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Lana Gid

UNBOOK

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Unbook

«Издательские решения»

Gid L.

Unbook / L. Gid — «Издательские решения»,

A book about creativity, imagination, and self-development. A light, positive read for self-improvement and boosting self-esteem.

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Содержание

I	6
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	13

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UNBOOK ONE (parts 1—11)

by Lana Gid

1. Joyfulness.

Lia lay spread out on the surface of the water. At last, the long-awaited silence... No one is nearby, only me and the water, she thought.

Not being used to thinking about nothing, the girl began counting in her thoughts.

This mysterious language amused her, and joy in silence was doubly wonderful.

I,

Kí,

Trí,
Ladí,
Pethí,
Oshestí,
Seizhetí,
Uturzhali,
Enedevetí,
Dekateritsí.
Enedevetí,
Uturzhali,
Seizhetí,
Oshestí,
Pethí,
Ladí,
Trí,

Kí,

I

Animals also amused her, especially those that coexist well with humans.

One of her favorite poems was about a cat and a dog.

Reading helped her escape from the surrounding world, and Lia often used it for that.

Most animals are free from so many prejudices!

People have much to learn from them. For example, animals do not envy one another; they usually have a healthy, appropriate self-esteem. And they do not pick on trifles the way some people do.

2. Drowsiness.

Drowsiness walked with big, quiet steps. She dreamed of a huge pillow. Instead of a bed. Embroidered on the pillow was a map of the world. A little song played in the background. It seemed as if someone had turned on a lullaby.

The song was about a female elephant playing with a dolphin among the clouds. She tossed him into the air, caught him, tossed him again... Behind them other animals wandered, and countless birds flew. The song itself was open to slight adjustments. Lia did this laughing and joking.

3. Counting Rhymes.

Classmates often asked Lia to draw different characters for them, and she gladly did so. In return, the students helped her with schoolwork whenever necessary. The girl had a small dream: to gather all those drawn characters into one book. She only had to learn how to write well.

Time spent wisely at school greatly improves writing skills. That was the plan.

The drawn characters, meanwhile, were preserved in copies in Lia's private collection — with the help of a camera and a scanner, among other things.

While the book was waiting for itself, the girl moved onto the ground and watched a group of children walking past on their way to the boarding school. Loudly, all together, the children chanted a counting rhyme.

Lia not only listened carefully to the words but also mentally translated them into *ilí*:

We decided to plant a garden,

Egisí idén decidirá plantár nori,

But the weather was all wrong.

Bet Perú idén irá faultyé.

We urgently needed rain.

Urgentuó estará anabí necessaryé.

The chief came to mind.

Recordará boí.

He refused to take the risk.

Ití idén desistirá ariscár.

So we had to call the bears.

Idén ligará kambuinisí.

One bear jumped on a cloud.

Ié kambuini ser saltará aúf parní.

Things became better.

Und será beteruó.

Two bears jumped on a cloud.

Kié kambuinisi ser saltará aúf parní.

Things became better...

Será beteruó.

Three bears jumped on a cloud.

Trié kambuinisi ser saltará áuf parní.

Things became better...

Und será beteruó.

Four bears jumped on a cloud.

Ladié kambuinisi ser saltará áuf parní.

Things became better...

Será beteruó.

In the end, the garden quickly grew.

In finí rapiduó crescerá norní.

Each of us was happy about the garden.

Everyé egisié alegrará derd ití.

Ah, those passersby... With so many gardeners, a garden simply cannot become neglected. And if it ever does, nature will take over, and the garden will turn into a forest. A real one. With animals! Because a forest without animals is just a grove...

Lia pushed herself off the ground with a sharp leap into the air. She picked a fruit from a tree, having already decided that it would be her main snack for today.

"The sooner I start, the sooner I'll finish," she thought. And she began writing her poem about groves.

4. Awakening.

I need to... I simply have to make sure I'm no longer asleep. How can I do that? How can I prove to myself that I'm awake?

Write it down!

The girl took a waterproof cosmetic pouch out of her pocket. Inside were a pen, a pencil, and a notebook. One of Lia's favorite pastimes was using things for purposes other than what they were meant for. That was why everything here was in its proper place. Everything except the poem. Writing it down took time once again.

There it is again, that oddity... I think much faster than I write... I have to duplicate things, at the very least. For some reason...

Also... I'm running out of space for notes. I'll have to find a way around it...

The poem was written on the last blank page available for notes, although the notebook had to be turned sideways, swapping the horizontal and vertical orientation. It worked. Every word fit. The only drawback was that part of an earlier text, written by someone before, had to be partially covered. It read:

"Ask yourself a new question every day. Don't scold the shadow for having no answer. A shadow can become a clue to the light."

Everything seemed clear enough. If the answer doesn't come right away, you can look at something opposite and draw your own conclusions.

I'll go through the notebook once more, reread every phrase, and see how quickly I managed everything. Well, not everything...

Whenever the girl disagreed with something she had written, she drew a minus sign next to the phrase in pencil, and once the lesson had been learned, she replaced it with a plus. Sometimes her opinion changed, and she turned a minus into a plus by adding just one vertical line.

As long as there was no decision yet on some possible matter, a little more blank space remained on that page than on those with lines or crosses. A bookmark was placed there as well. The last page received its plus sign, and at that moment Lia decided that in the new notebook, which she would make herself, she would write down her questions.

So, after returning home, the girl made herself a new notebook (and several blanks for the next one as well). It was larger than the previous one and had pockets. Now, if it ever filled up too, there would be no urgency: she could simply put notes into a pocket and copy them over later if necessary.

5. Awareness.

Evening was approaching. The song from the dream came back to her.

The girl began thinking about the difference between words.

Her night's sleep had been lucid, meaning the events in the dream were quite easy to control.

Lia was writing a book. Editing the texts was convenient and took almost no time. Every word could conceal additional information, including a picture. Sleeping was actually interesting. The book was meant to be different for everyone, and that gave it a mysterious charm.

In the dream, He Himself approached Lia. That seemed unconscious to the girl because she had never imagined such a thing could happen.

He offered Lia a chance to solve riddles. She would have agreed before because she liked finding answers. But this time she refused — she had more important plans.

Her plans were to visit the familiar animals from her favorite books and conduct a couple of surveys with them. Even in dreams, time was limited by invisible, yet very real, boundaries.

How could she know that it was truly He Himself? It seemed he introduced himself that way:

“ — I am He Himself.”

He Himself slowly walked away, muttering something in dissatisfaction, while Lia turned to what she had planned.

She only had to think about whose home she wanted to appear near, and she would find herself there. Then she asked the animals how they remembered the beginning of their existence and what their hobbies were. As for the question of their appearance, at that time it seemed more important for understanding Everything, while asking about hobbies helped adjust her plans for the future, because during the holidays many seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, and even months became free. They ought to be filled with something worthwhile.

Besides, all the plans from her notebook had been completed, and now she would have to invent tasks for herself. They could easily be combined with additional hobbies, perhaps even wonderful ones.

Among the hobbies mentioned by the characters were knitting, stained glass, traveling, sewing, learning a foreign language, and statistics. The girl decided that taking up sewing would be worthwhile, since so many useful things could be sewn! Thus, the decision about a temporary hobby was made. For the holidays, that was quite enough, especially because there were always plenty of needles, thread, and different fabrics at home. She could begin that very day.

After the decisions had been made and the necessary conclusions drawn, Lia wished to wake up.

Upon waking, the first thing she did was finish her previous task — she completed the notebook that lay on the table. After looking through it, she placed it beside the books she collected.

She collected only good books! The notebook found its place on the shelf beside Erwin Moser's series about animals helping one another. She owned them in different languages, just like her notes.

The newly freed space on the table gave her another idea: she could sew animal figures and communicate through them without relying on dreams — that is, whenever she wished. Thus, the plan moved toward becoming reality. The new notebook began filling with something like pattern sketches. At first they were flat, but later that no longer seemed enough to Lia. She began thinking in three dimensions — examining the potential model from different sides and assembling it all together in her mind.

Sketches and notes were essential, because how fascinating it would be to look back at her creations over time and measure her progress! It seemed that when you work on yourself, you often become a different person.

How unusual! You seem to be one person, yet at the same time many. That was where school mathematics once again failed to match her own logical reflections.

But... she had already decided to diversify her life with different activities, not to become too absorbed in any single pursuit. So, enough thinking — it was time to start sewing.

The cat was the first to be chosen. She and Lia shared a love of freedom, and it seemed that work on this character would go faster. The hedgehog, for example, was still a long way off.

The cat was drawn on fabric with a felt-tip pen. Then it was cut out along the invisible outline with scissors, using two layers of fabric. Lia decided that, for now, one illustrated side was enough for the figure. First, the other side could always be drawn later if necessary. Second, the backs of the figures would rest against the wall, so it was better to leave them one-sided and begin developing them in three dimensions. She believed this decision would speed up the process.

6. The Discovery.

Where did the notebook with the preliminary instructions come from?

Lia was spending time at a summer work camp located in a walnut grove. There was a chicken coop there, and the children collected eggs as eagerly as if they were gathering mushrooms.

Every evening, a campfire was lit. Lia noticed that the flames always leaned in the same direction, even though the wind blew from different sides if you watched it carefully. She walked over to the nearest tree, the one the fire seemed to be pointing at, looked up, and saw what appeared to be a stone drawn on the bark.

Lia had noticed a similar stone long before. It was located right by the entrance to the camp, on the side accessible to the children.

Her love of riddles fulfilled its purpose. Running to the entrance, Lia rolled the stone aside. Beneath it she found a small tin chest. She had never seen anything like it before. A lock hung from the chest, but it wasn't locked and opened with ease.

Inside she found a notebook as well as handmade postcards, each containing a message, apparently written in ILÍ. The postcards were decorated with drawings that were difficult to reproduce. This marked the beginning of Lia's passion for collecting instructional drawing books, because she believed that anyone could learn to draw if they truly wanted to, starting with something simple. These instructional books were given their own shelf in the bookcase, and the illustrations inside them were labeled in different languages. Thus began a collaborative form of creativity with artists.

The first postcard whose meaning became clear to Lia bore the inscription:

“VÍ terá potencialí unlimitedé,”

which meant something similar to *“You have unlimited potential.”*

This phrase greatly encouraged the girl and supported her throughout her life.

After reading the other postcards, it became clear that words cannot be translated literally. In fact, nothing can be translated word for word. More precisely, similar words in different languages are only similar in meaning because they are usually used under different circumstances. For example, the word “snow” used by the Inuit cannot be matched one hundred percent with the word “snow” used in hot countries. For some people, snow is an everyday occurrence. For others, it is almost a miracle. For this reason, and also because the Inuit perceive many different varieties of snow, they have numerous words referring to the concept of snow.

To make the phrases appear before her eyes more often, Lia cut each postcard into four pieces to use them in a game of *Quartet*. It was a game for several players, although sometimes the girl had to play it alone. The Quartet cards were compact enough to fit conveniently into a pocket and proved to be an excellent source of reflection.

7. Simultaneity.

In the mornings, television broadcast an animated series about a little kingdom. Although the television served merely as background for Lia — to listen to different languages — the cartoon also helped develop her imagination. Satellite television made it possible to watch the same stories as they were broadcast in different countries.

Sometimes the girl spoke aloud to the cartoon characters, and afterward speaking the new language became easier. At the same time, she mentally translated what was being said. In this way, she managed to do several things simultaneously.

During lessons, Lia not only listened to the teacher and took notes, but also made sketches, designed games, and wrote stories.

One should live here and now, but while planning the future! That future usually consisted of transferring drafts into a clean copy. And while those drafts were being rewritten, new thoughts emerged.

“Thoughts should be written down,” the mysterious notebook said.

“An opinion is the consistency of accumulated experience.” That was approximately the meaning extracted from the inscription on one of the postcards, and it became clear why some people enjoy arguing simply for the sake of arguing. They have no genuine opinion, only a desire to win. That alone is what guides them.

Realizing this, Lia argued less and stopped trying to prove things to others, because if someone who lacked the necessary experience, for example, was not prepared to be convinced in an argument, then the effort certainly wasn’t worthwhile. In other words, an argument was not worth the attention and time it consumed, because both could be directed toward something far more useful — for example, organizing one’s future.

8. Planning.

Lia’s organization of the future began in her early school years. She stood up for justice, yet at the same time decided not to engage in arguments. After printing the *Mona Lisa* in its full size, the girl glued the picture onto a huge canvas and colored *Mona Lisa* almost like a coloring book — naturally, in her own way.

The result was this: the *Mona Lisa* was hiding a mysterious object behind her right cheek, something useful for all humanity, while inside the bra that *Lisa* had simply decided not to wear, there was a packet of black tea — in support of Black people.

The girl thought about adding a few more riddles. She took an old notebook from the shelf. Inside it, arranged roughly in alphabetical order, were various kinds of brainteasers. The notebook had one purpose:

“To collect as many different kinds of puzzles as possible in one place. Logical ones — and not only logical ones.”

That was why Lia created her own riddles, leaving them on loose sheets tucked between the pages, without titles... Their story was rather strange. First came the puzzles, and only afterward the names. There was clearly something non-linear about that approach, but it was faster! Even in the completed notebook a few details were still missing, yet the collection was almost finished.

9. Additions.

One of her favorite puzzles in the collection had once been the one in which you had to name colors.

This time, however, it seemed too easy.

The main goal of the puzzle was not to confuse the concept of color with the meaning of the words. The words had to be read aloud from left to right and then from right to left. The actual colors in which the words were written were to be completely ignored.

Lia loved adding new twists to things that were already unusual. In her version of the instructions, it was no longer the words themselves that had to be spoken aloud, but the colors they were printed in. This time, first from right to left, and then the other way around. This variation also seemed very easy, so the girl decided to leave her notebook to the children she might one day have. And if she never had children (which should be a carefully considered decision), she would donate it to a kindergarten. Better yet, to every kindergarten.

10. Puzzles.

At the beginning of every new school year, Lia gave the class a themed notebook. One of her classmates — or one of their parents — would take it home for about a day and add a new brainteaser. As a result, the notebook became filled with unusual ideas. Mistakes appeared in it as well, but it had long since become clear that correcting mistakes was the teachers' job.

First, it was better to maintain good relationships with classmates, and second, mistakes in puzzles seemed extraordinarily interesting, because very often (unlike at school) a single puzzle could have several acceptable answers.

If a puzzle contained an error, the number of possible answers could be far greater than the generally accepted one. Besides, noticing the mistake was itself a challenge.

One of the boys wrote:

"What is unnecessary for me in a convertible if I use it only in summer, while in autumn, winter, and spring it's yours."

At first, Lia thought that, in this case, the unnecessary thing in the convertible was its roof. Then her imagination took off... They had recently been talking about sharks, and the girl imagined that instead of a boy, there was a shark sitting in the convertible. A shark would probably find a convertible without a bottom even more convenient — although preferably with a seat.

So the solution depends on the personality of the one asking the question. When she noticed the absence of a question mark, it became clear that the sentence was not a question at all, but a statement. Most likely by mistake, but it meant that *something* in the convertible was unnecessary. It was even possible that for almost a year that *something* belonged to Lia, because it (he, she, or it) was unnecessary to someone for three months of the year.

But... it was also possible that the convertible contained some *thing* that was not always used by the same person, because for nine months it passed into someone else's hands.

11. Home.

Somewhere near the beginning of that very strange notebook she had found, it said something like:

"Write down your conclusions every day, putting laziness off farther and farther each time."

For such conclusions, the girl kept a separate notebook, which quickly filled up. It found its place on a shelf between Osho's books and *The Little Book Inside a Book About Id and Nishka*. Later, while looking through the filled notebook during her free time from school, Lia noticed that some of her conclusions now seemed childishly naïve and even funny, while others she copied into the mysterious notebook.

There she also recorded her observations of the superintelligence that partially managed the house.

The superintelligence itself had been installed by her grandfather at Lia's request. He possessed an extraordinary talent for all kinds of technology and engineering. Her grandmother, a self-taught artist, decorated the house — which she and her grandfather had built together — with her own paintings.

By the way, Lia lived with her grandparents. Her parents had treated her badly, so she simply left... If the same thing had happened with her grandparents, she would have left again. But everything was going well.

Once, those so-called parents tried to regain her trust, but they failed. The girl simply threatened to tell their acquaintances — including police officers — about their real behavior rather than the one they pretended to have, if they tried to “befriend” her again. After that, the so-called parents left her alone.

Back then, Lia filled several sheets of paper. First, to pour out her feelings and get rid of them more quickly. Second, to gradually reshape the words toward what she wanted them to become. It worked. The original sentence,

“I don’t know what calmness is,”

gradually transformed into,

“Calmness is the foundation of my existence.”

What had been one way for years changed in less than a week.

The universe expanded. There were noticeably more possibilities to choose from. It would have been strange not to take advantage of the new opportunities.

On one page of the notebook, a new entry appeared:

“Become Yourself.”

UNBOOK TWO (parts 12—22)

by Lana Gid

12. Abilities.

Trusting herself was far from easy, because as a person matures, many authorities appear who seem to know more simply because they are older or, for example, travel frequently.

One constantly has to balance between public life and private life, studying for oneself or for distinction, behaving openly and honestly or merely properly.

For her birthday, Lia asked many of her acquaintances to write about her strengths. That was how she began getting to know herself more quickly, so to speak, through the eyes of others. She handed out sheets of paper, and they were returned filled in. In return, Lia gave each person a drawing featuring their name if they had put genuine effort into their response. For herself, she kept copies for the sake of history.

One quiet boy took longer than the others to answer her request. His sheet was different... But in the end it became clear that he had put a great deal of effort into it. Instead of a few, though usually pleasant, sentences, he had written a poem listing many of Lia’s qualities.

So much had been described, yet Lia still noticed gaps. He didn’t know everything about her, so he had overlooked a great deal. An entire story could have been written about each word. She decided not to do that. Not yet. Instead, she found a list of professions on the Internet, looked up the skills and abilities each required, and it seemed that the question of her future plans was answered in that way. There was still so much unexplored and unpracticed!

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