

18+

Valeriia Isaeva

Americano

English edition



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«Издательские решения»

Isaeva V.

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“Americano” tells about the way to success — long, sometimes difficult, full of surprises. The characters of this book tell their stories to the reader and to each other. Jerry decides to share her professional and life experience with one of her students, Gina. Young girl enjoys company of a new friend and teacher in one person. They spend much time together and very soon Jerry meets again one man with whom she separated many years ago. Since then Gina starts to have two wise friends.

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Chapter 1

Jerry Jameson

The lecture hall was filled with students of the seminar little by little. Most of them were young men and women, who just recently came into the profession, or were just planning to make their first steps in it. The atmosphere was creative, light and relaxed. It was getting dark outside, but in the hall it was light and cozy. Someone sat in silence, some students united in small groups and talked on various topics, lively discussing the nuances of the bartender's craft.

The chaos stopped in a second when she entered. She attracted the eyes of a few dozens people on her way to the place where the reading of the seminar was planned.

Jerry Jameson. A brunette of medium height, slim build, with aristocratic features of face. She had perfect posture, as if she had a crown on her head.

Young people, as a rule, have a rebellious spirit. However, during the event, even the most active of them were hesitated to argue and prove their point of view. Gina sat still, holding her breath and listened to every word.

At the climax of the lecture, Jerry dropped the shaker bowl from her hand and it bounced off the floor, making a distinctive echoing sound. The public gasped, but Jerry continued to speak, as if nothing had happened, as if not understanding what had caused such a reaction. She did not even pay attention to the common amazement. What was it – arrogance, or just unbreakable self-confidence?

At the end of the event, when everyone was packing up their belongings and leaving, Jerry chained Gina to the chair on which she was sitting. There were just two people in the audience. Coming closer, Jerry dragged on a cigarette in the cigarette holder and said:

– You know, do not listen to fools, and everything will be fine.

Gina was taken aback. How does this woman know that Gina's colleagues constantly make fun of her and insist that the girl has no future in the bartender's profession?

«You better burst out laughing them in the face,» she continued, «and show that it is better not to allow them to work. Now mores are much more liberal, I was less lucky. When I started, I met much more critics and arrogance. You will not do this in one day, but you will do this. If I, a native of Glendale, succeeded... Everything was put on the map, undoubtedly. Jerry – in honor of the legendary mixologist Jerry Thomas, Jameson – in honor of the whiskey brand. At birth me name was Hripsime Zakarian. I studied at church school, left home at sixteen. Started to work as a waiter, after two years I started my work at the bar.

Gina listened attentively and at the same time she was confused. Why did this woman choose her among all the students and now she is talking to her?

«Not a bad start,» Jerry grinned, seeing Gina's condition.

– Why did you leave home? – asked the girl, perplexed.

The woman did not make an impression of being from a dysfunctional family.

«I grew out of short pants,» Jerry answered meaningfully, taking another cigarette puff, «wherever I looked, there were just moralists all around, as if they descended from the pages of the Old Testament. I have been pointed fingers all my life long, and I am happy. I am glad that I live in the way the others are afraid of. I lived in society and at the same time did not want to live by it's laws. Because a human does not belong to society. He belongs to God and to himself. And he considers only these two quantities, not anyone else.

When I was sixteen years old, a family consisting of a father, mother and son moved to a neighboring house. They were wealthy people who had their business in trade, like my parents. Our families began to communicate on the first day of our acquaintance. I noticed their son, Raul.

He was the only child in the family and he was unique. He had the appearance of Mephistopheles, as if descended from medieval engravings. Brunette, tall, thin, with piercing brown eyes. We often greeted each other when our parents gathered at our or their home in order to discuss further business development and create a common company. Raul studied at the university, he was going to be a psychologist. Perhaps because of this we developed together a whole system of non-verbal communication, with which we communicated behind the backs of our mothers and fathers.

After a month of such communication, we began to guess the time for our dates, considering the working schedules of the parents and our studying schedules. Strict mores were... Neighbors also could not be witnesses of our dates. Thanks to the refined communication skills with gestures, facial expressions and thought signals, to which both of us responded automatically, we chose places for dating: a front garden, a backyard, a park bench hidden under heavy tree branches. Each meeting turned to us a genuine delight, we sincerely enjoyed each other's company.

It seemed that my mother sensed that there was a spark between Raul and me. She warned me, told me parting words, but firstly, that was useless, and secondly, our friendship was not provable. She began to complain to my father, but he refused to believe such things. However, he also designated what a girl of my age should and should not do, especially a daughter of parents like them.

Soon my parents had to go to the neighboring town for three days. There they also had business partners with whom they had to open a trading company. Raul and me waited for this day as if it was a miracle.

On day X, as soon as the parents left our district, my friend instantly appeared on the doorstep of our house. I opened the door, he hugged me tightly, we stood at the entrance and kissed. There was nothing to beware of, my home was my fortress, and in the next three days there will be no stranger in this territory. But you will laugh. At that outstanding moment the door opened and my father entered. He forgot some documents and returned home to pick them up. Firstly he was paralyzed, secondly he became furious. I was accused of all deadly sins. Daughter. The only one daughter. Raul was seen off with maximum intelligence. Then my mother entered. The scandal was catastrophic. I was accused of being immoral, mother shouted that no one would marry me and that I was dishonoring my origin. The news reached the parents of Raul, and then spread all over the area. I was sworn in my church school. My life turned into a nightmare. It constantly seemed to me that I was sleeping and I just had such a terrible dream, and when I wake up, it will disappear. Unfortunately, I did not wake up.

Then I decided to run away from home, because I would not be allowed to leave it simply. Every step I took, every breath I took was under control, especially since that incident. I did not understand and did not accept such a pattern. I picked up a minimum of clothes, all my financial savings, documents, and I left the house late at night, making sure that everyone was asleep. Some days after I settled in another state, I got a job as a waiter. I earned enough money for renting a room and for food.

As to the fact that they could put me on the wanted list, I had no concerns. I knew that if you are not afraid, then it do not happen at all. I did not sign the tenancy agreement myself and I did not sign the employment agreement with the restaurant.

Surprisingly, I did not experience any indignation about the situation at home. Probably because being offended by someone is not of my level. The new profession captured me so much that there was no time to think about anything else. I was fascinated with my work. Even if there was a large flow of visitors, I easily managed to serve every of them. Everyone was glad, my earnings grew due to the tips. The management valued my work, but I knew that my work as a waiter was temporary. Every working day I looked at the bar counter. It seemed to me, there was another world, with its own atmosphere, there were genuine wizards and wonderful miracles took place. Yes, it was my habit to romanticize things, but, if you understand, it was a genuine miracle. I understood that this was also not an easy perspective, but the physical work did not scare me.

I supposed that my restaurant sphere experience is still not enough to move to the position of bartender. I did not just take orders and serve the dishes, my mind noticed everything in the same time. Gradually the understanding of the whole structure of the restaurant business came to me. All the nuances created one big puzzle, looking at which I became closer and closer to the cherished goal. I did not have a dream, but I had the knowledge that I would get a job at the bar counter. I did not care how that was going to happen, I just left this question to destiny.

Jerry took another cigarette from a cigarette case, put it to her lips and set it on fire, interrupting her narration. She was looking at the ceiling, where she blew smoke rings. Gina mentally picked all the formulas of politeness and said:

«I am not going to judge your parents, but it was sacrilege – to blacken such fair relationships which Raul and you had.

«This is not a judgement, this is a fact,» the woman calmly replied, «you know that there is common sense, but there is also a dogma existing in our life. Following the dogma, a person commits a terrible crime, refusing from the possibilities of his mind, which power is unlimited. Father, following the tradition, wanted to have a son. He was so much indignant when I was born. Grieved, raged, then more or less get used to that. He was mad at my mother and me, because that did not meet his expectations. Expectations are a terrible trap, lots of people fell into it...

Jerry tossed her black hair behind her back, raised her sharp chin. She evidently possessed unbreakable spirit, which was inherited just to some people. This indescribable feature played a significant role in the development of her as a professional in her field.

«Nobody could even pronounce my name,» Hripsime grinned, «just a short story how Jerry appeared,» when I expressed a wish to work at the bar counter, all my colleagues showed a different reaction. You know the law of a small team – everyone has interest in everything what happens, every word you say will be heard and everyone will discuss it. I endlessly praise those people who believed in me, saw my potential and volunteered to be my mentors. I thank these people to this day. Definitely, the absolute majority preferred to mock. Every day I heard from them about ten jokes about non-female profession. Do you know how it hardened me? In order to keep up at your level and reach new heights, it is necessary to know two things: strictly fulfill your duties and do not take anything to heart. Strong ones help, weak ones – mock. Everything is simple, – she continued, – thanks to my cheerfulness, in any situation I noticed positive nuances and I reacted with a smirk to all sorts of jokes of middlebrows. Everyone remembers young Jerry always smiling, cheerful, tuned to the positive mood. The middlebrows have not gone away, they just forgot their jokes about gender, knowing that their opinion was obviously wrong. Now they have evolved, trying to prove that I «lose ground and young people are already overtaking.» While you consider this as idle chatter and nonsense, you are at the top, towards which they just cannot physically crawl, remember, – said Jerry edifyingly, – you will ask about my relationship with my parents, but I am going to disappoint you. We have never met since my escape. It's been about thirty years. They are not getting younger, health is not the same as in youth, but I remained an only child, as I was before.

Suddenly a voice rang out from the corridor:

– Miss Jameson, a letter has come to your name!

Jerry turned around and, with her royal walk, walked to the door of the audience. The secretary of the association of bartenders, which was teaching future specialists, stood on the other side of the door, handing her an envelope and smiling:

«As always, you look great,» he remarked.

«And you are not falling behind,» Jerry whispered and took the letter.

The young man was a little taken aback by the answer. He watched Jerry returning to the audience, and hurried away.

Standing next to Gina, she opened the envelope, pulled out a folded A4 sheet and looked at the lines written by a trembling hand.

«Harout Zakarian... Father... What a coincidence,» she whispered, «look, my soul, come here...»

Gina rose from her chair and stood behind Jerry, trying to read the lines.

«Dear, hello,» she read, like a sexton, «I don't know how you are doing, but I hope everything is fine with you.» Many years have passed, as we have not seen each other, you changed the name, well, for God's sake, if you like it more. You have chosen your path. You have succeeded in it. If you are disturbed by some kind of sadness, come to us, a table will be always covered for you and the doors will be opened. Your Harout and Gohar. What is going on, Gina, – she distracted from the letter and looked at the girl.

«Jerry,» she breathed, «you better come and see your family. Forget what was before. After all, if that situation do not happen, you would not become who you are now.

Jerry hugged the girl, and for about a minute they stood, hugging each other.

– We are going to finish the classes tomorrow and take a flight to my hometown, are you agree? – she didn't even ask, but stated a fact, – two hours by plane – and we are there.

«I agree,» Gina replied half peacefully, half lively.

Hripsime's lips were touched with a slight smile, her eyes shined.

«Why did you come up exactly to me?» Gina asked

«Because I saw in you the potential, same as once upon a time someone noticed in me,» Hripsime answered firmly.

Chapter 2

Flight

In the evening, two friends went to the airport. Standing in line at the check-in counter, Hripsime continued to talk with Gina, who preferred to listen, discovering more and more new aspects of the personality of this woman and learning the lessons of life.

– If you do not appreciate yourself, then you will be sold to the first naive fool like an expired product at the fair. Remember that you can not doubt yourself. Sometimes it is good to ask yourself questions in order to adjust your direction in this life, if needed. Although only fools or clinical idiots do not do that. As a rule, they finish tragically. Did I doubt in my life? Sure, I did. No one is a robot with a recorded program, avoiding the implementation of which is impossible. We are greatly gifted by God because we can choose. In my seventeen there was Bill whom I just adored. I understand that I myself have chosen to love and become attached to him. No one else instead of me would have been able to do this, as well as to get rid of this person. At that moment I doubted: am I doing the right thing? Now I know, by doing right, I would never doubt my actions. This concept works for everyone, not just for me. Bill was thirty years old, he was very popular among girls. Even excessively popular. His idol was Marilyn Monroe, whose portraits, according to rumors, decorated his house. All his girls resembled Hollywood divas of the early twentieth century. Did he need Hripsime with appearance so different from Hollywood patterns“ she grinned, looking at Gina „after rumors about my feelings to him, he began to mock me, telling about it to everyone he met. He had an opinion that I was not worthy for him. I am not a religious person, but I love to remember the words from the Bible: «pride is sin.» Everything changed when my career at the bar started, I forgot Bill easily. When you are completely involved in your favorite business, everything else fades and becomes secondary. After each working day I came to my room enormously tired of physical work and the flow of information. I had to learn by heart the recipes of several dozen drinks offered by our restaurant to customers. While I did not know the recipes of drinks and did not know how to serve them perfectly, I worked at the back bar. I carried boxes with tableware and alcohol from the warehouse, cleaned the bar, served simple drinks. My brain was in the knockout from such a multitasking. And later I heard that Bill was addicted to hard drugs. «Pride is sin»...

«I think there is no need to explain why this person behaved like this?» – Gina remarked ironically, «he wasn't self-confident. Moreover he wasn't satisfied with reality.

– Yes. It was even a restlessness; Bill was dependent, addicted to idols, then to random contacts, to alcohol, and then to drugs. He was destroyed by doubts from the inside and tried to prove himself and to the others that he was cool. Obtaining skills in the profession, I formulated the conclusion that there is just one life and there is no weighty reason to suffer. You can suffer when the soil falls into the grave. You need to love every moment of your life and use the maximum of it. Even if there is no reciprocal feeling from a person, you should not be upset. Actually, I am glad that I did not get it from Bill. After all, there are so many wonderful, touching, exciting, and fascinating things around us that can't be ignored. Diving into a person headlong is very risky idea, there is a probability to break on the underwater rocks. Although, sometimes we choose persons in whom there is no depth to dive. The shallow, ankle-deep.

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