the dog licked the boy's cheek, and the boy smiled. Wagging its tail, the dog ran into the entrance. All of this looked strange, but when the dog moved up the stairs in front of the boy and lay down near his apartment, the boy froze. Red somehow seemed to know where the boy was going to live. From that time on, Red began to sleep on the rug near the boy's apartment door. Whenever the boy went, his true friend persistently followed him.

Once the boy went into his house and came out with a big piece of sausage for Red.

The dog smelled it, looked at the boy, saw his kind expression, carefully took the sausage from his hand and ate it. The dog expressed its joy, wagged its tail and stood on its back feet. The boy stroked the dog on its back and went home. From then on, the boy and the dog became friends. But the boy's mom didn't know about their friendship. She ordered a pedigree shepherd just like the boy had been dreaming of since his early childhood.

Once day, the boy was playing with Red in the nearby construction site. The boy stumbled and fell through a manhole into an abandoned well. The dog saw this, but was helpless. He whimpered and ran around the manhole. It understood that its little friend was in trouble. After circling around the manhole, it ran to the fire station nearby. The dog ran over to a firefighter and barked, pulling at his pants leg. The firefighter did not understand the dog's unusual behavior, and asked,

“What happened to you, Red?”

The dog saw that the firefighter didn't understand his cry for help. He jumped in the air, got a grip of firefighter's wallet, and ran. The firefighter followed the dog. He saw the dog letting go of the wallet, and the wallet falling into the manhole. The firefighter looked into the well and noticed the boy who lay unconscious at the bottom of the dry well. The firefighter returned and told his colleagues about the accident. The firefighters rushed to the well and rescued the boy. This proved again that the dog was man's best friend.

When the firefighters dragged the boy out of the well, he was still unconscious. Red stood behind the paramedics' backs and whimpered. They put the boy inside the ambulance. Red jumped into the vehicle, but one of the paramedics drove him away.

After the ambulance started moving, Red ran along. It did its best not to fall behind.

But despite its effort, the dog could not run as fast as the ambulance did. The dog tried to stop the vehicle with its loud barking, but the ambulance didn't lower its speed.

Exhausted, Red went back to the yard, ran up the stairs and lay down on the rug near the boy's apartment. Uncertainty tortured the dog. Fretting, it walked back and forth on the floor. The dog thought it would never see the boy again. Red didn't understand how he would live without his friend.

Each time someone walked up the stairs, Red would look up and watched the stairs hoping to hear the boy's steps. But the boy didn't show up. Still hoping for the best, the red-haired dog rested its head on the rug and patiently waited.

Days dragged on in slow motion. The residents who got used to seeing Red happy all the time did not understand what happened. Why didn't their red friend show up near the

butcher's shop? Being so sad, Red stopped eating. The boy's neighbors left food for him but were surprised to see it untouched. Weakened, the dog didn't move but believed that the boy would return.

After coming out of hospital the boy went to a shop, bought a big sausage and asked the shopkeeper to slice it. When the boy was in the yard, he expected to see his faithful dog run up to him. Walking around the yard and not finding Red made the boy really worried. Despite his expectations, the little red friend was nowhere to.

The boy wandered the nearby yards until dark, looking in the entrances of apartments and basements. Heartbroken, the boy returned home, although his feet didn't want to obey him. When he came up to the door, he sat at the stairs and covered his face with his hands. The worries about what could have happened to the dog troubled him.



Suddenly, he heard a familiar bark. Looking around, he couldn't understand where it was coming from. At that moment, the door opened and his Mom, came out of the door with Red in her hands, happily smiling at her son. "Now our Red has a home!" said Mom, stretching out the dog smelling of shampoo and wrapped in a terry towel.

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Dear friends!

Please, write us about the happiest event that ever happened in your life. Your story will be included into “The Golden Book of Happiness”, which will help children of the whole world become successful and happy!

**Yours,
Alexander Aldali**

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