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Flying Happy



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Аннотация

All the characters in the book are children, who need adults' support, care and understanding at any age. Children are very sensitive to insincerity and can't forgive treachery. Their happiness depends on love, friendship and a strong family and they can do crazy things to reach this.

Содержание

EARNED HAPPINESS	5
CHAPTER 1	5
CHAPTER 2	10
CHAPTER 3	14
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	16

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EARNED HAPPINESS

CHAPTER 1

HELEN

When Helen turned six, her parents gave her a robot, a funny rubber monster Xena. She named him Tesla. Though Tesla was no way different from any other interactive toy, he was Helen's favourite.

Charming and kind, Tesla could wiggle his ears, make hand movements, nod, clap, sing and cry. His smile would make the girl happy and he would nestle in her hands when falling asleep. He would wave her off, when she tickled his toes and would drift off to sleep again. She was so taken with the little monster that would never part with him.

Helen's brother, Arthur, was her senior by eight years. He was 14, a tough age for the whole family.

He had in mind only his video games, his girlfriend Yulia and his mates with who he would hang out in cafés with until late at night. At the same time, nobody could guess how he could find time for his assignments and be an excellent student. Because of the age difference, the children were not close to each other. They didn't share any common interests, nor were they friends.

Despite this, Helen felt that she could always rely on her brother. When reflecting on her future as a schoolgirl, Helen always wondered who she would like to take care of Xena. “I could leave him with Arthur”, she would often think, “but he might forget about him and he will remain hungry and lonely. I still have a year to make a decision. Things might change a lot during this period and I’ll make the correct decision.”

If she had known how right her assumptions were...

Both Helen and Xena were in pre-school. Helen loved drawing. Her pictures were interesting and her parents let her paint on the walls of her own room. The room came alive with colours and Tesla clapped with delight.

Helen was also a good tennis player. At weekends, she would play table tennis with her parents in the yard and Xena would watch her with interest.

When Helen was attending her ballroom dance classes, Xena would quietly sit in the hall, as the girl was going through cha-cha steps.

– ...Turn to the right, ... step forward, toe... turn again, one, two, three...

Helen also played the piano and sang in the choir and Xena also got interested in music.

The girl watched him in delight respond to the first chords, clap and dance.

Once Helen decided to take Tesla with her to music class. She should not have done it, as Xena not only hijacked the class

but also made her music teacher angry. Lyudmila Alexeyevna could not boast a nice sense of humour and she took offence at everything Tesla did during the lesson. Let's give her credit, though, as things went from ordinary to extraordinary during her lesson. She was used to having her learners being quiet and organized during her classes, as she was a disciplinarian and the subject she taught was rather hard. However, with Xena, everything got out of hand in the class, everyone was clapping, laughing, making noise and interrupting each other. This cost Helen a detention because of her irregular attendance, careless attitude and she was asked to leave the class.

– Happy? – Helen asked him.

At the same time, Xena was just a robot, whereas Helen wanted at times to have a real friend, someone near and dear who would always stand by her.

Because of her versatile classes, Helen had a really tight schedule which caused her a lot of emotional and physical stress. That's why she often fell ill. Her parents decided to limit the number of classes she had to take and asked her which she would be willing to dismiss. Helen realized how hard it was to make a choice and Xena did not prove to be a good consultant either, when Helen asked him whether he could suggest which subjects she should drop. Helen saw that he was silent and his blank green eyes saddened her. She burst into tears and left the room regretting that her friend was just a toy and wasn't able to support or guide her. This is when she started cherishing a secret dream

of Xena turning into a human.

On Saturday, she was invited to Lera's birthday party. Lera was Helen's friend, she was older than Helen for a year but quite mature. They knew each from the choir. Helen though she was at times boring but loved her kindness and wit. In their spare time, they liked doing puzzles and assembling Lego. Lera was great at this.

The birthday party was in an amusement park. The weather was fine. Helen had Xena with her and he had already attracted a lot of attention. Everyone wanted to play with him and he was handed from one to another. Helen lost track of him but thought he must be in safe hands and went to play on the slide. The kids had a lot of fun and got tired. When it was time to leave, Helen suddenly remembered about Xena but couldn't find him anywhere.

– Have you seen Tesla, mum?

– No, honey, have you lost him?

– I think I have, she cried out and ran towards the park to look for him. Xena was nowhere to be found.

– Helen thought that Xena could find her on his own if he were not a robot. Her mum and the kids started comforting Helen
“Cheer up, we'll buy you a new one.”

“I don't need a new one. I need Tesla.”

The search continued to no success. It was already getting dark and everyone hurried home. There was no mood for excitement and celebration. The children realized that it was entirely their

fault that Xena had got lost. On the way home, all the talks were about Tesla but nobody could remember who was the last to play with him.

Helen tossed a lot at night and couldn't fall asleep. She was thinking about Tesla all the time and was wondering where he was.

...It was already early morning when she could fall asleep. In her dream she saw Xena who had got lost in the park and was asking her to rescue him. Helen woke up in a cold sweat and asked her parents to go back to the park to look for Tesla again. She recalled having seen a special place for lost toys next to the pool in a hotel in Sochi. She wondered if there was a place like that in the park. The parents couldn't have her change her mind and they decided to resume the search. Imagine their surprise when they discovered Xena among the lost toys in the park.

Helen held Tesla close and said, "I promise I'll never share you with anyone!"

CHAPTER 2

XENA

It was summer and the school vacation was in full swing. Arthur was spending his holidays with his friends in a sports camp. The kindergarten was in quarantine. Parents were at work. Grandma got sick and Dad had to take Helen with him to work. This is how Tesla ended up in a secret laboratory of the Ministry of Defence. Helen's dad was a renowned scientist and did research in the field of artificial intelligence. Having left the girl with his lab colleagues, he headed to the meeting in the conference hall. There were airplane and helicopter models and other toys displayed in the lab. To entertain Xena, Helen set him next to the toys and said, "Here, Tesla, I have found new friends for you. They can't wait to meet you. Enjoy your time." In the meantime, she went on to explore the lab. She was shown robots that played football, cooked food, smiled politely and encouraged her to do homework. Carried away by play, study and food she didn't notice time pass. At the end of the working day Dad came back to pick Helen and Xena, and they went home.

In the car, Helen shared her new impressions with Xena and asked him about his new friends. Xena kept silent, but it was a thoughtful silence.

"Just don't tell me you are not interested," – the girl tried to make him talk.

The response was dead silence. Helen could hardly recognize him. Tesla appeared different, unfamiliar, and strange. He looked at her as if he had just met her. Helen decided Xena was sulking because she had left him alone for the whole day in a strange company. She felt remorseful. The other day she promised not to entrust Xena to anyone, and yet... The worst part was that not even once did she think about Tesla during the entire day.

“I would be hurt too. Friends don’t act like this,”

Helen kept reprimanding herself.

Meanwhile Xena kept quiet. He listened to Helen and her dad, whose comments were occasionally interrupted by the girl’s monologues. Eventually, they made home. Mum came home from work and was heating dinner. At the table, Helen continued her account of the day, this time for Mum. After the dinner she went straight to bed.

“Love, what’s wrong with our girl?”, Mum asked in surprise. “It’s strange she went to bed so early on her own accord...”

“She has been talking non-stop for a couple of hours now,” Dad replied, who himself got more tired of socializing with his daughter over these several hours than of the whole working day. “Honey, I guess I am off to bed too.”

It rained heavily at night and there was a strong wind. The sounds of raging weather through the open window burst into the girl’s room. Helen woke up and saw Xena’s eyes right opposite her. She was so terrified that couldn’t even scream. She just

turned to the wall and ducked her head in the blanket. In the meantime, Xena went to close the window. It became quiet in the room. This quietness made Helen even more scared. From beneath the blanket she silently watched Xena move from the window towards her, tuck her blanket, wish her good night and set himself in the armchair near her.

“Morning, honey!”

“Where is Xena?”, Helen asked not finding Tesla in the armchair next to her.

“Probably, among your toys,” Mum replied.

“He was sleeping right here next to me. Where is he gone?”, Helen asked with alarm in her voice.

“Who’s gone? Who are you talking about?”, Mum said in surprise.

– “Xena, of course, who else should I ask about?” However, noticing Mum’s puzzled look she went on:

“Last night when it was raining heavily, Xena closed the window and fell asleep in the armchair. He is missing now.”

Mum studied her daughter in confusion. Helen, is everything all right? – She said after a long pause. -Where is he gone?

Helen rose from her bed and started looking for Tesla all around the apartment. Xena had disappeared. “I wish I could find him. Can I have really hurt him so badly?” – she kept saying.

Meanwhile Mum’s uneasiness grew. She called Dad and they both tried to calm their daughter and make sense of what had really happened.

The girl didn't listen to anyone. She went to the front door. Trying to open it with the key she found the door unlocked. "Mum, Dad, Xena left home!"

Now it was Dad who started worrying about his daughter's health. He blamed Mum for everything.

"See what happens when she plays video games and watches movies all night. Starting from today, no movies, no video games or audio records. Only books and fresh air. Healthy lifestyle. You deal with it here and I have to go to work," – he said.

"Seriously? And what shall I do? I have a job too", Mum said.

Parents' cross talking that usually evoked unpleasant emotions this time this did not affect Helen. She was too absorbed in thoughts about Tesla.

"My dreams turned out to be empty. No sooner had Xena become human than he left me. Only bitter feelings are left; I feel sad and they are only concerned about their work.

"I will stay at home alone," – Helen said reluctantly.

Her words had a sobering effect on both parents. They felt ashamed. Mum offered to take the girl with her. With a sigh of relief, Dad went off to work.

CHAPTER 3

IN THE LAB

– What’s going on here?

– Good morning, Ruben Nikolayevich, – Nika greeted the head.

– I can’t find the model. It has disappeared. – Vitaliy Semyonovich said.

– How come?

– Ruben Nikolayevich, shall I make you some coffee? – Nika started...

– Leave us, – said Ruben Nikolayevich fuming at the secretary’s stupidity.

– We have discovered it today.

– Then track his location.

“I seem to be surrounded by people whose mission is to drive me mad. I am not the only one affected by magnetic storms”, – he thought.

– Sorry, Ruben Nikolayevich, that’s impossible. The tests had reached their final stage and were being administered in real-life conditions. That’s why the connection with the outside world was turned off.

– So it’s impossible to track it? – exclaimed Ruben Nikolayevich realizing all the urgency of the situation.

There was silence in the lab. The laboratory staff was

apprehensive how furious their head could get.

It had taken them several years to develop the next generation robot and they couldn't imagine their competitors getting hold of the model. Besides, they had not yet completed all the laboratory tests. Though the robot was equipped with all the necessary defence skills, it was still not clear how he would behave if there was a software failure or any other error.

– I want you to check all the rooms and the security camera tape. He can't have disappeared without any trace. When was the last time you saw the model?

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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