

Chapter 2 – Business or Pleasure

Two weeks had gone by. It was a beautiful Sunday evening. It was about 21 degrees Celsius outside and the sun had just disappeared behind the horizon. It was quiet inside the cozy three-bedroom apartment.

“Iboya can you grab my MacBook charger for me please,” Daniel asked.

“Where is it,” she responded.

“I think it might be somewhere on the bed,” he shouted from the living room.

“Daniel why are you shouting? The baby is asleep and I don’t see it anywhere?”

“Maybe it is somewhere on the dining table,” Daniel said.

Iboya walked through the bedroom door and looked over at the dining table on her left. There was a lot of stuff cluttered on top of it. She moved around some of the stack of unpaid bills and retrieved the charger. She walked over to Daniel who was sitting on the sofa with the MacBook right in front of him on top of a glass top coffee table.

“Here you go sweetie,” Iboya said as she handed him the charger.

“Thanks gorgeous but can you also plug it in,” he said whilst he swiftly kissed her on the cheek. She plugged it in as she rolled her eyes at him.

“Why don’t you come sit next to me,” he said and he padded the sofa cushion with his left hand. Iboya sat down and looked at the MacBook screen and Daniel caught a glimpse of a twinkle in her eyes. The screen read corendon.nl, which was a Dutch controlled affiliate of the Turkish aviation company Corendon.

“Before we get too excited we should determine our budget and where we would like to go,” he said, “As you know money is tight, but if we juggle some bills around I think we should manage. “Well I would like to go somewhere where it’s still sunny in August because my boss approved my three-week vacation at the end of August.”

The approval for the vacation had been a really big hassle because Iboya had been under supervision of the Dutch Employee Insurance agency UWV due to thrombosis in her leg ever since her pregnancy leave had ended. The Dutch employee insurances are provided to Employees via laws such as the WW (Unemployment Insurance Act). Because of that she had to do adjusted work at the drugstore she worked at. In addition to this, her boss was not very easy-going when it came to the wishes of his employees.

“We could go to Turkey,” Daniel said. “It’s fairly cheap and....”

Before Daniel could finish his sentence Iboya interrupted him, by saying she had already visited Turkey a couple of times during her youth and she would rather go somewhere she had not yet been.

“I totally understand that but I was thinking money wise so maybe it’s better if we first establish our budget first,” Daniel said.

Iboya had just received her vacation bonus which was 300 euros and Daniel had also already put that same amount aside. After a couple minutes of going through their financial situation they had come to an agreement that their budget would be 500 euros each so a total of a 1000 euros. They had also established that they wanted an all-inclusive vacation. Due to the fact that they had gone to Tunisia two years prior and had experienced the simplicity all-inclusive provided. This would be a benefit especially now that they were going to be traveling with three people rather than two. Daniel clicked on advanced search and typed everything they were looking for into the search engine. Just when he was about to hit the enter button Iboya said, “Wait! Can you please change the three-star hotel to a four-star hotel?” She started blushing and Daniel knew exactly why. Their first all-inclusive vacation had not gone entirely without a hitch. In Tunisia, as in a lot of countries, it is advised not to drink the tap water because of the high levels of chlorine in the water. They had not drunk any of the tap water during their vacation in Tunisia, but the ice cubes that were used to make the cocktails in the resort were made of the aforementioned tap. This resulted in Iboya’ getting a really tumultuous stomach and, as highlight, Daniel had to hold her hair whilst she sat on the toilet, with her head hanging inside the showering cabinet, and bodily fluids spewing from every imaginable orifice. Daniel did not mention this incident and wisely changed it from a three-star hotel to a four-star hotel and hit enter. They started reading reviews of one resort after the other.

“This one looks really nice,” Iboya said, but as they quickly skimmed through a couple of reviews the food ended up being a disaster. And if there was one thing that they enjoyed it was good food. So the search continued.

They looked at resorts in different countries but they could not find anything that suited their needs. Daniel was thinking about how he would not mind going back to Tunisia. Financially, it would be the best location, but just a month ago on the 26th of June, there had been an Islamic attack claimed near Sousse, not too far from where they had stayed two years ago. It had happened at a tourist resort at Port El Kantaoui, about 10 kilometers north of the city of Sousse, Tunisia, when a Tunisian gunman armed with a Kalashnikov opened fire on tourists at the beach in between the hotels Rui Imperial Marhaba and El Mouradi Palm Marina. Thirty-eight people got killed, thirty of who were British. It was the deadliest non-state attack in the history of Modern-Tunisia, with more fatalities than the twenty-two killed in the Bardo National Museum attack three months earlier. ISIS had claimed responsibility for both the attacks and had been in the news frequently, so even if they wanted to go there, there had been a high flight risk issued to all of Tunisia. The flights were dirt cheap, because nobody in their right mind would want to go there right now.

“Maybe our standards are too high,” Daniel said.

Iboya looked at him and rolled her eyes again. So they decided to lower their standards a little bit but under the condition that they would at least look up videos of the resorts on YouTube. This seemed to be a very good tactic. Then the unthinkable happened. They came across a five-star resort that was an ultra all-inclusive and right within their price range.

“Jackpot,” Iboya squealed.

“Sorry to burst your bubble,” Daniel said whilst he pointed at the screen.

“Siam Elegance resort, Belek Turkey,” Iboya read with sheer disappointment.

“Don’t be sad. We can at least look up some videos on YouTube and we can go from there,” Daniel said.

The first video they clicked on was a video of someone standing in line at the buffet line that seemed to go on forever. “Oh my god so much food! It all looks so delicious,” Iboya said full of excitement. But they could not base their choice upon food alone. Daniel switched between tabs back to corendon.nl. It had a 7.8 out of 10, and it was near a sandy beach. It included late breakfast and midnight snacks and alcoholic local and import beverages. The more they read the more excited they got. They decided it would be best to fly on the 31st of August and stay for an eight day vacation.

“Should we put a down payment on it? I mean we already have the 600 euros and our salary comes in a couple of days we can pay the remaining 400 then,” Iboya said cheerfully.

Daniel thought it over and said, “I don’t think we should do that just yet. Let’s sleep on it for a night or two.”

Iboya looked surprised but she hugged him and whispered in his ear, “ok but if it’s gone within 48 hours it’s your fault.” She kissed him on the cheek whilst she did an over exaggerated pouty face.

“Don’t worry,” Daniel said. “It will be fine.” He saved the link to his reading list and closed the MacBook.

“Babes don’t forget it’s your day tomorrow,” Iboya said. Tomorrow it would be Monday Daniel’s day off from work and because Iboya did have to go to work, Daniel would have some wonderful father and daughter bonding time. He loved Mondays, no work and all play never makes Daniel a dull boy, he thought. Marlysha had just figured out how to climb on the sofa so he had figured that it wouldn’t take too long before she started walking. She was in a faze where she learned something new almost every day and he hated the moments that he was away from home and he was not there for those special and precious moments. They decided to go to bed. Daniel walked to the bedroom whilst he followed Iboya and turned on the baby monitor on their I-pad and crawled over Iboya to get in bed. She hugged him tightly and kissed him.

She looked deeply into his eyes and said, “Daniel Jansen you make me the happiest woman on earth. Thank you.” She kissed him passionately. He looked at her really seriously for a moment. “What,” she asked.

“He grinned just on this planet,” He said. “How about the rest of the universe?”

Iboya laughed, “this is exactly why I love you so much. I do not want to be a party pooper though sweetie, but I have work early in the morning.”

She kissed him once more and wished him a good night and rolled on her side. Unlike Iboya, Daniel did not have the magic ability to fall asleep as soon as his head hit the pillow. He curled up against her whilst he thought about their upcoming vacation. He was looking forward to it. Iboya had deserved it so much after everything they had gone through in the last 11 months, from the complicated pregnancy to having to arrange all of the paperwork regarding Iboya's unemployment insurance due to her thrombosis. It all had of been so much easier if her boss was not such a self centered obnoxious man that only thought about filling his own pockets. It was a true mystery to Daniel how that man managed to have multiple somewhat successful drugstores in this economy. Just thinking about that man made him feel tired. He yawned and could hear Marlysha turning around in her crib through the baby monitor. He thought about which bills had to get paid first so they would at least have some spending money on vacation. The economy had not treated them well, especially since Marlysha was born. He knew babies would cost a lot of money, but Iboya was almost deemed better by the health and safety service. From that point on they would make at least 400 euros less a month. They were already just scraping by each month as it was. Well at least he had that extra catering job coming up aside from his regular job, which was on the weekend of Marlysha's first birthday the 29th of August. He had yet to tell Iboya about that. He just did not know how to bring it up yet, but it would provide a little bit of cash flow in terms of vacation spending money, and a man has to do what a man has to do in order to provide for his family. He came to the realization that it had no use to jump the gun and worry too much about it. He set his alarm clock to 07:00 pulled up the covers and drifted into a deep sleep.

That night Daniel dreamed about sitting at the beach with his family with no care in the world. It was just he and his two girls and they were having a marvelous time. Marlysha did her first steps towards him in the sand and Iboya was putting on sunscreen. He heard birds chirping and the sound of the waves in the ocean crashing against the rocks. Everything was perfect. Daniel? Daniel? He felt a slight nudge. "Can you turn off your alarm please? And please change the sound of your alarm! Those birds and ocean sounds just make me want to stay in bed longer," Iboya said. He looked at his alarm clock, which read 07:02, before he could hit the button to shut it off. The sounds got accompanied by the crying of Marlysha through the baby monitor who had also woken up. "I got it," he said as he turned off his alarm and slowly made his way over Iboya and made it through the bedroom door. He took a right into the hallway and walked all the way to the end and opened the door.

"Good morning sunshine," he said as he approached the crib. Marlysha had escaped the clutches of her sleeping bag and was now inspecting it as if she were trying to solve a Chinese finger trap. Daniel could not help but laugh. "Who's daddy's smart little girl," he said and Marlysha gave him a huge smile. He picked her up and put her on the changing mat on top of her dresser. Daniel changed her diaper and changed her clothes. He then tried his best at putting her bangs up with a rubber band. It kind of resembled a miniature palm tree on top of her head. "Your hair is getting so long baby," he said and he picked her up again and made his way back to the living room.

He walked by the kitchen where Iboya was preparing a bottle for the baby and her lunch for work. He walked into the living room and put Marlysha in her playpen and turned on the TV, which he switched to baby TV. He wanted to watch the morning news but he had already missed most of it so he decided to watch the twelve o'clock news instead because he still had a lot of things to sort out.

Iboya entered the living room, gave Marlysha her bottle, and grabbed her purse. "I will be home later tonight because I have to work at a different branch today," she said. She kissed Daniel and Marlysha and made her way out the door.

"Hold on I'll walk you out. I have to grab the letters from the mailbox anyway," Daniel said.

They walked down the two and a half flights of stairs and shared a quick kiss at the front door. He waved at her as she got onto her bicycle and rode off. He grabbed his keys and unlocked mailbox 248. There were some advertisement leaflets and a letter from the UWV addressed to Iboya. He emptied the mailbox and walked back upstairs. As he walked through the front door of their apartment he opened up the pantry to his left. Daniel hastily grabbed some Miffy cookies and made his way to the living room. He made a short stop in the kitchen to throw away all the advertisement leaflets in the trashcan.

Daniel went back to the living room, and gave Marlysha her cookies. Ok now to handle some

grown up business he thought. He grabbed the stack of unpaid bills off the dining table and started sorting them. He grabbed his phone out of his right jeans pocket and tapped the mobile banking app of the Abn Amro Bank. He typed in his verification code and to his amazement his paychecks had already been cleared. He now was the proud owner of 1000 euros that would mostly get spent on bills. He started the tedious task of juggling which bills should get paid immediately, and which ones could wait a while. One by one he cleared the stack until a couple of bills with small sums were still left. "That will have to do for now," he said.

He looked at the clock. It read 10:45. "Time flies when the government is taking your money," he said.

His stomach growled, "Daddy is hungry munchkin how about you?" He returned to the kitchen and made some grilled cheese sandwiches and filled Marlysha's sippy cup with juice. He put her in her highchair whilst they enjoyed their breakfast together. He put the plates in the sink and washed his hands. When he returned to the living room it was 11:00. He then spent the remainder of the morning playing with Marlysha and trying to teach her how to walk. By the time it was 11:45 he had worn her out and she was taking a nap in her playpen. Finally, some time to myself he thought. He switched the TV from baby TV to Channel one. He sent Iboya a message to see if he could open the letter from the UWV. A couple of minutes later she responded with "Of course babe love you and see you tonight".

The moment he had opened the letter his heart dropped. The letter informed Iboya about how she was only two hours shy of working her full hours in her contract and she only had been reduced to doing minimal adjusted work, so they would stop paying her through the unemployment insurance. Daniel had at least hoped that they would have continued to pay her until they had returned from vacation. This came at a really bad time, because already having 400 euros fewer to spend this month was not really going to help. \

The intro to the twelve o'clock news started playing as Daniel looked over at the TV screen. "Good afternoon my name is Abid Hunkar. It is Monday the 20th of July and welcome to the twelve o'clock afternoon news. We have some international breaking news that is just in. At 11:45 local time there was a suicide bombing that occurred in Suruç Turkey". Daniel sat up and could not believe what he was hearing. "At the tares of the Amara Culture Center there were at least 300 members of the Federation of Socialist Youth Association staying at the Amara culture center as a summer expedition to help rebuild Kobane Syria, which lies directly across the border from Suruç. There where at least 32 fatalities and more than 100 people seriously injured most of whom where Kurdish. The bombing was allegedly executed by a 17-year-old Islamic State girl. At the same time a car bombs also went off at YPG headquarters in Kobane. The Kurdish YPG fighters had been in conflict in Kobane with ISIS, now better known as Islamic State or (IS) for the last couple of months".

Before he knew it, Daniel was clutching his phone in his hand and had already dialed Iboya's number. No answer... dammit he thought, it will have to wait until tonight. Marlysha woke up around four o'clock and it seemed as if time was slowing down with every minute that passed. Daniel had not been this anxious in a long time. This day had felt like a seeing a train wreck, watching it unfold from the sidelines in slow motion in full HD, but not being able to stop it from happening. Daniel was sitting on the sofa sipping on a root beer. After what had seemed like an eternity he heard the front door.

"Hey I bought some stuff I thought we might need on vacation on my way home," Iboya said.

"Ehm... Yeah about that Iboya, have you happen to see or hear the news today," Daniel responded.

"No? Did I miss anything important," she said with her voice full of anticipation?

Daniel explained what had transpired in Suruc,

"NO FUCKING WAY," Iboya yelled.

"Ehm... Kid? Iboya," Daniel said hesitantly. He did not really know how to respond. She was not someone to just flat out swear like that. "You're upset aren't you," he said. "Yeah...Uh...No...Uh...I don't really know how to feel right now," Iboya responded.

"Well at least we did not make a down payment on it yet," Daniel shrugged awkwardly as he said it. Iboya just looked at him with a blank stare and a raised eyebrow that spoke volumes.

"I'm sorry I did not mean it like that, well you know what I meant don't you?"

"Yes," she said, "I know... it's just that I had looked forward to this vacation and a 5-star resort Daniel! 5 stars!"

“Well we could always just have a staycation, maybe that would be safer.” The moment Daniel realized what he had said he knew there was no turning back. He had gone where no man had gone before.... The full brow zone.

“DANIEL JANSEN ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!”

“Well I’m sorry, Iboya, that I’m thinking about your and Marlysha’s safety. If it were up to me, whoo-hoo yeah let’s go to turkey,” he said sarcastically. Iboya semi smiled, and apologized for yelling at him.

“We could also try to find a different location to go to,” she said with her most angelic voice.

“Yes. We could do that,” Daniel answered.

He walked to the dining table where his MacBook was. He grabbed it and sat down on the sofa whilst Iboya came and sat next to him. He opened up the MacBook and typed in his password, which was Area51. He clicked on safari and then typed in corendon.nl.

“Don’t you have that feeling, Iboya,” he asked.

“What feeling Daniel,” she said.

He rolled his eyes and said “déjàvu” and then wiggled his eyebrows.

“Oh Daniel you are so lame sometimes. You know that right?”

“Lame? Yeah, if lame means I’m amaze balls, then yeah I’m pretty lame,” Daniel responded.

Iboya wisely kept her mouth shut, because she knew if she were to argue with him right now she wouldn’t be on vacation by the end of August.

“So where would we want to go,” Daniel asked.

“Well, I hear a lot of people are going to Greece lately and apparently it’s fairly cheap,” she said.

“I can live with that. As long as the weather is nice and the food is good I’m in,” Daniel said

So, the search continued. They started looking for resorts on the island of Crete. With only a little more than a month to spare before going on vacation, their search criteria line had deteriorated. Even with that blurred line, they could not find anything to their liking. Maybe it was also the fact that Marlysha was still awake, and she had now figured out that if she kept screaming hard and long enough she would get the attention she craved for, or even better yet get picked up. So Daniel added some of the resorts to their favorites so they could check them out more thoroughly after Marlysha had gone to bed.

Daniel had always been very observant. He had a knack for detail and he sucked up information like a sponge. If his eyes did not deceive him, none of the resorts they had just looked at were even remotely within their price range. This would be a really good moment to propose the extra upcoming job to Iboya. He ran the scenario through his head a couple of times and was now waiting for the ideal time. The ideal time’s being when Iboya noticed that all the resorts were outside of their price range for herself.

“Iboya how about you scroll through some resorts and I get started on dinner,” Daniel said.

“How am I supposed to turn down that offer,” Iboya asked as she pounced on the MacBook like it was the last slice of pizza.

Daniel turned on the TV and logged into Netflix. The moment Marlysha saw those bold red letters she swayed from left to right in her playpen. “You know what daddy is going to do huh little princess,” he said as he put on her favorite show for her to watch.

Daniel made his way to the kitchen where he opened the freezer and put some chicken in the microwave and grabbed some pre chopped vegetables. He knew that microwaving food was probably not the best thing for your body due to its changing the molecular structure of your food, but he did it anyways.

“Babe? All these resorts are out of our price range,” Iboya said from the living room.

“Is that so,” Daniel said. Well that was quicker than he had imagined.

“Let me finish up this risotto and then we can discuss it after dinner. We can worry about that after the baby is asleep.”

Daniel finished cooking in thirty minutes. He fed Marlysha first, and after Marlysha was finished eating he took her out of her high chair. “It’s eight o’clock so it’s bedtime munchkin.” Iboya had just finished eating.

“I will put her to bed so you can eat your food before it gets cold,” she said.

Daniel grabbed his plate and started eating. By the time Iboya had put the baby to bed Daniel was long done eating. It was one of the things he had gotten really fast at. He used to work as a chef

and whenever they had a meal break service would always start up and not die down until the late hours of the evening. So, he had learned to eat really fast during that period of his life. Iboya sat next to him and started looking at the MacBook screen again.

“Maybe we should try a different travel agency,” Daniel said. He typed their search criteria in Google and ended up at Sunweb.nl. After going through a couple of resorts, the one with the best price to quality ratio was Gouves water park holiday resort in the described picturesque village of Gouves in Crete. The opinions on the food were divided, half of the people loving it and the other half hating it. After doing an extensive Google and YouTube search they had established that there was only a handful of pictures of food to be found relating to Gouves waterpark resort on the internet and no videos of the park at all. Daniel did not know if this was a good thing or a bad thing, but except for that discrepancy the place looked really solid.

The resort was described as a good location for families because Gouves was far enough away from Hersonissos Crete, and therefore the infamous star beach. It was a nice looking resort with three pool areas, one of them being a small waterpark with four waterslides. There were two regular sized pools and a small pool for the little ones. The resort consisted of nice white and butter colored buildings with additional shades of brown. The sand beaches that surrounded Gouves were only 300 meters from the resort. A perk of being in a village was that everything was close enough to reach by foot so you could explore everything easily. The only problem was that even though this was their cheapest option for an eight-day family vacation, with the taxes and the special baby package they needed for Marlysha it exceeded the established budget by almost 400 euros. He sighed and then looked at Iboya.

“The cheapest way we could do this is if we fly the 31st of August for an eight-day vacation, which is two days after Marlyshas birthday.”

Iboya frowned, “But you promised we would celebrate her birthday on vacation.”

“Let me please finish before you get all judgmental on me,” Daniel said.

“Go ahead,” Iboya said.

“Well, Leon has this upcoming event where he needs a chef, but it is the weekend of the 29th of August, which is in the weekend of Marlyshas first birthday.” Iboya looked as if he had just slapped her across the face.

“Wait I’m not finished yet,” Daniel said. “It also involves my staying on location for three days. So I would be staying there from Thursday until Sunday. But it would bridge the financial gap we currently have. So I am willing to work my twelve hour shifts for two and a half days so we can be on that plane on Monday the 31st.”

There was a couple of minutes of silence. “I am kind of disappointed, but if there is no other way I suppose this is the only way this is going to happen,” Iboya said.

Daniel nodded. “But that’s just the first solution to a double-sided problem,” Daniel said. Iboya looked confused.

“Well,” Daniel continued, “if we want to book this vacation we need to put up the 1000 euros we have already established, but we also need to put down the extra 400.” Iboya looked as if the ground had just been pulled from underneath her when she realized Daniel was right.

“But I am willing to try and borrow that money from my aunt, so we can book the flight as soon as possible and then we can pay her back next month.”

Iboya had realized that this was the only real option and they agreed. “Well I will send my aunt a message on Facebook.” Daniel’s aunt was in her fifty’s and lived all by herself. Growing up Daniel spent most of his vacations at his Aunt’s house. She was one of the few people who was financially stable in his family. His aunt was always heavily involved in politics and he saw her sort of like an activist that questioned government and the way it handled certain situations. She would frequently question politicians and their actions through Facebook.

Daniel opened Facebook Messenger on his phone because Iboya was still sorting some stuff on the MacBook. Daniel took a deep breath and then he wrote. “Dear aunt Betty, I really don’t want to bother you with my problems but I feel as if you are the only person I can go to right now. As you might know it has been quite the year for us with Iboya’s pregnancy being so complicated and the birth of Marlysha. We really want to just get away from it all for a moment and go on a little vacation. We have found this lovely family friendly resort in Greece. We already exceeded our initial budget by 400 euros, which we don’t have right now. But I would love to book it as soon as possible as you

might understand. Now my question is, could we maybe borrow the 400 euros from you so we can book the vacation and we will pay you back by the end of next month? Hope to talk to you soon, your nephew Daniel.” He read it through a couple of times and then hesitantly pressed send. Daniel was a man with a lot of pride. He had gotten that character trait from his father. He disliked borrowing money from people. His old man always told him “be sure to always have your own money in your pocket son”. Money is a mischievous mistress and she can take down everything especially family bonds. Daniel exited the Facebook Messenger app and scrolled through his contacts and pressed call. The phone rang several times and then he spoke.

“Hey Leon. It’s Dan. Are you still looking for a head chef for that event on the 28th of August? That’s great! I will be keeping an eye out for that email with the specifics and maybe we can grab a coffee or something at bagel and beans soon so we can talk it through. Well I’ll talk to you soon.” He hung up the phone. Iboya was smiling whilst she closed the MacBook.

“What are you grinning about,” he asked.

“Oh nothing dear,” she responded.

Right as he was going to ask her more about her suspicious behavior he heard a loud ping noise followed by three short vibrating buzzes. It was his aunt. She responded, “Dear nephew, don’t be so silly that is what family is for. I would love to assist you in making a well-deserved vacation happen for you and your lovely family. What a beautiful daughter you have. Those big brown and honest eyes make me think of your father every time I see her pictures pass on Facebook. If you swing by my house tomorrow afternoon I will have the money ready for you so you can book your vacation. I hope you have a lovely evening with your family. Kisses and hugs, Aunt Betty.”

“Iboya sweetheart, if you could book our vacation that would be much appreciated,” Daniel said and Iboya smiled from ear to ear.

“You don’t have to tell me that twice,” she said cheerful.

After a couple of minutes their eight-day vacation to Greece was booked and it had felt like a weight was lifted from their shoulders. They spent the remainder of the evening planning the logistics because Daniel was not going to be home the entire weekend before their flight so Iboya would do all of the packing. They had also looked at different scenarios for traveling from their house to Schiphol airport. They had established that going by train was the safest option. They would arrive several hours early because they did not want to risk compromising their vacation due late arrival. Daniel would be wrecked after working an entire weekend and had a small timeframe to get home, showered and be out the door again, so they had to plan it with almost military precision to make it work. Daniel did not doubt that they were going to make it happen.

By the time they were finished with the meticulous planning of the logistical aspects it was already 23:09. They made their way into the bedroom. Iboya looked at him and said, “Thank you for everything you wonderful man.” She kissed him and it seemed like someone had turned on the central heating because it had just gotten a little warmer in their small bedroom. By the time they had cooled down in each other’s arms it was 23:52.

The next day was a very early and rushed morning. Iboya dropped Marlysha off at her mother’s house and left for work. Daniel spent the entire day at his regular job. He was caregiver to an elderly man who had had a stroke nineteen years ago. He loved his job even though it came with a couple of challenges. It was almost five o’clock in the afternoon when his workday started winding down to an end.

As soon as it was five o’clock Daniel made his way out the door and jumped on his bicycle. He took a left at the end of the street. He made his way to his aunt Betty’s house. She lived in a flat about two blocks away from where Daniel worked. He took a right at the next tram stop and followed the road all the way to the next roundabout. He passed the police station on the Beresteinlaan and took a left as he reached the roundabout. Once he reached his aunt’s flat he locked his bicycle and walked up to the door. He rang the buzzer. Several seconds passed when he heard her familiar high-pitched voice coming from above. She was waving at him from the balcony “hold on I will buzz you in, nephew” she said. She buzzed him in.

He slowly walked up the twelve flights of stairs as he thought about how many times he made his way up to the sixth floor of this flat in his teens. Once he had reached the sixth floor the door was already opened. He pushed the door open wider and walked into the small hallway with the light blue vinyl flooring he had walked on so many times before. Right in front of him were those big brown

honest eyes his aunt spoke of the other day. There was a picture on the wall of his father's standing in the snow with his older sister. It had been almost 15 years since his father had passed away. He had been fighting abdominal cancer for many years. Daniel had never really grasped how severe it was when he was younger, not until it was too late.

He closed the door and made his way down the hall into the living room. His aunt was sitting where she spent most of her days at her little command center behind the computer Daniel had bought her when her old one crashed.

"Daniel, my favorite nephew, how have you been," she asked.

"I'm still alive and breathing as always," Daniel smiled whilst he gave her a hug.

"How is the family," she asked.

"Marlysha is so big now aunty! You should see her. I will bring her by next time. She is at her grandmothers right now because Iboya and I both had to work today."

"Oh Daniel you look so much like your father," aunt Betty said.

"I hear that a lot," Daniel said slightly grief stricken.

"He would have been so proud of you. I hope you realize that," she said.

"Well I try my best," Daniel said teary-eyed.

Daniel sat down and they discussed the current financial status of Holland. They went back and forth between politics and how things used to be different.

"The world is changing my boy and I'm glad I won't be around the time it all goes up in flames. But it's getting rather late and I bet your lovely family is waiting for you to get home," aunt Betty said and handed him 8 crisp 50-euro bills.

"Be careful out there in Greece. It is even harder out there than out here. You take care of your family and enjoy your vacation," she said. She hugged and kissed him and walked him to the door.

"I will aunty don't you worry. You just be careful before they put you on some kind of political activist watch list," Daniel said jokingly.

"Don't you worry about that Danny, boy. I would love to be on a watch list! That only means that they acknowledge that this old lady means business," she said and winked at him.

Daniel made his way back home and only stopped at the bank with just minutes to spare to deposit the money. By the time he got home it was almost seven o'clock. Iboya already made dinner and was in the middle of giving Marlysha a bath. He could hear her joyful screams of laughter as she splashed the water with her hands.

"Daniel can you bring me a towel," Iboya asked.

Daniel went into Marlysha's room and grabbed a small towel from the clothing hook attached to her closet. He walked through the kitchen and into the bathroom. Marlysha smiled at him and he kissed Iboya. She grabbed Marlysha, wrapped her snugly inside the towel, and walked to Marlysha's bedroom to get her dressed for bed. Marlysha was so tired from her day with her grandmother that she had a hard time keeping her eyes open after her bath time. Daniel made a bottle for her in the meantime, knowing she would not be able to sit through her dinner. He brought her bottle and gave it to her just as Iboya was laying her down in her crib.

"Sweet dreams princess," he said.

"Sweet dreams munchkin," Iboya said and she kissed her goodnight.

They both walked to the living room and Iboya said, "Daniel I bought some extra stuff for vacation. I bought some extra diapers and stuff she will need. One of my co-workers went to Greece earlier this year. Apparently they have raised the taxes in Greece with twenty-eight percent and some stuff is outrageously over priced."

"Thank you. That is very thoughtful of you and it will save us a lot of money," Daniel said. His stomach growled.

"Are you hungry? I made your favorite dish, sloppy Joes," Iboya said triumphantly.

"To what do I have this honor," Daniel asked.

"For being the best father and boyfriend in the entire universe," Iboya winked.

They enjoyed their dinner at the dining table while they discussed their days. They went over their vacation plans again and after they finished eating they put down the last of the deposit on the vacation. Iboya received a confirmation in her e-mail in which they discovered that they also had to pay extra for their luggage as the laws regarding luggage had changed.

"I can't believe that we are almost going on vacation, Daniel,"

“Well almost? It’s still a good four weeks but that time will just fly by. I don’t even have the slightest idea where the last year has gone,” Daniel said.

Iboya started packing their bags slowly during the passing weeks. Before Daniel had realized, it was already the 27th of August, the day before the event. The doorbell rang and Daniel looked confused. He looked at the clock, which read about ten o’clock in the morning. He still had about two hours before he had to leave.

“I got it,” Iboya said whilst she jumped up from the couch and ran for the buzzer.

She picked up the horn, then pressed the buzzer and buzzed someone in.

“Who is there,” Daniel asked even more confused than before.

“None of your business,” Iboya said teasingly. She opened the door and Daniel stood up and ran to the door as if he were ready to punch someone in the face.

“Package for Mr. D. Jansen,” the deliveryman said.

“Huh, but I did not order anything,” Daniel said.

“But I did,” Iboya said as she signed for the package.

She handed him a white opaque mailer bag with his name and address and a YODEL logo on it, which was the courier’s logo.

“Well it says to Mr. D. Jansen. Are you just going to stand there or are you going to open it,” Iboya said cheerfully.

Daniel looked at the mailer bag as Iboya handed it to him. He squinted his eyes, “What is this?” It felt very sturdy yet somehow soft at the same time.

“Just open it,” Iboya said with a big smile.

Daniel opened up the mailer bag slowly. The first thing that caught his eye was the grey color. Once he took the content out of the mailer bag he looked at it whilst he studied it. “A backpack,” He said.

“Not just any backpack,” Iboya said, “and you’re saying it wrong. It’s a rucksack, manufactured in the UK.”

Daniel rolled his eyes. “You don’t name a product by the place of its origin, Iboya.”

“Why no? I think it sounds nicer, rucksack,” she said with an exaggerated posh British accent.

“Oh woman what am I supposed to do with you,” Daniel laughed.

“Well I noticed your ‘backpack’ had some holes in it and you could use a new one, especially now that we are going on VACATION. And if I may add you, Mr. Daniel Jansen are the second person to have one of these in the entire world,” Iboya said.

“Wait... how is that even possible,” Daniel asked.

“Well, my beautiful boyfriend,” she said while she picked up the British accent again and acted out that she was smoking an imaginary pipe.

“What are you doing Iboya....”

“Don’t interrupt me whilst I am unraveling this mystery to you. Well....,” she continued, “Daniel my dear chap, I backed this girl called Sarah Giblin in her Kick-starter project called Riut bag a long time ago. I present to you, exhibit A,” she said whilst she pointed at the bag.

She took a large big drag of her imaginary pipe and said, “This ‘rucksack’ is not supposed to hit the consumer market until December of this year, but by corresponding with her via e-mail we developed a friendship, and through the magical power of being WOMAN we came to a mutual agreement that only WOMEN can, and she secretly sent me one in advance for you to have.” Daniel’s jaw almost dropped to the floor, but then something dawned on him.

He had a mischievous smile on his face, “Well this ‘magical bond’ happened to overlook the fact that they forgot to put any zippers on this ‘Rucksack’.

“On the contrary, my dear Daniel. If you take this ‘Rucksack’ and turn it around you, sir, will discover the pure genius this ‘Rucksack’ contains.”

The moment Daniel noticed this simple yet really clever piece of design his mind was blown. “Wow, Iboya, that is so clever...,” he said.

It took him a couple of minutes before he grasped how revolutionary this was. If there were two things that Daniel had a soft spot for they were backpacks and snapbacks. This backpack was like the Rolls Royce of backpacks. The design was so marvelously done and so easy on the eyes. It was made for maximum functionality and with the zippers on the back it gave you total piece of mind against pick pockets. It had two bottle holders with one on each side and a sturdy top pocket for easy

access to your wallet, keys, and passport. Iboya had not seen Daniel this happy in a long time. He looked like a young man who was just about to lose his virginity. Daniel looked at Iboya in disbelief, "I love it thank you sweetheart."

"Calm down Daniel. You haven't even seen the inside yet."

They walked over to the sofa and sat down, where Daniel started to unzip the Riut bag to uncover the inside.

"I got you the big one," Iboya said gloatingly, "this is the Riut bag R15 which holds fifteen liters. They also have the R10."

"Let me guess that one holds 10 liter," Daniel said quickly.

"Yes but you don't have to be such a smart-ass about it," Iboya said annoyed.

"Not a smart-ass babe, just observant," Daniel responded.

He looked at the inside of the bag and noticed that there was a compartment with elastic gates inside to hold his laptop in place. There were a couple of penholders and enough space to hold an A4 document into place. Because the laptop compartment and the documents holder were all inside the back lining all the actual space inside the bag was utilized to its maximum capacity. It also had an adjustable chest strap, which Daniel loved because he used to indoor climb with full gear. The two outer bottle holders had a capacity of 750 ml.

"Look at all that room, Iboya! I don't even know what to do with it," Daniel said excited. He hugged her and showered her with kisses. "But you should have told me that you ordered this. I would not have packed and crammed everything inside that crappy old East pack backpack," Daniel said.

"Well then it wouldn't have been a surprise now would it? As a matter of fact, I didn't even know if it would get here in time, but I'm glad it did," she said enthusiastically.

Marlysha was taking a nap but she woke up.

"Hello gorgeous," Daniel said as she sat up in her playpen. "How do you like daddy's new backpack? Do you want to see if you can fit inside? Then maybe daddy can take you with him this weekend."

Daniel still had about an hour and a half to repack his new Riut bag and spend the remainder of his time with his two girls whom he wouldn't see for the next three days. He walked into the hallway and took the only door on the left. He opened the door and stepped inside their walk-in closet. Well closet was an understatement. It more so resembled a little boutique with a couple of clothing racks on the left and two dressers with two big mirrors on the right side. There was a black mannequin in the left corner that was always overdressed for any occasion.

Daniel put the Riut bag on top of his dresser. He walked to the window that divided the left and the right side and grabbed his old east pack backpack. He patted it on the back and said, "you served me well my dear friend" then unzipped it and transferred the contents into his new bag. He packed a couple of boxer shorts, toothpaste and a toothbrush, some deodorant, a couple of fresh pairs of socks, his phone charger and his MacBook charger. The other stuff that he needed for this weekend he had put inside a travel trolley. That would be his "chef related bag" which was filled with his uniforms, his knife set working shoes, fresh sets of clothing and a bag with edibles to ensure he and Leon would have enough to eat in their hotel room.

He grabbed both his bags and walked into the hallway and set them underneath the coatrack. He now had about an hour and fifteen minutes to spend with Marlysha and Iboya. He walked into the kitchen and made two latte macchiato caramel coffees. He walked into the living room and gave Iboya one. He grabbed Marlysha and they sat on the sofa for the remaining hour, talking about what they would do on vacation in Greece on. As time passed, things became a little uneasy. They knew the time to say goodbye had come but none of them wanted to acknowledge it. Daniel looked at Iboya and kissed her, the kiss lingered and the moment their lips had unlocked he whispered, "We can make out for another 15 minutes."

"Dan....," Iboya said, "just go. It will only make things more difficult."

"I understand," Daniel said, "I was just trying to lighten the mood."

He squeezed her hand. He stood up and made his way towards the hallway. As he was approaching the hallway Marlysha said, "Da-Da, Da-Dy." Daniel turned around and Marlysha had stood up and stretched her little arms out at him and smiled. Teary eyed and proud Daniel picked her up and hugged her. Iboya looked at them and hugged them both.

"Daddy loves you munchkin," Daniel said and he kissed her. "Daddy will be back in three days baby," he said.

Marlysha smiled at him. He set her down on the sofa next to Iboya. He went back into the hallway, put on his leather jacket, and put his Riut bag on his back but it somehow felt light. "My MacBook," he thought. He felt two arms wrap around him and Iboya kissed his neck. "You forgot your MacBook," Iboya whispered. She took his Riut bag and locked his MacBook into place with the elastic gate straps. She zipped it shut and slipped it back on to his back. "Be safe," Iboya said.

"I will," Daniel responded. He grabbed the trolley and looked back as he walked through the door.

"I will see you in three days. Love you," he said.

"I love you too," Iboya said as Daniel walked out the door.

It was cloudy outside as Daniel made his way towards Rijswijk station. He had been walking for a good 20 minutes. The wheels of the blue trolley rolled smoothly, yet they made this horrendous squeaking sound. As he approached Rijswijk station and walked passed the Subway, the smell of freshly baked bread made him hungry, but he only had a couple of minutes to spare. He looked at his watch. It was 12:15 and his train to Rotterdam would be departing at 12:24. This gave him just enough time to add sufficient funds to his OV chip card. He then took the escalator down to platform one and passed the yellow service station where he had to swipe his OV chip card. It was colder on the platform than it had been outside, probably because the train station of Rijswijk was underground.

He saw two bright lights emerge from the tunnel up ahead. The people at the end of the platform started walking towards where Daniel was. At the speed the lights were traveling, the second carriage door should stop right in front of him, Daniel thought. This was something he calculated whenever he traveled by himself ever. Strange enough, he was almost always right.

The train came to a complete stop and the doors opened. He waited for the people that had to get off the train first and then he stepped inside. He took one of the foldable seats right next to the door. The train started picking up speed and had made it out the tunnel. On the left they passed one of the buildings of shell headquarters called Alaska. Daniel had worked there for a couple of months when he worked in catering for a detachment agency. He reached into his pocket, grabbed his phone, and made a call.

"Hey Leon. I will be in Rotterdam central station at 12:43. You can pick me up at the halfway point. I will just walk towards your house. See you soon." He hung up the phone.

The train was now picking up speed again. It just left Delft station. He looked at his watch and it was another good ten minutes until he reached Rotterdam. His watch made him slip into a daydream about the day he got it. It had been about two years ago on the flight to Tunisia when he got it. He had seen the watch in the sky mall catalogue. "Spy watch" it said and it looked very sleek. It was a black watch and it had a couple of features like a 1080p HD Camera inside. It also had a built in microphone. It could take and store pictures, video and voice recordings on a 32 micro SD card, he really wanted it. Iboya had bought it for him as a present. He had been taking pictures and videos with it their entire vacation.

"We are now approaching Rotterdam Central Station" the intercom sounded and brought him back to reality. The train slowed down and Daniel stood up. As soon as the train came to a complete stop he pressed the button to open up the doors. The green light flashed and the doors opened. Unlike the train station at Rijswijk that was underground, at Rotterdam Central Station the platforms were above ground. Daniel did not want to take the trolley down the stairs or the escalator so he walked to the elevator. He pressed the button, and after a couple of seconds the elevator arrived and the doors opened. Daniel stepped into the elevator, which smelled remarkably fresh compared to the elevator at Moerwijk station, which always smelled like urine and was a couple of blocks behind his house.

The doors opened and Daniel walked towards the main entrance. The squeaking sound of his trolley was even worse with the acoustics of the big hallway. A wall of gates greeted him and Daniel swiped his OV chip card across the panel. The trip had cost him four euros and twenty cents. He walked through the hallway and the mass of people until he reached the sliding doors that led him outside. He walked across the big public square in front of the station. It started raining lightly, but he kept walking straight and took a right at Lebkov and sons, a nice looking lunchroom on the corner. He continued walking straight and passed Albeda College on a street called Weena where he agreed to meet with Leon. It started raining harder so he found shelter under a column of an apartment complex.

After a couple of minutes, he heard someone call out his name and he looked over to the right. It was Leon who was walking towards him under a black umbrella. Leon was a young looking short

Chinese guy in his twenties with thick-framed black glasses.

“Are you ready for this event,” Leon asked.

“Ready as I will ever be,” Daniel responded cheerfully.

They shook hands and made their way towards Leon’s house, which also doubled as storage to all the stuff regarding his Pop up Maid Café to go called Neko Neko Ni Maid Café. They reached Leon’s house and talked through their planning for the entire weekend. In the meantime, Leon’s older brother, Chau, showed up with a van to transport everything they needed for the event called AbunaiCon, a convention for people that enjoyed Japanese culture. It was one of the biggest events of its sort in Holland.

They spent the next couple of hours sorting everything and putting everything they needed in the van. After everything was transported inside the van, Leon’s mother showed up with steamed dumplings with the creamiest pork filling Daniel had ever tasted. After they finished eating they drove the van to the location in Veldhoven, which was near Eindhoven. Once they reached the NH Koningshof, which looked like a rather small building for a hotel at night, they checked into their hotel room and left their luggage there. In the meantime Leon’s mom was blessing the location, which was a Chinese ritual she always did at events like this.

Then they unpacked everything and started setting up their stand for the next day. It was at that moment that Daniel realized how huge the location was. They frequently got lost trying to find the Meierij foyer where their stand was. By the time they finished it was two o’clock in the morning. They went to their hotel room, which was located on the second floor. When they put their luggage inside the room earlier they had not noticed that there was just one big queen-sized bed.

Leon said, “Now this is quite interesting”.

Daniel said, “Dude, I’m tired as hell. Let’s just get to bed and we will get it sorted out in the morning. It’s fine, just don’t hug me in your sleep.”

“It’s more likely for you to do that. I’m used to sleeping alone,” Leon said jokingly.

They went to bed and they woke up at eight o’clock the next morning. They freshened up and made their way to have breakfast. They decided on having an English breakfast from the extensive and impressive buffet line. The room was filled with cosplayers, people dressed up as their favorite characters from Japanese Anime series.

As soon as they finished eating it was back to business. Their maids arrived and as Leon was helping them to get ready, Daniel was setting up the kitchen. They would be serving Japanese Cuisine consisting of, Japanese Crepes, dango’s, and different kinds of Japanese flavored ice cream like macha and sesame flavor, which they turned into nice looking fruit filled sundaes with cute themes.

As soon as the convention opened its doors to the general public on Friday the stand was swamped with visitors. Time sped up and Daniel was stuck in a haze. He had only found time to call home on Saturday to congratulate Marlysha with her first birthday. By the time he realized what was going on they were breaking up the stand and it was already Sunday.

“So how was your experience with the convention,” Leon asked.

“It was really nice but hard work bro”

Leon laughed and said, “Well we did great and at least we survived. Let’s pack up this last stuff and get you home so you can go on your well-deserved vacation.”

They packed up the last stuff, got in the van, and drove back to Rotterdam. They dropped Daniel off at Rotterdam Central station and Daniel got on his train. By the time he made it back it was already 22:06. He grabbed his keys, unlocked the door, and made his way up the stairs.

“Babe you’re home,” Iboya said and she hugged him. “The baby is asleep so please be quiet.”

“I just want to get out of these clothes and take a shower,” Daniel said.

Daniel went into the shower and while he was in the shower Iboya repacked his Riut bag. Daniel was showered and dressed by 22:30. He walked into the living room and Iboya kissed him.

“I missed you so much babe,” she said.

“I missed you too,” Daniel responded.

They sat on the sofa and hugged for what seemed like an eternity. “Everything is packed and ready,” Iboya said as she pointed at two fully packed suitcases her handbag and Marlysha’s travel bag.

Daniel looked at his watch. “We are already running late he,” he said. It was now 22:50. Iboya got Marlysha out of her bedroom and put on her jacket trying to not wake her up. Daniel unfolded her buggy which was a quick smart go. It was an ultra light buggy that they were allowed to take all the

way up to the gate. Daniel grabbed their two suitcases and Iboya grabbed Marlysha who was still asleep in her buggy. Daniel had to make two trips to get both the suitcases down stairs and locked the door. It was dark outside as they walked to the tram stop under the dimmed lights of the street lamps. "Did you pack the tickets and the passports," Daniel asked.

"Of course," Iboya responded taken aback.

"Just checking," Daniel said. He was kind of out of it, working so many hours and the lack of sleep had taken its toll on his temper.

They waited at the tram stop for a couple of minutes until tram sixteen arrived. Iboya took the buggy and Daniel carried the suitcases. They got off the tram at Den Haag, Holland. They checked in their OV chip cards and made their way to platform six, where they sat on a bench and waited for the train to arrive.

"How was your weekend sweetheart," Iboya asked.

"It was all right. I'm just a little bit tired. I just need some coffee and I'll be good to go," Daniel said a little bit irritable.

A couple of minutes later their train to Schiphol Amsterdam Airport had arrived. They entered the train and took a couple of seats in the hallway. It was only a fifty-minute train ride to the airport. Daniel tried to get some shut-eye but he kept on waking up and double-checking if they had everything.

"Calm down Daniel. It is all going to be all right," Iboya said.

Maybe it was the fact that Daniel disliked flying, or maybe it was the sleep deprivation or a combination of both, but Daniel was restless and uneasy and he could not seem to let it go. It was just a feeling that he could not shake.

"We are now arriving at Schiphol Amsterdam Airport," the intercom sounded.

Daniel grabbed the two suitcases and Iboya grabbed the buggy. "Where is my Riut bag," Daniel asked.

"Still on your back where it has been since we left home," Iboya said laughingly.

As the train came to a full stop they got off at platform seven A and walked to the elevator. Daniel grabbed an airport trolley that was parked next to the elevator, and put the suitcases on top of it. The elevator was nice and spacious and it took them up to the large hallway. It was now 00:30. Marlysha had woken up and was looking around with big eyes. Daniel had already spotted the Starbucks. Thank god most of the stores were still open, he thought.

"Iboya you want some coffee," Daniel asked.

"No I don't want coffee but can you get me some water so we can make a bottle for Marlysha," Iboya responded.

Daniel got a latte macchiato with whipped cream and some bottled water. He asked the girl at the cash register if she could warm up some of the water for him for a baby bottle and she did. He added the instant powder and swirled it with a plastic spoon from Starbucks. He then returned to his family and gave Marlysha her bottle. She smiled at him and started drinking. He patted her on the top of her head and took a big gulp of his coffee.

"So where are we supposed to go," he asked Iboya.

"I don't know but the tickets are in your arm straps," she responded.

Daniel looked at his arm straps and saw a zipper with a compartment that he had not noticed before. He took out their tickets and looked at them. Their tickets said departure from Amsterdam to Heraklion. The flight number was 1925 and the flight date was 31-08-2015. Time of departure was 06:50 and their estimated time of arrival would be 11:20. He looked at his watch, the time was now slowly creeping towards 01:00 which meant they still had a lot of time to kill, but they had to check in two and a half hours in advance, and this was the last train they could of gotten on without compromising their travel plans. Daniel sighed and took another sip of his coffee.

"Well our flight number is 1925." He put the ticket back in his arm strap pocket and said, "Let's start heading for departure hall two upstairs and look for somewhere to get some sleep."

They walked towards a flower stand named Afivlora and took a left. They walked passed Leonidas, a high-end bonbon and chocolate store, and reached a big flat escalator that took them up to the second floor. Thank god for airport trollies, he thought, because this is quite the walk.

Once they reached the second floor they started looking for a place to take a nap for a couple of hours. All the lounges were already full of people who were taking naps and waiting to board their

planes. Daniel's mood took a turn for the worse. He just wanted to get some shuteye and be a little rested before they had to get on this dreaded airplane.

They walked all the way from departure one to departure three. They passed four lounges that were all packed to the brim. Daniel was now cursing at everyone and everything. The sleep deprivation had taken its toll on Daniel and was now taking over his judgment. Daniel switched places with Iboya and was now pushing the buggy whilst she was handling the suitcases. He had to carry the buggy over a barrier and stumbled into something. Iboya yelled at him to be careful with the baby and Daniel snapped.

"I don't even want to go on this stupid ass vacation," he said. He grabbed the tickets from his arm strap and gave them to Iboya. "I'm going home. You both can go to Greece but I'm staying here," he screamed as he stormed off towards the escalator.

"Daniel," Iboya screamed clutching the tickets in her hand as she grabbed the buggy and started running after him, leaving their luggage behind. She caught him mid stride and talked him down. "Let's just find some place where you can rest for a couple of hours and then we can enjoy our vacation and you can get some well-earned rest. No obligations just us three, cocktails and sun."

That sounded better than spending eight days all by himself at home. Daniel calmed down and apologized. They found a quiet corner somewhere in between departure halls one and two. Iboya stayed awake to watch their belongings whilst Daniel fell into a deep sleep. Daniel felt a hand go through his hair.

"Wake up sweetie. It is 04:15. Our flight number just showed up on the board, we could check in at departure two," Iboya said.

Daniel sat up straight and looked over to the buggy. Marlysha was sound asleep. His Riut bag was still on his back. "Let's get a move on," he said. His mood shifted and he was his old cheerful self again.

"Let's check in and then you can get a little bit of sleep," he kissed Iboya and they walked towards the check in desk.

They stood in line for about fifteen minutes and then approached the desk. Iboya gave the woman behind the desk their tickets while Daniel got their passports and Marlysha's ID card from the top pocket of his Riut bag. The woman looked at the bag and said, "I see a lot of backpacks pass through here but that bag is amazing. I have never seen anything like it."

Daniel smiled, "It's a Riut bag. They don't hit the market until December, and it's a 'rucksack'," he said and winked at her. She smiled and told him he could put their luggage on the scale.

Daniel lifted their suitcases on the scale one by one and she labeled them and sent them on their way. She printed another label for the buggy and told Iboya where to attach it. She returned their passports and wished them a safe trip and pointed to the left where they could dispose of the trolley right in front of where security check was.

Daniel took the suitcases off the trollies and parked the trolley with his trolley friends. They walked through the gate and were now in line in front of the body scans. Because they had a buggy with a kid they did not have to wait in line. The buggy went straight through next to the body scan. Daniel went through the body scan first. He had to hold his hands up to the side of his head as if he were under arrest. Iboya was next. Daniel took Marlysha out of the buggy. He gave her to Iboya as she stepped outside the body scan. He had to fold the buggy so they could take it through the x-ray machine. After that, all of their electrical appliances had to be taken out of their bags and go through the x-ray machine whilst their luggage and everything else underwent the same treatment. Daniel had to take off his shoes, but Iboya did not have to do this. Iboya made a racial joke about it and Daniel laughed.

Then, Daniel unfolded the buggy and strapped Marlysha back in it. Security checked their tickets and identification and wished them a safe trip. At the end of the x-ray line Daniel and Iboya gathered their stuff, and Daniel noticed there was a break in his MacBook charger's cable. He cursed as they walked into the duty free zone.

Daniel checked his watch and by now the time was 05:00, just two more hours until their flight. They walked through the duty free zone for an hour and then went to the board with the departures on it. Flight 1925 Heraklion Gate Seven it read among the other departures. They walked to gate seven and there were already a lot of people waiting at the gate. They stood in line for thirty minutes and Marlysha was growing impatient with having to sit in the buggy for so long. Luckily,

their plane, one of the smaller planes of Transavia, was already on the tarmac. It was white and had the sun web logo on the side along with some palm trees and flowers. The words 'I love summer' were written next to the logo.

They entered the boarding tunnel that was attached to the plane, and they were allowed to take the buggy with them until they reached a round chamber inside the tunnel. Daniel got more and more nervous. Iboya took Marlysha out of the buggy as Daniel folded it and left it in the round chamber as the steward had instructed. They followed the line of people on to the airplane and were greeted by the personnel who assigned them their seat numbers. They were in isle E seats 22 and 23. Daniel took the courageous move to sit in seat 23, which was a window seat.

The airplane personnel passed by to give them an extra seatbelt for Marlysha and Daniel strapped her in. Due to bad weather conditions their flight got delayed about thirty minutes in which Daniel's anxiety grew by the minute. The plane slowly taxied on the tarmac and Daniel waited for the moment he hated the most. Suddenly the plane started picking up speed and Iboya grabbed his hand in an attempt to calm him down. Before he knew it, they were airborne and the buildings turned into what looked like toys and the plane shook heavenly due to turbulence as it was making its way through the clouds.

After the worst part was over Daniel fell asleep and was only awoken by the intercom, when the captain told them they were flying at a cruising altitude of 35,000 feet. What he said next gave Daniel the most ominous feeling he ever experienced. "If you look to your right you can now see that we are flying over Syria..."