

DUNNO'S ADVENTURES

Nikolai Nosov

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An ACCIDENT



KANOL PUBLISHING HOUSE (PVT) LTD.

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Some people think that the higher you go, the warmer it is. That is not true. The higher you go, the colder it is, because the sun heats the earth with its rays. The earth becomes like a stove, and everybody knows that the closer you are to a stove, the warmer it is.

The Mites discovered this for themselves when they flew off the earth in their balloon. It was so very cold up above the clouds that their cheeks and noses turned red and they had to stamp their feet and wave their arms to keep warm. Scatterbrain was the coldest of all because he had left his cap behind. He shivered all over, his teeth chattered, and a great big icicle formed at the end of his nose.

"Stop chattering," grumbled Grumps. "It's cold enough without having to listen to your teeth chattering!"

"It's not my fault if it's c-o-l-d!" shivered Scatterbrain.

"I can't bear to hear teeth chattering," said Grumps, getting up. "It gives me a chill."

He sat down next to Blobs, but Blobs' teeth were chattering, too. Grumps looked at him suspiciously.

"You doing it too?" he said. "Just to spite me, eh?"

"Not at all. Because it's so c-o-l-d!"

Grumps got up and took another seat. He kept changing his seat all the time, and everybody found him a nuisance.

The balloon was covered with hoar-frost and shone like silver in the sunlight.

Gradually the air inside the rubber cooled and the balloon began to go down. In a minute it was falling swiftly through the air. There were no more sacks of sand and nothing could be done to stop the fall.

"H-e-l-p!" cried Treacy-Sweeter.

"We're done for!" wailed Dunno, and dived under a bench.

"Get out of there!" Doono shouted at him.

"Why should I?"

"We're going to jump with parachutes."

"I'd rather stay here," said Dunno from under the bench.

Doono seized him by the scruff of the neck and dragged him out.

"Don't touch me!" cried Dunno. "I'll file a complaint!"

"Stop shouting," said Doono calmly. "No hysterics, if you please. Watch me jump, and then follow suit."

His calm voice made Dunno feel the least bit better. Doono went to the edge of the basket.

"Attention, everybody!" he said. "You are all to jump after me, one by one. Anyone who stays behind will be carried up in the air by the balloon. Get your parachutes ready. And now-jump!"

Doono jumped and went sailing down. Swifty jumped next, but he did not go sailing down. Instead of jumping and then opening





his parachute, he opened his parachute and then jumped. The parachute caught on to the side of the basket, Swifty got his foot entangled in the ropes and hung upside-down in the air. He kicked and wriggled like a worm on a fish-hook, but the parachute would not come free.

"Goodness me, if the parachute comes free, Swifty will land on his head!" exclaimed Dr. Pillman.

Quickly the Mites seized the ropes of the parachute and pulled Swifty back into the basket.

Dunno noticed that the balloon was rising again.

"Look! Nobody else need jump!" he said. "The balloon has stopped falling!"

"Why is that?" asked P'raps in surprise.

"Because Doono jumped out and the balloon's lighter, can't you understand that, stupid?" said Grumps.

P'raps gave a little shrug of his shoulders.

"P'raps just walk home," he said.

"And what will we do without Doono?"

"Pooh! As if we couldn't get on without Doono!" said Dunno.

"We've got to have somebody tell us what to do," said Roly-Poly.

"I'll tell you what to do from now on," announced Dunno. "I'll be in charge from now on."





"You!" said Grumps in surprise. "A fellow with a head like yours?"

"What's wrong with my head?" said Dunno. "You can jump out and join Doono if you don't like my head."

Grumps glanced over the edge.

"How would I find him?" he said. "We've sailed a long way since then. We ought to have jumped when he did."

"Jump now. Go ahead and jump."

Grumps and Dunno began to quarrel, and since there was no Doono to stop them, the quarrel went on and on until evening. The sun went down. The wind rose. The air inside the rubber got colder and colder and the balloon began to go down again, but Grumps and Dunno went on quarrelling.

"Enough of this," said Treacy-Sweeter to Dunno. "If you're in charge, tell us what to do. The balloon's falling again."

"I will in just a minute," said Dunno.

He sat down on a bench, put one finger to his forehead, and began to think. Meanwhile the balloon went down faster than ever.

"What's there to think about?" said Bendum. "If we had some more sacks of sand we could throw them out."

"Quite right," said Dunno, snatching at the idea. "But since we have no more sacks of sand we'll have to throw one of you out. Then the balloon will go up in the air again."

"Who shall we throw?"

"I don't know," said Dunno, deep in thought. "Let's throw out the one who does the most grumbling."

"What if I don't want to be thrown out?" said Grumps. "There's no rule that says the one who does the most grumbling ought to be thrown out. Let's throw out the one who weighs the most."

"That's an idea," said Dunno, "we'll throw out Roly-Poly. He's the fattest."

"Quite right," said Treacy-Sweeter.



"What?" cried Roly-Poly. "Me the fattest? Treacy-Sweeter's fatter than me!"

"Me fatter than him?" cried Treacy-Sweeter, laughing and pointing a finger at Roly-Poly. "Take a look, everybody. Take a look. Ha, ha! Measure us, if you can't see who's fatter."

"Go ahead and measure us," said Roly-Poly, leaping over to Treacy-Sweeter like a fighting cock. Dunno took a piece of string out of his pocket and put it around Roly-Poly's waist. Then he put it around Treacy-Sweeter's waist, and it turned out that Treacy-Sweeter was fatter than Roly-Poly.

"I don't believe it!" cried Treacy-Sweeter. "Roly-Poly didn't play fair. He pulled in his stomach — I saw him!"

"I did not!" cried Roly-Poly.

"You did. I saw you. Let's measure all over again."

While Dunno was measuring Roly-Poly, Treacy-Sweeter kept dancing about him and saying:

"Come, come, none of that, now! Blow yourself up."

"Why should I blow myself up?" said Roly-Poly. "Of course I'll be fatter than you if I blow myself up."

"Very well, don't blow yourself up, but don't hold yourself in, either. You have no right to hold yourself in. Look what he's doing, everybody! It isn't fair! He's a cheat!"

When Dunno had taken Roly-Poly's exact measurement, he measured Treacly-Sweeter just as exactly, and this time it turned out that they were both the same size.

"We'll have to throw them both out," said Dunno with a sigh.

"But why, when one's enough?" asked Treacly-Sweeter.

Shot, the hunter, looked down and saw that the earth was coming up at them very fast.

"Hurry and decide before we crash, Dunno," he said.

"We'll have to count out who's to be thrown over," said P'raps.

"That's right," said Treacly-Sweeter, "but we've got to count everybody, fat and thin alike, so that nobody's feelings get hurt."

"All right," Dunno said, "I'll count."

They all stood in a circle, and Dunno began to count, poking his finger into each of them in turn:



*Eny beny bess,
Tickle tackle tess,
Eny beny beany,
Tickle tackle teeny....*

Then he said:

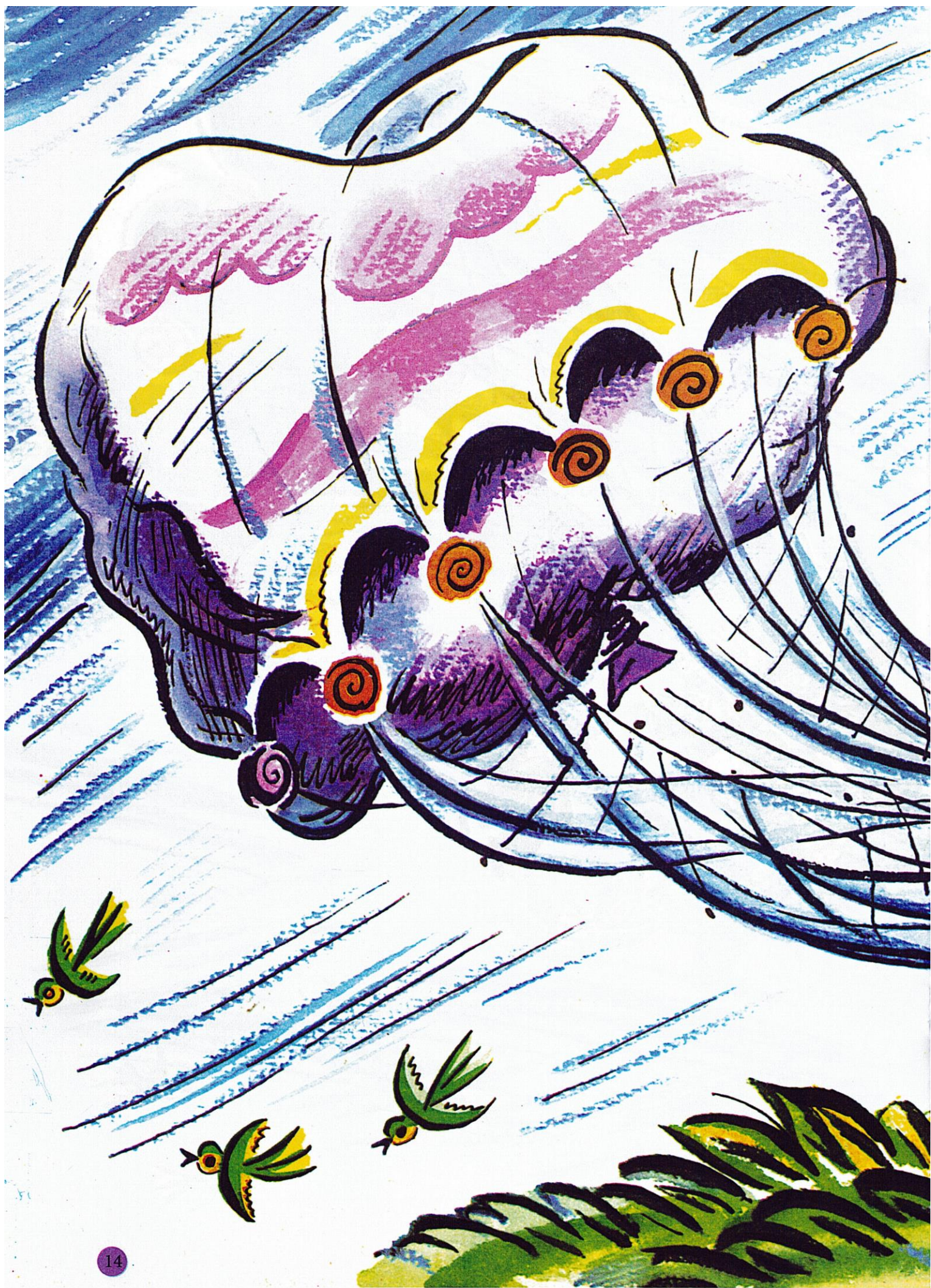
"I don't like that; here, I'll count all over again:

*Lckity pickity rickity lee,
Able fable, make the tea,
Lcky, picky, hot and sticky...."*

But at that moment the basket hit the ground and turned over. P'raps seized Probly by the hand and they fell out together. All the other Mites rolled out like peas — all, that is, but Dunno, who clung to the edge of the basket, and Dot, who held on to Dunno's trousers with his teeth. When the balloon struck the ground it bounced back like a ball, lifting the basket with it, then







it settled down slowly, dragging the basket over the ground behind it. Presently the balloon struck something hard and burst with a loud bang. Dot did a somersault in the air and ran away howling. Dunno fell out of the basket and lay motionless on the ground.

And that was the end of the balloon trip.







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Dunno and his friends from Flower Town in
IN A STRANGE PLACE
and **NEW FRIENDS**


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