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PUHKUS LÕLLEMAS

ANTARKTIKA EKSPEDITSIOON

HOLIDAY IN THE SUN – ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION

PROLOOG.

Kui mu mees Birmas mesinädalatel õhinal teatas, et tal on kindel soov koos sõpradega üritada Antarktika kõrgeimat tippu ja mul lihtsalt pole muud varianti kui temaga kaasa minna, oli minu ainus tõsine mure, mida selga panna. Küsimus lahenes justkui iseenesest. Kuna mehe soov on naisele seaduseks, siis me läksimegi Antarktikasse.

PROLOGUE.

We were on our honeymoon in Burma when my husband, full of enthusiasm, announced that he was going to attempt to reach the top of the highest mountain in the Antarctic with his friends. When he said that I simply had no other choice but to go with him, my only serious concern was what to wear. The matter was settled there and then. A good wife should follow her husband's command. So, we went to Antarctica.



25. DETSEMBER 2006.

Punta Arenas, Tšiili. Alar ning Priit olid eelmisel öhtul pa-haaimamatult linna mööda ringi lonkinud, kui korraga astus ligi meeskodanik, kes veeris Priidu varrukalt an-tark-ti-ka ning pakkus: Priit?. Priidul ei jäänud muud üle kui tunnista-da, et jah. Selgus, et see on meie giid Vern, kes luusib Punta Arenases ringi, on hoolega kodutööd teinud ja tunneb meid kõiki juba nägupidi! Täna kandsime kõik igaks juhuks päike-seprille, kuid ausalt öeldes, ega sellest suurt tolku pole. Kuna kõigil on sarnased punased Soft Shell'id seljas, mõjume sama silmatorkavalt kui Pluuto Jõuk või vähemalt A-rühm.

26. DETSEMBER 2006.

Punta Arenas. Kohe hommikul otsustasime, et mooramehe rolli meie A-rühmas täidab Kalev, sest tema on ainuke, kes oskab keevitada. Kell 12 ja väikese hilinemisega saabus meie hostelisse musta soniga, pätti meenutav mees, kes osutus giid Verniks. Alustuseks jagas ta meile oma firma logoga kakap-ruunid joped. Seejärel keeldus kategooriliselt talle spetsiaa-lselt osterud tervitusõllest (poes oli ainult üks suur purk ja seda pakkusimegi talle austuse märgiks). Kolmandaks selgus, et ta pole pähe õppinud ühtki rida laulust "Kuidas heeringas elas kuival maal", mis oli meie kindel nõudmine tiimspiriti tõstmiseks ja mille sõnad talle juba kolme kuu eest saatsime. Aga kokkuvõttes läks meil temaga ladusalt. Ta instrueeris meid põhjalikult marsruudi ja hügieeniprotseduuride osas ning soris viimse esemeni läbi meie varustuse. Kalevi koeravil-last sokke ja karvamütsi vaatas kergedusega. Lõpetuseks

üritas ka pisut pageda: ütles, et meie varustuse hää kvaliteet üllatab teda ja kuna meil on huumorimeelt, küllap meist saab hää tiim. Heeringa-laulu apsu leevendamiseks kutsus meid firma kulul õhtusöögile.

27. DETSEMBER 2006.

Punta Arenas. Nii, käisime täna ALE priihvingul. Etteruttavalt võib öelda, et mingit alet neilt oodata ei maksa. ALE, ehk siis Antarktiline Logistika ja Ekspeditsioonid, on firma, kel on inimeste Antarktikasse lennutamise monopol. Näidati slaide ilusast päikeselisest Antarktikast ja hiljem ka slaide inimestest, kes tiba tuulise ilmaga kindad koju olid unustanud. Need slaidid enam nii ilusad ei olnud. Meiega samal lennul on veel Abramov (www.sevensummits.com) hulga venelastega, Uus-Mere-maa firmast Adventure Consultants šiki moega latiino mingi grupiga ja posu korealasi. Lisaks hulk kõhukaid ja soliidseid habemikke, kes lähevad lõunapoolust ründama. See on küll paras petukaup, sest neid lennutatakse umbes 100 km kaugusele poolusest, kus nad siis suusad alla panevad ja mõnda aega mööda lagedat lund uhavad. Kogu kamp oli ülitõise ja tähtsa moega, justkui suunduks ristsõtta, mitte puhkusele lõunasse! Igatahes täna öhtul lendu ei toimu, sest Patriot Hills'is tuiskab. Järgmine valmisolek stardiks on homme kell 9.30.

28. DETSEMBER 2006.

Punta Arenas. Hommikul kell 9.30 oli Vern jälle kohal. Starti seekord ei toimunud, sest lund küll enam ei sadanud, aga Patriot Hills'is oli tuul 23 sõlme. Iljušin saab maanduda vaid siis, kui tuul on alla 20 sõlme. Järgmine kontrollaeg on kell 12.30.

DECEMBER 25, 2006.

Punta Arenas, Chile. Alar and Priit had been wandering around the town the night before when all of a sudden a man had approached them, spelled an-tarc-tic on Priit's sleeve and said: "Priit?" Priit could do nothing but say "yes". It turned out to be our guide Vern, who had been sneaking around in Punta Arenas, had done his homework properly and already knew us all by sight! Today we are all wearing sunglasses just in case, but to tell you the truth, it doesn't make any difference, as we all have similar red Soft Shells on and look as conspicuous as the Pluto Gang or the A-Team.

DECEMBER 26, 2006.

Punta Arenas. In the morning we decided that Kalev is going to do the hard jobs in our team, since he is the only one who knows anything about welding. At 12 o'clock our guide Vern arrives, being a little late and looking like a tramp with his black cloth cap. For a start, he handed out poop-coloured jackets with his company's logo on it. Then he refused categorically to drink the welcome beer that had been bought especially for him (there was only one big can left in the shop and this is what we offered him to show our respect). On top of everything it turned out that he hadn't learned a single line from the song "When the herring lived on dry land", which had been our specific request to keep up the team spirit and the words of which we had sent him three months before. But on the whole we got on well with him. He instructed us thoroughly in the route and hygiene and rummaged through every little thing

in our equipment. He looked with a touch of envy at Kalev's dog wool socks and hat. In the end he tried to suck up to us a little and said that he is surprised to see the good quality of our equipment and as we have a good sense of humour, we will make a good team. To make up for the herring song he took us out to dinner at the company's expense.

DECEMBER 27, 2006.

Punta Arenas. So, today we have been to the ALE briefing. Let me say at once that you shouldn't expect any discounts (ale) from them. ALE is short for the Antarctic Logistics and Expeditions, a company that has the monopoly on flying people to Antarctica. We saw a slide show of the beautiful sunny Antarctic and a bit later of people who had forgotten to take their gloves with them on a windy day. These were not so beautiful. On the same flight with us we have Abramov (www.sevensummits.com) with a group of Russians, a posh-looking latino with a group of people from a New Zealand company called Adventure Consultants, and a whole bunch of Koreans. In addition there is a whole lot of smart pot-bellied and bearded gentlemen, who are going to attack the South Pole. This is cheating, as they will be flown to a spot 100 km from the Pole, where they will put on skis and glide along the empty fields of snow for a while. The whole bunch had an air of utmost seriousness and importance, as if they were joining a crusade and not going on holiday to the south! Anyway, there is no flight tonight because of a blizzard in Patriot Hills. The next attempt to start will be tomorrow morning at 9.30.

Eile jooksime tänaval Abramovile otsa, kes sel aastal on juba Anartarktikas käinud. Tema ootas Punta Arenasest väl-jalendu kaheksa päeva ja hiljem veel Patriot Hills'is, kokku kaks nädalat. Suurte kogemustega mees andis meile kaks soovitus: esiteks - teeme nende grupiga vetšerinka ja teiseks - osame Patriot Hills'i õlut kaasa. Õhtusöögil arutasime õlle-teemat Verniga, kes oli vägagi nõus. Soovitas küll pigem õlle Vinsoni baaslaagrisse kaasa võtta, sest Patriot Hills'is jooavad teised selle lihtsalt ära. Kuna Vinsoni baaslaagris on ainult 2 püsielanikku, siis esiteks - nemad jooavad palju vähem, teiseks - on täpselt teada, kes jõi ja kolmandaks - kuna nad hoiavad õlut külmumise eest oma telgis, on neil natuke nagu õigus sealt ka matti võtta.

29. DETSEMBER 2006.

Punta Arenas. On väga närvesööv, kui öeldakse, et valmis tuleb olla 9.30, siis 12.30, siis 18.00, seejärel 20.30 ja siis jälle kell 6 hommikul! Meestel on närvid nii läbi, et läksid suurest meeleheitest juba muuseumi. Küll oleme üritanud Vernilt välja pinnida, milline on tema kogemuse kohaselt see ilmavärk. Vern kinnitab, et mingit korduvat mustrit on võimatu leida. Küll on ta aga märganud, et pigem on kolm päeva head ilma ja kolm päeva tormi. Meil on siis teoreetiliselt teine tormipäev käsil. Delikaatse otsuse, kas lend toimub või mitte, teevad piloodid koos Patriot Hills'i ilmaennustajaga. ALE firma omanikul otsustada ei lasta. Kuigi, ega need piloodidki teab mis papist poisid ole! 1993. aastal öeldi ühele, et pööra ots ringi, ilm on halb, Antarktikas maanduda ei saa. Too aga mõtles, et olen ennegi sellist juttu kuulnud! Nüüd korralda-

DECEMBER 28, 2006.

Punta Arenas. At 9.30 in the morning Vern was here again. This time we couldn't start because the wind in Patriot Hills was 23 knots. Although it wasn't snowing any more, the Iljušin can land only when the wind is under 20 knots. The next check point is at 12.30.

Yesterday we bumped into Abramov in the street. He has already been to the Antarctic this year. He had waited for his flight in Punta Arenas for eight days and later for some more in Patriot Hills, all in all for two weeks. As a man of great experience, he first suggested we have a little vetšerink with his group and then we should buy some beer to take to Patriot Hills. We discussed the matter with Vern at dinner and he quite agreed with us. However, he said that we should take the beer to the Vinson base camp instead, as in Patriot Hills other people will drink it up. In Vinson camp on the other hand there are only 2 permanent residents and firstly, they drink a lot less; secondly, it is known who drinks it; and thirdly, as they will keep the beer in their tent to avoid freezing, they are entitled to have their share.

29 DECEMBER, 2006.

Punta Arenas. It is rather nerv-racking to be ready first at 9.30, then at 12.30 and then again at 18.00 and 20.30. And then again in the morning at 6! The men are getting so edgy and desperate that they went to a museum. We have tried to find out from Vern what he knows about the weather, but he says that there is no regular pattern. However, he has noticed that



takse selle lennuki juurde, millest vaid sabaots lumest paistab, ekskursioone.

30. DETSEMBER 2006.

Punta Arenas. Meil on tekkinud paranoiline teooria, et kogu see värk on üks suur bluff. Kõigepealt korjati meilt hiiglaslik summa „Antarktika-paketi” eest. Siis võeti ära riided ja varustus ning pakiti Iljušini. Tegelikult on Iljušin, millest meile pilte on näidatud, lihtsalt papist butafooria ja Vern on Pensa pätt. Varustus korjati ära, et Ameerikas maha müüa. Hoolikas ülevaatus toimus sellepärast, et näha, kas kõik ikka kaubaks läheb. Viletsamate asjade asemele oleks kindlasti kästud midagi uuemat ja paremat osta. Nüüd toimub meie koorimine koostöös kohalike kõrtside ja restoranidega, kuniks meil raha jätkub. Toon näite tänasest päevast, mis on juba teine sarnane järjestikku. Öösel ei maga hästi, vähkred, sest tead, et kell 6 võib tulla otsustav kõne. Hommikuks oled roidunud ja pahur, sest kõnet ei tulnud. Sööd kiiresti, sest järgmine kõne on kell 9.30. Käid igaks juhuks duši all ka, sest vähemalt kaks järgmist nädalat ju ei saa. Nii, minekut ei toimu! Võtad vihaga õlle. Järgmine kõne - kell 12.30. Usinamad suudavad enne seda kerge snäki võtta, sest kohe-kohe algab ju kuiviku ja pudrudieet. Pärast seda lubad endale suurejoonelise lõuna mitme õllega. Pärast jalutad natuke ja juure tundub, et oled end higiseks ajanud. Enne järgmist potentsiaalset stardimomenti 18.30 peaks veel korra duši alla minema. Pärast järjekordset pettumust alustad varast õhtusööki vähemalt ühe

aperatiiviga (kohalik mark on Pisco sauer). Vohmid kiirelt kolm käiku sisse, sest järgmine kõne on 20.15. Pärast neljandat pettumust ühe päeva jooksul tellid uue pudeli veini. Kui kaua üks vaene inimeseloom niimoodi järjest jaksab! Nädala lõpuks oleme kõik puhta kuhtunud.

31. DETSEMBER 2006.

Punta Arenas. Tegelikult pole ilm Patriot Hills'is sugugi nii halb. Lihtsalt Iljušin vajab jäärajal maandumiseks ideaalseid tingimusi - külgtuult alla 10 m/s. Kui on puhangud kuni 15 m/s, lend ei välju. Nagu ütleb meie Vern: „Parem olla maapinnal ja soovida, et oleksid õhus, kui vastupidi.” Lõbusaks vahepalaks oleme Vernilt kuulnud mitmeid huvitavaid lugusid sellest, mis ta elus on korda saatnud: sõitnud jalgrattaga Aconcagualt alla, tõusnud esimesena talvel Denali otsa jms. Kuid palju huvitavat on tal veel teoksil. Näiteks on tema unistuseks tõusta talvisel ajal Vinsoni tippu. Tehniliselt peaks see välja nägema nii: ta hüppab langevarjuga baaslaagrisse, tõuseb joonelt tippu, heiskab õhupalli, tõuseb õhku, kust lennuk ta konksu otsa võtab ja tagaluugist pootshaagiga sisse kaksab. Ta on seda trikki ühest James Bondi filmist näinud ja teab ühte meest, kes sedasi ka teinud on. Vot selline lahe mees on meie Vern! Mis teil selle peale kostab?

1. JAANUAR 2007.

Punta Arenas. Eesti vana aasta saatsime ära koduseks saanud iiri kõrtsus, kus meile maja kulul shamp välja kärrati, kuna oleme seal püsikliendi staatuse omandanud. Tšiili uue aas-

ta puhul 5 tundi hiljem haaras Alar õhtujuhilt mikrofone ja pidas kogu kõrtsurahvale Aasta Inimese väärilise kõne. Uus aasta tuleb meil kõigil tõine, sest juba varahommikul oli Vern platsis ja sundis kassikangast kuduma ehk sõlmi tegema. Sõlmed punutud, kupatas ta meid parki, kus rippusime rahva naeruks kõitega puu otsas, et liustikupraost väljapugemist harjutada. Tegelikult tuli kõigil väga hästi välja. Põhjus, miks eelpool nimetatud tsirkus korraldati, on lihtne - Vern ei taha meid enne mäe peale lasta kui on veendunud, et kogu kõietöö selge. Peamiselt see, kuidas ennast ja teisi praost välja sikutada. Selleks on ta ette näinud terve päeva treeninguid Vinsoni baaslaagris. Kuna meie aeg hakkab vaikselt kokku kuivama, otsustasime osa õppust siin ära teha, et rutem tipu poole tormamata. Et ootamine huvitavam oleks, on ALE välja mõelnud uue triki - täna tuleb ööhäire! Potentsiaalne start - kell 4 hommikul!

2. JAANUAR 2007.

Arvake kus? Punta Arenases! **Mõned vihjed, kuidas aru saada, et kuigi olete enda arust eksootilisel puhkusel, selgub paraku, et olete ühte kohta sobimatult kauaks pidama jäänud:**

1. Teie hostelis elav koer rõõmustab teid nähes rohkem kui oma peremeest nähes.
2. Uue ja huvitava kõrtsi otsingul (nii 100 000 elanikuga linnas) satute (kusjuures kesklinnas) kohta, kus tuleb sissesäämiseks uksekella lasta ja köögist avatakse kori-

JANUARY 1, 2007.

Punta Arenas. We greeted the Estonian New Year in the homey Irish pub, where we had champagne on the house, because we have become regular customers there. In honour of the Chilean New Year five hours later Alar grabbed the microphone from the host and made a speech, worthy of the title Man of the Year. The new year is going to be full of hard work, because already early in the morning Vern is here to make us do the cat's cradle, i.e. to tie knots on the ropes. With the ropes ready, he took us to the park, where we were a laughing-stock, hanging from the trees and practising how to climb out of a crevice in the glacier. Actually we managed very well. The reason why Vern arranged this circus was simple – he doesn't want to let us go on the mountain unless he is convinced that we know all the rope work, above all how to get yourself and others out of the crevice. For this he has arranged a whole day for practice in the Vinson base camp. As we are running out of time, we decided to start with the practice here to get it over with and then rush towards the top of the mountain. To make our life more interesting while we are waiting, ALE has come up with a new trick – tonight we are going to be on the night alert. We might start at 4 in the morning!

JANUARY 2, 2007.

Guess where? In Punta Arenas! **Some clues how to know when you have stayed too long in one place on an exotic holiday:**

1. The dog at your hostel is happier to see you than its host

dori avanev silmapilu, et näha, kes tuli ja teid EI LAS- TA sisse.

3. Teie väga konservatiivne mees käib suurest igavusest viies poes ja ostab endale lõpuks uued matkapüksid.
4. Te hakkate mängima mõttega, et mis oleks, kui ei lähekski õhtul teistega kõrtsi. Toon parem poest pudeli veini ja vaatan viiendat korda “Gladiatorit” (et “Gladiatorit” näidatakse, olete juba päeval voodis vedeledes ja pultri näppides kindlaks teinud).
5. Te vaatate kogu grupiga hosteli lobby's vana-aasta õhtul „The good, the bad and the ugly” hispaania keeles ja see tundub meelelahutuse tippsaavutusena.
6. Ettekandja kohalikus iiri kõrtsis ütleb teile: „Vabandust, aga teie tavapärase laud on hõivatud.”
7. Te ei jookse Abramovile ja tema grupile (kaks Lukoili bossi naistega) otsa enam mitte kord, vaid vähemalt kaks korda päevas.
8. Mõnele teie grupi liikmetest on hakanud tunduma, et nad on leiutanud uue surmasõlme.

3. JAANUAR 2007.

Punta Arenas. Tänane hommik algas lootusrikkalt: tuul Patriot Hills'is 20–27 sõlme. Kell 12.15 ikka sama lugu. Nüüd ootame järgmist šanssi kell 16.15. Eile korraldas Vern järjekordse õppuse, seekord eesmärgiga, et me oskaks teda praost

it gives three good days and then three stormy days. We are theoretically on our second stormy day. The delicate decision whether the plane will take off or not will be made by the pilots together with the weather forecast in Patriot Hills. The owner of the ALE company has no say in this matter. But then those pilots know what they are up to. In 1993 one of them was told to turn round, as he couldn't land in Antarctica because of bad weather. He thought that he had heard that story before and didn't turn round. Now they arrange excursions to this plane, with only its tail visible from the snow.

DECEMBER 30, 2006.

Punta Arenas. We are getting paranoid about it all. We have a theory that it is all a bluff. First, we pay an enormous sum of money for “the Antarctic package”. Then all our clothes and equipment are taken away and packed in the Iljušin. The Iljušin itself is a cardboard model, of which we have only seen pictures and Vern is in fact a crook from Pensa. Our equipment was collected in order to be sold in America and it was very carefully inspected only to see whether they could sell everything. We would have been told to buy better ones if they hadn't been satisfied. Now we are being ripped off by the local pubs and restaurants, until we run out of money. Let's take what happened today as an example, it's the second time in a row already. You don't sleep well at night, you keep tossing and turning because you know you might have an important call at 6 in the morning. When morning comes you are weary and easily upset, because you didn't get that call. You have a quick breakfast because the next call may come at 9.30. You take a shower too, just in case, because for the next two weeks at least you won't be able to do it again. Still no news, so you have a

beer to suppress your anger. The next call is at 12.30. The more diligent travellers manage to have a quick snack before that, as very soon you will be on a biscuit and porridge diet. After that you treat yourself to a lavish meal with several beers. Afterwards you go for a short walk and feel that you have already exerted yourself. Before the next start at 18.30 you should take another shower. After yet another disappointment you have an early dinner with at least one appetizer (the local variant is Pisco Sauer). You gulp down your meal because the next call may be at 8.15. After the fourth disappointment in one day you order another bottle of wine. How much more of this can you take? By the end of the week we will all be broken.

DECEMBER 31, 2006.

Punta Arenas. Actually the weather in Patriot Hills is not so bad after all. Iljušin simply needs ideal landing conditions – the wind blowing from the side under 10 m/s. If there are gusts of wind of up to 15 m/s, the plane won't take off. As our Vern says: “It's better to be on the ground, wishing you were up in the air than the other way round.” Meanwhile Vern has been entertaining us with stories of his life and of his achievements: he has ridden a bike down the mountain at Aconcagua, he was the first to rise to Denali in winter, and so on. But he has a lot going on too. For instance he is dreaming about rising to the top of Vinson in winter. This is how it is supposed to take place technically: he will parachute to the base camp, rise to the top, blow up a balloon and fly up to the air where a plane will catch him with a hook and draw him in through the back door. He has seen this trick in a James Bond film and knows someone who has done it. This is our Vern! What have you got to say to that?

JANUARY 1, 2007.

Punta Arenas. We greeted the Estonian New Year in the homey Irish pub, where we had champagne on the house, because we have become regular customers there. In honour of the Chilean New Year five hours later Alar grabbed the microphone from the host and made a speech, worthy of the title Man of the Year. The new year is going to be full of hard work, because already early in the morning Vern is here to make us do the cat's cradle, i.e. to tie knots on the ropes. With the ropes ready, he took us to the park, where we were a laughing-stock, hanging from the trees and practising how to climb out of a crevice in the glacier. Actually we managed very well. The reason why Vern arranged this circus was simple – he doesn't want to let us go on the mountain unless he is convinced that we know all the rope work, above all how to get yourself and others out of the crevice. For this he has arranged a whole day for practice in the Vinson base camp. As we are running out of time, we decided to start with the practice here to get it over with and then rush towards the top of the mountain. To make our life more interesting while we are waiting, ALE has come up with a new trick – tonight we are going to be on the night alert. We might start at 4 in the morning!

JANUARY 2, 2007.

Guess where? In Punta Arenas! **Some clues how to know when you have stayed too long in one place on an exotic holiday:**

1. The dog at your hostel is happier to see you than its host

2. In search of a new and exciting pub (in a town with a population of about 100 000) you come across a place (in the town centre by the way) where you have to ring the doorbell to get in and they open the slot in the door to see who's coming and they WON'T LET YOU IN!
3. Out of boredom, your extremely conservative husband goes to five different shops and finally buys a new pair of hiking pants.
4. You start toying with the idea of not going to the pub with the others and getting a bottle of wine from the shop instead. You'd rather watch the “Gladiator” for the fifth time (you've made sure that they are showing the “Gladiator” earlier in the day while you were lying in bed, playing with the remote control).
5. On New Year's Eve you watch “The good, the bad and the ugly” in Spanish in the hotel lobby with the whole group and you think that it's top-quality entertainment.
6. The waitress in the local Irish pub tells you: “Sorry, but your usual table is taken”.
7. You don't run into Abramov and his group (two Lukoil bosses with their wives) once, but at least twice a day.
8. Some of your group members get the idea that they have invented a new death loop.

JANUARY 3, 2007.

Punta Arenas. The morning was promising: the wind at Patriot Hills is 20 to 27 knots. At 12.15 it's still the same. Now we are waiting for the next chance at 16.15. Yesterday Vern arranged another training for us, this time to practise how to



välja kaksata. Õppisime tegema Z-plokküsteemi (seda kasutades tundub 100 kg kaaluv inimene 30 kg-ne; mõikab nagu moodsad kõhnumistabletid - kiiresti ja efektiivselt). Praktilises osas vinnasime Verni ka pargis puu otsa. Õppus õnnestus sajabrotsendiliselt, sest Vern on üks kergemaid ja teda sikutasid vähemalt kolm tugevat meest.

4. JAANUAR 2007.

Punta Arenas. Eile saabus meie reisiärevusest õhvil linnakesse kuulud tegelane nimega La Escoba de Dios. Kes temast kuulnud pole, sellele selgituseks, et tegu on lausa nii tähtsa tegelasega, et kui tema tänaval on, siis lihtsurelikul on targem toas püsida (umbes nagu siis, kui Bush Tallinnas käis, teate küll). Jumala Luud pühkis üle Punta 35 m/s ja lennuväljale jõudes kaksas Iljušini hanna otsast. Vern kutsus meid eile õhtul kell 7 kokku, et pommuudist isiklikult teatada. Ta hoiatas, et on võimalus, et kogu ettevõtmine jääb selleks aastaks üldse katki. Tahame ehk järgmisel aastal uuesti tulla? Lõplik tõde pidi selguma järgmisel päeval kell 11. Kõigepealt tuli aga maha pidada kriisikoos-

olek iiri kõrtsis ja vastu võtta Alari sünnipäev. Meie ühehääline otsus oli loomulikul - ei sammugi tagasi, ikka edasi Tootatud Maa poole! Õnneks tabasime telefonitsi Abramovit, kes kurba uudist kuuldes oli oma grupi viinud kinno hispaaniakeelset multifilmi „Happy Feet” vaatama. Mõni giid ikka teab, kuidas grupil tuju üleval hoida! Nii liitus meie kriisikomisjoniga ka venelaste gäng koos piloot Igoriga. Pärast seda, kui olin Igoril rinna lahinal märjaks nutnud, tunnistas ta, et ega kogu Iljušini häänd kah läinud pole, vähemalt pool on alles ja ülejäänud pool kasvab tagasi järgmise viie päeva jooksul. Alari sünnipäev algas seega ülevas meeleolus. Šampus voolas ojadena ning Kalev komponeeris kiiresti oodi Iljušini ja Alari auks. Täna hommikul kell 11 sumises ALE aktusesaal kui pahane herilasepesa. ALE tuus Peeter Austraaliast pidas pika ja liigutava kõne katabaatiliste tuulte auks. Need on sellised tuuled, mis hakkavad pooluselt puhuma ja järgi ei jäta, kas vai ike, kui tahat. Iljušini sabaots peaks koos sabainseneriga saabuma Dubaist kahe päeva jooksul. Järgmine stardipauk käib pühapäeval, 7. jaanuaril kell 16.00. Ootamatult tekkinud vaba aja kavatseme sisustada sel-

lega, et rendime bussi ja kimame Torres del Paine'i rahvusparki. Muide, kas keegi mõnd hääd hännaloitsu teab?

8. JAANUAR 2007.

Ekspeditsioon Puhkus Lõunas raporteerib Vinsoni baaslaagrist 2100 m kõrgusel! Eile, 7. jaanuaril kell 18.00 toimus Punta Arenasest väljalend tervenendud hännaga Iljušini. Maandumine käis kõigepealt järsu jõnksu ja seejärel kõva kolksuga. Aga saime siiski kõik tervelt maa peale. Vern pani meid Patriot Hills'is kohe tööle. Meie ülesandeks oli leida Verni varustuse peidukoht ja kaevata välja kaheksa telki. Twin Otter lennutas meid kella 4-ks hommikul baaslaagrisse, kusjuures maandumine suuskadel oli tunduvalt pehmem. Püstitasime telgid ja magama saime alles kell 6. Nüüd on hiline pärastlõuna, päike paistab ja Vinson ka paistab. Egas muud kui kott selga, kelk taha ja uhama!

9. JAANUAR 2007.

Siin taas ekspeditsioon Puhkus Lõunas. Oleme jõudnud esimesse laagrisse. Kui kõrgel oleme, täpselt aru ei saa, aga vast

get him out of the crevice. We learned how to make Z-block systems (using this system a 100-kilo person feels like 30 kilos, it works just like modern weight loss tablets – quickly and effectively). In the practical part of the training we hauled Vern into a tree in the park. The training was a success one hundred percent, because Vern is one of the lightest persons and he was pulled by at least three strong men.

JANUARY 4, 2007.

Punta Arenas. Yesterday an important character called La Escoba de Dios arrived in our town filled with great expectations. For those who have never heard of it, let me explain that this is such an important character that it is wiser to stay indoors when it is out in the street (you know, just like the time when Bush was visiting Tallinn)

The Broom of the God swept over Punta at 35 metres per second and chopped off the Iljušin's tail when it reached the airport. We gathered at 7 in the evening so Vern could break the grim news personally. He warned us that the whole thing

might be off this year. Perhaps we would like to come back next year? We would find out the final truth the next day at 11. But first we had to hold an emergency meeting at the Irish pub and celebrate Alar's birthday. Naturally, our unanimous decision was to stand firm and move on to the Promised Land. Fortunately we got hold of Abramov by phone. He had taken his group to the cinema to see "Happy Feet", when he heard the sad news. Some guides know how to keep up the team spirit. And so the Russian gang with the pilot Igor joined our emergency committee. After I had wept buckets and Igor's chest was wet with my tears, he admitted that not all of the Iljušin's tail had gone, at least half of it was still there and the other half would grow back in five days. So, Alar's birthday started in high spirits. Champagne was flowing and Kalev quickly composed an ode in honour of the Iljušin and Alar. This morning at 11 the meeting hall of ALE was buzzing like a wasps' nest. Peter, ALE's boss from Australia delivered a long and moving speech about catabatic winds. These are winds that start blowing from the Pole and won't stop, even if you cry for help. The

Iljušin's tail should arrive in two days from Dubai together with the tail engineer. The next start will be on Sunday, 7 January at 16.00. We decide to rent a bus and drive to the Torres del Paine national park to pass the time. By the way, does anyone know a good magic spell for tails?

JANUARY 8, 2007.

Expedition Holiday in the south reports from the Vinson base camp at 2100 metres! Yesterday, on 7 January at 18.00 we started from Punta Arenas on the Iljušin with the healed tail. We landed first with a sudden jerk and then with a loud bang, but still safe and sound. At Patriot Hills Vern got us to work right away. We had to find the hiding place of Vern's equipment and dig out eight tents. By 4 o'clock in the morning the Twin Otter flew us to the base camp. By the way, landing on the skis was much smoother. We put up the tents and got to sleep at 6 o'clock. It's late afternoon, the sun is shining and we can see Vinson. Now all we have to do is to take the backpacks and sleighs and get going!

päris kõrgel. Eile higistasime järjest viis tundi, kotid seljas ja kelgud taga. Täna eile päeva põhiteema on: kuidas kakada kotti, kuidas seda kotti hoida ja kuidas seda kotti kokku voltida. Sellest oleme rääkinud terve hommiku. Kõigi tervis on väga hea. Täna on plaan umbes 3–4 tundi liikuda edasi teise laagrisse.

12. JAANUAR 2007.

Oleme jõudnud kõrgeimasse laagrisse umbes 4000 m kõrgusel. Kõigil on vähe hõre olla, aga sellele vaatamata on rõõm tõdeda, et tegu on tõeliselt lõunamaise puhkusega. Särab päike ja tuult pole absoluutselt. Jutud Antarktika külmast on igatahes liialdatud. Oleme siiani saanud ainult ühel päeval natuke tuult ja ühel päeval natuke lund. Muidu on kogu aeg olnud väga soe ilm. Isegi meie giid Vern ütleb, et sellist soojust ei ole ta kunagi näinud. Homme plaanime tõusta tippu, mis peaks võtma umbes 13 tundi. Eile õhtul jõime esimest korda grokki. Pakkusime ka giidile. Ta võttis välja kitarri, mis tal igal pool kaasas on, lasi laulu ja plõnnis pilli. Selle tulemu-

JANUARY 9, 2007.

It's expedition Holiday in the South again. We have reached the first base camp. We don't know how high we are exactly, but it must be quite high. Yesterday we sweated for five hours in a row, carrying the backpacks and pulling sleighs. The topic of the day is: how to poop into a bag, how to keep the bag open and how to fold it. We have talked about it all morning. Everyone is in good health. Today we plan to keep going for 3 or 4 hours to get to the next camp.

JANUARY 12, 2007.

We have reached the highest camp at about 4000 metres. The air is a bit thin up here, but still it is nice to have a real southern holiday: the sun is shining and it is almost calm. The stories about the Antarctic cold are surely exaggerated. So far we have only had a bit of wind and a bit of snow on one day. Otherwise it has been really warm. Even our guide Vern says that he has never seen such warm weather. Tomorrow we plan to rise to the top, which should take about 13 hours. Last



sena me täna tippu ei tõusnud, kuigi tegelikult ka sellepärast, et paremini aklimatiseeruda.

13. JAANUAR 2007.

Tähelepanu, tähelepanu, raporteerib ekspeditsioon Puhkus Lõunas. Täna 13. jaanuaril, kell 16.16 siinse aja järgi jõudsid neli meest ja üks naine Vinsoni tippu.

Ilm on imeilus – tuulevaikne, päike sirab taevas. Täiesti ebaantarkikalik ilm. Püstitasime teatud mõttes rekordi, sest giid ütles, et ükski tema grupp pole käinud tipus nii kiiresti – 9,5 tunniga. Praegu tunnevad kõik end hästi. Homme,

kui ilmaga veab, läheme tagasi alla baaslaagrisse. Meie edu oli ilmselt selles, et giid tõi meid enne tipupäeva üheks päevaks viimasesse laagrisse aklimatiseeruma. Niisiis - kõlisegu klaasid ning voolaku viin ja vein!

14. JAANUAR 2007.

Jabadabadauuu - ekspeditsiooni Puhkus Lõunas liikmetel on õnnepäevad! Jõudsime baaslaagrisse, kus ootas ees kast õlut! Ilm on hästi udune, paks pilv on pea kohal. Ootame, et Twin Otter saaks taas suuskadel siia maanduda.

16. JAANUAR 2007.

Ekspeditsioon Puhkus Lõunas resideerub endiselt baaslaagris. Oleme paar viimast päeva täiega puhanud. Esimesel õhtul, kui saabusime, toimus venelastega suur pidu - venelaste uusaasta ehk starõi novõi god. Tähistasime küll päevakese hiljem, sest varem ei jõudnud, aga sellest polnud midagi. Järgmisel päeval oli venelaste giidi Aleksander Abramovi sünnipäev, mis toimus veel suurema peoga. Lennuki maandumisraja kohal ripub hiiglaslik pilv, mis ei kavatse kusagile liikuda. Oleme üritanud tuult nõiduda, aga seni tulutult. Vedeleme päevad

läbi telgis, loeme raamatuid ja sööme. Oleme ka arutanud naljaga pooleks, mis saab, kui peaksime siin talvituma. Kohalik laagriülem ütles, et neil on kindel plaan - lennuk lendab üle ning viskab alla püssid ja uue piirituse. Ärge seda siiski tõsiselt võtke :) Loodan järgmise teate saata juba Patriot Hills'ist.

20. JAANUAR 2007.

Meie ekspeditsiooniga toimus tõeline progress: jõudsime Vinsoni baaslaagrist, kus kuus päeva istusime, lõpuks ometi Patriot Hills'i, sest ilm paranes. Ootamatult aeti meid juba mit-

night we had grog for the first time. We offered some to our guide as well. He took out his guitar, which he takes with him everywhere, and sang some songs and plunked on the guitar. As a result, we didn't get to the top today. Well, also because we needed to acclimatize better.

JANUARY 13, 2007.

Attention, attention! Holiday in the South reporting. Today, on 13 January, at 16.16 local time four men and one woman reached the summit of Vinson. The weather is beautiful – it is absolutely calm and the sun is shining in the sky – not typical

of the Antarctic at all. We have set a sort of record, because our guide says that none of his groups have reached the top so quickly – in 9 and a half hours. Almost all of us are feeling well. Tomorrow, if the weather is good, we will go back to the base camp. Our success lies probably in the fact that our guide took us to the last camp to acclimatize for a day before going to the top of the mountain. So – let's lift up the glasses and celebrate!

JANUARY 14, 2007.

Yabadabadoo! It's happy days for the expedition Holiday in the South. We reached the base camp, where we've got lots of

beer waiting for us! The weather is foggy and there's a thick cloud above the heads. We are waiting for the Twin Otter to land again on the skis.

JANUARY 16, 2007.

The expedition Holiday in the South is still in the base camp. In the last few days we have had a good rest. On the first night when we got back we had a big party with the Russians, celebrating their New Year, or starõi novõi god as they call it. We celebrated it a day later because we didn't get back for the right day, but it didn't matter. The next day the Rus-

sian guide Aleksander Abramov had a birthday, which was celebrated with an even bigger party. There's a gigantic cloud above the runway and it isn't going anywhere. We have tried using magic spells, but so far with no results. We lie around in the tents all day, reading books and eating. We've also discussed, half jokingly, what if we have to spend the winter here. The local camp warden said that they had a detailed plan – the plane would fly over the camp and drop the guns and fuel. Don't take it for a fact :) I hope to send the next message from Patriot Hills.



mendat korda vara üles teatega, et nüüd vist tuleb lend. Täna lend toimuski ja nüüd on kõik grupid Vinsoni baaslaagrist jõudnud Patriot Hills'i. Meie loomulikult jätkame vennastumist vene grupiga ning limpsime hõögveini. Tuul on hästi kõva. Saime telgid üles enne, kui oli vähe vaiksem. Venelased jõudsid kohale hiljem, nii et aitasime neil telke üles panna. Üks telk lendas peaaegu et antarktilistesse avarustesse, kui me poleks Kaleviga seda kinni rabanud. Nüüd joome meie uue kodumaa - Antarktika - terviseks. Kuid loodame ikka juba järgmisel nädalal jõuda muusse maailma. Päris kindlad veel ei ole. Kõik on terved ja tunnevad end hästi.

21. JAANUAR 2007.

Teatame kurbusega, et puhkus hakkab lõppema. On aeg jälle klaasid täis valada, sest Iljušin on õhus ja loodame, et maandub siin umbes kell kaks. Veelgi enam - loodame, et see ka

õhku tõuseb. Viimane kord maandus ta väga kõva tuulega ja nibin-nabin. Arvatavasti oleme juba täna õhtul Punta Arenases. Mehed plaanivad minna iiri pubisse ja on täpselt välja mõelnud, mida tellida, süüa ja juua. Seni tühjendati hommikusöögi kõrval viimane venelaste veinipakk. Eiline õhtu oli väga meeleolukas. Meie Tarmoga vajusime varem telki, kuid need, kes kauem vastu pidasid, osalesid kohalikul suveolümpial. Täna hommikul nägime fotomaterjali maadlusmatši kohta. Kuulsime kell neli hommikul Kalevi ja Toomase vestlust, et kalkun kui vagur ja taltsas loom on hea kingitus sõbrale sünnipäevaks!

22. JAANUAR 2007.

21. jaanuaril umbes kell kaks pärastlõunal saime kord jälle imetleda Iljušini graatsilist tossukaart taevaalotusel. Tuli kolk-suga maha ja pärast slaavipärast kaisutust teatas piloot: "Hva-

tit, davai poletajem!" Lennukis olid lisaks meie ja venelaste veinist rõõsadele nägudele ka poolusele suusatajate eriti tähtsad ja hoopis lapilisemad näod. Pool vene grupist ja Abramov ise võeti Tšiili piirikontrollis vahele kui kontrabandistid ja piiririkkujad - miski viisajama. Lasti siiski ausõna peale õhtuks linna pidutsema. Passid konfiskeeriti.

Ja siis saabusid õnn ja rõõm: esimene peapesu, teine ja veel kolmaski peapesu, esimene sööm ja esimene vetsuskäik! Teie, kes te pole pidanud kaks nädalat järjest pungestama selle nimel, et paks ja vedel kogu aeg eri anumatesse satuks, ei tea sellest muidugi midagi, mis tunne on korraga istuda, mõnuga! Pidustused koos venelastega koduses iiri pubis võtsid korralikud tuurid sisse ja tugevamate grupp saabus alles hommikul hostelisse. Nüüd viivad meie teed lahku: Alar ja Priit bussiga Argentiinasse, meie Tarmoga homme Men-

dozasse ja Kalev Toomasega stardivad siit 24. kuupäeval koju. Täname kõiki kaasaelamise ja toetuse eest!

EPILOOG.

Pärast Vinsonit teatasin abikaasale, et mulle meeldiks esimest pulma-aastapäeva tähistada Aconcagua ning tal lihtsalt ei jää muud üle kui minuga kaasa tulla. Tähtsaks päevaks, 1. veebruariks, jõudsimegi 6000 meetri kõrgusele, kus ootasime kolm päeva tormi möödumist. Lõpuks otsustasime minna hoopis tagasi Mendozasse ja veinituurile. Meile on kombeks üks mägi korraga.

JANUARY 20, 2007.

Our expedition has made good progress: we finally got from the Vinson base camp, where we had been waiting for six days, to Patriot Hills, because the weather improved. We had been woken up early several times before with the call for the flight, but today it finally happened. By now all the groups from the Vinson camp are back at Patriot Hills. Naturally, we are fraternizing with the Russian group and sipping spiced wine. A gale-force wind is blowing. We got the tents up when it was a bit calmer. The Russians arrived later, so we helped them to put up their tents too. One of the tents would almost have flown away into the Antarctic wilderness, if Kalev and I hadn't caught it. Now we are drinking a toast to our new homeland - Antarctica. But we are still hoping to reach the rest of the world next week. We are not quite sure yet. Everyone is in good health and feeling well.

JANUARY 21, 2007.

We regret to tell you that our holiday is almost over. It's time to fill the glasses again, as the Iljušin is in the air and we hope it will land at about two o'clock. Moreover, we hope it will take off again. The last time it landed in strong winds it was touch and go. Hopefully we will be in Punta Arenas tonight. The men are planning to go to the Irish pub and have already decided what they are going to order. For breakfast, we emptied the last carton of wine from the Russians. Last night was spent in high spirits. Tarmo and I went back to the tents earlier, but those who stayed up, took part in the local summer Olympics. This morning we could take a look at the photos of the wrestling match. At four o'clock in the morning we overheard Kalev and Toomas talking about the turkey. It would make an excellent birthday present for a friend as it is a meek and mild animal!

JANUARY 22, 2007.

On 21 January at about two o'clock in the afternoon we could once again admire the Iljušin's graceful curves of smoke in the sky. It landed with a bang and after a typical Slavic hug the pilot announced: "Hvatit, davai poletajem!" In addition to the Russians and us, with our faces ruddy from the wine, there were also the skiers who had been to the South Pole. They looked extremely important but their faces were much more blotched than ours. Half of the Russian group, including Abramov himself, were arrested at the Chilean customs as smugglers and offenders - there was some sort of problem with the visas. However, they let them go into town on their honour and have a party, but their passports were confiscated.

And then the joy and happiness: washing the hair once, twice and then for the third time, the first sip and ... going to the toilet for the first time! Those of you who have never had to try very hard for two weeks to make sure that the solid and

the fluid end up in separate containers, have no idea what it feels to be able to sit at last, and enjoy it!

The celebrations with the Russians in the homey Irish pub were in full swing and the strongest got back to the hotel in the early morning. Now we will go our separate ways: Alar and Priit are taking the bus to Argentina, Tarmo and I are going to Mendoza the next day, and Kalev and Toomas are going home on the 24th. We thank you all for sharing the experience with us and for your support!

THE EPILOGUE.

After Vinson I told my husband that I would like to celebrate the first wedding anniversary at Aconcagua and he would simply have to come with me. On the important day, 1 February, we reached the altitude of 6000 metres, where we waited for three days for the storm to pass. In the end we decided to return to Mendoza and go on a wine tour. We are in the habit of taking on mountain at a time.

