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Sergey Soloviyov

Ivan Moshkin, ataman
Katorzhnoy. Under the
auspices of the
Roman Pope



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Аннотация

НЕЗАКОННОЕ ПОТРЕБЛЕНИЕ НАРКОТИЧЕСКИХ СРЕДСТВ, ПСИХОТРОПНЫХ ВЕЩЕСТВ, ИХ АНАЛОГОВ ПРИЧИНЯЕТ ВРЕД ЗДОРОВЬЮ, ИХ НЕЗАКОННЫЙ ОБОРОТ ЗАПРЕЩЕН И ВЛЕЧЕТ УСТАНОВЛЕННУЮ ЗАКОНОДАТЕЛЬСТВОМ ОТВЕТСТВЕННОСТЬ.

This novel is about the extraordinary but taking place adventures of a completely real person, Ivan Semenovitch Moshkin. The time of troubles ended only twenty years ago, a new Romanov dynasty was established on the royal throne. The young sagittarius is captured, and then on the Turkish galley. Seven years after a successful uprising, the young man is released, and with his comrades in misfortune returns home to the Russian kingdom. Thanks to the help of the pope.

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Sergey Solovyov

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Preface

This novel is about the extraordinary, but taking place adventures of a completely real person, Ivan Semenovitch Moshkin. A challenging time in the mid-seventeenth century for Russia. The time of troubles ended only twenty years ago, a new Romanov dynasty was established on the royal throne. The young sagittarius is captured, and then on the Turkish galley. Seven years after a successful uprising, the young man is released, and with his comrades in misfortune returns home to the Russian kingdom. He was sent to Tula, where he was appointed ataman of the Cossacks in this fortress, which already seems incredible. All his wanderings, adventures, a feat of patience, courage and perseverance, were worthy and reflected in art much, much earlier. This man, without a doubt, is equal in strength and stamina, mind and courage to Stepan Razin, Emelyan Pugachev, Ivan Serko and others, truly national heroes of Russia. He managed to save people, bring home, convince the Roman Pontiff himself to give the former slaves a letter of protection, so that two huge countries of that time — the Holy Roman Empire, the Commonwealth, as well as many Italian possessions would freely let this detachment of Russian people through — about a hundred people. But in those days, tramps on the roads were simply hung without much sentiments and remorse! And the fact that people, simple very poor people wished to return home,

brings down the myth of some unthinkable oppression of people in Russia at that time, in 1642. How long yesterday's slaves who had not seen their native places had to love their land, Russia, in order to wish to leave Rome, where they were offered to stay forever. But, unfortunately, our hero, Ivan Moshkin, did not deserve a memorial plaque in his native cities, Tula and Kaluga, but he deserved a whole relation published in Rome, Italy, of the seventeenth century for his incredible courage.

Prologue



Ivan Semenovitch Moshkin walked ahead of the Russian rati with his ertaul, with the city Cossacks from Tula. Before them,

traveling, for six flights of arrows, horse-drawn Don Cossacks walked ten or twelve people, the soldiers took care of the enemies, the Polish army. The sovereign was led by the boyar Vasily Vasilyevich Buturlin, and his valiant soldiers were to unite with the Cossacks of Bogdan Khmelnytsky. It was already 7163 (1655), their regiment was marching to distant Lviv when the case near Smolensk ended, and the city again returned to the hand of the Russian tsar from godless Polish paws.

— Voivode orders to stand on a halt, — shouted to the messenger ataman, — Ivan Semenovich, rest, cook porridge!

— And then the case, — answered the seasoned warrior, habitually smoothing his mustache with his index finger, — Trofim, — he turned to Yesaul, — check everyone on the lists, and so that the horse dogs would not let their eyes off the horses! Fedor! — the chieftain turned to another Cossack, — put up guards, but don't forget about secrets! There, according to more experienced service people, put that with pistols and reference squeaks, locks so that everyone has flint. Well, you know what our service is.

— I will do everything, Ivan Semenovich, I will not miss anything, — and Fedor rode off to dispose.

— With feed as, ataman? 'asked the elderly petty officer, Evgraf Petrovic.

— For two weeks there is spelt and buckwheat, crackers for a week, bread wine is the same. You, Petrovich, do not give more than half a dog to the Cossacks, the main thing is that they do

not suffer from bellies. You yourself know how it happens on hikes. Water, water check. Only in the stream take, do not bring the Lord from the lake or the river. How many of you and I have gone through these battles, more from the belly of our own died than in a saber battle.

— Yes, the chieftain, they came with you from Italy itself, no one died on the road.

— I hope for you, — and Moshkin tapped the old comrades on the shoulder.

“I’ll go.

Again the messenger rode on a hot horse, looking out for the initial people among the Cossacks. But now, I saw the chieftain among the Russian soldiers. The chieftain, eating porridge, laid down a wooden plate and removed the silver spoon, glancing at the messenger with displeasure.

“What’s in there?”

— Boyarin, governor Vasily Vasilyevich Buturlin calls you, Ivan Semenovich!

— This is the case, — and the chieftain famously threw his burnt body into the saddle, and trotted a pedigree stallion after the messenger.

Ataman Katorzhnoy drove past the boyar children who were boiling porridge with their military slaves. They behaved smartly, took care, albeit without armor, but were with sabers and pistols.

— Hello to you, Ivan Semenovich! shouted one slightly overweight landowner, in his forties.

— And to you, Luka Ilyich!

— Come to us, taste porridge, good came out!

— I'll come in, but the boyar called! I hasten... — and Katorzhnoy drove on.

But here, and the rich tent of the boyar Vasily Vasilyevich, and on guard at the entrance are not just his military slaves, but Moscow residents in white caftans and with swan wings behind their backs, with pistols, with newfangled wheel locks, in iron hats and cuirasses.

— Please to Vasily Vasilyevich, expects, — said the boyar servant.

Ivan Semenovich nodded, dismounted, tied the horse to the harness, tried not to rush and keep his back straight, throwing back the canopy, entered the tent. There was no particular luxury in the boyar's chambers, except for trophy shandals and a tapestry of French work taken in Smolensk. Well, Vasily Vasilyevich ate, of course, on silver, and not from a wooden plate. Moshkin did not break hats in front of the boyar, the chieftain himself, granted by the tsarist will, is now from the initial people.

— Sit down, chieftain. Taste the wine — and Buturlin, without repairing, poured into a silver bowl — Hungarian.

— Thank you, boyar, — and drank a third of the cup.

— And so, for you, — and put on the table something wrapped in a blank canvas.

Mokshin felt the viscous smell of honey, looked at the governor again, and smiled. Well, having opened exactly, I saw a

printed gingerbread made of rye flour on honey and with ginger and anise. Favorite delicacy, yes memo about home native!

“Thank you,” Ivan Semenovitch said cheerfully, “an extraordinary gift, boyar.” As if I got home.

— We are not far from Gusyatin already, there are no Polish patrols nearby, here, look at the map, — and the initial person laid out the drawing, — on the Zbruch river, and the bridges near the city are suitable, and the castle is not too strong. Try to take them as an outcast, so as not to waste time with us, but to keep up with the arrival of the Polish armies near Lviv. You went hiking more than once, served on the Zasechnaya line, is accustomed to military tricks.

— Order, governor, to give us rope ladders with iron hooks, and we will go to the city without rest. My Cossacks have replaceable horses, there are sixty miles left, we will reach quickly, without hesitation.

“And I’ll follow you, chieftain. I’ll catch you up in a day. Don’t worry, the local army will do soon. There and the Cossacks of Khmel’nitsky will help you.

— If only they didn’t interfere, Vasily Vasilyevich. The hetman is very enthusiastic. Dangerous, and lying without measure.

Buturlin only darkened, remembering his embassy and the expectation of the Cossack Rada. How yulil, how Khmel’nitsky dodged. And he himself told the sovereign that it would not be bad to put Ivan Serko as a great hetman, he is not angry, not

lying and not addicted, but brave desperately and faithful without deception. But Alexei Mikhailovich did not want to interfere in the decisions of the Cossack foreman, but in vain, as time has shown.

— Okay, I will write to Khmelnitsky. Take your ertaul, and do not sack, chieftain.

Ivan Moshkin finished his wine, bowed, left the tent, and trotted the horse into his camp.

— Trofim Petrovich! Then let's rest! We go as an outcast to Gusyatin, light. With our wagon train, you will leave twenty sensible Cossacks, and the rest on a hike! And now, taste the boyar hotel! — and held out a piece of gingerbread.

— Thank you, — immediately having bitten off half, the Cossack answered.

— Eat come on, otherwise again chew one porridge for a whole month.

— Such fate at us! In an hour we will speak!

— Trofim, appoint the Sentinels, so that ahead of us they would go no more than three flights of arrows!

Four hundred horsemen went into the night, following trampled roads. Squeaks and pistols were loaded, the Cossacks were waiting for a fight with the Poles. Scouts checked beams and ravines, but there was no enemy anywhere. Cossacks trotted, without rest, only changing clockwork horses. So they dozed in the saddles, but nothing, no one fell into the roadside ditches, the soldiers held firm.

But it was not in vain that the watch was sent, it was not in vain that the chieftain was so worried. The Poles are also military affairs, and not simply boasted... In the bushes Trofim and Gray noticed two dragoons, with squeaks at the ready, you can see it was an enemy patrol. Cossacks just looked at each other. The horses were left to Andreike as the youngest. They did not rust, did not give out their owners, only spun their ears, but pulled their muzzles to the horse breeder. He took out two crackers from the bag, sprinkled them with salt and treated his four-legged friends.

Trofim and Andrei sneaked around the bushes, and walked like forest cats — not a single dry bitch flinched, not a small bump crunched. Here it was impossible to make a mistake — the arkan was an indispensable weapon of the Cossack, and both steppe warriors owned it perfectly. Throwing — squeezed scream — and in the mouth of dragoons instead of German sausage, strong fingers stick old rags, and hands behind their backs are knitted with hemp ropes. The day ended well! Loot, horses, weapons and a couple of prisoners. Both were put on the saddle alone and horses and tied tightly with belts.

The prisoners were taken to the chieftain, who knew the Polish language too. Dragun put the ground and Katorzhnaya, wrapping his hat, holding his hands behind his back, not releasing the whip, slowly walked around the Poles.

— Well, what? Who is the castellan of the castle? Where else are the patrols hidden?

The prisoners kept quiet, but looked at the Russians proudly,

not lowering their eyes.

“I don’t want to, but I’ll hang you. Do not seek, since so.

The answer again was silence. Ivan Semenovitch nodded to Trofim and Andrei, and the Cossacks dragged the dragoons to the nearest tree. Caftans and boots and hats were stolen — why in vain is it good to disappear. But, the soldiers were stubborn, they did not want to speak, but the Cossacks were also not disposed to spare enemies — and soon two bodies with bare feet swayed on strong ropes.

— Well done Trofim, check if you can find anyone else, — the chieftain ordered in a deaf evil voice.

— Understood, Ivan Semenovitch!

Cossacks scattered in front, checking hollows and ravines, bushes and thickets, as usual, as if during the search for the Crimean Tatars. Six more dragoons were slaughtered, but no one else was found on the outskirts of the town.

By dawn they approached Gusyatin, Ivan Semenovitch looked into the pipe taken from the battle from the Poles. The castle was small, on a hill, and covered the bridge over the Zbruch River.

But then those who were not expected jumped back, they did not expect. In front of the ataman stood three Cossacks, in picturesque bright clothes. Who is in a caftan made of Turkish fabric, who is in a simple, cloth. But everyone has hats with hats, and everyone has Tatar sabers, with pistols on their belts. Their esaul stood imposingly in front of the ataman Katorzhny, put his hands behind his back, played with a whip.

— Zdrav budi, voivode. So Bogdan asked to say that he was talking with Captain Olshevsky, that he would have surrendered the castle. That's our business.

“So Rada swore to Tsar and Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich to be at the same time. And hetman Bogdan Khmelnitsky too. And I am the chieftain of the boyar regiment of governor Vasily Vasilyevich Buturlin, and I was ordered to capture Gusyatin according to the sovereign's word. And not the governor, but the chieftain Ivan Semenovitch Katorzhnoy, with me four hundred Don Cossacks.

— Heard about you, I — Yesaul Demyan Golovnya, — and the Cossack looked at each other with smiling comrades, — Ivan Semenovitch himself granted. Do not go to the city, bit the hetman, it will be bad.

— I would look for where everything is fine, — Moshkin smiled, — I would serve the pope myself in Rome. Esaul, raise hundreds! Let's go fast!

Ertaul went on a trot, the Cossacks dismounted in front of the fortress for two shots from squeaking, the horse breeders took their horses away. Ataman saw the Cossacks putting four of their small guns in front of the castle.

— Here, you see, Trofim Anikeevich, — said Katorzhnoy, — and the Cossacks will help us. Expose the squeakers, cover us, instantly turn around here. And I will climb the walls with the Cossacks.

Ataman began to habitually charge his two pistols, removing

them by the belt, and cheerfully looked at the initial people.

— Be careful, Ivan Semenovitch. At the walls, it's your business to command people, not to wave your saber.

— Nothing, — answered Katorzhnaya, — I'm not old yet...

But here, the Cossacks ran to the wall with shouts, throwing up hooks from the stairs, and pulling the rope shoots to the walls. From above, the Poles blurted out from the squeaks, but not densely, and out of place, so that they did not hit any of the Russians. The arrows of the Cossacks beat solid and accurately, the cries of the wounded were heard on the syenas. Moshkin turned around, looking at the rows of Cossacks with cannons, and was the first to climb up to the wall, holding his Turkish saber in his right hand. He heard the guns of the Cossacks blurted out, having time to think for the last time, who were they aiming at?

Sovereign Service

Young Sagittarius



“Well done, we have a son,” Semyon Petrovich said to his mother, who only wiped her eyes with a handkerchief. — Yes, you do not twist, not sent to the spot, but in the fortress. I must rejoice. Here, a real sagittarius! ‘and patted his son on the shoulder.

Earlier, ten years ago, the Moshkin family lived in Kaluga, and Ivan was born there. But then my father was sent to serve in the Tula fortress, and the family went here. So they served here now. The place was not bad, and the feed of the sovereign went more, so there was no need to complain.

Ivan Moshkin looked at his new outfit — his mother and father, Eupraxia Kuzminichna and Semyon Petrovich, did it for the second son, who was just turned to the tsar's service.

The first, Kuzma, was selected for a special position in the Stremyannaya regiment, and now served under Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich, in Moscow itself. And now the young man was torn away from the family, but his mother and father were very happy for the elder. Two more sons, Ustyan and Vasily, grew up, and his father taught everyone in the same way as his father, Pyotr Semenovich, taught him the mind. Everyone studied fire fighting, sabers, spear and berdysh to be controlled.

So all the clothes of the shooter — a caftan made of rough gray cloth, boots, a hat, a belt were with him Vanya especially stuck to an old saber. His father, Semyon Petrovich, from the age of ten taught him to own an old grandfather's blade. Now Ivan perfectly held his weapon in his hands. The father also trained to shoot, however, from a hunting squeak. But the young sagittarius did not give a mistake one hundred steps, and was turned into the sagittarius order of the city of Tula.

"Here, now Ivan Moshkin is on our order," approved the young warrior foreman, Afanasy Petrovich Dulyov, "a reference

sagittarius,” he said, looking at his clothes and saber, “but to you, and from the treasury,” he put a squeak in front of him, a sum for cartridges, a stand. Now read the oath, go to the gospel, and sign the book.

Pop Terenty read a prayer, he, and two other new archers, gave him a kiss of the cross. The head, Tikhon Ilyich, put a book in front of them and indicated where to sign. Everyone knew how to read and write, so everyone put their name and nickname.

— Well, now the foremen will see how you are fit for service.

All three took beeping on their shoulders, and went into the courtyard, to a place upholstered in thick boards. Here stood thick poles dug into the ground, ten in number.

— Here, Ivan, Peter and Pavel, charge the squeaks, but on my command — “Pali” shoot at the poles, they will seem like Poles for you.

He came up and marked three poles with chalk. The young men began to charge. First of all, Moshkin examined the castle. Although old, wick, but whole, not broken, good work. He checked the hole at the lock with a pickaxe, cleaned the barrel with a ramrod for order, scored gunpowder from a cartridge, a wad and a bullet, and put a squeak to his leg, and lit a wick on the lock. Peter was also ready, Paul was a little worried, and so that the hat fell from his head.

— Apply! — ordered the foreman, looking at the novikov.

Sagittarius put beeping for deliveries, took a long time to aim. Ivan’s two fingers lay on the launch pad, the smell of a smoldering

wick blew into his face.

— Fall!

Moshkin did not immediately hastily press the brace, but looked to ensure that the barrel was accurately aimed at the target, but his ears were already a little deaf from two shots, but now he fired. The poles were not visible in the powder smoke. Ivan put a squeak to his leg, trunk up. Desyatnik Dulyov approached the poles, and chalked the hits. Then he came back.

— Well, then? Ivan Moshkin hit the very middle of his target, Pyotr Avdusin missed, Pavel Noskov hit the edge of a thin log, knocking out thick chips with a bullet. But you are all great, you know the fiery teaching well. You own sabers, yesterday I checked all three, — Dulev expressed himself vividly, — so you will be in line to serve in the orders, or warehouses of the sovereign.

So the young sagittarius began to pull the strap of the servant, and with the eldest, foreman Dulyov, he arrived to guard the warehouses with grain.

The elder led the soldiers to inspect the royal property entrusted to them by service. Solid, tightly knocked down log houses, covered not with straw, but with shingles, well-groomed, with small windows covered with shutters. Doors, oak, made of thick boards, reinforced with strip iron. Everything was strong and fine.

— Look, Ivan, here, barrels of water, buckets of leather and crimson and stairs, if any room suddenly lights up.

— I understood, — the young man noticed, remembering what was said, — we will cope.

— Here is a guard where you can eat, and relax when the turn comes, — and the foreman pointed to a small hut, — the first are Ivan and Peter. Eat for now.

Sagittarius got bread from the collapse, half an onion, and smoked fish. All this is controversial on healthy and young teeth. So the dinner did not take much time, and the servicemen began to serve.

Moshkin rinsed his hands, wiped them with rags, and taking a squeak on his shoulder, took a place next to the gate of the warehouse. Light rain began, draining little by little. The drops did not interfere, only the sagittarius did not sack, covered the castle with burlap.

“What to do,” whispered the service.

It is boring, of course, to go around long barns at night, whose log cabins were illuminated by lanterns hanging in the corners. But they could not disperse the darkness, they just pointed to the buildings. The rain continued, flashes of lightning began to cut through the sky, Ivan crossed himself, just in case. The rain poured more and more, the rumble was heard more and more, lightning often hit not far. Sagittarius did not have time to count to two — he heard thunder, and after two counts lightning sparkled. It hit very close, it even went deaf. And then he noticed that he had a heavenly fire on fire — shingles broke out on the roof. Moshkin with all his feet, dispersing the spray from wet

grass, ran to the beat, and began to sober up, raising the guard. Then, he ran after the stairs and crowbar, moved it, and with difficulty holding on to the steps, began to break out the burning shingle and threw it on the ground, then poured a fire under the roof, pouring out one leather bucket of water after one. In a hurry, he did not notice that he burned his hands, tried that his fingers were squeezing as they should, and with pleasure lowered his palms into a barrel of cold water.

Here, rattling with shovels, bugs and crowbars, comrades led by Dulev came running.

— Everything paid off, Afanasy Petrovich! Moshkin shouted.

— Well, that's all, not all... Now we will bypass everything, but we will check the honor by honor. Antip, Prokhor! You two fix the roof!

"It's clear," the hosane Prokhor nodded, "it's clear. We'll fix everything.

— Well done, Vanya. But especially keep quiet about our affairs among the household, you yourself understand, — the foreman began from afar, — the authorities will not praise that the barn caught fire at all. But I will not forget your skill, do not think.

"I understand," Moshkin nodded.

— That's right, — Dulev smiled, — it's time for you to rest. Let's go.

After that day, the Streltsy service went even better. For his efforts, they gave him two altyn money, and cloth for a caftan.

The young man did not know that he had reported the foreman to his head, and kept his mouth shut.

The head, Tikhon Ilyich Trubchev, was pleased with the young warrior, and often put on guard to help the collars of the Tula Kremlin. The time was autumn, but not to stand in the rain, and it was pleasant for Ivan to serve among experienced soldiers.

Sagittarius on the serif line

They were replaced by another foreman, Luka Ryzhov, shortly after dawn. Afanasy Petrovich led Ryzhov to the barns, to surrender the guard. Everything was clean in the gatehouse, and the archers talked with their comrades, only a few looked at Moshkin's bandaged hand.

— What is it, are you Ivan? Korney Tsybin, an experienced sagittarius from Ryzhov's people, asked him.

— Burned in the stove. It happens, — the young man smiled.

— Nothing, it's young. It will heal.

Finally, happy Ivan walked along the path to his native settlement. On the outskirts I met a shepherd, a cheerful Porfiry, already whistling on his indispensable pipe, and his dog, Polkan, was spinning nearby. Cheerful then cheerful, but with a whip controlled — directly passion, the gadfly knocked down a cow from the back, without spoiling the skin.

Father, Semen Petrovich, diligently pretended to be busy with a very important matter — picking the ground with a wooden

shovel. I noticed and mat- she just sat on a bench, but went through the wool, cleaning out thorns and grass. There were already many soft and combed fibers in the basket. Vanya added a step, proudly walking with a squeak on his shoulder, two brothers, Ustyan and Vasily, jumped out to meet him, quickly grabbing the elder under his elbows, and dragged him into the house.

— What is it? just cried her mother, Eupraxia Kuzminichna.

— Everything is fine, mother, — Semyon Petrovich smiled, and put a shovel at the gate, — let's go, we'll eat ourselves, but we'll feed Vanka, — come Ivan, put your reservation, my hands and sit at the table.

The mistress of the house overtook the family, and when the men decorously sat down at the table on two benches, facing each other. On the table was a tray of rye pies, warm and smelling incredible. The dishes were also rich, Bukhara, in green enamel, with a wonderful pattern. Then my father bought at the auction, spared no money for a curiosity. As if by itself, a large zhban with cold kvass and wooden buckets for drinking appeared. The servicemen lived well, the windows were taken away with wooden grilles with small pieces of multi-colored glass, others let light through pieces of mica in wooden bindings.

Mugs, too, for this occasion, Eupraxia took out rich, covered with blue water, also Khiva work. And, the mother sat her son down, put in a treat, watched everything — was he tired?

“All is well, mother,” said the matured son.

— Sit down mother, you sing yourself... Everything is fine, that's how good our Ivan is. Here, look at your older brother, Ustyanyan and Vasily, how to serve. And there it's time for Vanya to get married.

Ivan blushed, buried himself in a plate, fiercely began to cake with onions and eggs.

— Eat, Vanechka, — said the mother, laying a treat to her son.

— Nothing, next year we will set up a house for him, he gave his head a place in the wasteland, let's build, — the satisfied father expected everything, — yes, there are brides, from good families — Avdotya is the daughter of Korney Fedorovich or Praskovya, the daughter of Erofei Vasilyevich. On Sunday, in church, at the service and look at them..

— Yes, too early, father, — Vanyushka doubted, — maybe later? Just serving started and getting married? I haven't thought about getting married yet.

“But I thought about it. It's time already.

Ivan fell silent, not wanting to argue with his father in vain, and he did not want to go against his will, he had to talk to his acquaintance, Maryushka. Everything was unclear there. She was a merchant's daughter, not that Gavril Alekseevich would be very rich, but nevertheless, the yard will be sick of them, Moshkinsky will be. And who is he so far? Only for the service is turned, and the salary is small, three rubles fifty kopecks a year, and the truth is also bread — eight quarters (a quarter to six pounds) of rye, and even barley, and still oats.

Master lock cases

After lunch, having rested, as it should, Ivan took a screwdriver and an oiler, set about his squeak. He turned away and greased the lock, put the parts in place, making sure that the trigger with the wick went gently and smoothly, then rubbed the trunk, forend and butt lovingly with a rags. It was possible to put in place.

— Ivan? Finished? Let's go and dig up the garden, "said the father.

The young man nodded. He changed clothes, dressed simpler clothes, took a hoe and a spade. You can't pick the ground with a shovel — it's wooden, and you need a hoe first. As usual, the two of them first broke solid clods with hoes, and then turned over the rebellious soil with shovels. The hand almost did not hurt, and worked sporingly, but not in a hurry. An hour later, the job was done, and the ridge under the cabbage was ready. Both, father and son, washed the instrument in a barrel of water, and then, Simen Petrovich himself carefully laid everything in the barn. Here stood his pride — a strong and durable workbench made of thick boards, and a perfectly worked vice made of good iron. In addition to service, my father earned good money in the locksmith part — he repaired locks, or even made complex constipation himself, got along with the keys instead of the lost ones.

Fixed and firearms

Ivan was handy, in his father. and the two of them got down to business, and the two boys looked closely, they were trusted while things were easier, so that they themselves would not hurt themselves, and would not break anything due to his oversight.

— Here Vanya, well done, support the spring, I'll rivet now, and everything will be ready...

— Now, — and the young man intercepted small pliers, and the father pulled the spring into a thin plate.

Then, heating the part to red, riveted, and the lock was ready. It was a big, tricky lock at the door, with a few springs, just the pride of a skilled craftsman. First you had to click on two places in the cunning pattern, and only then the key could open the latch of the constipation. The merchant Fyodor Konyukhin promised as much as ten rubles for the work, but the work was worth it. They spent almost a month working on this beautiful thing. Outside it was an iron patterned door, very beautiful, made for a stone basement with expensive goods.

"They worked well, father," Ivan said proudly, admiring the delicate work.

— Not bad. Now let's take our brainchild to the merchant Fyodor Romanovich. I'll go and cook the cart.

Ustyan and Vasily, the youngest sons, kept their horse, Ogonyok, under the bridle, and Semyon Petrovich and Ivan

busily and carefully laid the iron door on the straw in the cart. Corrected everything better, got bogged down. A hammer with two crowbars was also put in the wagon to hang an expensive contraption on the hinges. Vaska ran to open the gates, and managed to hold the dog, grabbing its ear.

— Hey, Druzhok, where are you going? — he reprimanded the hefty dog, — now everyone will return, — and dragged a four-legged friend who no longer rested to his booth.

The dog was good, in vain Druzhok did not bark, but he guarded well, however, he did not like to be alone, he howled terribly when the family went to listen to the service at church.

The youngest son led the horse under the bridle, the wagon slowly rolled along the road, sometimes the cart was shaken on bumps, so Semyon held on to the edge, afraid that the fruit of hard work would fall on the road. At the merchant's gate stood a worker playing a horn. Naigrysh was not new, but pleasant, so Ivan even listened. But my father interrupted the efforts of the new David, in this pastoral, and shouted:

— Open it! We brought the lock and door to Fyodor Romanovich Kanyushkin. Report to the house.

— He waited, looked at all his eyes, — and began to open the gate, creaking in poorly lubricated loops.

The gates were coordinated conscientiously, Vanya looked at the beautiful and palm thread — lions and unicorns on oak boards. And everything was done smoothly and beautifully, strictly on the same line. The pillars were decorated with a grass

pattern, and painted with red and blue paint. Ustyan started the wagon, the merchant went down the stairs, and immediately almost ran up to the luxurious thing. Semyon and Ivan set the door to the basement.

— Zelo is wonderfully executed, craftsman, — and handed over a suede wallet, — now I will open the doors to the underground. Anfim, shine!

The yard hastily brought an oil lantern, and when, angry, the merchant Kanyushkin flooded his feet, he brought two more. Semyon Petrovich nodded his head. So there is enough light.

— Ivan, come on belts. Look who are good and strong.

The son stretched out thick rawhide belts, and hooting for order, the masters of Moshkina began to descend a steep stone staircase. The owner of the house shone ahead, the hardworking Anfim with two lamps closed the procession. Father and son put the door against the wall, next to the opening, Vanya ran for the tool. The iron cloth was placed on a stone, and deftly dressed in loops. The door fit tightly to the forged jamb, Semyon was pleased.

— Let everyone leave, Fedor Romanovich, I have to show how the castle opens. Ivan, leave us.

“Anfim, go away,” the merchant ordered.

Both went upstairs, the servant looked back, but Ivan helped him up, pulling his hand.

— Let's go, not a trace to look, — said the young craftsman sternly.

— What is there, what kind of witchcraft?

— Cunning skill, — Ivan sentenced, — not knowing, the door cannot be opened.

“Do you know?” — the yard archer urged, — I suppose your father didn’t tell you either?

Moshkin Jr. did not say a word, only famously moved his hat to his right ear. What is there to say? Dad will now show the merchants what and how, and they will close the door with beams so that no one can remove it from the hinges. And so it happened, the work was done, and the merchant brought the icon to the persuaded, Semyon kissed her, crossed himself, and said:

— I won’t tell anyone, Fyodor Romanovich, here you have a holy cross!

— The Lord is with you, Semyon Petrovich, — and the merchant bowed back, — Eat, on the path?

It was impossible to refuse, and three workers sat down at a rich merchant’s table. Raznosol brought a daughter, Elena Fedorovna. Ivan saw her in the church more than once with his father. The merchant family stood not far from the altar in an honorable place, because the temple was erected by the father of the merchant Kanyushkin, Roman Prokhorovich, without sparing the treasury on a stone building. And the good master put, Kuzma Skinny, a student of Peter the Small, Fryazin.



Beautiful was a girl, a merchant's daughter, yes stately. Her father did not spare silver for outfits — from Persian silk sundress, ashtray also from silk, everything is dark blue bright, a shirt of a Dutch canvas, a brocade headband, goat skin shoes.

But Ivan was surprised that her prigei, densely whitened face with blush on her cheeks, blackened eyebrows, so often turned to him. And the beauty even quietly told him:

— I baked pies myself...

There has long been a rich merchant for widows. Beloved wife Ulyana Yurievna died of consumption, leaving her daughter in the care of her husband. Fedor Romanovich spoke quietly with Semyon, having time to eat, then they hit his hands, apparently, having agreed.

Ivan himself looked at the prigozhny girl, but did not stare, did not break his eyes. He also looked around the mountain, richly furnished, with an Italian locker, carved chests, and a cunning table with many boxes, apparently, of Venetian work.

The pies were indeed rich, made of wheat sown flour. Such they rarely ate at home, although rye bread was enough. But now, they ate, and the guests bowed decorously, thanks to the owners for the treat.

— Come on, it's time and honor to know.

— Thank you for your work, Semyon Petrovich, and see, your son will also be a good craftsman.

Elena Fedorovna whispered something to the old cradle, she

hastily nodded her head, and the old wrinkled face lit up with a smile. Ivan did not pay attention, or pretended not to.

The moshkins rode home on a cart, and Ivan kept a small basket, which Elena managed to put into his hands at the gate,

— A prigozhaya girl, — Semyon Petrovich uttered thoughtfully, — one heiress, one joy at Fyodor Romanovich. The rest of the children and his wife were taken from him by a reckless woman. So the merchant Kanyukhin was unlucky. Neither conspiracies helped, nor the prayers of Priest Arkady, nor grass. The Lord left only one Elena to comfort the merchant, to see, for zeal in the faith of his father, with the construction of the church. And so, you see, we are returning with a lot of money, we earned ten rubles, — the master rejoiced, — here you, Ustyan and Vasily are ten kopecks, — and counted two dozen silver scales — money.

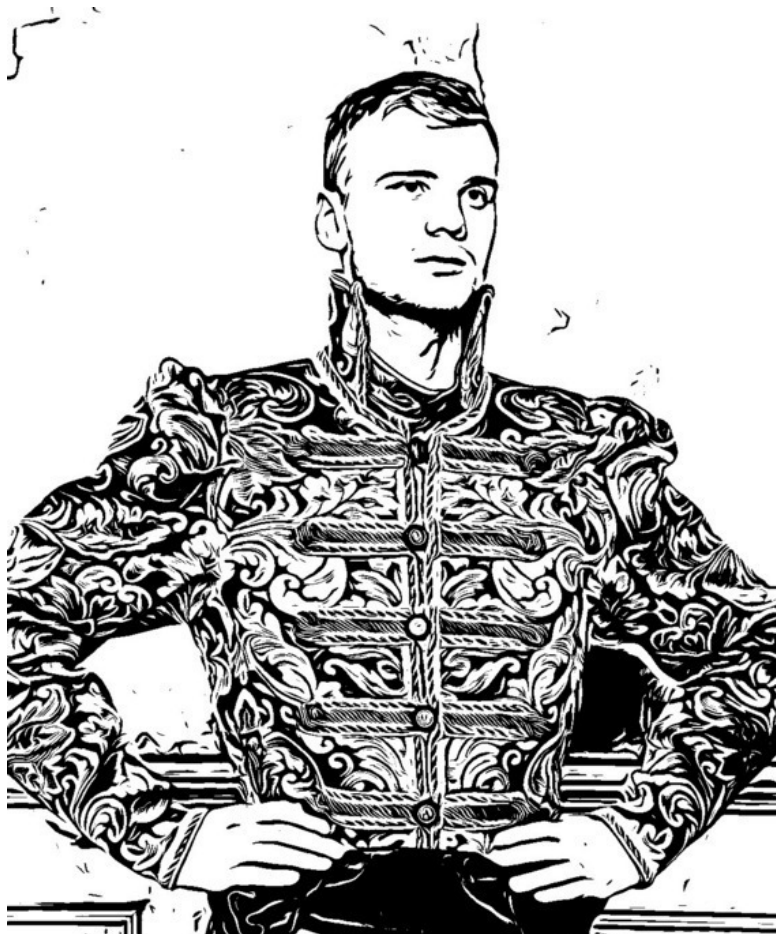
— Thank you, father, — only the boy could answer.

— So you will understand why mastery to master. And the most good, and silver in Moshna rings.

— Yes, we are in the service of the sovereign? Ivan said.

— Right. Only we are not in great ranks, and our salary is also not great, — said Semyon Petrovich, — and now for five rubles we will put you a new hut, you see, and cover the roof with shingles. Near our estate. And it will be no worse than others that you could marry, and lived no worse than others, with your home! — lead away Semyon Petrovich.

**Ivan and not Tsarevich, and
Elena Fedorovna Beautiful**



Towards evening, when all the household had time to eat, Ustyan heard a quiet knock on the gate, as if they were knocking on it with a small stick. Quietly so, and then two more times. The boy ran up, listened again, but asked how his mother and father taught:

— Who granted? he said deliberately.

— So grandma Lukerya it. Will you open it to me, or what? I'm not Baba Yaga, I won't eat you, good fellow. And if you open it, here's a lollipop for you.

Ustyan, of course, was impressed by the cockerel on a stick, and the boy rightly reasoned that an evil person would not scatter lollipops. And he quickly convinced himself that nothing bad would happen, especially since the dog was guarding the house in the booth. And he opened the wooden shutter.

— Here, take it, — and a dry hand stretched out the hotel, — and call Ivan, here, and money to you, — and for sure, the small coin seemed to lie in the palm of your hand.

Ustyan nodded, and the arrow rushed after his brother, and soon dragged his hand to the wicket.

“There he is,” the boy whispered to his grandmother.

Ivan just did not understand why Lukerya came to them? But to say that to an old woman is to offend. He slowly went closer, and bent down:

“What's wrong, grandma?” How to help? Or our work turned out to be bad, Fedor Romanovich is grinning?

— It is satisfied, the key on a belt hung, walks, rejoices. Everything goes down to the basement, looks at the iron door. That's not why I'm here... Here, a letter to you. Read it with me.

Ivan unfolded the message, written in lead pencil. Only a few lines:

Hello, Ivan!

Whether it's bad or not, what I wrote to you is my business. Should have. Even in the church I noticed you a year ago, and now I have decided. Cute or not, unsubscribe without hiding. Elena

Lukerya rested with both hands on the staff, and sighed and waited.

“Did you read it?” Write an answer. And then I can't run back and forth endlessly, the old one hurts, and I held out a pencil.

— At least you need to think...

— Do not answer with your mind, but with your heart. Write, there is no time, — the grandmother was robbed.

Hello Light Elena for many years!

And you are sweet to me and to my heart. Yes, I am much poorer, I would not want to become objectionable to your father. Ivan

The young man rolled up the message and gave it to his grandmother. He wrote, and did not know where to put his hands. And so bad, and so it turned out even worse.

“My heart will be at church service tomorrow Sunday. You must come, loach. And you will offend my berry, like God holy,

I leave you with my stick, I pull out my arms and legs.

Ivan hastily nodded, straightening the caftan, and then his hands seemed to open the shirt gates themselves. Who can get hunting with a stick and remain without arms and legs?

— Goodbye, grandmother, — and the young man was not too lazy to bow to a low dear guest.

— Nothing, everything is sweet, — and Lukerya at parting finely crossed the young archer, — if anything, which of the brothers you will send.

Ivan closed the gate, and quietly, in small steps, went home. At the door, on the bench, the Ustyan brothers were sitting with Vasily, enthusiastically engaged in a sweet hotel. The golden cockerel was just melting before our eyes.

“We don’t have a word, Van,” Ustyan promised as an adult. Vasya diligently frowned at his bright eyebrows, and nodded, imitating his father.

The young man nodded, corrected the whirlwinds and slowly, decorously, climbed up the seedling, opened the door and sighed again. In the room, the mother put things in order, knocked on wooden plates and spoons.

— What is not so cheerful? “she said, approaching her son,” or tired?”

“It’s all right, Mother. I’ll go.

“And that’s right. Write it off. And then on Monday again to the service.

Ivan entered his part of the house, and only shook his head.

The mother herself is accustomed to military affairs, she knows when it is her son's turn to appear in the Order. He sat down, began to undress, kept thinking about today, about Elena. And how did it work out? Why did you suddenly like the streletsky son of a merchant daughter? Okay, tomorrow it will be seen whether she laughed at him, or really wants to see him.

Sunday day, everyone got up early, especially Eupraxia Kuzminichna, cooked porridge and jelly for a considerable family. Soon everyone gathered. On the table are bread, porridge, jelly on dried raspberries, and boiled chicken eggs. Semyon Petrovich proudly looked at the meal — they live well, better than many. He read the prayer, and everyone sat down at the table, cheerfully pounded with spoons.

Sunday service is like a holiday and everyone dressed for the best. tried to surprise the neighbors. Eupraxia took out renovations from chests and barks, her husband, children and herself. Laying out her clothes, she whispered under her breath: — why? We live better than others, there is nothing to anger God. And only one little child died, — and she crossed herself, — otherwise the won, the merchant Kanyushkin, would burst from silver, and God read, took the whole family, only left her daughter in consolation, — and sighed sadly.

Finally, I laid out outfits for everyone. Everyone found caftans made of good cloth, Semyon Petrovich even cornflower blue, Van burgundy, Vasya da Ustyan are also good, but gray. All

good is still from Polish booty, as Semyon walked at the hand of Kuzma Minin, and he was tarovat to military people. And she herself also has something to wear — and good shoes, and a sundress and a slap in the face of good cloth, raspberry color. Neighbors, Marya da Katya, looked at these updates. Where else do you go besides the temple? And after the service, you can talk with other hostesses, at least you will find out what is being done in the world.

We left the house decorously, leaving our Friend to guard the master's yard. Semyon Petrovich and Eupraxia Kuzminichnaya marched ahead, and their three sons followed them, Ivan looked after the younger ones so that all the dust would not be found on the road. And you had to go under your feet to look, the cows were kept in every house, and the pastures were outside the city. Nearby, other families walked in front and behind, each dressed in the best dress, so as not to hit the face in front of others.

So they approached the church fence. For the sake of this day, the church headman, Timofey Feoktistovich, dressed simply and deliberately strictly. His assistant in the church held honorable places for the merchant Kanyushkin and his daughter, the streletsy's head. clerks with families.

Ordinary people became close to their household and acquaintances. The Moshkins also got up, but the place was not bad, everything was visible. Men, of course, were without hats, women in strict headscarves. But here, the Streletsky head Tulupov walked, with his wife and two daughters, clerks with

his household, and Fyodor Romanovich with his daughter Elena Fedorovna and certainly bent Lukerya stood behind them.

Ivan looked only at Elena. She was dressed richly, but in clothes of dark colors, on her head was a beautiful scarf, perhaps made of velvet. Now, without blush and whitening, she seemed even more beautiful than the day before. A very cute face, even with small freckles on the nose and cheeks, a big difference with an almost white statue. The young man noticed that the merchant's daughter recognized him, and barely nodded noticeably. Lukerya, when she was able to see the Moshkins, bowed for everyone.

Father himself in solemn vestments, began the service. His voice was strong and deep, so the parishioners listened without stopping, were baptized at the due time. Ivan looked at the iconostasis, at the faces of the saints. I didn't feel very comfortable, because I came not only for prayer, but also to see my gag. Yes, honestly and say — where can you see? Only here. You won't climb through the fence, only Elena Fedorovna will create trouble, but here it is quite decent. It seems that there was no condemnation even in the strict, but gracious face of the Virgin.

The service ended, and Semyon Petrovich went for the candles, distributing one to each of his family. Eupraxia Kuzminichna put a candle in front of the image of St. George, and Ivan stood in front of one of the icons of the Virgin. He lit a candle from the lamp and prayed. I did not notice how Elena

was nearby, I also lit a candle, and quickly baptized.

— I read your letter, Vanya, — the girl said in a whisper, without turning her head, — thank you for answering, but it's a sin to say that I am richer and you are poorer. Before God, everyone is equal.

“I'll send matchmakers, so your father will let them down from the porch,” the young man answered in a whisper.

— As God willing... I will persuade you too much... If only I didn't give up on me myself. Not scared.

— I will not give up, I swear to the icon! Ivan answered quietly and crossed himself.

Elena quickly turned her head in his direction, but immediately turned away, lowered her head down, and went to her father. Fedor Romanovich noticed Semyon, and without hiding his location, he approached the craftsman himself.

— Be healthy, Semyon Petrovich, — named and by the patronymic of a friend, — and met in church, — my daughter, Elena Fedorovna, you saw.

— Exactly. And you health for many years! This is my wife. Eupraxia Kuzminichna, sons — Ivan, Ustyan and Vasily. Now you know everyone.

— Your eldest is good, you won't say anything! And fit, and strong and very smart! And he did a good dress! Soon, I suppose, are you going to marry?

— Yes, it would be necessary, how without that... — Semyon spoke evasively.

— And I'm going to do everything, but Elena will fight everything. He is not good, but the other is not a fit. And it's time to give up the marriage — in the spring there will be sixteen years.

Eupraxia Kuzminichna did not open her mouth, but she nodded her head in agreement, agreeing with all the words of the merchant. The girl's face became a color almost like her velvet burgundy scarf, she lowered her head, and just grabbed her father's hand. Ivan tried to hold on, after all, the Sagittarius is now in the royal service.

“Let's wait a while. It's too early, I'll go to the centurions! — said Ivan.

The merchant looked at the young man approvingly, Elena Fedorovna already pursed her lips, and her eyes rounded. Well, Lukerya could not stand it, answered:

— How! And why not immediately to the governors?

— Yes, at least to go to the chieftains, — Ivan noted, — to go out with the Cossacks in the field...

— So your wife is not a burden, you stupid head, — the grandmother spoke again, — but a joy!

The girl laughed, and covered her lips with her sleeve, but now the young man turned densely red.

“So, Vanya, Lukerya will be smarter than you and me,” Semyon Petrovich nodded his head.

— Okay. Let's go home, — having laughed, concluded Fyodor Romanovich, — it's time, and dinner will come soon.

“And we must go. Let’s go us.

The elder Moshkin bowed to a good acquaintance, and the family headed home.

Ustyan, playing with a wand, walked from his yard to the street. The case is already autumn, and there was on it over the shirt a favorite cloth simple kaftan. He bent down, wanted to pick up a funny slingshot from the ground, but then a felt hat fell from his white head. The boy hastily caught the defensive, and with his fingers checked the felt flap, and exhaled with relief. Everything was in place. And then the slingshot came in handy. So grasping and good for everything! It was very similar to the squeak that my father, that Vanina, straight arrow... And Ustyan presented himself in a caftan, with a saber, or even an iron hat and cuirass! Well, not immediately, how to turn out, so, in five to eight years...

It was necessary to hurry, and the boy ran to the court of the merchant Kanyushkin. On the other side of the fence, the dog barked for the sake of order, and almost a gate opened saz.

— Well, what did you bring? ‘the grumpy voice of Grandma Lukerya rang out.

“And the carrot? ‘the guest asked busily.

— Come on, there is nothing to show here, still young.

Ustyan just sighed, knew that the cradle would not deceive. He took out a letter from his hat and gave it to Lukerye.

— Do not leave, run here, next to the fence. I’ll come now.

The boy sniffed for solidity, and his attention was drawn to the nettle thickets in the ditch, here the stick was suitable. Now Ustyan was a horseman of the sovereign's court and cut himself with enemies, he did not feel sorry for himself, all the nettles were chipped, but he pulled the burning grass to the root!

Indeed, the grandmother left the house and carried the treat in a small basket.

— And Vasyatka half. And you bring a basket in a week, and now, take a note. And don't get caught in Emele's eyes anymore. Did you understand?

“Yes, I understand,” said the honest lad.

— Hide the letter in the hat.

— All right...

— Go ahead.

Ustyan ran home with a basket and a wonderful slingshot, already anticipating how he and his brother would eat the donated gingerbread to the last crumb.

The boy rushed home, Vaska closed the gate behind him. The brothers hesitated, and the basket was given, but of course, not to the very youngest, and Ustyan was already decorous. as the priest likes to walk, he began to climb into Ivan's room. The brother apparently did not sleep, but simply sat on the bench, waiting for news.

— Well, did you bring it? asked the young man impatiently, rising quickly.

“Did you scold me with a saber?”

— Here, take it, — and held out the promised to the boy.

Ustyan incredulously picked up a solid and beautiful thing, made even with scabbard, he simply could not tear himself away from the gift.

— This is Vasily, — and in front of him lay another saber, only not in blue, but in green sheath, — otherwise you will fight again.

“My brother and I never fight. Why? — Ustyan said very confidently, but not quite honestly — and this is for you — and put the letter in front of Ivan.

The boy hastily left the room, not wanting to interfere with the elder to disassemble the palm letters written by Elena.

Ivan put the letter in front of him, and began to read:

Hello Ivanushka for many years!

A week later, the priest leaves for three days. In the evening, as Anfim and Emelyan sleep, I will wait for you. In my window, two candles will burn.

Elena

Ivan even suffocated with joy. He will agree with the foreman, tomorrow and the day after tomorrow he will stand guard, and he will be free on the day of school. It will be necessary to make a hotel, otherwise what will surprise such a girl? Today I will work in a forge, the young man decided.

Having drawn water into the house, six buckets, which would be enough for everything, Vanya went to the workshop, where

the prepared bast blanks lay. He had already begun to carve a bear figure with a bear cub.

— Ah, Ivan, hello!

— Hello, Father. Here, you need to work. A little left.

— I see your art, son, — he sighed, — it is clear for whom you are trying. Maybe, nevertheless, you will send matchmakers to Avdotya? And beautiful, and our family is no poorer than her. How will Fyodor Romanovich, Elena's father, look at your courtship?

— Come on, father... As it will be, so it will be good... Maybe everything is sweet.

“Well, God knows,” Semyon Petrovich did not argue, “but you did well.” Now you will cover the tree with oil, and then paint it in a day.

“I'll go to the guard tomorrow.

“I'll paint it. Don't worry.

— Thank you, Father — and the young man began to iron the tree with emery applied to the rag.

So by evening, an elegant figure, covered with oil, stood ready for painting in the workshop.

On this day, Ivan, together with old acquaintances Pyotr Avdusin and Pavel Noskov, entered the guard with a collar. Two archers were from the other ten, Zinoviy Ilyin and Demyan Goglev, already sedentary men, about forty years old, with wide broad beards. The eldest was, as always, the foreman Dulev

Afanasy Petrovich, their youngest initial person.

The day was turbulent. In the morning, the bishop of the city himself was invited to the city governor, the wheels of the beautiful carriage of the bishop rumbled. It was not a monk sitting on the goats, but it is clear, just a servant in a gray felt caftan and the same hat. The priest was accompanied by six boyar children, in embroidered queens and necked hats, with sabers and pistols at the saddle, but the riders and horses were good, but only one had argamak, apparently, the eldest over all. The collars were considered with someone else's honor, and the hats were removed in front of the priest who had passed.

— Now, Ivan, you will listen to the stories of the boyar children, as they went to Smolensk. They broadcast this every time, — said Zinovy Ilyin quietly, — well, Demyan and I were there too. But, pretend that you believe everything, do not enter into a quarrel.

— You say right, — Goglev nodded, — nothing, next time we will recapture the city from the Poles.

— Exactly, we'll beat it off, — Ilyin agreed, — but Filimon Gukov tells the son of Ereemeev, fun. Listen.

— Okay, well done, — Afanasy Petrovich himself spoke, — the head of the order himself goes, Tikhon Ilyich Trubchev.

Everyone immediately settled down, took on a young look, so that the approaching head was pleased with his archers, and did not hide his joy. He simply radiated a light-brocade hat glistened, the caftan simply shone, with a pattern on his back — Heat with

a bird embroidered with pearls and mother of pearl.

“Well done, well done to her God,” he said to the five collars, “especially to you,” and his head turned his face to Dulyov, “the bishop was very pleased. Yes, he may be, and he himself will come out to you in front of the road. The governor, too, as he heard the words of the bishop, immediately came off the plate with jellied meat. But the jellied meat that his yard girl Melania does, he, read the best in the entire Russian state! — and raised his index finger up, — okay, you have two altyns for vodka, — and handed Dulyov six money.

Having completed such a good deed, the initial man Trubchev moved back to the stone chambers of the governor. Well, the excited foreman, having removed his hat, crossed himself three times to the cathedral in the citadel.

“Father Barsanuphius will love your goodness. Especially when his servant will bypass parishioners with a mug, calling for generosity,” said Ilyin, a joking sagittarius.

— And you, if you had the opportunity, would give alms not only for your family, but also for Goglev’s household.

Then everyone laughed, and Ilyin only straightened his mustache, sometimes looked at his old friend, Demyan.

— What are you laughing at, archers? — asked the boyar son Filimon Gukov, the son of Ereemeev, — really over me?

“How can you, Filimon Ereemeevich,” Dulyov began to say, “you are a famous warrior, and we went on campaigns with you.”

— Exactly, near Smolensk! — the nobleman agreed, — the

campaign was glorious!

Gukov looked around the young soldiers who had not heard of the Smolensk fortress, sat down, moved his hat to the back of his head and led a story:

— The year 7140 has come. Mikhail Borisovich Shein led a large army. We approached with a large army under the glorious Smolensk — the city. Regiments came from all over the earth — from Novgorod, from the Volga. Moscow nobles were also on the campaign. Large cannons, siege, took with them more than twenty. Around all the cities fought, and Novgorod — Seversky, and Serpeysk and Belaya fortress. They began to camp, set up a palisade and began to dig aprosh. We were approaching the walls, and Polish military people fired at us from muskets and cannons. Which of ours died. But will you scare us with bullets and cores? But, our siege guns Serpent and Raven also spoke, like the walls and towers from the cores of huge ones shook. They almost took the city, but the king of Poland came to the rescue and for a long time we fought in the camp, I even got a saber in battle. So in the winter of 7141 we left with honor from under the walls of Smolensky. But come back, the king — the priest — will gather strength, and again we will go to war. Okay, let's go and eat in the refectory. Only me are waiting.

“God help,” Afanasy Petrovich said, calming down.

So the day was busy and hectic. The bishop left only in the evening, when the sun began to hide behind the walls of the fortress, making the brick walls of the Tula stronghold

even redder. Their Kremlin was good, they say, no worse than Moscow. And there were a lot of battles here.

“Finally, the day ends. Now we will close the gate, — whispered the foreman.

The archers removed the locks, and five of them began to push the gates of the gates, heavy, shackled with iron. Here, the gate slammed shut and the grate was lowered. Two guards remained at the entrance, and two went to rest in the room nearby. In the morning they were replaced. Ivan waited impatiently for the evening.

Cherished date

In the church of St. Nicholas, they called for Vespers, and the young man began to dress for a night walk. Clothes picked up not noticeable, but good, soft boots. He put a gift for Elena Fedorovna in a shoulder bag. He sat down at the table, looked thoughtfully at the candle, a small light slightly illuminated the room. I had to go, and the young man carefully stepping on the floorboards did not wake anyone in the house. The dog, dozing at the booth, only raised its head and wagged its tail, recognizing the owner. Ivan could not resist, stroked the head of a faithful friend, and slipped out into the night street.

It's dark, it's just very dark and the blackness seemed to come up from both sides. The night traveler saw only coal fences that seemed now, as if hiding in the black night silence. Ivan finally

saw with difficulty the turn of the street to the estate of the merchant Kanyushkin. He went closer, and accurately, saw the tower with a window lit by candles. The window was definitely girlish, with multi-colored glasses. It was impossible to pull, and Ivan, having finally decided, jumped, clung with his palms to the edge of the fence boards, pulled himself up and threw his body over the fence. I landed almost on my arms and legs at the same time, it's good that I didn't get into the nettles growing nearby.

— You jump well, for sure, because you are in the royal service, — he heard such a welcome voice.

In the dark, Elena Fedorovna stood over him, shining with a white face, and rolling into a forest and a large, and you can see a warm, scarf. She held an oil lamp in her left hand.

“Let's go,” she said, grasping the guest by the hand, “Emelya and Anfim are sleeping, do not wake up.

— And, Ivan Semenovich was late, — suddenly heard the young man a familiar voice, — yes I am, Lukerya. Go, but look at me, don't indulge, otherwise I'll leave you like that with a stick, you can't sit down before the wedding!

Elena laughed, looked hastily at the young man, but he only smiled back.

“And to you, grandma, thank you for everything.

— Okay, go fast, doves. I'll watch here on the bench, “Lukerya immediately cooled down.

The girl shone on the stairs, and they quickly climbed the steps, and the hostess opened the door to the girls' chambers.

— Come on in.

The same guiding two candles by the window that he saw when he walked down the street shone in the upper room. In the red corner, three lamps in red lampshade glass burned in front of the icons. The girl looked very cozy in the room — on the floor there was a Khiva carpet, three Venetian chairs, an armchair, a bookcase, a pair of carved rich chests, a bed covered with a rich bedspread, with several pillows at the head.

“That’s how I live. Sit down Ivan. Here is honey and beer.

“This is for you,” the guest muttered a little embarrassed and put a wooden figure on the table.

Two funny bear cubs danced on the table, hugging each other with shaggy paws. The girl sat down next to the tables, turned like that, it was clear that she liked the figure.

— What can I say, very beautiful. I’ll put it here. Thank you for the gift — and she put the hotel on her desk — here, you sing, she baked herself.

Elena moved the dish with pies, and removed the linen napkin from the treat. Poured into glasses and berry glove. I put plates for the guest and myself.

— Try, these with fish, next to — with hares, and this is with cabbage onions and eggs.

The dishes smelled amazing, and the guest could not refuse. He should have tried. Having eaten each of the pies, which of them he could not decide, and was forced to repeat. The hostess was glad that he did not refuse, although she herself ate only one,

with fish.

— Which one did you like best?

“One is better than the other. You cannot select.

She thoughtfully drank a berry drink, then got up, opened the supplier and took out a shirt from a thin canvas.

“It’s a present, you. As a keepsake — and she put it on the bench — my father does not want to listen about our wedding yet, — she added in a different tone, — I don’t know what to come up with.

“I will try to negotiate with Father Barsanuphius,” Ivan tried to find a solution, “we will be secretly married. There, you see, your father will forgive us.

— Hard to say... But the priest will go for the goods now only in winter, as the road opens. And so, we can see each other in the church on Sundays. Only you know: I will not accept matchmakers from anyone but you.

“And I won’t marry anyone but you.

Elena came close, very close, so Ivan heard the rustling of the silk of her outfit. It seemed to him so loud, so it sounded in his head, and his heart pounded very hard, and it seemed to the young man that the girl could hear it. Her dazzling chalk white face approached and the beauty’s carmine lips touched his lips, and her hands lay on her shoulders. Ivan dreamed that time seemed to stop, the young man did not breathe, as if he had fallen into the abyss. Finally, Elena broke away from him, the eyes of the beauties constantly looked at their chosen one.

“Let’s go,” she said with difficulty, “it’s time. I’ll walk you out.

The girl took his hand, there was an oil lantern in the other, the young man put her gift in his bosom, and they carefully went down the stairs. Elena was anxious, listening to every rustle in the house. But now, she pulled back the bolt, opened the door from the hem, kissed Ivan’s neck, and whispered:

— Go. It’s time for you to sleep...

He nodded, hardly turned away from his beloved, ran to the fence, and quickly climbed it, being on the street. The young man here checked if he had forgotten anything, and went home, hiding in the night darkness. It was hard to return, he turned around more than once, wanted to once again see the window of her room. Before him everything stood the white face of the beauty with dazzling blue eyes.

From autumn to spring

Ivan’s service in the fortress continued, as did secret correspondence between lovers. Winter was coming, and the day became very fleeting, after four in the afternoon the young sagittarius and his father returned home after the service, and they made something by the light of the rays. Of course, not something complicated, but so, rude things to take your hands. It was also twilight at home. Hearing a prayer for Vespers, they also performed a prayer, sat down to dinner, to eat what the hostess had prepared for dinner. After that they went to bed.

It was more fun in those days when the father and the eldest son stayed at home. Work was in full swing, and new sensible things were getting out of the hands of the Moshkins. For three weeks they made the Psalter's salary for the church from bronze from bronze, then Gavril, a goldsmith, arrived, took their work, which put gold and stones. And so, most often they made locks for the merchant Kanyushkin.

One day in December, Semyon and Ivan were engaged, rather tormented with the repair of a cunning pistol given to them by a streletsky head.

— So Ivan, heat the bugle, but keep the axis careful... I need to go in... So, now hammer quietly. Bite with ticks and files now...

The son clearly did the job according to his father, it turned out just fine. The gun cooled down, Semyon cocked the spring with a key, pulled the trigger: a whole sheaf of sparks hit the lock.

— Well, that's it, it's done. Then we will shoot once for order, and take the pistol to the Kremlin, Tikhon Ilyich.

Ustyan strolled by, singing, and sometimes winked at his older brother.

— What, eyes hurt? Tell your mother, let her wash, — the father was worried, — and you and I, Ivan, need to put iron tires on the wheels of our cart, they jumped off. The wheel will quickly get around, there will be absolutely trouble.

The eldest son nodded, and went to the barn. Ustyan also followed him, and quickly put the letter in his hand. Then, as if

nothing had happened, the boy joined Vasily, who was carrying firewood into the house. The work seemed fun to the children, the snow was sad under the felt boots, sometimes one or the other threw snowballs at each other. So, not very much, if only the snow fell in the bosom.

Well, Ivan put the jumped tire in the bugle, warmed it to red, grabbed it with ticks, and began to settle, hitting the rim with a kiyanka, on a wooden wheel so that it would fit less. It was already beginning to get dark again, and it was necessary to remove the ticks and hammers and extinguish the bugle. Then, sedately, imitating his father, the young man went home.

He ate as if he did not notice the taste of food, only brought, like others, spoons with porridge to his mouth. So he swallowed dinner like a crow in a tree. And did not notice what he ate. But now, it was over, and the young man hurried to himself. Closing the door, he took out the cherished note

Good afternoon, Ivanushka, health to you for many years!

Father will leave at the end of March, sell the goods to Moscow and buy all sorts of things there. He wants to grab me for Gavril Khlebnikov, a merchant from Moscow, but I don't want that. They told me that Father Barsanuphius could marry us secretly. I'm ready for anything.

Elena who loves you.

Ivan jumped up from the bench, and entered the upper room like a caught forest cat in a cage. Nothing, the pop will marry them. How much money will he want for demand? He has two

rubles, nothing. He sat down at the table, pulled up a burning candle, and began to draw out the letters with a pencil.

My kind Elena!

We get married secretly, I will agree with the priest. I will never give up on you.

Devoted to you Ivan

I re-read it again — it seemed to be good and not stupid. He could not express himself as colorfully as his betrothed did. Both clever and beautiful... And he? Well, he has enough strength, he shoots well too, and he almost adopted the skill from his father.

— Okay, stop harassing yourself, — he said to himself, and began to earnestly pray for the icons in the red corner, remembering both the Mother of God, and St. Nicholas, and St. George.

Only in this way could he calm down, undressed to death, and climbed under a warm blanket. The stove was heated, the houses were heated from below, from the basement.

Secret wedding

Ivan went to the church, in a hurry. And it was not easy, and the cat is heavy — as much as two rubles of money. He walked past melting snowdrifts, trying to get around cow cakes on the road. And what kind of farm without a cow, or even two? Milk to sour cream is difficult for a Russian person to live without them. So the fence appeared, next to which sat Mishka, a holy fool. A

good, kind ascetic. He did not wish evil on anyone, did not curse, he spoke only good things.

Ivan, without thinking, put two kopecks in the mug of the holy man, and taking off his hat, crossed himself on the domes, and asked:

“Stand up for me before God, good man.

— Do not doubt, — and the holy fool smiled with a good, bright smile, — everything will be kind. The Most Holy Theotokos loves you, will intercede.

It became a little easier on Ivan’s soul, and he went into the temple, and again crossed himself, and tried to see the priest. Finally, I saw a priest talking about someone with a widow. Finally, she bowed low to him, and moved away. Father Barsanuphius was thin, with the same thin beard, in an ordinary cassock. and, with a cross on his chest.

— Father, — Ivan turned to him, — I would talk about an important matter. I decided to get married...

“That’s a good thing,” the priest clasped his hands on his chest and smiled slyly.

— Yes, it’s not easy... We wouldn’t talk here, otherwise I’m a little embarrassed in front of someone else’s eyes!

— And why you, vyunosh, thought, if you don’t want someone else’s ears nearby?

“He’s getting married, Father. So the bride agrees, do not think. Her father looks at me askance.

“Why?” You are in the royal service, and do not carry

firewood to people.

“So I wish to marry Elena Fedorovna Kanyushkina,” the young man said very quietly.

— Vona as... Beware of an honest boy, I'll marry you... No matter how something happens.

“So I don't want to marry. We will come together, and you will get married, all honor by honor. Don't you feel sorry for our souls?

— And I'm sorry for mine especially, Ivan.

“Yes, I brought the money,” the petitioner added quietly.

The priest turned and beckoned to Ivan. Both quickly entered the church gatehouse. Barsanuphius put a bench for the archer, sat down on the other himself.

— I would say right away... The matter is not easy, and in the church book you need to make an entry, and straighten your letter. Paper, yes ink, they are worth the money. This is altyn, child. In the evening, light candles — these are four altyn. I held out. will you donate half a million for church vestments? — and pop made a blissful face, looking at Ivan, — give half a day ahead. The rest is after the wedding.

“What are we talking about, Father Barsanuphius!

The young man quickly laid out small silver coins in front of the priest, he wiped his eyes tearing with affection, carefully counted and shook the silver to himself.

— For three days, the child, — said the pop already just in an unctuous voice, — warn, and I will wait for you after Vespers.

Do not worry, the Lord will not leave you, and I will please.

Ivan bowed to his bottom, kissed his hand, who in response twisted the young man. Sagittarius went, just ran home. Like a stone fell from my heart. I did not remember how I returned, ran into myself, and began to display letters on a small sheet of paper.

Everything is agreed with the priest, you just need to warn three days in advance. Perhaps the matter is only after evening prayer.

The ink dried, and the older brother set off in search of the younger ones. I didn't have to look for a long time, the young man heard sniffing and slapping. The brothers mutused each other, trying to plunge into the opponent's snowdrift.

"Mother will know everything! 'he threatened the boys.

"Why?" You can't tell! — answered the smart Ustyan, — need to run away on business?

"Exactly.

"Now," replied the elder.

And Ustyan began to dust off Vasily from the snow, then threw off the snow flakes from his felt boots and hats, and quickly followed his older brother.

"Give me a note, and wait for me at the gate," he said patronizingly.

The young messenger slipped over the fence, and was like that, and Ivan wrapped himself warmer, and began to expect a messenger.

Ustyan ran out into the street, and let him through the snow to the Kanyushkin estate. I wanted to scream to a famous place near the fence, but I heard the ringing of bells and hid in time. The dog barked, sensing strangers. Two troika arrived at the gate, the clerks Anfim and Emelya hastily opened the gate.

— Good afternoon, Kondrat Stepanovich! We are glad that you came to us! Anfim said loudly and bowed to the merchant.

— And good afternoon to you, — the merchant answered loudly, — Is Fedor Romanovich at home?

— Waiting.

— Spend, Anfim.

The coachman remained in the sleigh, wrapped himself in a sheepskin coat. And the boy saw a stately merchant, in a rich sand coat covered with Dutch blue cloth, coming off the wagon. His servant hastened after him, with a small chest.

The gates closed, Ustyan pulled his hat over his ears, and raised the collar of the felt armour. It's good that there were felt boots on their feet, they didn't freeze. Finally, he made some noise at the wicket, three times. Only then, finally, the long-awaited Lukerya looked out.

“What are you doing?” You see, we have a guest, — grandmother started grumpily.

— Yes, I am with a letter, — the boy immediately justified himself.

“Don't wait. Tomorrow you will take the answer. Here, the hotel.

Ustyan nodded, hid the gingerbread in his bosom, and ran home.

Unexpected rival

Elena sat in her room and embroidered. Three candles were burning on the set, it was seen well. Bed, of course, early. What to do? Is it then to read the Holy Gospel. Father is in the house, he conducts business. Lukerya looks after the cook, and when she helps her herself. Cowgirl with cows and chickens is controlled, how is living creatures without a look? Anthim and Gavrila da Emelya cope with everything else — when sweep up, stab firewood, feed the cattle. The father himself sits in the shop, well, if he is not there, then Gavrila works as a clerk. When her father was gone, she delved into everything. And so that cows are milked, and the bread was baked, and the grain from the barn did not disappear. And she looked after the goods.

Therefore, now there was a beauty only when sewing. I looked at the pattern — really beautiful, I hoped that Ivan would like such a pillowcase. After all, everything turned out in foreign colors, she always imagined such fairy tales. And so, while she was working with needles, there was a knock on the door, and Father came in.

— Good day, daughter. With the joy of you, a dear guest came to us — Kondrat Stepanovich himself honored us. Asks for your hand.

“So I don’t want to,” the daughter answered her father sharply.

— A worthy person, has long been in great honor in Tula, in the living room is a hundred. It can’t be better.

— I will not go for him, — and Elena did not even postpone sewing, only turned her head to her father, — I will go to the monastery, but I will not become the wife of this Kondrat.

— I promised for you, daughter, — said the merchant heartfelt, almost affectionate.

— It was free to promise me, as if I were a thing, — and she jumped up from the chair, — I will not go... Elena said quietly.

— And I promised! — and, grinning, hit my fist on the table, — my word is firm!

— And I, like God holy, drown myself! Nothing, and you will live alone! Elena broke down in tears.

The girl did not just cry, she just began to shake in convulsions, her father just got scared, and ran out of the room. A frightened Gavrila, who heard screams in the house, walked towards him.

— Send out Kondrat Stepanovich. Apologize for me, bow down, but send me out. Don’t explain anything.

— Understood, Fedor Romanovich, — and the sensible clerk disappeared.

The merchant ran to the kitchen, where Lukerya helped prepare a dinner party. The old woman knew how to check the pots in the oven, whether the stewed meat was ready, the cereals were finished.

— Grandma, come with me, — Fedor asked, — everything is completely bad.

“Now, my dear. I’ll finish it... Shchi will be late??? — and continued to quickly chop cabbage.

— Praskovya will finish... It’s up to you, hurry, grandmother... — the merchant stood nearby, not knowing where to hide his hands.

They left the basement, began to rise, but Fedor did not just walk, but as if clinging to the railing of the stairs. His legs became as if cotton, and did not obey him. The owner of the house carefully opened Elena’s chambers, and looked inside from behind the door. Everything was also bad with the girl, she was on the carpet. Lukerya slipped in, and whispered reproachfully:

— Eh, father... As if you have a dozen daughters...

— Calm her down, you see, things are bad, — the frightened father whispered, — do what you can do there, old witch, — the merchant began to get angry, — all sorts of herbs for you, what... Do what you want, just to recover!

— Go, I’ll stay with Alyonushka, don’t worry, — the witch answered without raising her voice.

Fedor wilted again, and carefully, trying not to make noise, left the maiden’s, and closed the door behind him.

Broken wedding

Christmas, baptism passed, Lent began. Ivan and Elena could only see each other in the church itself or spread the word after serving in the church, not before their fathers could

say something. These dates were rather not happiness, but a test, in front of others to spread a few words, so that the suspicious merchant would not have guessed about the secret correspondence of his daughter and the young archer.

But now, March has come, and on the last luge, the merchant Kanyushkin was getting ready for the road. The cargo on the sleigh was dismantled, loaded and tied in order, everything was ready. With a merchant, except for the carriers. faithful Gavrila rode on the road, and Anfim and Emelyan remained at the estate and shop.

— What do you bring, my berry? — the father of his beloved daughter spoke affectionately, looking at her pale face, — did she really scream again? Do not write at all, pale such.

— No, no, father, — the girl answered in an intentionally even voice, — everything is fine. Only buy more silk threads for sewing.

— Oh, you are my clever, — Fyodor Romanovich said happily, and now completely calmed down, he left the girl's.

Elena ran to the mirror on the set and looked at her reflection with concern. And for sure, she was so pale, as if smeared with chalk.

“Indeed,” she said, “and how will you fall asleep, if the wedding is scheduled for today.”

The beauty looked at the letter again, and for the hundredth time she probably read:

Be ready for today, afternoon. Father Barsanuphius

crowns us.

Ivan.

Treacherous tears fell on the letter, and she could not restrain herself and kissed such cute and kind lines several times. But, it was necessary to quickly gather. The certificate lay on the supplier.

She took a sum, left her clothes for the first time, and a koshel with father's hotels was laid on top. I also prepared clothes for the wedding — not to be dirty on such a day, a fur coat on top, but after thinking, I also found a raincoat — gray and invisible. It was necessary to run to Lukerye, to say goodbye.

Anfim, went around the estate, checked and examined everything. The bird is fed, the cows are drunk and in the hay, everything is in order. The man only wrapped himself more tightly in an armyak, and adjusted his hat — it was still cold today, although spring was beginning. It was necessary to find out the orders of Elena Fedorovna for today, and what kind of lunch should be prepared. No, the merchant's daughter did not demand anything like that, she was spreading overseas, but order is in order, and Fedor Romanovich ordered to ask what the heiress would delve into everything.

So the clerk went into the manor house, shook off the boots with a broom from the snow in the basement. It was cool here, the whole house was not heated, otherwise the firewood would not be enough. Slowly, taking his time, he climbed up the seedling and knocked on the upper room. No one answered, and the door

was ajar.

— Elena Fyodorovna? said the clerk loudly, I am it. Anthim! Will I come in?

There was still no answer, and the man was very scared. The yard people knew about the unsuccessful matchmaking of the merchant Kondrat, about the screams in the girl's, but did not say anything about it, and certainly, God forbid, they did not discuss it. But Anfim knew this, and therefore decided to enter. You never know what with the heiress, otherwise he will answer.

The upper room was empty, there was a bag, a fur coat was lying on the bed, and a certificate... He looked around again, maybe he did not notice the young mistress, and finally, he read, frightened himself to death. It was impossible to take the letter, because Elena immediately knows! But I remembered by heart, since I learned to count bags of rye. As soon as possible, Anfim left the house and ran to Emelyan. I found violence, he cursed a pipe for himself, whistled something under his breath, rejoiced in life, a simple soul.

— Do what, Emelya! 'the clerk almost shouted to his comrade, talking about the letter.

— Skachi for Fedor Romanovich about two-horse, and here I will look after Elena Fedorovna. Everything is formed, the main thing is that there would be no cries, otherwise the owner will not have mercy on us. He does not tolerate swar.

Anfim darted to the stable, saddled two horses. Emelyan, putting his pipe, ran to the gate, and waited for a comrade. As

soon as Anfim drove up, he immediately opened the heavy gates, without bothering to release the messenger. First with a step, and then with a trot, a burly horse galloped, knocking out caking wet snow with savvy hooves. The clerk knew what road Fyodor Romanovich always walks, and he could not miss him.

Ivan at this time, at a distance from the eyes of his father-mother, washed in a barrel of cold water, all flushed, only wiped himself quickly, so as not to freeze. Dressed in everything new. There was no strength to wait, and began to repair the locks of the squeakers with his father. The owner of the house only hid a grin in his beard, looking at his son. He only worked cheerfully with a file and did not raise his eyes to the priest

“You’re doing well today, son. Apparently attentive and assiduous today.

— Yes, there is no snow. Well, — Ivan answered out of place.

— It is of course, — Semyon Petrovich did not argue, — and the day is not sunny. Spring is coming.

But the young man made the castle, checked, everything worked well. Once again he pulled the trigger, lowered, no, everything turned out as it should. Here in the church they called for dinner, he started up like the Golden Scallop cockerel, jumped up and went to the gate. Father only sighed after, but muttered:

“It’s a young thing...

— I will soon, father, — the young man turned around, as if

remembering, shouted, — we must go. Not far here.

— Don't forget about lunch! — only Semyon Petrovich managed to answer.

Ivan quickly walked to the Kanyushkin estate, checking the treasury in his bosom along the way. For father Barsanuphius, and so, for himself. just in case. The young man remembered the letter by heart, and hoped that the girl was waiting for him, ready to go down the aisle with him.

Be ready for today, afternoon. Father Barsanuphius crowns us.

Ivan

A cabman from the posad people was waiting for them at the church. Luka, a good friend of Ivan, was hired for a whole altyn. And his sleigh is kind, with a canopy, the horse is good, not old. I thought and decided — it's not good at all, that after the wedding, but on foot to get home, and agreed with Luka.

The long-awaited wicket of Lukerya was not, Ivan just sighed hard, but it was impossible to retreat. The young man climbed over the fence, fortunately, the dog slept in the booth. He looked around, but there was no one, then quickly ran to the door of the house, and quietly knocked. No one answered. He listened for a long time, hoping that the door would open now. He was disgustingly sucked under the spoon, and his heart beat very hard. Ivan, to be honest, did not understand what was the matter, what was here, Navya started, or what? Where is Elena? He opened the constipation with a false knife, and went inside. The young

man went into the basement, listening for the slightest rustle. The heart beat often — often, and how not to worry? Someone else's house, and you can't see the narrowed one. But then, I heard a rustle from behind and sat down in time, immediately a hefty baton fell on the kitchen table, and without thinking at all, the Sagittarius managed to hit the stranger under the breath. But the dark caftan seemed so familiar! He suffocated and began to settle on the floor. There was nothing to do, and Ivan pulled off the belt from the enemy, and tied their hands. I thought I tied my legs with a rope too.

— Sorry. I'm not a robber, — the young man explained, and put him tied up on a bench.

There was neither Elena nor Lukerya anywhere. In desperation, he checked the rooms of the house one by one, and finally, in one light, he found his bride and grandmother locked there.

— Let's go, we have to go! -he said.

— Run faster until Fedorushka returns! said the nurse quietly.

The girl thought only for a couple of seconds, looked at her grandmother, at the beloved youth, and firmly said:

— Let's go, — Elena nodded, and she herself began to quickly get ready.

And now, they are already walking quickly, almost running to the church. Step by step, let their legs slide through the melted snow, the girl almost fell in a hurry, but Ivan managed to catch her.

“Thank you,” she whispered.

At the church fence, Father Barsanuphius strolled, pretending to be busy with something very important. Actually, he counted crows on the fence.

And then, as if warning the lovers, seven huge birds croaked loudly at once. Ivan turned around and saw a horse racing with a gallop, and the rider on it was a simple-haired Fedor Romanovich. Behind him, far behind, two of his clerks galloped.

There were only five steps to the church... The merchant dismounted, and ran to his daughter, simply snatched her hand from the palm of the young man. Ivan did not even think to resist. The enraged father raised his whip, thinking of hitting Ivan, but he only took off his hat and lowered his hands.

— Kill if you want. I will not fight with you, — he said loudly, — with the father of my bride.

— Leave the sacred place! — Father Barsanuphius raised his voice, — do not darken the Temple of the Lord with your squabbles!

— So you, pop, stuck with them! — the furious merchant shouted at him, — all the silver is not enough! You probably take a lot!

Barsanuphius first swung his staff at ignoramus. and then. as if remembering, touched a huge pectoral silver cross. Actually, it was Fedor Romanovich who gave it two years ago.

“Damn how holy God is! cried the priest, raising his hands in the air, as if trying to appear much taller.

— I'll damn you, forget what you were called! — Fedor was not afraid, — let's go home Elena! Marry Kondrat!

— No, I'd better go to the monastery, drown myself! she shouted, looking only at her beloved Ivan.

He tried to rush to the bride, but he was already held by the elbows of the clerks and the church elder who ran up to the screams. The young man only looked at Elena rushing from her father's bear hands to him. She was banging and screaming, banging and screaming. Her cry turned into a heart-rending terrible howl, she turned white and lost her feelings. Fedor Romanovich himself was now seriously scared. He held his daughter's body firmly in his arms, and could not say a word. The clerks realized everything quickly.

The cart drove up, and the father carefully put his daughter on wolf furs, sat down on the seat himself, and Emelyan quietly moved from his place, and the sleigh was quietly scraped with runners on the blackening snow. Ivan remained standing at the church gate, and powerlessly looked at Elena leaving. The black raven swirled over him, and sat on a thick branch. The young man looked at his feet, at the black tracks from the runners of the sled.

— Do not be sad, lad, — the churchwarden quietly spoke, shaking off the snow fence from the broom, — and the ice on the river melts, and watch the sun shine. Everything is formed.

Ivan looked at the roof of the church. The hanging icicle began to drop the first tears. It was hot in the sheepskin coat. The snow

on the road melted, leaving blackening glades.

And for sure, spring was coming.

Case on the night

So he sent his head, Tikhon Ilyich Trubchev, to a notch, to a small prison.

— Not for long Ivan, don't think. Our Fyodor Romanovich will calm down a little, change anger to mercy, as he learns that you will be away from his daughter. It's easy there — with a dozen Alexei Chelobanov to serve. He's a warrior fair, but skillful, will teach you a lot. You also squeaked there, and you will examine two guns, that it would be okay if suddenly the Crimean Tatars attacked. I will not reproach and reproach — in fact, we are still not generous slaves, but service people, no worse than others. But after all, Kanyushkin already reached the clerk that they say you wanted to take the girl away from the yard.

“That's not true,” Moshkin said, without raising his head, “honor by honor conspired, and everything happened near the church. We went to the wedding, everyone saw. And pop expected us.

— What blundered, sagittarius, — and his head straightened his mustache, — did not do?

— How could I, Tikhon Ilyich? After all, Elena's beloved father is Fedorovna's light, and I am his fist? That's not a peremog.

— Okay, — said the head in a changed voice, — you look, everything will work out. In the evening, with a wagon train, you will go to the outpost, and a letter to you for Zinovy Dmitrievich, and put a message rolled up with a pipe in front of the shooter, fastened with a rope and a simple seal.

Ivan hid the paper in his bag, bowed, and left. Pischal held the butt, and the weapon habitually pressed on the shoulder, the palm burned in a bronze case on the chest. Sagittarius with wick food is simply impossible without fire, otherwise the enemies will attack, and he:

“Guys, I’m going to fire the flame now, you wait here, don’t leave. Without fire, I won’t shoot you from squeaking”

It would be fun... He hung a bag of provisions on his left shoulder, and, sighing, left the chief’s chambers. Slowly went down the stairs, and sat down on the bench. Caravan supply took an important cargo. The men — the carters put five — six heavy bags on the scrap carts, but still, the carts simply cracked under the load. Six Cossacks arrived, on nimble, small horses. Dressed, contrary to conversations, quite in Russian, in gray caftans and wide pants. Boots, however, were in heels, familiar to equestrian warriors. Each was beeping, saber, and a peak dangled on the belt behind the right shoulder. Ivan saw that at the end of the pole of the peak there was a belt in which the sock of the boot of the dashing rider stuck out

— And, Tikhon Ilyich, is everything ready? — shouted the eldest of them, but also a Cossack without a beard, and with an

indispensable drooping mustache, and a straw forelock hanging from under his hat. That is, their foreman was also a real Cossack. The seasoned warrior looks no more than thirty years old.

— Yes. Only Stepan Ivanovich, capture this rowdy to the outpost. It's a long walk to get there, and it's not a matter for one to go through these places.

— So we will not do without him with the Tatars, head! the rider laughed, I don't even know what they would do! Thank you, of course, for your help.

— He is not only a sagittarius, but also a noble craftsman. Gunsmith, works on locks. His head praised him greatly.

— Depressed, Tikhon Ilyich, — the Cossack thanked without a laugh, — Rodion, my second clockwork horse to the archer!

— So bring Murza?

— Vedi Murza. Sagittarius, ride a horse?

“I'm going,” Ivan replied.

— Rodion, help secure his weapon to the saddle. And, on the road!

The young Cossack helped link the weapon, and Ivan rather deftly sat in the saddle. The young man stretched his legs into stirrups, rested his heels, and confidently took up the occasion. The horse obeyed the saddle perfectly.

— Good Cossack! Stepan praised, let's go!

The caravan set off, the carriers slapped their belts, urging the horses. The road snaked between the trees, but it's good that there was little dust after the recent rain. So they walked quickly,

wanting to get to darkness. Places here were restless, and Tatar trips appeared on the Zasechnaya line often.

Ivan kept in the saddle quite decently, and what? Didn't you ride a horse? And my father had a horse, and not one. So the young man knew how to ride as it should. Another thing is that he did not know how to act in equestrian formation, especially Cossack. Therefore, slowly shaking on the road, and the distance to show considered a stupid idea... We drove for a long time, Stepan Trofimovich was not going to give rest, traveled around the line of carts, encouraged the drivers. People only managed to drink water from their flasks, and put a couple of crackers in their mouths.

But now, we met a Cossack detour, a dozen stanitsa with peaks and sabers drove up closer, checking who was walking along a dead road.

— Ah, Stepan! We've been waiting for you for a long time! We spend! 'one of the Cossacks said after recognising the elder from the caravan.

— And hello to you, Demyan Zinovievich! As the governor promised, we are going with grain and flour!

— Is there any cereal?

— And there is cereal! And we bring salt! Everything is there now.

— Well, thank God! And then we just sit on the fish!

Soon, as if a prison fell from the sky, protected by a tall rampart and a deep and wide moat. Ivan looked curiously at

the place of his new service. The shaft was solid, in three human statures, although overgrown with short often mowed grass, though only knocked out of the ground. Above the tightly knocked down ground stood low wooden walls, log cabins made of huge logs. A decent rain canopy was made over the wall. There was also an observant high turret, so that the sentinels would see everything from afar.

The bridge on chains over the moat was lowered, and here stood four archers with squeaks. Seeing carts and Cossacks, the more sedentary of them called out to Stepan.

— Be healthy. They came well on time, otherwise the Crimeans are mischievous. Again there was a shootout. Stop by, do not hesitate — and he waved his hand expressively.

Creaking carts stretched across the bridge. But either the driver was inexperienced, or the horse was frightened, but the wheel of the last wagon fell to the very edge of the tightly knocked boards, and hit the wooden axis. The wagon began to fall sideways, leaning dangerously against the moat. The horse laughed wildly, crouching on its hind legs, Moshkin did not hesitate, jumped off the saddle, grabbed the goblet lying nearby, and forged the cart like a lever. He screamed, the muscles of his arms and back seemed to be rushing outward, but the cart began to straighten. Two Cossacks ran up to the archer, and the three of them were able to save the cart and the precious cargo. The wheel again stood on the bridge, the cart settled, but now everything was fine. Ivan exhaled, removing his hands from the

wag, the Cossacks patted the new comrade on the shoulder.

— You are healthy, brother, — Stepan Trofimovich was surprised, — and the whole itself. You are careful, otherwise you will break, this is the case. Let's go, we'll take off the bags from the cart.

Already on hand, grain and flour were transferred from the cart directly to the warehouse. The cargo was taken by the elder. Who will call the governor the main one in the small prison? And not a fortress after all. Meanwhile, the teamsters were dropping bags from their carts. The warehouse was kind, with pallets on the wooden floor so that the bread would not get damp. And so well everything was done — both dry and tightly.

— Zinovy Dmitrievich? Moshkin asked the elder in streletsky clothes.

— Exactly. Zinovy Dmitrievich Khvorostov, foreman. And you, right, Moshkin Ivan? I know your father, Semyon Petrovich.

— For you and a letter from Tikhon Ilyich Trubchev, the head of our order, — and the young man held out a message.

Zinovy scratched his beard, broke his seal and quickly read what was written, sometimes looking for order at the young archer, and finally hid the paper by the belt.

“I see, Ivan. Strength, I see, you are big, as the loaded cart managed not to fall! And you are a craftsman with us, then. Well, you have enough to do here, you won't get bored, our forge is yours now. And then, maybe, and the watch is sweet to us? ‘the foreman joked.

— If I could... There is no one to learn from. Such masters, it is known, live in Moscow. After all, the mechanics are complicated, — Vanya started talking, and began to show on his fingers, — on one axis there are two gears — one for the clockwise direction, the other for the minute. And the minute should rotate sixty times faster than the hour. Well, on the main axis, the watchmaker must lift the chain every day, and the load of that chain gives the rotation of the axis of the clock, and moreover, uniform. AND...

— Got that. I realized that you know the job. Get out of the way. You, as a craftsman, will spend the night in prison. The place is good, almost holy, next to the chapel. Pop we have Father Cyril...

— I would like to go to Tula... — suddenly escaped from Moshkin, — I am for a day... I'll turn around quickly. I will swear on the holy icons.

— Can't brother, service. We are all needed here. I, here, wrote to the governor, I remember by heart:

"I wish to absolve myself of sins, I need to visit holy places. The murdered tortured me completely, they don't let me sleep, especially on Sundays. Let go on a pilgrimage"

And do you know what Prince Pozharsky ordered me to answer?

"Nooo," muttered the Sagittarius, and simply did not believe his ears. Pozharsky! Oneself!

"Your service is sacred for the Russian state, and, therefore,

there are no sins on you. Well, I wrote to your priest that I would impose penance on you according to your strength, that I would not look for sins where it is not necessary”

“So they put me on bread and water,” said the foreman.

— To the dungeon? — Vanya was afraid for the elderly archer.

“I dreamed. In the spring, the service is here, and no one has to sleep. Either secrets, then chases, then you can’t close your eyes on the walls, you stare at everything — where are the smoke of Tatar fires. Tick line. So I could not sleep in the dungeon. I ate only a week later. But, I’ll tell you, it helped! — he laughed, stroking his beard, — the dead, that I no longer see my own enemies of the dead in a dream. So, Sagittarius, penance is a big deal, however, it helps — and he sighed more calmly. — Take your armor, come on, show your place to sleep, forge and everything you need for your art.

Ivan corrected his caftan, buttoned two, raised his weapon and let the bag go after the foreman. Zinovy Dmitrievich walked quickly, although he limped a little, but did not rely on his staff, but carried it rather for beauty, for honor, and that the archers would respect more.

— Leg? — he saw Vanya’s slanting glances, — this is our military business. For a long time Tatar Sulitsa hit the leg. Well, at least from the pistol missed. So would...

They passed the chapel. The doors of the wooden unwise church were open, and a prayer was heard, which Father Cyril read in a loud voice, and did not even look into the liturgical

book. Sensible was father. There was also a bathhouse nearby. So there was everything here for cleansing the souls and bodies of Orthodox soldiers.

“Do you sing songs?” the foreman asked.

— It happens, of course, — Ivan did not refuse, — there is a holiday, or Paska. Our church is stone, Roman Prokhorovich Kanyushkin, father of Fyodor Romanovich, erected it with his joy. So it happened, sang on the choir.

— You see! Well, we have everything for the correct service. Well, we came.

The house, the tower is not a tower, but the house is chopped wooden, large. Some windows with rich platbands, others are much poorer. There were no carvings at all, such orphans with wealthy relatives. But it looked, of course, fun.

— This is Patrikey, all the art will not finish in any way, — explained the foreman, — He took it, but he will not finish the matter. Some platbands have embellished, others will not do anything. And, interestingly, every time the reason finds, but such that you do not dig.

— The work is not bad, — praised Moshkin such beauty of work on wood, — craftsman Patrikey.

— Well, let's go, — and he opened the door to the room, — here, settle down. A trunk for things, a bed, a table and two benches. There are also family ones here, so don't be surprised.

Ivan looked at his room. There is not a lot of space, but even in a small window the sunset sun shines, it seems that it is not

so bad here either...

“Well, rest, tomorrow will be a new day,” said the foreman, closing the door behind him.

Ivan looked around — there is a shop, a mattress full of hay is also available, and the pillow lies at the head. Sagittarius remembered the service, you always need to take care of your weapon. He put the squeak in a corner, the saber took its place on the hook in the wall, hung the cartridge bag on a wooden nail, carefully driven next to the hook. The cloth blanket lay nearby, he ran his hand over it. The young man just sighed, remembering his home, yet he was unusual here. He straightened the caftan, dusted it off from the dirt on the sleeve, and folded it on the bench. In the corner there was a lamp under the icon, Ivan prayed for the night, remembering his family, and Elena... With Father Barsanuphius it turned out stupid, but with Elena... And how Elena sobbed, screamed, shook straight when her father dragged her home by the arms. And he could not do anything, because Father. And Ivan grabbed himself by the head, and only swung from side to side, covered his face in exhaustion with his hands. All this stood before my eyes. When in the service, it seems to be released, but how to go to bed — so everything is again. Okay, you still need to sleep...

They raised everyone, as soon as the sun rose, in the German manner, with the sound of a trumpet. But, so, with a Russian bias. They were not buzzing very loud and strong. Sagittarius went out

quite quickly, did not be lazy, and springly stood in two ranks. There were no Cossacks yet, everyone was visible on the road and in secrets.

The foreman bypassed the formation of four dozen of his dares. But, each of the soldiers was with weapons, this was not spoiled here, the danger was all the time nearby. Ivan saw the sentries at the gate, and the sagittarius walked on the tower while beeping.

“Is everything in place?” — shouted Zinovy Dmitrievich Khvorostov, — well, what is there?

— That’s right, Zinovy Dmitrievich! On the spot, no one left!

— Okay, do business. Ivan, let’s go to the guns!

Moshkin already dreamed of seeing the huge guns that he heard about from his father. That would be right with cunning casting all over the trunk, inscriptions there, carving in bronze. But dreams do not often coincide with reality, and a couple of guns did not impress the young craftsman too much. Caliber on the strength of one and a half pounds, however, with a cunning lock. I have never seen this before — the vingrad had a lock that locked the bore and a lever that closed the bolt. The gun was rifled, and, apparently, could only shoot “cunning cores.” It will be necessary to find out if Hvorostov has such in the cellar. And I saw that the trunnion jumped out of the castle.

— Blimey! — Ivan admired, — sliced squeak! The shutter is not easy, Zinovy Dmitrievich. And the question is this. Do you have cores for this gun?

“Does she shoot a shot?”

“That’s not what she’s for. There should be lead cores in the prison, for a gun with a caliber of one and a half pounds. And not round, but such, — and he made a mysterious gesture in the air, — Then let’s try to shoot.

— We have to watch... And cast iron?

— It is possible, but the accuracy and range of the shooting will be less. The cast-iron core will not enter the rifling, but will break the barrel. So, you need to take a smaller one. Lead — it will go straight through the rifling, and the firing accuracy will be twice as much and the range will be greater.

— Well, work, master. Your forge. And the tool is yours. Gunpowder is stored in our cellar, in the underground, Only I have keys from it.

Moshkin, nodded that they say, understood. He took the pattern, measured the bore of the gun, and, putting the tool in the basket, went to the gun hut. Yes, actually, it was not a hut, but a large dugout with a gable earthen roof. The door was also locked, and Ivan went to the guards.

— good afternoon. Open the lock of the armory.

“Now, I’ll ask Zinovy Dmitrich,” the Sagittarius replied, and went to the foreman’s chambers.

The craftsman put a basket with patterns and a ruler on the ground. It was necessary to wait for the return of the guard. But finally, rattling the keys, they began to remove the locks with the iron upholstered in the door. Ivan went inside with a lit lantern.

There were twenty squeakers near the walls, sabers wrapped in burlap, dozens of copies and protazans complemented the picture. Nearby were baskets with buckshot, cores. On top lay cast iron, two-pound. The craftsman began to lay out the cores, measuring each, shifting already in calibers.

— Here, — the young man was delighted, — finally found...

He laid out gray lead nuclei, distinguished by their weight. There were as many as twenty pieces! And for sure... These oblong shells were like plums, but more. It was possible to please Zinovy Dmitrievich! While it was necessary to deal with the shutters of the guns. Sagittarius brought two guns to the forge, and Ivan set to work.

There was no need to get bored, the difficult work took almost two weeks, but everything was ready. The shutters now worked perfectly, with the force of the lever, the wedge locking the bore opened the chamber for charging. Everything worked.

All the warriors of the prison gathered, and a whisper was heard, everyone looked at Moshkin, who was standing next to the cannon craftsmen Evgraf Isakov and Andrei Zotov. They had already prepared their baths and cleanings, put on aprons and mittens, stood and buckets with water to cool the guns.

“Well, craftsman, show me,” Zinovy Dmitrievich, pleased with himself, said loudly.

Ivan did all the tricks with the shutter of the guns. Old cannon masters Evgraf Isakov and Andrei Zotov repeated behind him. The warriors were simply delighted, and welcomed their foreman

and Ivan Moshkin.

— Yes it would be necessary to try at least one, — the foreman Alexey Chelobanov whispered, — otherwise fight will happen, and we without guns? Look, the foreman, — he tried to speak convincingly, — and the gunners need to get used to shooting from the repairmen. And then they have only one gaufnitsa left.

— Okay, — Khvorostov reluctantly agreed, and called Ivan to him:

— That's what, it would be necessary to shoot once. Well, it's better three times out of each. Not here, of course. You take the gun, but blurt it out. Find only lead nuclei, we will transfer them. Will be old new... And then every shot will become golden.

— Let's do it, — Moshkin simply answered, — and we need two shields, from those on which archers from squeaks are fired.

— Exactly! It is only necessary to fill the earthen shaft behind the shields. Alexey Ermolaevich! — called Khvorostov a foreman, — stop looking here, pour a shaft on the shooting range behind the shields, but drown it. Do it hard, conscientiously. And in front of the shaft, put two old logs so that I do not lose cores and bullets. Lead is expensive, oh expensive...

— And they bring little gunpowder. Only ten times a year to shoot.

— Talk again... They will bring. Promised.. Here, and the handmasters brought...

— We heard about Ivanov's exploits... — Chelobanov smiled, — yes, the fire is a guy. It's good that my daughters are all

married, — he joked, — We'll manage in two hours, not earlier, — I finished seriously.

Zinovy Dmitrievich nodded, and went to the gunners. The young craftsman showed the elderly how the bolt works, how to clean the barrel after a shot. Although the guns were already fifty years old, and everything was like new, only the carriages were changed five years ago.

— After twenty shots it will be necessary to clean the rifling in the barrel, — and Moshkin showed the rifling in the cannon with his finger. — lead will remain on them.

— And with a cast-iron core if blurted out?

“The barrel will burst. What pressure...

— And if the core right with the cuts is cast? — suggested Andrey Zotov, as more sensible.

— Well invented, Andrey Prokopyevich. Sensible, — Ivan smiled.

— And the core is necessary, not round, but oval — said Evgraf Isakov, — and drew with a stick on the ground, cutting then three, so that it entered all the rifling of the trunk. Yes, I think so, Ivan Semenovich, — respectfully, with the meaning said the gunner, — no one fired from her. And the cores were made at random. The barrel enters — and thank God. There and charge on the contrary — first a shell, then a wad, and then a cap with gunpowder. Give me a shell. Semenych...

He tried, but the lead shell was cast expressively in the size of the chamber, not the barrel, and had to enter the rifling and fly

after the shot, as it should. But, I must say, it was not the core, but the shell was more like a large plum. Not spherical, but oval in shape, oblong such.

— You see, Evgraf Fomich, everything is not bad, — Ivan sighed with relief, already frightened that he had not watched the cores, — It will definitely go into four cuts.

So two hours passed. Three gunners have already harnessed the horses into teams and put the guns on the front.

— Everything is ready. You can start! — the messenger from Chelobanov shouted to Hovorostov.

— let's go! 'the foreman ordered.

Zinovy Dmitrievich climbed onto the front of one of the guns, an sagittarius climbed onto the other. The cannon masters also took their places, and Evgraf Fomich, who was sitting on the front of the front gun, waved his reins, and the horses moved in steps.

Ivan sat with his fingers clinging to the front cover, and inside there were cores and gunpowder. It was hard to sit, and it shook mercilessly, however, everything was not on foot.

— What, Wan? Heavy? Zotov laughed at him. — here, gunners, like this. And then, they will turn you to us, from archers.

Moshkin was silent. Who knows what will happen... How is Elena? Mother and father, brothers?

Svatya Fedor Romanovich and Semyon Petrovich

— Hello, Fedor Romanovich! — and Semyon bowed low, taking off his hat.

— Good for you, sit down come on. Here, drink wine. Hungarian — and poured into a glass glass.

Then the door creaked, and the senile face of Grandma Lukerya seemed. A cat slipped through the door, immediately raising its tail high, and began to rub against the owner's leg and purr desperately.

— Lukerya! What is there?

— Yes, I thought, Fedorushka, what do you need? Or do you want to eat? Completely emaciated after all.

— Fish salted. Shomgi want.

— You can't fish with wine, — answered restless, — indecent. And the wine is red, not white.

— Then bring smoked meat.

“I'll bring it now,” Lukerya replied with a satisfied tone.

Fedor jumped up, listened until he could wait for the shuffling steps to subside.

— Gone... Faster it is necessary. Well, the case is Semyon, I will not pull. All this is matchmaking, but the fact that Ivan and Elena tried to get married themselves is not the point.

“None of it,” agreed Moshkin, the elder.

— Yes, I have one daughter, and I wish her happiness.

“That’s right.

— Here, I drew up the paper, then we will enter our contract into the book, — and handed the sheet to Semyon.

He read slowly, repeating wise words to himself. and looked at the merchant.

— So???

— Well, yes, in the summer we will marry the young. Honor by honor when this conversation with Father Barsanuphius settles... Screams, screams, oh my God!

— This is of course — and Ivan’s father remembered what happened next to the church, and again grabbed his head.

— Well, in general, your Ivan of considerable courage... And Emel — the clerk was not afraid, and my dogs...

— Elena Fyodorovna is clever and beautiful, — Moshkin expressed himself as biased as possible, — Ivan could not hit her face in front of her.

— Very horny, yes, character in me, — said the father with undisguised pride, — Well, your son was not afraid, it means that they will live happily. But it is necessary that they would not see each other before the summer, otherwise such a shame, for the whole city...

— The head of the Streltsy order can send him to prison. There the mind will gain. And in the summer Ivan will return to Tula. It will be possible to get them married.

— God forbid that everything would be sweet... And then,

after all, Elena in the tower roars endlessly, does not eat or drink, and he suddenly spoke deliberately loudly, and mowed his eyes at the gap between the door and the jamb.

Semyon also noticed that Lukerya was eavesdropping again, because he was cleverly attached!

— Yes, in the summer and marry Ivan and Elena! — continued the speech Fedor Romanovich, speaking even louder.

— So after all, we will prepare for the wedding as it should. I'll put a new hut, there is a place, — agreed, and Semyon Petrovich spoke just as loudly.

Fedor touched his lips with his finger, asked the interlocutor to be silent. and listened. And, for sure, I heard light retreating steps, and then a little in the house the stairs creaked.

— We bet, on your castle, that now my daughter will come here?

— Well, if the girl finally calms down, — the guest did not get into family disputes.

“Will you have any more wine?” the merchant asked, taking out another glass Italian decanter also with red wine.

Semyon only estimated the amount of capacity, but did not think to refuse, and the owner put two clean glasses on the table.

— So, something to chew? Fedor thought.

He began to open the drawers and shelves of the desk, which could not be called a table. A real work of art, with a retractable countertop, artsy carvings. The owner did not lose heart, and again filled the glasses. They drank more wine, however, from

the food there was only one gingerbread in such a beautiful merchant's table. Fedor sighed sadly, and next to the lamps at the icons in the red corner lit three candles, baptized for a long time and bowed.

— More wine? 'he asked after a future relative's prayer.

They managed to drink only two cups, then they knocked on the door, and Elena came in with a tray on which there were two plates, silver two-toothed forks, a dish with finely chopped meat and bread. Semyon quickly looked at the girl's face, but she was smart and very difficult — little was noticeable on her white face, only her eyes were red.

— Have a meal, what to drink wine without charcuterie, — the girl was noticeably bored in the nose, put everything on the table and left importantly.

The men just looked at each other, Fedor made an expressive gesture, leaning his hand in the form of a tube against his ear. Semyon nodded, agreeing with the obvious.

— Exactly. Grandma Lukerya hears everything and manages everywhere.

Cannon drill



On the field, where archers usually checked their weapons, everything was prepared. There were two shields, a shaft was poured, and logs lay in front of the shaft. Pushkari nimbly

unhooked the guns from the front, Khvorostov himself tied horses from teams to the pegs, but hung torbs with oats on his muzzles, so as not to be bored.

Zinovy Dmitrievich personally began to measure fathoms from shields. I decided that two hundred fathoms (four hundred meters) would be just right.

— It will be far away, — Evgraf Isakov was concerned.

— Not close, — Zotov agreed.

— Finish, and logs in chips! — Moshkin promised.

“We’ll see,” the foreman smiled, adjusting his mustache.

Ivan crossed himself, and opened the shutter wedge with a lever. Zotov held the projectile, and Isakov wad and kartuz with gunpowder.

— Nothing, Ivan Semenovich, get used to it, — Evgraf Fomich encouraged him.

First, he put down a lead oblong shell, and laid it denser, then inserted a wad and a cap with gunpowder into the chamber. Raised the wedge, and fixed the shutter with a lever. Also, under-arms — no, you’re naughty, tight! With a pickler, he pierced a powder box and inserted a firing tube. He began to aim, knocking out a wooden wedge with a hammer under the trunk. Finally, the trunk of the gun looked exactly at the target. He turned around, looked at his new comrades, crossed himself and poked his finger at the protruding ignition tube.

The shot barked deafeningly. The gun rolled back a little, enveloped in acrid smoke. Ivan’s eyes turned, and he coughed.

— Well, Semenysh, get used to it, — and Zotov slapped him on the shoulder, — you will swallow the smoke.

Ivan did not look at the target, fearing to jinx it, but admiring archers had already fled to him. They, standing away from the cloud of gunpowder smoke, saw two broken logs fly up, and earth from a poured rampart.

“Let’s go and see what,” Khvorostov amused.

The cannons left five archers for protection, the rest moved to the rampart. Moshkin approached the shield, in which, away from the middle, there was a hole the size of a fist. He picked his finger thoughtfully without fear of splinters. Traces of lead were on the boards of the shield. Further, the core, apparently without losing strength, hit the fortified shaft. Two logs, not thick though, were broken in the middle, chips and bark were lying around. All this was sprinkled with earth. Evgraf and Andrei lifted pieces of log, looking for the core. Finally, Zotov, with a nail in his hands, picked out a piece of lead from a deep hole, all broken and crumpled from the strongest blow.

— Here, look... — and showed the core to Ivan.

Well, yes, it was already difficult to call it a core. On the body of the projectile, traces of three rifling of the gun barrel, imprinted in lead when fired, were clearly visible.

— Nda... Just pour now. It is clear why, the guns are mostly without rifling...

— Why? Moshkin did not understand.

— Eh, youth... You didn’t have to burn on the stone

walls yet... Think for yourself, Semenych, he will scatter lead against the stone wall, and the core should break the wall. And expensive... Okay, our gun, otherwise ordinary, field in two or three pounds — this is how much lead is needed...

— It is necessary to think, — said the young man, — he needs soft lead for rifling, and if... Cast iron core with rifling!

— You can try it, and not to come close, not to grind. The barrel will burst. Although I saw ordinary guns, there the barrel will be two times thinner. Well, let's see what's up with the cannon.

Ivan opened the shutter, cleared the chamber, threw out the remnants of the gunpowder case, and looked into the bore. Yes, traces of gray metal were clearly visible on the bronze.

— Well, how is it, — Zotov looked there, — everything is fine! — he shouted to Hovorostov, — now we shoot from the next one. You aim, Semenych, you will.

Now everything was done faster, the gun blurred out, Ivan hit the target, the core was found and taken away.

We returned to prison only in the evening. The foreman stroked the new guns lovingly, and ordered to be put under the canopy, and personally covered with a slingshot.

“From someone else's eye. With the governor, if he jumps to us, there are different people. They have nothing to look at our goodness, — he explained according to the nodding archers. Oh, you pleased me, brothers, oh pleased. Especially you, Ivan. Here's a gift for you — and he gave him the fish hooks — more

and more fun. But don't go alone, only with the Cossacks.

— Semenych he well done, — stepped in for the new comrade Evgraf Isakov, — would let the guy go on a visit to Tula.

— I can't. Trubchev strictly ordered me not to appear there until the summer. Sorry Ivan, service.

— Yes, nothing... We still decided to brainwash...

— You don't think much, otherwise our guns will fall apart. They shoot good honor to you and praise. It will turn out, I will unsubscribe to Moscow, to the Cannon Hut. There the masters themselves will figure out what and how.

Zotov and Isakov nodded their heads, amazed at the wisdom of the foreman of the prison.

— You, Semenych, do not serch. Have you seen the cannon explode? Isakov asked him. Ivan just shook his head in response, — and I saw... The roar... The flame to heaven, the vent to smithereens, the gunners are nearby. Who is burned, who is killed to death, who has legs and whose heads are torn off. They shout such — do not bring the Lord to hear this again. So jokes are bad with powder potion. Let's go and eat... Schy how it smells!

And for sure, Moshkin did not even notice that he had not eaten all day. And then the belly himself told him that it was time to eat, and so desperately that older friends smiled.

Tatar fishing

The day was not bad, and Zinovy Dmitrievich allowed Moshkin to unwind, especially since he was for what merits. The river was not far from their serf, and Hvorostov was not too worried. Cossack trips have not met Crimeans for a long time, so the danger was not expected.

Moshkin saddled a horse, calm and not weak. An ordinary such bay gelding. Ivan dressed in a simple gray sermyag, did not take weapons, only a knife hung on his belt.

— Why, craftsman, let's go? — Stepan Ivanovich Shaly, an old acquaintance of the young man, asked impatiently.

He sat tenaciously, like a molt, in the saddle, holding his burly stallion for a reason. The Cossack was ready for everything — with a saber, squeaked and two pistols.

— Yes, he is an excellent rider, — Demyan Gubnov scratched his strong teeth, — let's go!

This stanitsa, and the rest of the Cossacks, did not rely too much on “maybe,” but more on a sharp saber and a faithful hand. No one had anxiety on their faces. They went far into the steppe, cutting themselves with the Tatars.

Sagittarius habitually sat down on horseback, and walked towards the river. Two more Cossacks set off with them. Five people, all not alone. Pack horses, two, carried a tent and cereals and crackers with them. The calm road did not portend inconvenience or incident. It's already warm, the birds are singing. Ivan corrected the sum thrown over his shoulder — there were cunning fishing devices.

They found a suitable place for the tent quickly, made a hearth, and began to cook porridge. The case is short, and pleasant. Ivan was put in a bowl of food, he mixed the brew with a wooden spoon. Millet boiled well, and hunger would make a wonderful and not such a meal.

— Ivan, is it true that you were transferred to the gunners? Demyan asked him.

“I don’t even know,” the Sagittarius answered honestly, “repaired, greased the guns in the prison. Khvorostov was pleased.

— The salary there is more than that of the archers. Agree.

— Yes, I feel good in archers. What sewed on soap to change.

— Yes, you didn’t go to the daughter of the merchant Kanyushkin, — said the Cossack, sometimes looking at the young man. He already blushed with anger — here, drink kvass. Chill.

Ivan tasted a treat poured into a wooden cup. The rest of the porridge was covered with an iron lid, and buried in coals, leaving food for the morning.

“We’ll take turns sleeping. You, Pushkar, were sent here to rest, for your joy. Well, we will draw lots, who will guard their comrades in turn.

— Well, am I better than others? And I have to watch.

Demyan looked at Stepan, and Stepan at Demyan. One of the Cossacks nodded in agreement, the other inexorably disagreed. Finally, Esaul broke five straws, and showed that one is longer

than the others.

— Pull, — just suggested Stepan.

Ivan chuckled as he checked his luck. I tried it several times, pressed the straws, and decided.

“This one. ‘he called.

Demyan nodded, oh opened his hand. The straw extended by Moshkin turned out to be long.

“You see that?”

Four went to sleep in a tent, one remained to guard the peace of his comrades. Ivan, now with pistols on his belt and a saber on his side, walked quietly nearby. Bright stars in the black sky were perfectly visible, and the moon, appearing from the cloud, illuminated the earth well. It wasn't bad sitting here. Nearby, forest animals snooped. not showing people. Something stirred in the bushes, and Ivan spread the branches with a dagger. But it turned out to be just a simple forest hedgehog, disgusted, smelling a person next to him. The young man smiled, and returned to his stump. Half the night passed, judging by the stars, but he did not want to wake anyone to be replaced. So I met the dawn, and lit a fire, putting a pot of water on the slingshot. He put porridge nearby, and it was exactly warm, as the comrades said.

Soon the Cossacks began to wake up, ran to wash themselves to the river. Stepan was dissatisfied.

— You should have woken up Demyan, but yourself in line to rest. Seniority must be observed, the elders must be listened to, another time I will order you to be flogged. Do not fail, —

Yesaul finished his strict speech.

— Okay, — Ivan muttered, — the porridge is ready, the water is boiling.

— Now we'll make a breeze, hot drink.

And Stepan threw four handfuls of dry berries into the pot. Immediately smelled of raspberries and currants. Everyone sat down nearby, and each senior endowed with porridge, and poured a hot drink into wooden cups.

— Now I'll go fish, — Moshkin warned, — everything is ready for me.

“Don't go far,” Demyan recalled.

But Ivan moved away — not far, but sat down so that he was closed by an earthen mound from the Cossacks. It was cozy, quiet. He put fishing rods on the ropes, sat down next to him. Water flowed quietly, leaves were gently rustling in the trees, as if lulling. And the Sagittarius imperceptibly curled up, fell asleep...

The awakening was scary. He was already tied up, there was a gag in his mouth that you couldn't scream, and he was dragged through the ford to the other side of the river. Nearby there were five Crimean Tatars, whom Ivan would have distinguished by smell — strongly dragged lamb fat from these people. On the other side there were two, apparently, horse breeders, and a dozen horses. Not particularly prominent or rich, but strong, steppe breed. The prisoner was tied to one of the stallions, and the outfit, without saying a word, rushed away from the Serif Line. So Ivan got caught like a crucian carp on a hook.

Seven years away from home

At the Tatars

The Tatars walked quickly, stopping just to change tired horses to fresh ones. There were seven people in the detachment, dressed very picturesquely. The riders could go quickly and far about the two horses, but Ivan saw how careful the Crimeans were. Verst after verst now removed the prisoner from his native places. The young man only prayed to himself, calling for the help of the Almighty.

In the late afternoon, when the eldest of the Tatars, who even had a squeak at the saddle, in addition to a bow and arrows, and a saber instead of the usual Tatar club,

with his hand he pointed to the place for the night.

Suddenly there was a roar of hooves, and apparently, the horses were savvy. unlike Tatar. Their eldest ordered everyone to dismount, and their horses turned out to be more obedient than dogs, and also lay down in tall grass. Sedoks at the ready held bows, their boss picked up a squeak. Ivan could not scream with his mouth tied and call for help. He saw tribesmen ten paces away as their helmets and armour glistened. Their main one pointed to the beam, stretching a luxuriously decorated mace in its direction. Russian horsemen drove by without noticing the

Tatars.

The steppes sat in the grass until night, then their boss, apparently with a mockery, approached Ivan and patted him on the shoulder, and said something Tatar, the rest laughed. We spent the night nearby, but did not light fire. At night, the prisoner was tied differently. The young man tried to free himself, weaken the ropes, but everything was in vain. Fatigue took its toll, and in the morning he fell asleep. They woke him up just a couple of times kicked under the rib.

The jump continued further, but there were no more Russian trips, and the day passed without incident. By evening, the Tatars, having pulled out a hole, made an inconspicuous fire in it. They cooked a stew on it. And so, the Crimeans began to cut the hardest dried horse meat with knives into thin slices. After talking with his own, one Tatar handed the prisoner two crackers and a plate of water. Moshkin soaked a meager dinner, and swallowed it with pleasure. I wanted to eat very much, and after swallowing even this, the prisoner felt much better.

“Who are you?” — tricky words, asked the main Tatar.

— Posadsky, — without thinking, Ivan lied, — went fishing with the Cossacks. I, at the merchant Thaddeus, brought the supplies to the outpost.

Stepnyak nodded. It was unclear from the face whether or not he believed the captive's words. Moshkin decided that as a simple posad person it would be easier to redeem himself, or run away if he was lucky and had an opportunity. The ransom for an ordinary

person was no more than ten rubles, for a warrior they demanded three times more, for a governor as many as ten thousand.

He was tied up again for the night. Ivan lay not far from the extinguished fire, but there were still hot coals... It was necessary to wait until the enemies fell asleep. The young man already imagined how he would crawl to the fire pit, and burn the ropes. And there, at night, it will hide in the darkness. The Tatars do not have dogs, but the steppes themselves will not find him alive.

But one was sitting on a hill, not closing his eyes. Probably two or three hours later, he was replaced by another, slurping something from his flask. Moshkin did not understand anything in Tatar, and now regretted it. But the steppe carried the service well, and in exhaustion the prisoner fell asleep.

The next day was not much different from the past. The same jump all day, and a meager dinner and a brief nap. But here, the elder, the one whom the other Tatars called Akhmat, slightly covering his eyes, joyfully shouted to his own. Ivan squinted, and for sure, he saw the river, you can see the Don, and the walls of the city with towers.

— Arrived, this is Azak, Russian, — Akhmat told the prisoner.

They drove up to a low rampart, at the gates of which soldiers in strange hats with a helmet, caftans, wide pants, and short boots stood guard. They had excellent squeaks, sabers, hatchets and clubs of weapons. Rather, they were Turks. Apparently, the eldest of them approached Akhmat.

They talked to each other for a long time, they all bickered. Ivan was still looking around. In Russian, it was not the City, but Posad, with many houses and houses behind adobe fences. A little away, the harbor was also visible, where there were huge Turkish ships, as many as three. The vessels are large, unprecedented, about those masts each, and thirty or thirty-five oars on each side.

AZOV

A large fortress, eleven towers, everything is stone. True, everything was built of limestone, in some places the stone turned green, and was not clean and elegant. Of course, the fortress looked more sticky than Tula, but he has not yet seen others. There was no huts in the city either, people lived in stone houses, but behind fences made of old stones from disassembled buildings and used again. Trees were visible, everything was strewn with still unripe fruits. Around them walked locals, women with their faces covered to the eyes, and of course, next to men. Those are all settled, bearded, in wonderful caftans, many had daggers behind their belts. But so the place is open, treeless, visible in winter with its winds here it will be very bad, cold.

Next to them were two more chains of slaves, one with chains on their necks. so a common chain united each of these unfortunate. Their clothes were completely dirty from the ground and sweat.

Ivan examined all this while he and ten prisoners were led to adobe sheds. As you can see, there was a whole slave town here, where people deprived of freedom in longing and sadness expected their fate.

Among the Akhmat slaves there was another Cossack, and the rest, judging by the dialect, were Ruthenians, with Chervona, not White, Great Russia. Two of them argued bitterly about something, but Moshkin could not hear. The guard with a stick, guarding them, clattered something and burned both with his weapon. Everyone immediately quieted down.

At their prison there was a guard, two Turks with wonderful guns, the barrel expanded at the end, the young man later found out that this weapon was called a musketon, shoots buckshot, not a bullet, and with sabers. The sabers were good, Ivan even envied. Their guard talked with the soldiers, they opened the room, and began to remove the ropes from the prisoners, and instead shackle them. What is good about them, so you can do something with your hands, but it is clear that now you will not run away. Then the prisoners were driven inside in pokes, and each was given a plate of water and a hard cake.

— Well, that's all, we disappeared, — said one of the Rusyns, — now we will definitely get to the boat. You can't escape from there.

— Do not be fooled, Mikula, God will not leave us. You look, the Cossack seagull will give us freedom, but he will send these non-Christians to Hell.

“God forbid, Osip. God forbid. Who will you be, Orthodox? Mikula asked, — after all, a young clapper! Rusyn was surprised.

— Ivan, my father’s name is Semyon, — Moshkin called himself, — we are the drivers, from Tula. Foolishly caught fishing. Karasey caught, but he himself was caught.

Everyone laughed together, although everyone was not laughing. The Cossack approached Ivan, clapped his shoulder approvingly, and said himself:

— Yes, everyone was caught here. Who was taken with the wagon train, who was caught hunting or fishing. My name is Grigory Kireev’s son Ilyin, from Don I am.

— Everyone found themselves here, well... — Mikula said and spread his hands amusingly, ringing with a chain, — they got caught like fish in the net.

Then the door opened, and the Turk raised his musketon, and brought it to the captives, then beckoned to him with his hand. Everyone went to the exit, not knowing what to think. But everything was much simpler — the guard took the shacklers to the latrine, and then again locked them in prison.

The morning began early for the prisoners, they were raised before dawn, taken out. In front of them stood Akhmat, already familiar to Ivan. He ordered here, the guards bowed respectfully to him. Women with covered faces brought the prisoners bread, dried fish and water. There was also water to rinse your hands before a meal. They ate slowly, the Tatar did not push them.

Nearby, from another prison, women were taken out. They were without shackles, in already dusty clothes. And they were given the same simple breakfast. Judging by the appearance, Polonyanka was also with Chervona Rus. The dialect was understandable to Ivan, although it differed from his usual language. The Rusyns tried to approach, but then the Tatars jumped up, and drove their fellow tribesmen away from each other with poles of copies. On this, the guards calmed down, and squatted nearby, quickly talking about their own. However, some prisoners did not calm down on this.

“Where are you from, beauties?” ‘a restless Mikula shouted.

— From Volyn, — answered one of the women with a beautiful face wrapped in a scarf.

“And I’m from there. Come back, pass what?”

The girl only nodded her head negatively in response, and tore off pieces from the cake, trying not to look at Mikula. Soon Akhmat, familiar to them, came up, and his soldiers were with him. Horses Tatars led about. Approximate the chief led two horses. He brought the horse to the master, he lovingly stroked him, treated him with a delicacy, patted his mane. Then he deftly jumped on a beautiful horse, and moved to the harbor, followed by prisoners, his prey. The shackles rubbed their hands, although they were given burlap to put under hard iron. Chains did not allow to go wide, and slaves made only small steps. All together they rang almost as if they were a trio of horses at a wedding. Small Tatarhats ran around, threw fish bones, shells at prisoners,

shouted:

— Urus, urus!

The guards smiled, sometimes gently shook the mischievous on the heads, and only near the harbor itself, drove the evil baby away from the slaves.

Akhmat drove on to the pier, the horse stepped next to the barrels, deftly stepping over obstacles and debris with his smart legs.

But now a Turk came out to meet him with his guards, or soldiers, Ivan did not understand this here. But this nobleman was dressed richly — a sable collar at a brocade caftan wrapped in a rich gold belt. Around the neck is a gold necklace, fingers humiliated by rings. A tall hat with a peacock feather and green saffron soft boots complemented the outfit. And the weapon was to match the outfit — a saber in a golden sheath, strewn with stones, a pistol and a dagger were also with gold handles. Expensive and rich — that's what the appearance of this mustachioed Turk said. But, he shaved his beard, and his face was fine.

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