

Anniversary!

Cheap Newspaper Vol.179

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Latest News.

About a year ago, the Worth No Penny Press was born, along with it's only child, Cheap Newspaper.

At first, we were an ordinary/dumb/cheap/vainglorious weekly paper. Then a better/slightly entertaining/a little bit boring/kinda funny/cheap/vainglorious monthly paper.

Now we are just an occasional paper, having become unique/amazing/really popular/awaited/loved by the masses/fantastic/funny/marvellous/incredible/the one and only/genius/splendid/excellent/grand/really big thing/cheap/vainglorious.

But nevertheless - it is our anniversary! And thanks to our readers we are still aswim, cruising this Ocean of Garbage Literature and trying to make it over the skyline before dark.

Skyline Fund

As a present to our readers (and to the world as a whole), the WNP Press has decided to stop releasing Cheap Newspaper for free. After all, it is called "Cheap", not "Free". Right?

So from this day on every CN volume costs 4.99 opticents.

Q: Huh? What are opticents?

A: Opticents are an imaginary currency, the word 'opticent' being comprised from the words 'optimism' and 'cent'. All the optimoney made from selling Cheap Newspaper go to the Skyline Fund, organized by the WNP Press.

Q: A Fund?

A: Yes. It is imaginary too, folks. However, there is a known theory that everything people make up gets created somewhere in the Universe, so it is not too foolish to say that somewhere an impressive building has appeared, people got hired and the work begun. The physical address and the exact dimension of the Skyline Fund are (yet) unknown.

Q: How do you pay for the paper then?

A: Ah, that's a good question. Well, basically, optimoney transfer usually uses the energy of emotion and the direction of thought. When you get a positive emotion, you have to mentally take a small part of your optimism and send it over to the Fund.

Q: What if I don't feel optimistic?

A: Then you have to do something about it. Use your imagination! The easiest way is to make a present to someone or just do something kind without awaiting anything in return. The more unselfish you are when doing something good, the better!

Q: Okay, I feel great! How do I know that the amount of optimism I sent equals 4.99 opticients?

A: You don't have to. It is all automatic. Just take a bit of optimism and send it over.

Q: What is this all for?

A: The Skyline Fund is a depository of optimism. It will be given out to all people around the world and maybe help someone make the right decision, let go, overcome a depression. Sometimes all you need is a couple of opticients ;)

Q: Isn't this stupid?

A: It is. But stupid things tend to work.

Q: Is there any other way to contribute to the Fund?

A: Sure! Everytime you were able to overcome a problem, everytime you feel you have become a better person, send over your experience and optimism!

Android Language

Dr. Samius Bungee from the Texas Lingvo Institute says that when humanity finally comes up with artificial lifeforms, people will be ready to talk to them, for he has invented a unique android language.

The language is based on the signals of a very simple generator which should be built into an android. The generator can produce a 1-bit sound wave, very primitive, but still quite enough to communicate.

-The idea is quite simple,- explained Dr. Bungee on my visit to his lab.-All you do is produce basic rules for a language to evolve. Once it gets to be really used, all the vocabulary and grammar will grow on by itself in the process of daily usage. Androids will incorporate new structures into the language as they aquire new experience. That approach makes sure that the language will be as close to reflecting the reality as possible, for we all know how deadly programming mistakes may turn out. Android

software should be 100% reliable since we are dealing here with more then simply machines.

It is important to point out to our readers that while the word 'android' is usually associated with Ltn. Comm. Data from the Star Trek series, that exact model is very much advanced. It is more likely that first androids would be closer to R2-D2 from Star Wars, having no verbal tools.

Let us now look closer at the basics of the language, developed by Dr. Bungee.

The synthizator, which would be build into the android, produces only one signal, which is, of course, 'beep'. According to Dr. Bungee, the simpliest word of the android language is, no doubt, 'beep', which may mean something like "Hey, I'm here" or simply "Hello". The second word, "beep-beep", clearly means "roadrunner", also a very useful everyday word.

Dr. Bungee:

"It is obvious that with these two basic words - 'hello' and

'roadrunner' - you can explain almost everything. Well, you won't be able to recite Shakespeare, but the android would have the ability to develop his speech."

Indeed. For example, if an adroid meets a roadrunner, all he has to do is say: "beep (pause) beep-beep", which would clearly mean: "Hello, roadrunner!"

When the android faces a new object or a new event, he would be able to create a new word. The next available word is "beep-beep-beep" and it is yet empty. What it would mean depends on an individual android. If he meets a cat and wants to incorporate this new object into his language, he would create a new path in his electronic brain and attach the word "beep-beep-beep" to the meaning of "cat".

"Beep-beep-beep-beep" is not a vacant sequence, however, and it means "two roadrunners". Five beeps altogether is almost poetry, meaning "Hello, two roadrunners!"

I pointed out to Dr. Bungee that with the vocabulary of,

say, 100 000 words, an android may run into problems.

-What if an android learns some very common word, say, "evening", at a very late stage, and it becomes his 100 000's word. Then, to pronounce it he would need to produce a hundred thousand beeps. Wouldn't it be a long word? And if the word "good" happens to be his twenty thousand word, a simple "Good evening" might take quite some time.

-Well, first of all, the android would produce beeps very fast. And second - there would be a display on him that would quickly interpret the beeps and print out the words. So there's absolutely no problems with that.

That was a relief and I took my chance to look at both the synthizator and the display. The only thing that the lab didn't have were androids.

Nevertheless, having left Dr. Bungee's lab, I thought to myself that when I buy my first android, I would certainly contact the Texas Lingvo Institute. This indeed is the possible future of cross-communication.



Madame la Spam

I once met this lady by the name of Madame la Spam. She is a very difficult person, for everything she says and does has this bitter taste of advertising. I am not exactly sure how she achieves the effect.

For one thing, though, she is very strangely dressed. Not one of her clothing matches the other. She manages to dress herself up in cloth of different companies so she really becomes a walking list of available cloth firms. Add to that her vulgar manners and heavy make-up and you've got yourself a spoiled appetite and sour milk spirits.

Also, her speech is awful! Everything she says tends to go into several definite trends with her trying either to talk you into some needless buying or push you into some unnecessary selling.

-Dear, do sell your house, it's so awful!

-Awful? Madam!

-No, really - the color of these walls doesn't match the color of the air around here.

Last week she came up to me and said that I won in a lottery. She was all exclamation marks about it and said that to get the gift all I have to do is invest several hundred bucks into some real estate near New York.

Once she came up to me with a rather conspiratorial look on her face and uttered some words about the length of something and asked if I want this something to be 5 cm more long and if I do she knows where to buy a medicine that does just that.

Yesterday our relationship scattered into pieces and, boy, was I happy!

She told me straight out that she wants me to marry her and devote all my life to buying things, selling things, winning lotteries, receiving money from African kings, helping some families from small countries with unknown names who kindly ask for your help, USUALLY IN CAPS and doing all that with Madame hand in hand with me everywhere.

And you know what I did to both answer to that speech and to ruin our relationship completely?

I threw up.

So if you sometime meet Madame la Spam, tell her I don't miss her. Tell her she can go buy a napkin. Tell her she should sell herself into slavery. Tell her to choose a path to the forest and I'll watch her spam a lion. You tell her that and I'll reward you with a lottery ticket. Ugh...

How People Become Gold Miners

There was this family of Renouk. They were all present at the mayor's ball and they were all quite well known to the mayor. Mister and missis Renouk had seven children. Missis Renouk's brother, Robert Renouk, was also present at the celebration and so were some other relatives, including parents of both of the Renouks.

The youngest Renouk daughter had returned from the Institute she was sent to and was the only one from the family not introduced to the mayor.

So when the ball started, Mr. Renouk came up to the mayor with his youngest daughter and said:

-This is Marlana, my youngest daughter.

The mayor said:

-Nice to meet you, Marlana. I hope you have finally returned to live in our city!

Several minutes later Mrs. Renouk came up to the mayor with Marlana and said:

-Dear mayor, this is Marlana, my youngest one.

-Oh, your husband has already introduced her to me.

-Ah, so you are acquainted! When did that happen? On the beach?

The mayor's face went slightly red and he laughed:

-Ma'am, your husband has just introduced Marlana to me. I've not met her before, of course.

-Ah, I see.

And so the ball went on, but some time later Robert Renouk came up to the mayor with Marlana and said:

-Good evening, mayor, what a wonderful ball!

-Why, thank you! I like organizing a good party from time to time.

-Indeed... Anyway, I am here to introduce to you the star of this season, Marlana, the youngest daughter of my brother.

-Oh. Well, she has already been introduced to me twice by both of her parents!

-Bwa-ha-ha, - laughed Robert heartily, his mustache shaking to the rhythm of his laughing. - Well then, I am glad you know Marlana. They say you've met her on a beach?

-What? - the mayor's face went white. - Who told you that, Mr. Renouk?! I've met Marlana today! I have never met her before in my entire life!

Robert made a concerned face, apologized for the misunderstanding in best traditions of the society and retreated together with Marlana. The mayor wiped his forehead with a napkin and sighed: "What a weird family they are."

The ball went on and the mayor was already beginning to forget the affair when one of Mr. and Mrs. Renouk's sons, Dick Renouk, approached him, Marlana arm in arm with him.

-Good evening, mayor.

-Good evening, Dick. How do you do?

-How do you do. Let me take the honour to introduce my youngest sister, Marlana, to you.

The mayor didn't smile this time.

-Yes, young lady, it was a pleasure to meet you this evening for the first time in my life, - he said slowly and deliberately. - Now, if you'll excuse me, I have other guests to attend to.

That wasn't very polite, but yet the circumstances were so odd and Dick had not yet earned much respect in the society, so the mayor decided to cut it off this way.

However, he couldn't imagine that it was only the beginning of his mischiefs, for several minutes later another Renouk offspring, Timothy Renouk, faced the mayor with Marlana beside him.

-Dear mayor, as an honoured citizen, let me take this opportunity to introduce you to my sister Marlana, whom you, they say, have not yet met.

-Yes, sir Timothy, I have not met your sister Marlana before this day. Yet, several members of your family have already introduced her to me. I wonder why she did not inform you of that fact.

At that point of conversation Timothy took the mayor by his arm and drew him aside.

-Oh, she is very much embarrassed by rumours that you made love to her on the beach, - he whispered earnestly into the mayor's ear. - As your

close friend and colleague, I decided it was quite alright for me to warn you.

The mayor felt his heart sink and his toes become cold.

-Oh, my God! That silly rumour, which of course has no ground whatsoever, can ruin my career and reputation forever! Who started it, I wonder? The guy deserves to go to prison!

-Yes, my mayor, I agree. The insult of the governing persona is a serious criminal act, that's for sure.

The mayor thought a bit and then said:

-Please, give life to another rumour and tell everybody that this beach stuff is a lie.

-Yes, sir.

And so the ball continued and the mayor rubbed his hands in satisfaction. Perhaps, it would turn out okay after all.

In high spirits, the mayor even danced a waltz or two and was involved in a lovely conversation with a modern philosopher, when he was called to the other part of the room and there was approached by Anna Renouk together with Marlana.

-Ah, mayor, you look so handsome to-night.

The mayor smiled and thought to himself that perhaps these ladies came up just to chat and enough with all these silly introductions. However, he was deeply, deeply wrong.

-My dear mayor, - started Anna, - please meet my sister, Marlana. She came from abroad.

-Yes, yes, we are acquainted already, yes.

-Oh, she has been introduced to you by someone else, hasn't she?

-Oh, yes! - said the mayor, happy Anna wasn't talking that rubbish about the beach. - Your family is behaving a little bit out of the ordinary today. They've all taken turns to introduce Marlana to me.

-Ah-ha-ha, what a weird situation, is it not?

-It is.

-Well, everybody is concerned with rumours. They say you haven't met Marlana on the beach. They say you've met her somewhere else, maybe even in a bar.

And before the mayor could reply anything, both ladies swept away, leaving the mayor with his jaw down.

"This is getting out of hands!" - he thought. - "What shall I do?!"

As the mayor was thinking of stopping the ball, Mr. Rebouk's father, a 90 year old man, approached the mayor and smiled at him with his charming toothless smile. Marlana was just behind him.

-James! - he said to the mayor. - How's the reigning?

-Um, thank you mister Renouk, it is an honour to be a mayor of this wonderful city.

-Yes, indeed.

The old man pushed Marlana in front of the mayor and said, bowing in a manner people do when presenting a new horse, creaking with his every bone:

-Miss Marlana Rebouk, to your services. Has a diploma from abroad.

The mayor felt the skin of his face extract some cold sweat and his feet start shaking.

-Um. It is a pleasure, miss, - he bowed in return and smiled a weary smile.

The old man looked closely at him.

-Your smile looks forced. Aren't you happy to meet my granddaughter?

-Oh, no, mister Rebouk, I am very, veeery happy. And pleased.... Honoured, even! It's just that... Well, many people have taken this ball as an opportunity to introduce the girl to me.

-Well, I guess, as they knew that you were informally acquainted with her anyway, they wanted to make some official introductions. To clear things up, you know.

-What? - the mayor started. - I have never had any informal acquaintance neither with Marlana nor with anybody else! What are you talking about?

-Well, you know what they say, - the old man said respectfully. - That you two met either on the beach or in some bar and that you even want to put her former lover into prison!

-Bwa-ha-ha! - came a laugh from behind and Robert Renouk joined their merry conversation. - What a rumour! I don't believe a single word of it!

-Really? - asked the mayor with hope.

-Of course! I am sure it was all misunderstood! How can a man of your position date a girl on a beach or in that "Dog and Whistle" establishment when you've got such a lovely yacht! What's it called? "The Romantic Night on Bajor"?

-Oh...

The mayor felt it's becoming difficult to breathe. His eyes began to water.

-Gentlemen, - he said, listening to his own voice and not really recognizing it. - All of this is so strange... Look, I have never met Marlana. Never! I have a wife and two children! I have never been neither on the beach nor in that "Dog and Whistle" and what you are saying are rumours, voicing which is simply impolite. It is especially impolite as I am the host of this event.

Everybody in the room seemed to get silent after these noble words. Then Robert said in a puzzled tone:

-If not on the beach and not in the "Dog and Whistle", then WHERE?!

As suggestions started coming from everybody and the noise of many people arguing filled the room, the mayor lost sense of time and space and fainted.

* * *

Several years later I met him in Alaska, sipping beer in a place called "Jar and Donkey". He was in high spirits, though I noticed his left eye quiver every time you introduce him to new people.

An Interview with Cooth



Cheap Newspaper is known for it's serious, in-depth interviews, which tend to reveal the true side of things, show our secret fears and display new visions on characters.

Cheap Newspaper: Hi, Cooth! Very nice to have you with us. It's cloudy in Moscow, so may I just call you Darth Vader and we'll proceed?

Cooth: No. You can call my Iggy Uggy Boomchuck-Fligugigu Wubby Giggy Rrrakchakchak Woobiedoo BANG if you really want to.

CN: Very well. Mr. Iggy Uggy Boomchuck-Fligugigu Wubby Giggy Rrrakchakchak Woobiedoo BANG, I really wanted to interview you for

quite some time and there was always one big question troubling me. Picture ten frogs, nine of which are green and one is yellow. Which one would you pick?

Cooth: To be honest, I prefer Italian food, if I'm to choose.

CN: **Any relatives in Rome?**

Cooth: I'm sure there are. They say time is relative for example. I guess they have time in Rome.

CN: **I've heard you have business over in Italy, something concerning smuggling.**

Cooth: WHO TOLD YOU THAT!

CN: **Do you actually kill witnesses? What weapons you usually use?**

Cooth: I don't kill them, I just happen to occasionally do something that in a complex chain of events eventually makes them stop living.

CN: **Ah, a chain! A flexible connection through multiple rigid links?**

Cooth: Yeah, that chain. Nothing like good, solid connection through multiple rigid links, as they say.

CN: **Let's go into other matters, though. Can you explain what is the difference between a lantern and a bon-bon filling? We've had this question on many philosophy group discussions.**

Cooth: That's a toughie. The wisest heads in the world were trying to figure that out, but they are divided. Some claim there is no difference and in the end it's all just the same piece of bullcrap. Others oppose, saying that since you don't normally eat lanterns, there's no proof of any connection with crap - so it's just about assumptions and speculations, while we are seeking for Truth. But I personally tend to agree mostly with the third group, who don't give a fork. Fork is an interesting thing by the way, don't you think.

CN: **Yes, forks are a hobby of mine, I have a collection of 2876214987 of them. But I know many people prefer spoons, because spoons don't require a decision to be made.**

Cooth: Indeed, spoons are the easy way to go. Especially when you eat soup. Eat it with a fork, that's a challenge.

CN: **Did you bravely face that challenge or did you withdraw, like a coward?**

Cooth: I'm still preparing myself mentally for it. And that's only one of several amazing challenges I have in plans. If I succeed in this one, the next thing will be eating a tree. I haven't chosen the exact type, but I suppose it will be an oak. But that's just future plans. I have some more ideas, but that's a secret now.

CN: **Ah! A secret! I love secrets, especially family secrets! Iggy Uggy Boomchuck-Fligugigu Wubby Giggy Rrrakchakchak Woobiedoo BANG sounds**

like a simplified nickname. What is your real family name? I've heard it's fancy and long.

Cooth: Actually it's written down in a book in the family library. 5 volumes.

CN: 5 volumes??! It's that loud? By the way, they loudly say Quake 5 will feature bunnies and elephants. Any comments from you?

Cooth: Whoah! Bunnies are the most dangerous deadly creatures! Don't get mistaken by their size! I've seen this horrible movie. Something about Quest for Holy Graal. And it was nothing compared to what they can do! It may be the most violent part of Quake. I'm sure it'll be a hit. It'll take a lot of courage to play it at nighttime.

CN: Are you personally afraid of the dark, brave warrior Cooth?

Cooth: Well, it depends what is actually dark. Or being dark. Like - dark forces, yeah sounds scary. But dark font on white background, that seems pretty much ok.

CN: You are brave then, aren't you?

Cooth: Well, um. Erm. Yeah. Sure.

CN: Do you have a phobia? You said you are afraid of Dark Forces. That's why you don't want me to call you Darth Vader?

Cooth: I'm afraid of white little bunnies, but that's not a phobia. They're really dangerous.

CN: Ever tried talking to kidney beans? If yes- what did they tell you?

Cooth: They said they don't like to be called beans. They prefer "Phaseolus".

CN: Hmm... Interesting. So. These Phaseolus are native Americans, are they not? What did they tell you about American life?

Cooth: Complained something about corn being more popular.

CN: I take it they might also have mentioned that they mostly observe America from inside the mouth... Do you yourself like Phaseolus?

Cooth: It's not too bad. Maybe because I've never been in the army.

CN: CTG is down today.

Cooth: Yep.

CN: I am thinking of writing a short essay: Life Without CTG.

Cooth: Is it about how you start to realize how many colours there are in the world, except blue?

History Of Magic

Have you ever dreamed of flying or moving objects? Have you ever wanted to just squeeze into that TV screen and live in the world of Harry Potter, where life and magic walk hand in hand?

Well, if you do - then you probably missed your childhood magic lessons, otherwise you wouldn't dream of magic, you would just do it.

But not all is lost! The WNP Press smuggled some of the works of great magicians from the excavations in North America, India, Europe and Asia. Actually, the History Of Magic crew circled our green-blue planet many-many times to get you the material you are about to read.

Before you do, keep in mind, though, that all of it works. It is serious and when we tell you things are serious - you know what that means. So before attempting some real magic, please read the introduction part, prepare well and proceed only then. It is also vital that if you get hurt, we won't be responsible. Just last week we were sued by twenty three families from different parts of the world, who complained that:

1. A boy sat on a broomstick, flew up and then supposedly left the planet.

2. A girl swallowed a cherry and turned into an invisible flea that travels at sonic velocities, so now they can't find her. (duh)

3. Twins pronounced some spell and ten more children appeared. Poor parents don't have the money to feed 'em all. The number of children keeps doubling every two days.

4. A boy put a house on fire. The effect of this should've been a castle in place of the house, but the kid did something wrong, so only a heap of ashes was his reward.

5. A brother shrunk his baby sister and put her into a soda can. Unfortunately, the spell was over before the girl could make it out, so now she is stuck.

6. Two kids made a hovering bicycle, but crashed into a row of cars, the spell left the bicycle, jumped into the cars and they all flew away somewhere.

7. A TV had a spell put on it and now it shows only cartoons.

Of course, we have a special team that fixes all these magical mischiefs, but we can't be at two places at once (even with the help of magic) and we can't fix everything. From the cases above we couldn't retrieve the broomstick boy.

Anyway, enough talk. Let's get to *Magic Lessons That You Were So Unfortunate To Miss In Your Childhood But Are So Fortunate To Take Now.*

The Introduction: What we will need.

The broomstick.

Take the broomstick and throw it away. Broomsticks are for women. We, men, use other stuff. If you don't have a broomstick to throw away, go buy one. If you are a woman, you can keep a broomstick to clean up the place after we, men, are done. (kidding) Seriously speaking, you won't need a broomstick for performing magic, no matter what gender you are.

The magic wand.

Magic wand is one of the most important tools in wizard's possession. Many spells require for the magical energy to travel through the wand in order to accelerate. That's why wands need to be of an exact length.

However, the most important detail of a magic wand is the knob on it's upper end as it can be used for several things, like:

- hitting somebody over the head with it
- using it as a mirror when shaving
- sticking it into holes that it can fit
- hitting it with a metal bar to produce music
- rubbing it to perfection to kill time
- reflecting sun with it to figure out where you are (it's usually impossible to tell, but it adds a certain air to your personality)
- licking it to cool your tongue
- selling it in times of financial needs
- throwing it away to walk faster
- taking it off to use as a ball in cricket, golf or billiards
- throwing it at an enemy

+ bonuses:

- when lost, it can be a reason to stay at her place to search for it
- when swallowed, it can be a bridge to the world of dead

Magic wands are sold almost everywhere in the Dormouse Street, London. You are advised to buy wands of the Tipps company.

Note: There may be those students who can't go immediately to London. They may attempt to make a wand on their own, but it's tricky and not really recommended. However, the specifications are these: a wooden stick, 1,34 meters lengthwise, 2 centimeters in diameter. The section of the stick should be a perfect circle. The knob should be made of any soft metal, preferably aluminum. The knob is a sphere of 7 cm in diameter. On the bottom it should have a hole that allows it to be attached to the stick. When all is done, attach the knob to the stick. Then you should put the wand into a dry dark room with very cool temperature and let it stay there for a couple of hours. Afterwards, you should put a magic sign upon the wand (invisible to human eye). Just contact any local wizard for this. After he puts the sign on, the wand is ready for use.

This Instruction.

If you are reading it, then you have it. If you are not reading it, however, then you don't have it and you should get it. It is in Cheap Newspaper, volume 179.

Confidence.

Without confidence magic won't work. It avoids cowards. When performing magic, you should be absolutely sure that you know what you are doing. To get the feeling that you know what you are doing, you should actually know what you are doing. To find out what you are doing just keep reading this very instruction, which explicitly tells what exactly you should be doing.

The Introduction: Some things you should know about magic.

So now, when we are prepared and you have a magic wand, this instruction, the confidence and don't have a broomstick, we can start doing magic. Before we make our first magic move, there are a few stereotypes about magic that should be dethroned.

Stereotype 1: Spells.

Spells are passed from generation to generation in oral form only. Usually, they are short poems which have instructions on what NOT to

do. This is done to prevent people, uncommon with magic, to get themselves into trouble.

Example: "Raising from the dead spell"

Water, air, fire, rice,

Let the man who's dead arise!

You can try this spell out and see for yourself that the dead will stay dead. Proper spells are always like that.

Of course, there are improper spells too. But the assumption that those improper spells work is wrong. If they worked, nobody would call them improper, would they?

In conclusion, no respectable wizard uses spells to perform magic.

Stereotype 2: Spell books.

Usually contain solutions for spelling tests. Spell books NEVER EVER contain magic spells! However, they are made of good paper, so you can use them to set up a decent fireplace.

Stereotype 3: The music.

Music is very important in magic as it has absolutely nothing to do with it. Things that have absolutely no relation to magic are always of high importance to every wizard. Other things that are of high importance in the world of magic include tooth-brushes, pink marbles, marshmallows, siege tanks, guitars, rusty monkey wrenches, soda cans, spoons, advertisement booklets, stereo players, bits of asphalt, doors, bubble gums, in-line rollers and dog collars. For full list, consult the dictionary of commonly used English words.

Stereotype 4: Side effects of magic.

Now this is the big and sad truth about magic's underside. Unbelievable as it may seem, no wizard is capable of, say, moving a mountain. Every wizardry out there deals with small objects and small purposes. The rest are uncontrollable side effects. This is best illustrated by an example.

In 1997 a wizard from Australia was condemned to prison for destructing the local police department into tiny debris, drying out three rivers, calling a series of small earthquakes and heating up a volcano somewhere in Asia where it burst several heaps of ashes onto cities and gardens. But the only thing he did was change the color of his hat from brown to black. The rest were side effects.

However, there are certain methods of dealing with that, which we will study further. Basically, tragic side effects can be avoided by precise magic performance, as usually side effects are the main purpose of big magic.

The Magic Lessons: Lesson 1 - 11.

Lesson 1: Your first magic move.

And now, at last, we can start the magic.

You will now perform your first magic move which does nothing useful, but provides illumination to impress your friends and family. This spell is called "Sparkles" and will require some practice to master.

With a magic wand in your right hand, clear your mind from any thoughts. Your mind has to be absolutely still for precisely 15,5 seconds and then you should make a smooth move with your wand, drawing an arch in the air with the wand's knob. If everything is done correctly, the wand will leave a tail of red-yellow sparkles behind it. Several moments later they will disappear.

This is the basic move and, apart from being very beautiful and unexplained by modern science, it is also a method to make your magic more powerful. For now, it will just make you very happy about creating the first miracle.

The difficult part here is to not think about anything for 15,5 seconds. There is no need to worry, as it will all come with practice. The period of 15,5 is a very common thing in magic, so later you will get the feeling of this period very well.

Lesson 2: The Vanishing of the elephant.

Now that you've practiced your first move, it is time to do something useful.

In your city find an elephant that is blocking the road. It is easily done by locating traffic jams. Once you did, walk away until the elephant looks as small as a toy soldier and then draw a circle in the air around the elephant with your wand. If the circle is a perfect circle, the elephant will vanish. If you'll attempt this spell on something other but the elephant, the spell won't work.

Lesson 3: The tea pot levitation.

Prepare green tea. Let there be lots of big leaves. When the tea is ready, pour all the water from the pot, leaving leaves only. Take a spoon/fork/stick/finger and mix the leaves into a muddy essence.

Then draw an equilateral triangle. If it is really perfectly equilateral, you will float in mid air for about 15 seconds.

Lesson 4: Queen Catherine.

You have probably noticed that each magic spell requires a perfection of some sort: either you have to draw a perfect figure or do something with perfect precision. This spell is no exception.

Take a mirror of any size and cover it with a layer of pressed oranges. The layer should be precisely 3 mm thick. Then take a dry cloth, clear your mind and start wiping the orange off of the mirror. For exactly 31 seconds instead of your own reflection you will see the beautiful face of queen Catherine.

Note that 31 seconds is twice the magic period of 15,5 seconds. If the spell doesn't work, then the orange layer probably didn't have the precise thickness of 3 millimeters.

Lesson 5: Teleportation.

This one is fairly easy and is one of the favourite spells of all magicians, since it opens the world in front of you, enabling you to travel wherever you wish. No need to buy tickets, no need to stay for twelve hours 10000 km above the ground.

This is what you have to do.

Take a piece of wood and draw a world map. It has to be drawn very precisely and with your own hand. You can use a pen, a pencil or paints. When the map is done, choose a place you want to get teleported to and stick a needle into it.

Afterwards, prepare a cup of fruit compote. Find a big tree and stand near it, so that it's shadow fully covers you. Drink the compote with very small sips. While drinking, stamp your right foot like that: thump (pause) thump-thump (pause) thump (pause) thump-thump (pause) thump (double pause) thump-thump (pause) half a thump (half a pause) thump-thump (pause) thump-thump.

You have to complete the foot stamping pattern three times, finishing off the compote at the same time. If everything is done correctly, you

will experience a short free fall effect and find yourself in the desired place.

The side effect of this spell is that you have to wait at least 24 days to use it again.

Lesson 6: Pigs.

A very neat spell, which allows you to do a bad turn to an enemy of yours.

Take three onions. Throw two away, since only one is needed. Stand in the center of an empty room with an onion in your left hand. Sneeze three times, say the name of your enemy and then eat the onion. After it's done, the person who's name you said will find 56 dirty pigs in his house, 7 of which are about to give birth.

Lesson 7: Broomstick Levitation.

Witchcraft is tricky, so we'll skip this one.

Lesson 8: The Stairs.

Not a very useful spell, but we'll mention it for the record.

With a piece of chalk draw stairs on a wooden wall. Clap your hands five thousand seven hundred thirty four times. A small white figure will appear to be climbing down the stairs that you've drawn. When it reaches the end of the stairs, you will find it hard to breathe and soon die. This spell is also known as the Curse of a Wooden Prince.

Lesson 9: The Carnival.

This is a very important spell and is more advanced than the ones we have already mentioned. Perform this spell with care.

Find a rock and throw it 15,5 meters away. If you did it precisely, a door will appear. Enter it. You'll find yourself in a sort of a corridor. Just walk forward and don't answer the voices around. When the corridor is over, you are going to be asked a question either about paper-clips or horseshoes. No matter which, just say no, you are not interested.

If all's done correctly, you will find yourself 55 years into the future at the magic carnival. There you might find useful contacts, get to know other wizards and find out about your destiny. You will have 31 minutes after which you'll find yourself back in your time. Experience shows that everything you get to know about your own destiny at the carnival never happens.

Lesson 10: Deal aces.

This spell only works at the magic carnival.

If you are going to play a Poison game with the Asp Dwarf, be sure to use a finger-stall when dealing. You can buy it at the 5th row of the market. There will be a choice of an expensive silver finger-stall and a cheap stall webbed from a blue cloth. Take the latter one. When dealing to yourself, avoid touching the cards with the stall, but touch a card before dealing it to the Dwarf. If all's done correctly, you will deal yourself thirteen of the fifteen aces.

Lesson 11: Checkers.

Get a piece of dry cloth and fold it into a sphere. Get a fork and bend it. Get a stick and break it. Get an apple and eat it. Then get a life.

If all's done correctly, a beautiful set of checkers on the checker-board will appear on your table.

We'll stop here, because that is quite enough for your first tryouts. Don't rush and be patient - magic is one of those things where it is better to take one step at a time. If you'll be visiting the Carnival, be very cautious, since it is a dangerous place. Try not to play cards with the Asp Dwarf, don't buy things which you don't know what are for and watch out for assassins. Generally, if you don't attempt anything tricky and just observe, things might go fine. And remember - in case of any trouble just save yourself some time, since 31 minutes after you appeared at the carnival you will vanish and return back.

Anyway, good luck! The History of Magic team will prepare next lessons for you, so stay tuned and high spirits to everyone!



A short story: fable.

Law and Genes

The Dolphin Almaus may have been a little dizzy, but he was also alert. Always. Anyone would be on his toes if he was to control the entire sea.

Anyhow, that splash in the water was heard and he 1/3 opened his left eye.

Pirate Byi didn't believe those stupid legends about a big fish controlling the Awk Sea when he set off to cross it in his boat. The boat was of a very small size, so small that the Stolen Treasure and Byi himself took up all of the free space.

"Told ya it exists," - said Albert, old parrot occupying Byi's shoulder. By the time the bird uttered these dreadful words, Byi and the Stolen Treasure were in the middle of the Awk Sea, halfway to the other side. Albert's sight was becoming only better with age and he could already see the Dolphin Almaus rush through the waves, creating local storms with every move.

Byi turned white.

"When it's late, there's at least one good thing - no point in fear," - continued Albert. - "You never know what to expect next, but once the unexpected happened, expect it to behave unexpectedly anyway. These are the true postulates of the Blank Future Theory believers, are they not."

"Try to be calm and cool," - went on the parrot, - "for nothing can be done to prevent the unpreventable. We are talking of death here. Sooner

or later it takes you, tucks you in with it's skeleton hands and off you go into the unexpected, which was, I must add, expected..."

"But why should anyone be afraid of that?" - couldn't stop Albert. - "What a useless tactic this is, to try to prevent the inevitable. It's easier to invent the inventable then to fight the unfightable, is it not?"

Byi gripped the parrot by it's neck and hissed into it's ear:

"Then you'll be the one talking to the big fish."

"Ah, should I?" - exclaimed Albert, coughing and putting it's neck back to the original position (see Parrot Skeleton, Biology Lessons, page 69, drawing 2).

That very moment the Dolphin Almaus stopped.

Right in front of them.

"Oh, hello," - said Albert and performed a bow. - "We are poor peaceful travelers, crossing this beautiful sea in hopes of getting safely to the other side."

"Aha," - nodded the Dolphin Almaus thoughtfully.

"And we were thinking of getting a special document of some sort, a sea passport or something and we were wanting to get it signed by the King, but he resigned and stuff and we couldn't get it from the new King. His name is Mario and he said he wants mushrooms and so we are on our way to get them."

"Sure."

"Yeah, - continued Albert with inspiration. - And we even got a Merchant's Certificate, here it is, in his pocket. And so we took the treasure and fled."

"What?!" - exclaimed Byi. - "You damn bird, should've cooked a soup out of you long ago!"

The pirate then turned to the Dolphin Almaus and uttered:

"I am sorry, dear Mr. Big Fish, don't know your name..."

"Almaus."

"Mr. Almaus... We are really merchants and this silly bird once belonged to a pirate whom I ki... I mean, bought this bird. And it has a long memory of bad things."

"I see."

"So may we please go? I promise we mean no harm."

"I believe you. What is that?"

The Dolphin Almaus pointed at the Stolen Treasure.

"This is a chest."

"Um... I am the Stolen Treasure, to be exact," - said the Stolen Treasure.

"It is really my daughter, don't listen to her", - said Byi.

"Yeah, and she received a lot of hitting over the head with a candlestick, so she doesn't know what she's saying, Byi is an excellent father," - added Albert. He then received a short punch from the pirate and made a hiccup.

"To whom does this treasure belong?" - asked the Dolphin Almaus.

"To nobody," - said Byi. - "You see, Mr. Alsamum..."

"Almaus."

"Sorry. You see, this is a Stolen Treasure by it's nature. No matter who takes it will posses a Stolen Treasure. So even if it was always yours, it is still stolen."

"I don't get it," - said the Dolphin Almaus, - "how can it be just stolen? To become stolen, it should've been taken from someone."

"No, no," - smiled the Stolen Treasure. - "I never belonged to anyone. I was born Stolen Treasure."

"But why?"

"I don't know. But I seek the meaning of life each day I live," - said the Stolen Treasure.

"This is a good thing to do, indeed," - uttered the Dolphin Almaus. - "But tell me, who were your parents?"

"I was born to Mr. and Mrs. Stolen Riches."

"Oh my God," - muttered Albert. - "Here we go again..."

"And their ancestors?"

"The family of Dragged Away Jewelry and the House of Taken Away Possessions."

"And among their ancestors were there any families that belonged to someone?"

"No," - said the Stolen Treasure sadly. - "Each one of them was either stolen or taken away in unfair circumstances."

"So why do you continue their trend?" - asked the Dolphin Almaus. - "Why do you let this man steal you?"

"He did not steal me. He bought me for a fair price."

"But yet he is still a thief?"

"No, he is not, but I am a Stolen Treasure."

"Our laws state that if you posses stolen property, you are a thief!"

"Please, the ruler of seas and oceans, let us proceed with our mission!" - pleaded Albert. - "Last time our Treasure explained it's life to a dragon for over fifty hours and we still never came to any point!"

"You mean he eventually let you go?"

"Of course. But we had to bury him first and it took weeks. Phui! Never sleep near a decomposing dragon - that smell leaves you with bad dreams." - Albert made a grimace and yawned. - "Besides, it's night and you'll be wanting to be active tomorrow, will you not. Now go get some sleep."

The Dolphin Almaus was puzzled:

"So the dragon died? But how?"

"Oh, from being overconcerned. His last speech was on adopting the Stolen Treasure in order to make it simply Treasure."

The Dolphin Almaus was never a stupid fish. He was always very clever, at times even wise. But this situation was not only new, it was dangerous, it was ridiculous. He considered swallowing this funny small boat with the pirate, the talkative parrot and that pathetic Stolen Treasure, but then he figured that by having the Stolen Treasure in his belly, he might be considered a thief. Such an option was totally unacceptable for a ruler of seas and oceans and he decided to show graciousness.

"Proceed to your destination," - he said solemnly and disappeared in blue waters.

Some hours later the small boat arrived to the other side and Albert left Byi's shoulder and started inspecting trees.

If you are a traveler without a passport, keep in mind that good teamwork and quick wit are documents that always work.



DID YOU KNOW THAT...

...the most commonly used last name around the world is "son of a blacksmith", which in English sounds like Smith and can be found almost in every nation.



YAWN!



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