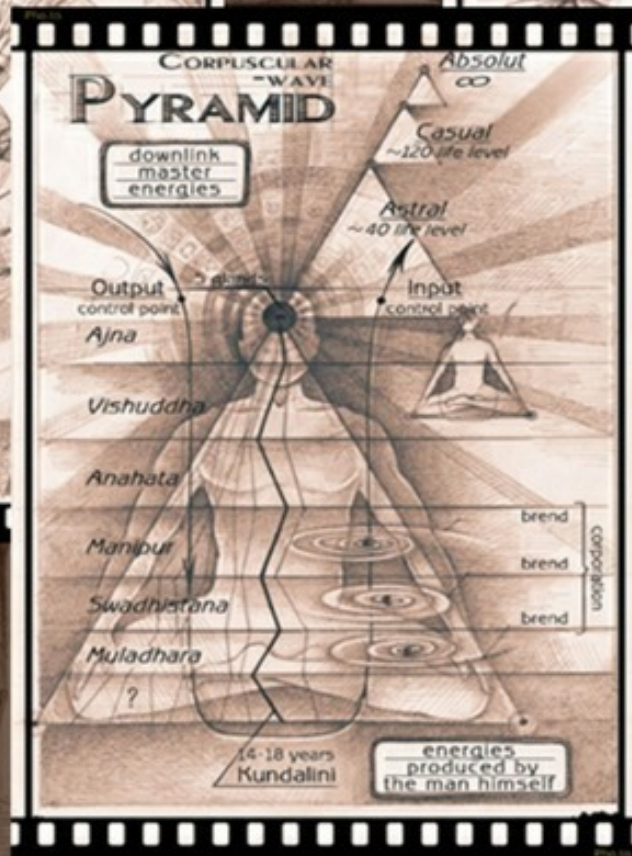


Dmitry Shustin

SHAMAN

Book 1 Renaissance



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Dmitry Shustin

Shaman. Book 1. Renaissance

«Издательские решения»

Shustin D.

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I'm so far gone that it is already impossible to stop...Have you ever thought that you can be anyone other, not alike yourself today? Would you like to feel and see a little bit more than you do now? Would you like to know what it means to be truly alive?...Once there was a moment when I asked these questions to myself. Since then much time has passed, and now, having learned many interesting and surprising things, I understand that this is only the beginning, the beginning of a long journey...

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Shaman. Book 1. Renaissance

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Part 1. Awakening

A light beam of the morning sun glimmered in the window. It seemed to me that I was about to wake up, but I was still sleeping. Such a strange feeling when you can either go on dreaming or return to everyday reality, and what is more both dream and reality seem to be the same. Having rubbed my eyes, I still decided to hit the deck because it was a normal working day today and soon I had to get ready for work. Everything was as usual. Even sun, poking through the yellow curtains, appeared to be so ordinary that I could simply miss it. I hit the deck and walked aside my balcony. A new pack of cigarettes purchased in advance in the evening was waiting for me there. Having stepped out on the balcony, I saw the endless stream of cars already familiar to me, making their monotonous movement towards a new day and a new business. Suddenly I recalled when I was a child and waking up I've seen infield courtyard with bushes and various fruit trees in the window. I imagined how I was dreaming about living and working in the city with that endless stream of cars that I have the pleasure to watch right now. However, here we are, my dream came true but I don't feel any mad delight and joy. It seems that now other higher and bigger dreams were the masters of my mind. If you stop for a moment and really think about the meaning of your life, a slight suspicion that your whole life is just cycling of events and objects may creep into your mind. When you strive endlessly to achieve something for gaining eventually that very happiness, you desire. However, every time you achieve a certain goal, gently beckoning happiness is slipping away again...

After looking for some time at awakening up city instead of starting quickly getting ready for work, I suddenly sat down on a wooden bench, which is luckily located in the shady side of the balcony. And I really had to get ready and leave the house as time was steadily approaching 8 am. As it later turned out, I would be late for good two hours. These very two hours would determine my future for many years, if not for the whole life.

Having sat on the bench, I felt a pleasant touch of wooden planks to my body. Maybe because I was born in the countryside, maybe just because of my addiction to everything alive and real, but every time I felt a real thrill from any wooden objects whether it's furniture or even small household utensils. Easy breath of wind and the pleasant warmth of sunlight relaxed my mind and allowed me to immerse myself into my own thoughts. And these thoughts were about the fact that both today and yesterday and the day before and generally for the past couple of years for sure, I had to wake up and go to work to pay the rent and housing in order to have the place where to wake up and gain strength to go to work again... It may seem that these thoughts are like ravings of a madman, but if it is so, then at least 2/3 of the world population are madmen. Such sad fact could not help flashing through my mind. Previously such thoughts occurred to me more than once, but they also disappeared as quickly as they came, not leaving at least any significant trace in my head. It has been always so, but not today.

It is today when such ideas had such a strong influence on me that... I woke up and I woke up for real! I suddenly realized what a huge amount of possibilities are hidden behind the walls of my apartment. And even if my whole world was just this small apartment with a small shabby sofa, a table and a couple of closets called now «vintage»?

Various kinds of old objects, things, recordings are hiding here and waiting for their time...

Perhaps this is my diary which I was trying to keep from the very early childhood, but I could not hold out for more than 5 days, although in five days I was able to fill at least the whole notebook. I remember how for want of important events I could just write down the news from TV. This activity seemed to be really important to me, at that time I still did not know about the existence of the World Wide Web. Although a global network was already gaining its momentum somewhere far away 1,000 kilometers from my village, somewhere in distant America...

Perhaps these are photos taken at different times. Each photo, if you look closer, plunges us into a whole epoch when it was made. This is especially noticeable at the old photos even if they are black and white. The older photography is the starker contrast is. You begin to notice not only the faces of people but also their entire surrounding: clothes, sometimes, it seems to be strange, or vice versa causes a feeling of admiration (this feeling arises when there is a return of the once-forgotten style in vogue), the interior of the shooting place where you can find entirely strange things preserved only in the local history museums. Particularly interesting are the pictures of the so-called «transitional period» between the black-and-white and color photos. These slightly reddish photos looking unrealistic, but so memorable. The defect of colors seemed to be only the imperfection of technology at that time, but today these images became part of history. It's strange we begin to appreciate many things only some time later...

Perhaps, this is my collection of coins, which will be completely lost some time later and I will have to collect everything from the ground up. Another things I have true passion for are the coins, paper money (it is generally agreed to call them “bonds” – printed banknotes that were once in circulation, but now they have become the subject of antiquity), various bonds, bank notes and everything else that refers to this subject anyhow. Coins have always caused a double feeling in me – on the one hand, I always liked them as an object itself, but on the other hand, – I saw the possibility of a financial perspective in them. The idea was very simple: if you regularly buy a certain set of collector's coins, the number of freely convertible on the market sets will become less and less. Thus, the cost will be increased for each set in particular. The main thing is not to break your own rules and go directly to the intended purpose. But I didn't have enough enthusiasm for buying more than 5—7 sets and then somehow I calmed down and could easily get carried away by the new subject to meet my rapidly changing interests. Generally, money have some magical influence on the human nature – the value of money increases the value of person, both in his own eyes and in the eyes of people around him.

All these things, once forgotten and many of them being covered with a thick layer of dust seemed to be asking for attention, for being presented with a piece of that subtle energy which is called soul. Normally the soul of an average person almost always sleeps, but it is waiting, every moment waiting when the man will wake up and then his soul like Danko's burning heart will burst into flames. And at the moment when the soul is awakening, somewhere deep inside a new, unknown to you feeling of bliss and delight appears. Somehow, associations from childhood occur in such moments. Perhaps we were really happy then? What has happened to us now? Where did we turn off the right way? And does it really exist, this right way?

Having felt that consciousness is waking up, you begin to see differently. Objects take on another meaning, deeper than before. Every cell of your body can feel now and all the world around, as if obeying only to one's will, lights up and reveals more and more new facets of itself.

What keeps us away from seeing the world in all its glory? It's enough to look at it once with clear and not blear eyes and you will never be the same. This feeling goes so deep inside you that even people around you, as if obeying some mysterious instincts, begin to treat you as a completely different person and sometimes give in without understanding why they do it.

Suddenly a sharp noise outside dispelled my fantasy and I reluctantly returned to the usual world full of everyday routine. Actually, I quite often lapse into day-dreaming, captured by thoughts. Time passed steadily, but I didn't want to leave the balcony. Bench seemed to be alive under the rays of the morning sun and a slight scent of wood breathed in the air.

A few more minutes passed and I finally came to my senses. The room door was slightly shut. With one flick of my wrist, I opened it and went inside. On entering the room, I really noticed that there are so many different things around me as far as my eyes can see. The room was quite comfortable and nice, despite the fact that most of its furniture consisted of old wooden chests and

closets. Chandelier decorated with all sorts of figures and cutouts fit in the interior very well. When the evening twilight thickened in the room, this chandelier got its own, indescribable charm of antique. But the biggest attention I paid to the wooden ledge of some subject from the pantry. It was interesting that I could not immediately figure out what it was. By that time, more than two months passed since I had rented this apartment, located just in two hundred meters from my workplace. And in all that time I never looked into the pantry. My curiosity was flaring up more and more. Quickly stepping on the soft carpet, I found myself at the pantry door. However, it was opened just a little and it seemed impossible to open it. A sofa and an old chest of drawers were too close to it. I gently pushed the sofa away and managed to reach my goal.

That very object was... easel. It was obvious that it was used often enough. At the edges and particularly at the bottom lining, paint droplets were translucent. Sometimes they were mixed and formed incredible color combinations. However much time has passed since then, and an easel seemed to be frozen in anticipation of new creation. I carefully took it out and put it in the center of the room. Somewhere on the shelf were laying pieces of canvas, which could be still used for work. However not being an artist and having no skills in dealing with the canvas, I decided to leave it where it had been for the last few years. Having gone through some notes and heaps of books, I found a few sheets of paper of the needed size that fit the frame. While making my search I was surprised to find out that the apartment owners were teachers of literature. Most books were dedicated to this profession; folded sheets with essays, written expositions and other school works were laying here and there. Some of them were clean and had high marks; others were covered with red ink inside and out. I noticed one essay. The handwriting was such that it seemed as if letters were carved with a rough stone on a rock. It did rather resemble an ancient cuneiform than a modern language.

After selecting some sheets of the needed size, I grabbed one of them and attached it to the easel frame with clips. It was a burning desire to draw something. I picked up a pencil and was ready to start my work, when suddenly...

...When suddenly I realized that I do not know what to draw, moreover, I had no idea what I could draw at all. At that moment, I felt great emptiness inside. I was still the same as before, but now I looked at myself as if a little higher, from somewhere far above. I had nothing in my head besides small daily activities. This idea flashed in my mind like thunder. In a twink, I realized that I don't live, but just go through my life. As if with my brain on autopilot. All my activities, being very important and necessary (but necessary for whom?), in a new light didn't make sense any more. Even before realizing the emptiness inside me, I immediately felt an irresistible longing to get new knowledge.

Inspired by my new desire, I went to work.

In quick and a bit hasty steps, I went down to the first floor and went out. I did not notice when the morning cool, invigorating my sleepy mind, completely disappeared. By 10 o'clock, it was so warm that it seemed to be a real heat by midday. The city, not subsiding for a minute, was gaining more and more speed now. After passing through the shady park, sown with all sorts of trees and flowerbeds, I came to the place of my employment.

My working day began quite normally. I joined the public frenetic pace so quickly that there wasn't left any trace from the morning meditation. It was a feeling that the whole world in all its immense diversity was trying to occupy all my thoughts without giving me a second to come to my senses and realize what I'm doing and why. In general, I liked my work, especially when I compared it with other less prestigious types of work. And every time it calmed down my mind flurried by various thoughts. But really I was interested in and delighted with what I was doing probably for the first 3—4 months. During this time I was actually getting acquainted with both workflow and people involved in it. Then rather a strange phenomenon appeared. Neither the conditions nor the staff nor even the increase of wages gave me the former keen interest in my work. Time after time vague suspicions about the soundness of my existence appear. Somewhere in the depth of the soul the idea is emerging – how great it would be to direct all my creative and intellectual potential to a hobby.

But work took so much time that sometimes, in moments of extreme fatigue I didn't understand whether it really exists, my favorite activity. If it is possible generally to have such activity that would bring both money and pleasure. Moreover, a permanent pleasure, which will not transform with the course of time into something like duty.

Such thoughts occurred to me constantly at least once every 2—3 months. And they ended either with a conflict at work or simply with a change of mood and the realization that I was thinking again about some stupid things, and I should be immensely grateful for having such a good work.

However, after this morning such thoughts seemed to seize control of my mind, not giving me any opportunity to concentrate on work. Usually I immediately took a tool and began to make simple movements learned over the years. Fingers seem to begin making the necessary actions themselves. Sometimes these actions are so fast and precise that even eye can't catch them.

My colleagues and I have spent most of our time at the enterprise in such «mechanical» condition. And strangely, it was the key to a successfully done work. However, this fact does not have so much influence the personal success. As it will turn out later this is really not the same thing.

Today the usual order of things for me was broken a little. Although somewhere inside there was a strong feeling that now everything is exactly as it should be. As soon as I took my tool and started using it for the processing of a metal workpiece or a wire, I was horrified to realize that movements once had been brought to the automatism no longer worked. My mind like a watchful guard was keeping me on slight alert. I was so much aware of every movement that it took much more time to process a detail. Saying nothing of the efficiency. I felt absolutely everything – a cold metal touching my skin, a smooth detail surface occasionally slipping through my palms, a specially processed framework exuding a faint metallic smell. Sometimes I felt that I clearly saw how both the framework and its parts were made on a lathe. As a machinist takes a piece of raw metal and starts to pass it through many incisors, giving it the desired shape...

There were so many feelings that they were flashing in my mind like a hurricane, forcing to shudder and revitalizing every cell.

My awareness of new and fascinating sensations was rudely interrupted by a lunch-break call. It was like a hammer booming in my ears. Earlier I did not notice it at all and a couple of minutes before this creaking and sometimes slightly hysterical ring tone I was getting up and ready to go for lunch. Somehow, I instinctively stood up (as if this call had lulled me and returned for a while in my previous sluggish state) and went towards the passage that led through the long corridor to the exit.

As expected, it was really hot outside. The sun scorched faces and hands of people walking in a united stream along the narrow factory streets. On the left and right there were tangles of cypress trees, making with their height a shadow veil, the only one thing that could save from the ubiquitous hot rays of the sun.

Approaching the cafe building I suddenly realized that I did not want to eat at all. My appetite was completely suppressed by some stronger sense fluttering inside me. By that very sense, which was raising me over all these buildings and working there people all day long. It raised me somewhere very far away and at the same time so close that the completely surrounding reality seemed to merge into a single rhythm and to overwhelm me by all its infinite variety.

Standing for a while in a light confusion, I decided to move out of the enterprise's territory. Finding myself under the direct rays of the scorching sun, I walked quickly toward a small alley, located just in front of the main building of the enterprise. I usually passed this alley, not even noticing what trees were growing there but now I saw every leaf, every blade of grass. An old abandoned building was seen a little apart from the main road. Perhaps one day it had been a part of the enterprise, or maybe it had been built even long before the enterprise was found. A small winding path was already so overgrown with grass and was almost invisible at first glance, that it seemed that nobody had been here for a long time. The building itself was so neglected that it was impossible to understand what actually was there.

Probably only the locals could say what was located here. All these thoughts quickly flashed in my head and less than in 5 seconds I turned from the main road. My feet stepped onto the soft grass, which seemed to be a real carpet compared to an asphalt track. All my body was overcome by a strange feeling. With each step, I seemed to feel more and more an invisible connection with nature, becoming a single whole with it. I suddenly understood that I had not wandered so simply on the grass, at forest lawn strewn with tree branches and fallen leaves for so long. I turned around and was surprised to see all people, some of them being my colleagues and some being idle passers-by, who happened to step onto the factory alley, were going strictly on asphalt tracks, not daring to turn on the green lawn. It seems like if they do it, they will immediately fall under the attention of the other passers-by, under their look of mute reproach and misunderstanding. In fact, everyone is so busy with himself and his own problems that does not notice anything around, and even why he is going in one direction or another.

Now I found myself at the door of the building with peeling cause of the long loneliness walls, which caught my attention. Almost nothing left from the door. Without any special efforts, I gently pushed the wooden frame and several boards adjoining to it. I took the first step and saw a dark corridor in front of me, occasionally lighted by the daily sun. A curtain looking like a linen cloth was hanging on the window. With the course of time, it became completely opaque and was covered with a thick layer of dust. My hand touched it and I felt a slight shudder of the fabric edge, as if it stood still for many years waiting when at least someone touches it. Left edge of the curtain slightly moved because of my touch and the corridor was brightened with the sunlight. However, there were still dark places somewhere, as if deliberately not willing to open up and show the light. Now I had the opportunity to see the interior more accurately. It was clear that during its heyday there was a real oak floor here, decorated with carved skirtings on the edges. A little bit later, this splendor was carelessly covered with an artificial, faded with year's coat. Remains of paint were flying away from the walls every now and then. Somewhere plaster was falling away in whole pieces. Part of the accessory, providing the stability of the entire structure, was seen aloof.

Visiting such places, you seem to be thrown out from the usual cycle of everyday endless routine. Environment is so different from the one you have to see every day that you completely lose the sense of time and space.

It seems that situations, various events associated with this place flash like a whirlwind before you. Every part, every piece of this building keeps memory of people who used to be here earlier...

The sound of alarm was ringing relentlessly, telling me about the end of the break. I hurried to the exit and moved to the side of the enterprise almost running.

Then my working day continued as usual. Emotions subsided a little. When I came back home I felt whiny tiredness coming over me. Apparently, I was not ready for such amount of new experience that surged over me this afternoon like a tsunami.

I do not even remember how I took off my clothes. As soon as my head felt the soft touch of a pillow, I fell asleep in a few moments...

Part 2 Realization

I woke up quite early, the clock showed 4:30 a.m. The last few months I woke up only at the alarm bell and not at once, but in 15 minutes, that is why I was inevitably late for work. I did not notice that at some moment it turned into a complete system that was leading me up a blind alley. At first, you work doing your best, then you take a vacation, but the feeling that work is approaching squeezes the heart harder with each passing day, giving you boredom and slight disappointment. Maybe it's me or maybe it's environment. The flow of information is so great that sometimes we are rushing through it like a tree branch on the rapid flow of a mountain river, losing any chance to assess the situation critically. In this condition, it's very convenient to ignore what is actually happening inside the person. What does he want and what does his always-seeking soul want?

Waking up so early, I turned to the other side as usual and wanted to go on dreaming. But I didn't want to sleep at all. Having tossed for a few minutes, more I decided to get up. Yesterday tiredness passed, I felt quite relaxed and even cheerful. Events and experiences of the previous day gradually began to clarify in my head. The remnants of sleep finally dispersed and again I felt the compulsion to create.

The room was still in the dark, but having made few cautious steps, I almost immediately came across an easel, which I had found yesterday morning. Moonlight lit up the whole room and a white sheet neatly attached to the easel frame, was radiating gentle turquoise light.

It became immediately clear that nothing special had changed in the past day. I was still silently standing in front of an easel unable to squeeze out at least some tiny idea. It seemed that my entire mind was filled with alien thoughts and intentions. This feeling was so strong and sharp that even paralyzed my will for a while.

I tried desperately to shake off this hated burden. Ah, I wish it was just a bag full of sand and uncomfortably laying on my shoulder. Then I could easily throw it down and squaring my shoulders I could cast a proud eye at the whole world around me. However the more free from the strange ideas I became, the more it seemed to me that I was starting to lose myself as well, so much these ideas digged into my consciousness. Now the yesterday feeling of emptiness could be regarded not as bad as the realization that your brain was filled up and down with unnecessary things.

After hesitating for a while I did not come up with anything else but to go sleep again. Paper sheet remained completely clean, without a single stroke like yesterday. It represented my inner world, with the same emptiness and waiting for new and fresh ideas that could wake up and excite my mind.

I am almost falling asleep. The noise of city streets, wafting through the open windows, led me into a light slumber that was just about to immerse me into a dream. For a while, I will forget about my thoughts, doubts, that so much alarmed me lately. Sleepy-eyed I happened to see a pile of some books on the bottom shelf of the old chest of drawers. It is strange...

It was strange that I did not even notice that they all had been here before. As if they were from some other life that I did not know before, but which was constantly following me like a shadow. Overcoming my reluctance to move and to make at least some movements at all, I came to the chest of drawers and picked up the first book. It was lying at some distance from the rest and was notable for its bright, colorful cover. The first thing that immediately caught my eye was the image of firemen, although judging by their faces and eye expression; they looked like someone else, but not firemen. Perhaps this strange incongruity drew my attention. The book was called «Fahrenheit 451».

The book title told absolutely nothing to me, and it was rather good than bad. My curiosity noticeably perked up and I began to read. Long time ago I liked reading and I could spend the whole evening diving with enthusiasm into a regular literary work. Then my passion faded by itself or maybe not by itself...

I did not notice when an hour passed. My whole being was filled with some new, forgotten long ago feeling. Suppose, I could not create by myself, but I knew for sure that I was on the right way. I read about 40 pages, but didn't catch yet, what was the plot, although I liked the book in general. The dawn broke, even the sunrise seemed different to me, I vividly and with interest watched the solar disk, rising higher and higher and illuminating everything around.

Not waiting until the critical time, I hurried to dress, wash and left the house in the direction of the work. Although already then I was keenly aware that the work itself was not interesting for me anymore. And I couldn't even remember if it was ever interesting. Such situation is probably quite common for people who have lost their way and forgotten about their true aspirations. On arriving at work, I was ready to spend the day as quickly as possible and return home to continue reading the story of Ray Bradbury. To my great surprise today wasn't usual. Moreover, the changes began in the morning, when I still did not really understand that I was already in the workplace...

At the entrance, there was a small line and I even imagined for a moment, that I could just turn back and not to go to work. How it would be nice just to walk around the city, shrouded in the morning coolness. To drop by a nearby café, order a strong coffee and start thinking about the future project, at the same time I even didn't have any idea what project it might be and how it could be developed, but I liked this feeling and I remembered it for a long time. Meanwhile line quickly disappeared somehow and I was inexorably drawn into the general crowd, peacefully and quietly following to their places. I quickly changed my clothes as usual, exchanged a few words in the hallway and on coming into the shop floor rushed to my workplace. Usually my first minutes were devoted to the preparation for the work, but as soon as I made a couple of steps, I was immediately beckoned by my boss. The conversation was short and quick:

– Pack your things; you are transferred to another department. You'll find out all details on the spot, and also...

– Where am I transferred??? Why... I... I have not finished my work ... – I tried to interrupt my boss, but due to surprise my words were slurred.

– Pack your things, details will be later – Petr snapped out and I slightly hanging my head walked to my workplace with not such a cheerful mood as it was before this conversation.

Everything seemed to be mixed up in my head. On the one hand, 10 minutes ago, I wanted to leave the company myself, and now I was completely disoriented by a simple transfer to a new place. I wanted to rebel, resent, but whom to and what for. Slightly ironic grimace froze on my face.

Sometimes you get used to certain circumstances and things; become attached to them so much that any interference in the usual routine causes almost a state of shock. This is a sure sign that life has gone deep into the track and it's high time to change your environment.

On coming to a new place, I was handed a job description and some other documents. Having not come to my senses yet, I thumbed through it mechanically and, looking around, I started to learn my new job and my new colleagues. The day passed quickly and I did not even manage to notice that it was time to go home. And then I remembered about the book and about everything else. Having jumped up quickly from my chair and quickly said goodbye to everyone, I almost started running home. There was the book waiting for me on which I pinned my hopes for the revival of my abilities.

Today I decided not to distract on anything and already by the midnight, I had read the last page. I was definitely impressed by the main character, Guy Montag. His intention to find himself was very similar to what happened to me the last two days, which seemed like eternity, days that covered with an invisible veil everything that had happened before. Once again, the author of this bestseller reminds us, the readers, that somewhere far away, inside of every person there is a sense of the true path, that very path which will inevitably lead him to the absolute happiness! Even if this path is associated with overcoming a plurality of visible and invisible barriers.

The next few days every evening I sat down in my comfortable chair and enthusiastically read works of art until late night. And one day I noticed one unusual book. Several times as if not

deliberately I avoided it and took another one. But now, I picked it up without thinking. Pages of this book like white wings opened before me, offering to plunge into the world of unbridled fantasies.

It was the work by Bernard Werber “The Thanatonauts’. The unusual book title and the beginning alerted me a little, but the more I sit over the book, the more interesting and charming it seemed to me. This book awakened in me the vague desire to learn something new and incredible. Having strengthened in my mind, this desire was growing more and more during the plot development. The story itself was quite strange to understand, especially for such an ordinary person as I was. It should seem, the two completely different characters met. After several years of searching of themselves and their mission in the world, they began to explore the completely unknown by that time area of human consciousness – the limb. Step by step, they moved through the limb levels, each time being on the verge of death. This fine line between life and death let them move to an intermediate state of being their soul fluttered in space like a butterfly, revealing more and more facets of our vast universe. On deciding not to go to bed, I finished reading this book in one breath. I was still under strong impression from reading the content even after a few days.

I got used to this book so much that I did not want to release the situations and the events that had happened with the main characters. Unnoticeably to myself I began googling any information related to this topic. I came across one article or another and it all seemed to be no more than a fantastic fiction. And after three days of fruitless search, when I was quite desperate to find something worth attention, some unpopular forum caught my eye. I would shut it before, but now one of forum posts attracted my attention. Someone Mathieu Launter offered assistance with the development of limb in confident, even slightly immodest tone. His offer was written as if the journey to the limb was a quite common thing and all people practiced it from time to time. Feel like going to the outskirts of the galaxy – you’re welcome! One, two, a small breath and that’s it – you’re there...

It was all of a sudden for me. Distant and childlike innocent thoughts now took on quite real outlines. The first moment I did not even believe in what I’ve just read. Slightly excited I went to the balcony and sat down on the very bench where I liked to dream when I got free time and to have a slightly think. Now thoughts raced like a wild whirlwind in my head, not allowing me to concentrate properly on anything. Fresh breeze hauled, I closed my eyes, enjoying the coolness of the night city. Suddenly, vague images of heroes of Bernard Werber, their launching chairs for sending to the limb, bright, but pleasant glow of Milky Way appeared before my eyes...

Now I felt that anxiety that had possessed me, slightly subsided, and I was able to come back to the room and sit down at the computer again. I was more than sure that Mathieu Launter was just an invented nickname, but later it will turn out that it is quite a real name. Mathieu was a French immigrant in the second generation. I read his message until the end. Below I saw his contact information as a signature. Not even knowing how to start a conversation, I wrote that I wanted to start training immediately. I was ready to sit down at the books, manuals right now; I was ready to work through all kinds of practices all day long, just to get closer to my dream...

Now time at work lasted so long that it seemed impossible to wait for the moment when I was able to start my new hobby again.

For the whole day, I had much time to have a good think about what I wanted to get from learning at master Mathieu. Sometimes in moments of weakness, I was captured by inexplicable fear. A little longer and I was ready to give up this slightly wild idea. While on the other hand it was the percentage of insanity that caused a burning desire to start immediately!

I came home and not digressing to secondary things, clung to the monitor at once. In one move, I opened messages and among 10 incoming ones sent to me for the last day I saw the one, the one I was waiting for so eagerly. There were only 4 lines where I found out that I could start training that day. I completed the commercial part of the agreement, and after half an hour I received the keys to the whole range of theoretical and practical material needed to achieve the result. A separate file included video instructions, telling about all the niceties of training step by step.

With some difficulty overcoming the temptation to proceed to practical exercises immediately, I started learning theory a little anxious. There was a lot of material, no end of it. But it was not the main problem. Lectures were so full of complicated scientific terms, that sometimes I just lost the ability to understand what was said there. Besides, the text was not deprived of lyrical component. My perseverance and will to achieve the desired objective were so strong that, despite all difficulties, I went on studying the course, hoping that sometime later, I will be able to master this discipline from top to bottom. I was reading page after page, more and more affirming the idea that all this could actually be real. Although strong doubts about the success of my business still remained in my heart...

«The structure of human consciousness objectively associates with the environment. As the harmonic component, it fits well into a life symphony. Obeying the universal energy principles, our body also has a frequency component where every organ, every cell and every atom inside it vibrates at its specific levels. Besides the whole structure is arranged in such way bodies with higher frequencies gradually replace that starting from the sacrum of the spine, organs with lower vibration frequencies. It creates the conditions for passing the energy wave to the brain, where it enters the electromagnetic resonance with a neural network...»

Reading all this I seemed to soar over my own body, and sometimes I began to think that my thoughts went a little beyond the written text, to the area of pure inspiration and creativity! Being an inveterate materialist, I was intuitively looking for information directly related to our daily life, whether it was money, occupation, personal life, etc...

After reading several lectures and being pretty tired, I decided to put everything aside and have a little think about what I had just learned. Different thoughts occurred to my head; somewhere I admired the level of master knowledge, but somewhere, on the contrary, deeply disagreed. I didn't have any definite attitude to everything I had read. So I decided to go on...

"... all social reality is the projection of our inner state, and vice versa – the inner human world is an accurate representation of the entire structure of the universe. Man is a small copy of the whole space, which we could hardly imagine. The path to perception of the world lies through self-perception..."

Here it is!!! That very thing I was looking for! For a moment, I even forgot that I was going to the limb, about adventures I could meet there. All my thoughts were focused on one simple idea – to know myself and thus to come closer to understanding the meaning of life.

My inspiration was enough for one hour, after which I felt a strong desire to go to bed immediately. It was dark outside the window. However, it was light in the room; the moon was illuminating all around with its pale light, giving objects and things an extraordinary cool tint. Everything stood motionless and sank into a sleepy slumber. Watching this picture, I did not notice how I fell asleep.

It took me just a couple of days to read the rest of the lectures, included into the course. There I first became acquainted with the system of Tibetan chakras that were as I understood a purely conventional representation of subtle energy centers in the human body. Through the prism of the structure and location of the organs in our body, the master easily and elegantly explained the structure of cosmic bodies, their movement, and their past and future development. Although the concept of the future and the past, it seemed to me, did not exist for Mathieu at all.

Having got a large flow of new information, my mind was tossing from side to side, trying to find at least one island, where you could stop and take a breath in this infinite ocean. Many hours were devoted to dialogues with the master about it:

– Ask any questions, I am at your disposal.

I did not even expect such courtesy from my teacher. Until recently, he seemed to be rude and tough enough. I even thought that it was the most appropriate way to promote such ideas, differing greatly from the normal life.

– I am interested in the limb very much and I want to learn it thoroughly. But now, I would like to ask what I can do to feel that my life has a definite meaning. I understand the question may be

stupid, and I'm still not quite experienced in my life, but right now I'd like to understand the basis, fundamental nature, in order not to turn from the desired path accidentally. I am afraid that later, being already in advanced years, I will wonder again like now, but there won't be such energy and desire to find answers any more...

– All right, my friend. Hmm... I am not so much surprised as pleased with your question. And not concrete actions, but path; path which is longer than your whole life, a much longer path will be your answer...

– But maybe we can already refer to some things, objects, able to give a support, belief in myself and better tomorrow?

– Yes, sure. You can write a book, compose some music, and draw a painting... In short, any human creation born by gusts of pure inspiration is able to give you what you are inquiring about...

There were a lot of such conversations during the entire time of my studies. From them I learned the basis, relying upon which one could look calmly at the future. I was like a sponge absorbing every master's word, trying not to miss anything.

So, time for practice came. Sometimes I felt such a strong doubt that involuntarily I tried to focus more on theory, as if being afraid that I would fail. However time passed by, all lectures were read, and it was high time to start acting.

The next day I finished my work earlier and immediately began to study practice. I decided that today through thick and thin I would really start my study. Excitement and anticipation of something wonderful and mysterious was literally bursting me inside. From the first minutes, I realized that the biggest part of all practices, and maybe even 90 percent of them were... breathing exercises. It countered with my philistine ideas concerning the limb development. Being a child, I heard a lot of legends and stories about shamans, wizards and other representatives of the dark forces. I thought their life was shrouded in darkness and accompanied by various rituals and witchcraft. Now, however, it was relatively simple and clear, magic areole vanished into thin air, as if it had never existed.

Finally, I used an easel in work. Breathing exercise schemes were new for me, and I had to sketch out everything in details. It turned out to be difficult for me to draw, I succeeded pretty badly, and sometimes I could not really make out my own records. But, nevertheless, it was the first real step towards discovery of my creative abilities. After reviewing the materials for the first week, I started to practice. I stood in front of the mirror, fixed hands front and side parts of the lungs, and began to inhale air by my belly slowly and rhythmically. So, the development of the lower yogic breathing passed. Then I switched my hands and gradually worked out the medium and upper breathing. At first, I was confused wildly in my hands, several times my breathing collapsed heavily, but after a half of an hour, I began to succeed. Another part of the training was exercise – “the take-off point”. For its working out, I went out and walked to a nearby yard, where the sports equipment was located.

I quietly hung on the bar, having chosen the highest one, in order my feet could not touch the ground. Gently rocking, I felt a light breeze blowing me up and causing a pleasant shiver throughout the body. A couple of minutes passed, and I was still hanging. Hands were pretty tired already. But, due to the master's advice, I bravely endured the inconvenience and was waiting for the moment when I could abstract from reality surrounding me. Everything was buzzing around, somewhere kids were screaming; somewhere car rushed past with roaring, following one after one... Suddenly I felt a sharp ringing in the ears and ceased to hear everything around me for a moment. That moment was enough to lose control of myself and my sense of reality. Somehow, hands relaxed themselves, I hardly felt them. Buzzing in ears turned into a ringing vibration, and I began to fall. ... In less than a second, my feet hit the ground hard. But something else, separate from my body, as if not noticing it, continued to fly down into the very depths of the earth. I understood! I understood why it was needed, a simple and yet very uncommon exercise. Only now I did truly realize that I am made of several bodies, gathered together as a Russian nesting doll. This feeling was so strong that I could not control myself at once and try to make at least a step.

Next 7 days I was systematically complying with all master's recommendations. Perhaps the most difficult thing was to stay awake making 700 rhythmic breaths. And the minimum rate – 600 cycles – I was able to make only in the last two days. The second week of training with new exercises was waiting for me. Moreover, the new techniques didn't replace the previous, but imposed on them, thus complicating the process. It was designed for all 4 weeks of my study.

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