

Alexander Zykin

A+A



# Александр Зыкин

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### **Аннотация**

In the enchanting world of A+A, music is magic and friendship is the brightest star. But when the heavens grow dark and all light fades, Alexander and Ekaterina — the Taurus-born duo whose harmony once filled the world with song — must find the courage to journey beyond the known. Guided by Barsik, their wise feline companion whose purr vibrates with ancient wisdom, they follow the faint echoes of forgotten melodies. They soon learn that the inner light can outshine even the deepest darkness.

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### Prologue. A+A: Stars That Faded in the Night

In a distant valley, sheltered from the world by mountain ranges and dense forests, lay a small settlement — a quiet haven where time flowed slowly, like a stream winding between the stones. Here, among houses with tiled roofs and blooming gardens, lived Alexander and Ekaterina — two people whose fates had become so intertwined that sometimes it felt as if they were breathing in unison.

Their house stood on the outskirts of the village, right by the forest. It wasn't very big, but it was cozy: a spacious living room that smelled of wood and old books, a kitchen filled with the aroma of fresh-baked pastries, and an attic converted into a music studio. On the living room wall hung an old star chart — a gift from Alexander's grandmother, who had once told her grandson about constellations and distant galaxies.

Alexander was a man who combined strength and gentleness. Tall and broad-shouldered, he resembled a mighty ox. His character seemed to embody the symbol of Taurus, the sign

under which he was born. Alexander's brown eyes, warm and deep, could be both tender and determined — depending on his mood. He loved sports: every morning he started with a run along the river, and on weekends he played soccer with the village kids. But alongside this physical strength lived a delicate soul. Alexander adored music. In the living room stood an old piano, and in the corner — a guitar he had repaired and tuned himself. When he played, it felt as if the sounds filled not just the room, but the entire world around.

His hobbies weren't limited to music and sports. Alexander loved to read — his bookshelf was bursting with well-worn volumes, from adventure novels to scientific works on astronomy. He could spend hours sitting by the window with a book, occasionally pausing to take a bite of pizza — another one of his passions. Ham-and-mushroom pizza was his signature dish, which he made on weekends, always inviting Ekaterina for a taste test.

Ekaterina resembled Alexander in many ways. Just as driven and yet sensitive, she shared many of his interests. With flowing blonde hair and dark-green eyes that reminded one of a sunlit forest glade, she radiated a calm, confident energy. Like Alexander, she was born under the sign of Taurus, and the same traits showed through: perseverance, a love of beauty, and the ability to appreciate life's simple pleasures

Her voice — clear and ringing, capable of conveying both joy and sorrow — was a gift she cherished and nurtured. She had

been singing since childhood, and now most often — together with Alexander. Like him, Ekaterina loved sports: they often went jogging together in the mornings or rode bikes along the riverbanks.

She loved to cook — not just follow recipes, but to create, to blend flavors, to invent something new. Her kitchen often looked like an alchemists lab: jars of spices, fresh herbs, bowls of dough sat side by side on the table, and the air filled with the scents of cinnamon, vanilla, and freshly baked bread. Ekaterina knew how to turn an ordinary dinner into a celebration, and her signature apple pie with cinnamon had become a legend among the neighbors.

But most of all, they both adored music. When Alexander played the guitar or keyboard, Ekaterina would pick up the melody; her voice wove with the notes, creating something magical. Their interaction was so seamless that sometimes they didn't need words: they easily guessed each others mood from a glance, a gesture, or the slightest change in tone.

They recorded songs in their attic studio — simple, heartfelt compositions about friendship, love, and dreams. One day, while thinking about a name for their duo, they remembered a curious detail: both were born under the sign of Taurus. And the ancient Phoenician symbol for Taurus was called "Aleph" — and was represented by the letter "A".

"So were both 'A'," Alexander smiled.

"Then our duo is 'A+A'," Ekaterina chimed in, her dark-green

eyes sparkling with delight.

And so their artistic name was born. "A+A" sounded simple, yet it carried deep symbolism: two Taureans, two forces, two voices merged into one. Their duo became a local celebrity. Kids would run over to listen after school, elders smiled as they passed by the house, and young couples would secretly meet beneath their windows to hear what true harmony sounded like.

They lived simply, but happily. Mornings began with a cup of coffee on the porch, days with chores and hobbies, evenings with music and conversation. They knew each other by heart: wordlessly, they understood when to offer support, when to give space, when just to sit in silence together.

Time passed like this — until one night, everything changed. Alexander woke up with a strange feeling. Something was off. He opened his eyes and froze. The sky outside the window, usually sprinkled with myriad stars, was completely black. The North Star wasn't twinkling, the Milky Way wasn't shining, the familiar constellations weren't winking back. Everything had vanished. It was as if someone had taken and erased the sky, leaving behind only a bottomless darkness.

He jumped out of bed and ran to the window. His heart started beating faster. This wasn't a trick of the imagination — the stars had truly gone out.

"Katya," he called quietly. "Wake up. Look."

Ekaterina sat up in bed, rubbed her eyes sleepily, but as soon as she saw the sky, she jumped up. Her face went pale.

"What is this?" she whispered. "How is this possible?"

They stood by the window, staring into the black abyss, and understood: this wasn't just some natural phenomenon. Something had happened — something huge, frightening, threatening everything they knew.

"We have to fix this," Alexander said, clenching his fists. "We have to find out why the stars went out — and bring them back."

Ekaterina looked at him, and in her dark-green eyes he saw not fear, but the same determination that lived in his own heart.

"I'm with you," she nodded. "Wherever you go."

They didn't yet know what awaited them. They had no idea what dangers lurked in a world that had lost its light. But they knew one thing: together, as "A+A", they could do anything.

And so began their journey — dangerous, full of trials, but necessary. A journey that was meant to save the world. The journey of Alexander and Ekaterina, "A+A" — two Taureans who had decided to challenge the darkness.

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