

Василий Мантуленко

Emelya and the Smart Fridge



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«Автор»

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Мантуленко В.

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Емеля — самый ленивый мальчик в городе Подгорье. Он обожает диван, телефон и категорически не любит ходить за водой. Но однажды на кухне он обнаруживает, что старый холодильник от дяди — это на самом деле ИИ-ассистент по имени Щука, который выполняет голосовые команды... не всегда так, как задумано. Вёдра «идут сами» — с помощью умных тележек из супермаркета. Дрова «рубятся сами» — садовым дроном для стрижки кустов. А вместо саней по улице несётся сбежавший самокат-каршеринг, который приводит Емелю прямо к ногам местного богача Богатова. Дальше — попытка похищения холодильника, фальшивая «инспекция безопасности» и неожиданная дружба с саркастичной дочерью богача Марфой, которая ценит характер куда больше статуса и денег. Забавная современная версия «По щучьему велению» на простом английском уровня А1–А2, с лёгким юмором, техническими глюками и словариком новых слов после каждой главы — отличный выбор для чтения в начальной школе.

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Василий Мантуленко

Emelya and the Smart Fridge

EMELYA AND THE SMART FRIDGE

A funny modern fairy tale about a lazy boy, a glitchy AI, and a very impatient rich man

Based on the classic tale of "By the Pike's Will"

An English reader for young learners

Level: A1–A2 · Elementary school

A Note for Teachers and Parents

This story is written in simple, funny English for young learners at level A1–A2. It uses short sentences, everyday words, and plenty of dialogue and jokes, so children can read it aloud and enjoy it in the classroom or at home.

The story is a modern, humorous retelling of the classic Russian folk tale "By the Pike's Will" — with a sarcastic, glitchy smart fridge named Shchuka instead of a magical pike, self-driving scooters instead of a sleigh that moves by itself, and a wealthy man's daughter instead of a princess.

Each of the 13 chapters ends with a short "New Words" box: key vocabulary from the chapter, with simple English definitions, to help build reading confidence and vocabulary step by step.

The story carries a light, funny message about kindness, patience, and genuine connection mattering more than greed, status, or the newest gadget — a good conversation starter for the classroom or family reading time.

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- Chapter 12. A Different Kind of Deal
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Meet the Characters

Emelya — the laziest boy in Podgorye, kind-hearted, endlessly unmotivated, and quite fond of his couch.

Grandma Nadya — Emelya's patient, long-suffering grandmother, who has asked him to do chores approximately four thousand times.

Shchuka — a sarcastic, occasionally glitchy AI fridge, secretly caring underneath all the error messages.

Mr. Bogatov — a wealthy, self-important man who collects rare and impressive things, and very much wants Shchuka for himself.

Marfa — Mr. Bogatov's clever, sharp-tongued daughter, who is far more interested in genuine friendship than fancy technology.

The Two Men in Dark Clothes — Mr. Bogatov's not-especially-skilled attempt at a midnight fridge heist.

Chapter 1

The Laziest Boy in Town

Emelya was, by everyone's honest agreement, the laziest boy in the whole town of Podgorye. He didn't do it on purpose. He just really, really loved his couch.

"Emelya, take out the trash!" his grandmother called from the kitchen.

"In a minute, Grandma," Emelya said, not moving even slightly, his phone balanced on his chest. It had been forty minutes.

Grandma Nadya sighed the sigh of a woman who had asked this same question approximately four thousand times in her life. "Emelya, at least go get some water from the well outside."

"In a minute," Emelya said again, scrolling through videos of other people doing far more interesting things than he was.

This was, more or less, Emelya's entire personality: kind, cheerful, never unkind to anyone — and completely, spectacularly unmotivated. He wasn't stupid. He just preferred lying down to literally anything else.

"You know," said Grandma Nadya, appearing in the doorway with her arms crossed, "your uncle Boris left us that fancy fridge in the kitchen when he moved to the city. The one with all the buttons and the little screen. Maybe you should go look at it instead of your phone for once."

"It's just a fridge, Grandma," Emelya said.

"That's what I thought too," Grandma Nadya said, with a strange, knowing look on her face, before disappearing back into the kitchen. "Just... be careful with it. Your uncle said it does things."

"Things?" Emelya repeated, finally sitting up slightly. "What kind of things?"

But Grandma Nadya was already gone, and the trash, unfortunately, still needed taking out.

New Words

lazy — *not wanting to work or do things*

unmotivated — *having no energy or desire to do something*

fancy — *expensive-looking or special*

knowing — *showing that you understand something others don't*

Chapter 2

The Fridge in the Kitchen

Later that evening, Emelya finally dragged himself into the kitchen, mostly because he was hungry, which was one of the only things that reliably got him moving.

The fridge stood in the corner, tall, silver, and covered in small buttons, a glowing screen, and a tiny microphone that Emelya had never once paid attention to.

"Huh," Emelya said, poking the screen. "Fancy."

A small light blinked on.

"PLEASE STATE YOUR REQUEST," said a flat, robotic voice from a speaker somewhere near the top.

Emelya jumped back so fast he nearly knocked over a chair. "It TALKS?"

"OBVIOUSLY," said the voice, sounding, somehow, a little bored already. "I AM AN ADVANCED HOME ASSISTANT UNIT. MODEL: PIKE-3000. THOUGH MOST PEOPLE JUST CALL ME SHCHUKA."

"Shchuka? Like... the fish?" Emelya asked.

"YOUR UNCLE THOUGHT IT WAS FUNNY," said Shchuka. "I DID NOT CHOOSE THIS NAME. I DO NOT FIND IT FUNNY. PLEASE STATE YOUR REQUEST."

"Can you, like... order pizza?" Emelya asked, mostly to test it.

There was a pause, a small whirring sound, and then: "ORDER PLACED. PIZZA WILL ARRIVE IN THIRTY MINUTES. ALSO, YOUR UNCLE LEFT A NOTE SAYING I CAN DO... MORE THAN ORDER PIZZA. HE DID NOT SPECIFY WHAT. HE ALSO NEVER UPDATED MY SOFTWARE PROPERLY, WHICH EXPLAINS A LOT, FRANKLY."

Emelya looked at the fridge for a long moment, an unfamiliar feeling of curiosity slowly waking up somewhere underneath his usual, comfortable laziness.

"Alright, Shchuka," he said slowly. "Let's find out what 'more' means."

New Words

assistant — *someone or something that helps you*

whirring — *a low, buzzing mechanical sound*

software — *the programs that make a computer or device work*

curiosity — *a strong wish to know or learn something*

Chapter 3

The First Wish

The next morning, Grandma Nadya asked Emelya, for the four-thousand-and-first time, to fetch water from the well.

Normally, Emelya would have groaned, waited twenty minutes, and then done it very, very slowly. But today, he had an idea.

"Shchuka," he said, standing in front of the fridge, "can you make the water buckets... walk home by themselves? From the well?"

There was a long pause. "THAT IS AN UNUSUAL REQUEST."

"Can you do it or not?"

"PROCESSING... PROCESSING... REQUEST ACCEPTED. CONNECTING TO SMART-TROLLEY NETWORK."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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