

ARRIKOS

*The idol
of universe*

Novel

CHRISTOS D. STRATIGOPOULOS

ARCADIA



ISDN 960-92034-2-6

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— ● —

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A R C A D I A

*Man's morale,
is not gained with drugs.
He has his deeds as his food,
struggles and visions.*

C.D.S.

INTRODUCTION

*The President of the
International Association of the Greek
Literary Figures, Reviewer and
Honorary Doctor of Literature in Seoul,
Mrs. Chrisoula Barberi – Barra,
is writing*

I'm starting with an extract from his book:

“You warmongers, predatory birds of the flesh of human beings, who infringe on people’s rights, uncouth and uncivilized egotists, Atheists and disrespectful people of the international institutions and rules. In a while, all of you will first sign the protocol that we’ll bring in front of you and then you’ll regain your eyesight... Help me God!” added the lad who fosters respect for the rights of people...

With his new novel, the poet of **PEACE** and author Christos Stratigopoulos, arms us with the brave and forceful contemplation of his protagonist Arrikos, so that we can become strong and fighters for the winning of human ideals and aspirations. The writer doesn't waste time and energy by using insignificant details and tame incidents.

The protagonists of the book are simple, with special and eminent characters, which contribute to the morale of the story.

This genuine and dashing inspiration of the author, demonstrates that he has the scholarly man within, as well as the simple one, too, the Arcadian potentiality and the language of truth of Kavafis, too, a truth that stirs us and is undying.

Christos D. Stratigopoulos, belongs to those who believe in **“the patterns of values”**.

He pursues, through his intellectual powers, the strengthening of love, peace, freedom and justice worldwide.

The power of his speech is liberating and hopeful for the Man of today, who takes pains to seek the freshness of his peace of mind.

“Arrikos” is a **sacred symbol, a fighter** who **doesn’t yield** to difficulties, but he fights for the sake of human dignity and for the vision, raising HOPE in this way.

In certain parts of his book, the author Christos Stratigopoulos, with his **literary exaltations**, offers us a never-failing light and a divine power that can scatter away the darkness of despair, because he loves people as much as he loves God. His love is a bright star that makes our life more beautiful.

Christos is imbued with great anguish, with regard to the way humanity can be helped, as far as its contemporary scourges are concerned. That’s why, he believes that all of us can become heroes of life. He believes in the power of Man and **“the fragrance of the fruits”** of his constant fight for the betterment of the world.

The writer is a fighter, who has self-knowledge and is **aware of the limits of his responsibility.**

“Arrikos” is always the winner, thanks to his fights in life.

He is the superman, a contemporary God that only somebody like him would be able to save humanity if he was lucky to be in command of a co-operative world.

The novel of Christos D. Stratigopoulos, is simply written and well-worded. **But the problem that invites us to solve it, is not an easy matter!**

The author, through the protagonists of his work and his ingenious imagination, tries to lead us to the clearing of happiness.

Ha adores the place he was born in, he is proud of the brightness of the Arcadian land and **Greece**, but above all, like **a real humanist** he dreams of a humanity devoid of torments, diseases, drugs, poverty and injustice. He really is a **universal author and poet.**

All real creators, wish for the “dawn” of human joy to come, all of them are seeking the real light in an endless night of a long-lasting course. The love of Christos Stratigopoulos for **the light** has been in his fine soul for many years now. His vigilant bright conscience, affects in devoutness every common person who has his own responsibility for the betterment of the world.

Social, historical and other problems of the world exist in the planet. We become more and more anxious every day that elapses. There must

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be solutions for the difficult times we're going through.

The author has a duty to trumpet forth it and Christos knows his **mission** very well.

I

The first signs

It might have been or not fifty meters and just opposite the northern window of Arrikos' house, lied old Nicolas' garden. An exquisite garden, full of all sorts of trees and flowers at its ends, that everyone adored... but if anyone would ever dare get near it... and were seen by the old man... what a nagging he would go through!

What a strange man he was! He had never treated even a fruit from his garden to a neighbor or a passer-by, neither a flower had he ever offered to anyone. Not even for Good Friday's procession did he give anything to two sweet little girls who asked him for some money. He turned them away and peeped at them from his window, to make sure that they would not come back and pick a flower. The entire garden was girdled with white tapes and scare - crows, not even the birds did the old man want to go near.

The more stingy and strange the old man Nicolas was, the more open and kind-hearted was his wife. She always treated everyone when her old man was out, but never when he was there. She couldn't stand his nagging if he would see her giving something to a man passing by.

... "Uncle Nicolas..." his neighbor Theodore called him one day, "...the flying birds have also got a right and share, don't turn them away, they are living things you know".

“Do we pay them to sing to us?” the old man said.

“Can’t you hear how brightly that nightingale sings in the ravine every night? Birds are important, we need all living things in life”, replied Theodore.

One year, when a jackdaw went and sat on a premature pear-tree to eat a pear, the old man Nicolas wounded the bird with his gun – on its wings – and when he caught the bird, he plucked it alive and let it walk. The croaking and cry of the poor bird was unbelievable. Not even three meters did it manage to do and it fell dead! But the old man Nicolas derived such a delight from that!

When Arrikos heard all about that, he didn’t even want to see his ruthless old neighbor ever again. So, he was relieved from the remorse that he felt, after entering sometimes the old man’s garden secretly – after checking the place first, to make sure that the old man was not there to catch him – Arrikos picked fruits from the old man’s trees and then hid them carefully in his underarms and quickly ran to the back yard of his own house to savour their sweetness.

In the middle of the garden and between a pear-tree and a well-planted sour cherry-tree, an unknown fruit-tree had just grown, but nobody knew anything about it. Unique in the village, it didn’t even look like any other tree. Its fruits were deep yellow, like amber and its flavour reminded you something of vanilla and mandarin together, if these fruits were to be tasted, illegally of course. Almost like a wild plum in size and very strange in form and shape were the fruits of that tree.

Arrikos must have been around ten years old, when one day, he ran into the old man Nicolas, who was driving off to the fields with his animals. He jumped into the garden like a fox and crammed his

hands with fruits from the trees. He went directly to the back of his house and without delay and needless movements, he sent the fruits directly to his stomach, but their flavour wouldn't leave his mouth. But it wasn't an easy thing to resist such a tasty temptation and again he sneaked into the garden. This time, though, he wasn't that lucky, because the field guard whistled, trying his new whistle and Arrikos jumped up all of a sudden from fear, tossed himself over to the rear of the yard and almost tripped over Uncle Christos' dog, that was lying asleep in the shadow of a black fig-tree and the poor dog almost died of heart failure. It was the first time he had picked fruits from that strange tree, which was full that year and could hardly bear its own weight. After a while and without having the might to resist such a sweet and rare temptation, the child checked if there was somebody in the garden and approached the exotic tree again.

Like a magician, he picked the dear fruits quickly and effectively and when he had bulged up his pockets and had no place to stuff any more, he flew off again for that particular place, to enjoy them. Arrikos hadn't chosen that particular place by chance. Not only coolness did it offer, but also water was there, so he could wash his dear fruits from a small little tap that supplied water to all the animals of the house. With great gluttony and greediness, he sent most of the fruits to their destination -his stomach -, but at a certain point, something crossed his mind: "If I plant the seeds of these fruits in the soil, maybe one day there won't be a need for me to enter secretly into the old man Nicolas' garden, because, according to a saying:

'Many times does the pitcher go to the fountain for water, but one day it goes there and never comes back again!'"

After this thought, another one crossed his mind very quickly, which told him: “Yes, but the point is how will he make an excuse for the presence of the plants in his field?” It will be difficult to sort things out, especially when he has to deal with a man that is so strange and fussy, a neighbor whose tree was the one and only in the village. If the old man got to know about it, then Arrikos would be in serious trouble for sure.

After a lot of thoughts, Arrikos decided to plan the seeds and afterwards he would figure out what to do. Until then, who knows what would happen...? The old man may not even be around for much longer. Lots of things could happen.

It wasn't long before Arrikos ate the last of his stolen fruits. Satisfied as he was, he took a small mattock lying beside him and immediately went to his own garden to plant the seeds which had been left behind and which with great care, he was now putting into the ground.

“Arrikos! Arrikos!” his mother called him to go upstairs and run an errand. “I'm coming!” said the boy, who had just finished his task. In two minutes, he had taken his mother's order and without hesitation, he was just leaving to accomplish the work. He would bring “fine salt” and “matches” from the market. Indefatigable as he was, he brought the shopping goods in less than ten minutes and his mother caressed his totally blonde head in reward and gave him a piece of advise, not to run so fast, because his forehead was full of sweat and his stripped shirt was stuck on his body.

Arrikos agreed, he darted a sweet smile at his mother and went straight to their garden. He took a pot, full of water from the tap and watered the fresh-planted seeds, so he could make sure that they would

not take long to become firm, independent plants. That was his true desire.

Arrikos was the seventh and last child in the family and the most beloved, thanks to his appearance, his civilized behavior, as well as his willingness. He was as sharp as a needle in everything, except his schoolwork. He wasn't very good in school. As for sports though, no child could ever beat him in competitions. His brother would keep pushing him to study, but Arrikos always answered the same way: "The greatest men in the world, were bad students in their childhood!"

The night when they sat at the table, Arrikos told them about the planting of the seeds in their garden and he begged them to be careful around that spot. He didn't make the mistake to tell them where he had found the seeds, because if he did something like that, what a spanking he would receive from his father! After having listened to the story, Arrikos' father told him to sit on his lap and kindly said to his son: "I would like you to be a great scientist one day and not a simple farmer as I am now!" Arrikos looked his father deep in the eyes, grasped a thought... but didn't say anything.

The child must have visited the foreign garden more than ten times and no one had ever noticed the bright, illegal, small visitor. One day, the strange old man called out to Arrikos and said that he wanted some cigarettes and a newspaper from the kiosk. "Immediately!" answered the little boy. "I'm coming, sir!" In one minute, Arrikos was in the old man's house. The man gave him money and the child immediately hurried to the square to run the errand. But the old man Nicolas, had made a mistake, he had given him more money. When Arrikos came back, he gave the cigarettes, the newspaper and the change to the man, who looked at the child and told him: "Come

with me!” The man went down the stairs and the boy followed, until they reached the garden. The old man Nicolas, opened the wooden door and said to Arrikos: “Go inside and pick as many fruits as you wish!” The smart boy just proved that even if he was not a very good student in school, his mind was sharp and not just a little... “This is my chance”, he thought, “to account for the trees that are going to grow in my garden!” and immediately went to the exotic tree. He picked as many fruits as he could and headed for the exit.

The old man, putting his stinginess aside for once, rewarded the child for his good deed. He added that whenever Arrikos would want any of the fruits, he could just have to ask for some. “Than you, sir! Thank you!” said the child and made for his house. He gave everyone two fruits each and all of them admired the tastiness of them. But they wondered at the old man’s act, who had never in his life offered a treat to a single soul.

Autumn came and schools opened. This year, Arrikos left everyone struck dumb. The teacher, his parents, his brother. All these years, he had been the worst student in his class, but this year, he was at the peak of his performance. Excellent in all subjects, he even left Periklis behind, who usually did even better than his teacher. Everyone was stunned.

When the school year was over, the coffeehouse keeper, Mr. Tasos, hired Arrikos to help him, but the boy not only helped the man, but also saved him time for a rest. He held the coffee shop on his own and did much better than its owner. As for the exotic fruits of the old man Nicolas, they were not forgotten. When Arrikos had a sweet tooth, he would call the old man for some. And when the old man would hear the boy, he would come to the window and say: “Pick whatever you like, but be careful so that you don’t break the

branches and close the door behind you!” Arrikos was extremely careful, but he also respected the old man who let him enter his garden. He gave many of the rare fruits to his grandfather, which he liked a lot and as always he received his generous blessing.

The child kept the tips in a glass-jar where apricot syrup was before that and saved it. At the beginning of autumn, in broad daylight, as he was sitting with his boss at the coffee shop, he approached the counter and took the jar in his hands. He handed it over to the coffeehouse keeper and told him: “This money comes from tips. It’s mine, but I want you to know about it Mr. Tasos. I will buy exercise books and whatever I need for school and I will also buy an encyclopaedia, like the one my mother’s cousin -the doctor that left from Germany- had. His mother locked it in a trunk and they won’t even let me get close to it”. The coffeehouse keeper, looked at the child lovingly, he caressed his head and told him: “In order to buy such an encyclopaedia, you have to work for ten summers and maybe more!” But before he finished his words, the doctor’s father, a white-haired old man, came in and gave his order: “A coffee without sugar, please and a glass of water without ice!”

“Sure!” answered the lad and went straight to work. Five minutes later, the customer at the coffee shop, was savouring his coffee, after having gulped down the fresh, cool water that Arrikos had brought to him. As the white-haired old man was tasting his light coffee and as he was scanning the headlines of a newspaper that was lying on the table, a thought crossed the young waiter’s mind: “I will ask him...”, he thought, “...if I can go and read or take my uncle’s encyclopaedia with me” – the old man was the brother of Arrikos’ grandfather -. Being determined, he approached him and said:

“Excuse me, I need to talk to you about something”.

“Yes, my child, tell me! I am all ears!”

”This and that is going on”, the child spoke.

At the hearing of those words, the white-haired man frowned at the child and answered:

“What you are asking me for, is out of the question. These books have been paid by the sweat of the brow!”

“Okay...”, said the lad, “...I apologize for asking! Farewell!”

“What an indecent demand!” soliloquized the old man.

With his face distorted with insult, the sweet little boy went back in the coffee shop and sat at the table where its owner was and started counting the money that was in the jar. The owner of the shop, realized that Arrikos was preoccupied and asked him what had happened. The young lad told him everything about it.

“Let the mice eat it up!” whispered Mr. Tasos and darted a stealthy look at the middle-aged man, lest the man should hear anything of what he was saying to Arrikos.

They counted the money in the jar and Mr. Tasos said to his assistant:

“With this money, you can afford half of a second-hand encyclopaedia from Monastiraki, but don’t worry at all, in a month or two, I’ll go to Athens and then you’ll see!”

“What do you mean?” said Arrikos.

“In a month, you’ll have your own encyclopaedia and you won’t be obliged to anyone. I, personally, will give you one as a present”.

Arrikos’ face, just beamed with joy. He made a smart quick thought and a tear rolled down his cheek.

“Yes, but providing I will be your assistant next summer too, Uncle Tasos and these tips here, will all be given for an encyclopaedia”.

The smart coffee-house owner, couldn't refuse it and he went on to say to Arrikos:

“The services, you've offered in this shop all this year, are worthy of ten encyclopaedias, but I can't turn down you offer”.

The smart act of the coffeehouse owner, set Arrikos' soul at ease, after the uncivilized action of the old man, that had caused such bitterness in Arrikos' heart.

The schools opened and Arrikos was back in class. He was in grade six that year and the best student in his class, a child prodigy. The books of that year were very easy for him to comprehend.

The beginning of November came and Mr. Tasos went to Athens. He looked everywhere in Monastiraki for the encyclopaedia, but he couldn't manage to find it. A second-hand dealer, promised him to have the book until the end of the month. When he returned to the village, he told Arrikos the news, but Arrikos' sorrow lasted less than a moment, since he knew that Mr. Tasos' word was as good as his bond.

The teacher of the school found it difficult to work with such a student, who had already learnt all the books that were given to him for the year, from cover to cover and which were admittedly many.

Arrikos was most of the time deep in contemplation. He was always pensive and couldn't give an explanation why his mind had changed so much in one year. “A year ago...”, he thought, “...I didn't want to even open my books, not to mention to study them. But now what has made me change so much?” There wasn't a moment when he was not reading something. Anything. A book, a magazine, a newspaper, whatever he found. Not only did he want

to read it, but he also managed to learn the content by heart, he never left anything out and would never forget what he had read.

One day, he took his brother's grade eight History book and in three hours he had learnt the entire book by heart. He called his sister and told her: "I want you to ask me questions on what is written on every single page of the book and I will give you the answer, but don't do it in order, ask in random order. Do it, please!"

The girl couldn't believe her eyes. Not even a full stop had Arrikos forgotten, not even a comma had he put in a wrong place. What a child prodigy! He was in continuous contemplation, but couldn't give an explanation to what was happening to him.

At the beginning of December, a little donkey was heading for Arrikos' home, loaded with goods. Loaded with science, with thousands of years of research and studies. With the science of retaining Man's health, with the science of taking precautions against various diseases and curing them. The bus of the local line, carried the encyclopaedia to the bus stop, outside the coffeehouse where Arrikos was working for the summer. The donkey carried the books to Arrikos' house uncomplaining.

The great man -the coffeehouse owner- kept his word and Arrikos was then in front of the gate of his house, unloading at a fast pace. He put the boxes down with great caution, because they contained the encyclopaedia, which for such a long time he had awaited in agony. Six boxes were lying on the ground. And above them, the blonde-haired boy Arrikos, entered the boxes with his imagination and was looking at the volumes of the encyclopaedia. The donkey beside him, bent over one of the boxes and with its nostrils tried to smell the contents. The ropes from the saddle of the animal were hanging down and

without haste, Arrikos managed to open one of the six boxes. Looking like an excellent surgeon, he took a volume out of the box, opened the book skillfully and his first glimpse fell on the page that wrote: "Blood Groups" and underneath was a picture with a woman to the left and a man to the right. The picture showed how the parents' blood groups joined through the inheritance route, giving a start to the children's blood groups.

$O + O = O$

$O + A = O$ e.t.c.

He read it twice and closed the encyclopaedia. He put it carefully into the box and carried it back home. Every time he carried one of the books, he said to himself " $O + O = O$ " e.t.c. He repeated it six times. That was it! The type remained in his mind forever.

He prepared the donkey, put it in the stable, he caressed its two big ears with sympathy and went up to his house. At a fast pace, he opened all the boxes and with great caution, he took the heavy black books out, which had gold letters and taking a quick glance at each one of them, he placed them in the bookcase which just a few years ago was used by his brother Sotiros.

For quite a while, he stood in front of them and using his imagination, he reached the time when nothing of their contents would be unknown to him.

The door opened. It was his father who had just returned from work. He read the satisfaction on his son's face and Arrikos' eyes beamed with joy. Arrikos' father wanted his son to be a scientist, that was how he had dreamed him in his mind. The little child's behaviour, filled the father with enthusiasm. The father made dreams for his son. He pictured him as a civil engineer, an architect, a lawyer, a doctor. One night, in his dream, he saw Arrikos as a pilot, taking off and hiding in the clouds. He saw him turning back

again, renting the air in his aeroplane and underneath lots of people... people waving their white handkerchiefs in a rhythmical way. What a dream!

Arrikos, holding a volume in his hands and full of anxiety, was having a lingering look at certain pages. He put the volume away and took another. He did the same with that volume, but soon understood, that he had to start to study them from the beginning. His father was watching him for a quite a while and then told him:

“If you keep on studying the way you did last year and this year and you impressed us, it is as sure as fate that a time will come when lots of people will be talking about you!”

Like a wise old man, the young lad looked at his father and answered:

“Father, I don’t really know what’s going on with me lately. A tremendous power is hiding inside me, an unusual enlightenment flows through my mind. If I keep it up, by the end of the school year this encyclopaedia will have been embodied in my head. This is where its contents will take permanent place. Now come, so I can show you something!”

The lad took the volume with the blood groups in his hands, turned to the page where that concept was and told his father: “O + O = O” e.t.c. He reached the end, everything was right without any mistake and he was fast too. His father was stunned. He clasped him in his arms, caressed his head and his imagination sent him far, very far away. Arrikos’ totally blonde hair and his radiant face, make you adore him, even from the very first moment you see him. But if he gives you one of his adorable smiles, you will love him for sure and you’ll definitely keep a place in your heart for him.

Thirty great volumes composed that encyclopaedia. From the origin of life to the latest therapy were the books' contents.

The Christmas holiday was close at hand. His schoolbooks were carried around in his bag, but were never used, as Arrikos had read them all and had learnt all their concepts by heart.

For a long time, the teacher had been using him as his assistant. Together with Pericles, they taught. Both of them were the school "leaders". Pericles was the flag-bearer and Arrikos was the trumpeter. The hoisting of the flag took place every morning. The trumpet shivered in the blonde lad's hands and echoed through the entire village. All the pupils at school admired him and the younger children patterned themselves upon him. Arrikos was one of the rarest athletes. His greatest love was pole-jumping. He took off like a spring and like a feather did he land. In the other races, he was also the first. That year, he was competing only in pole-jump. He had his own reasons and it wasn't accidental at all. "Other athletes should have a chance to distinguish themselves as well", he thought. "As far as I'm concerned, this event is enough".

They were on Christmas holiday. By the time when the highest peak of the village got drenched by the sun, Arrikos was awake. But even if the "glorious shiner" – the sun – was "carried away", behind the clouds and "forests to shine", Arrikos would still be awake. He had a task to accomplish, plans to bring to fruition. Thirty volumes should be carried to the place where they could be wholesome and useful and not just lie and decorate the surroundings, just imposing their weight on inanimate furniture. And all that, in six months.

In a greedy way, the blonde boy started reading the first volume of his encyclopaedia. The origin of the

world, the biological evolution, the evolution of Man, his biological superiority, his hyper-perfection e.t.c. He reached the page that described the cell, he learnt its parts, its functions. He stuck at that part of the book for quite long. He really wanted to assimilate the chapter, he wanted to learn even the slightest detail. "Everything evolved from the cell, it is the first biological unit of the organism", he thought. Many ideas crossed his incisive mind. After he had read about the chemical composition of the cell, he raised his eyes and looked out, through the window, rapt in contemplation and kept his thoughts there for a while, without moving, without diverting his mind from what had come to his imagination at that moment. A concentration that lasted more than five minutes, a rare thought, a spontaneous divine brainwave, a short period of time that determined the progress of the twelve-year-old boy and not only his. Those five minutes, were enough for the conception of a brilliant idea that crossed the boy's mind and played a positive role to the human generation of our planet.

It's the twenty-third of December, afternoon time and the hands of the clock that was hanging on the room's wall, created a right angle. The long hand was precisely on "twelve". Arrikos took a red pen with his delicate fingers and wrote under Asclepios' head, which was illustrated on the first page of the first volume of the encyclopaedia: **"Iapetos - Arrikos - The Altamer"**.

He wrote three words and signed underneath. Not even for a moment did the words leave him. Wherever he went, they would always follow him. They were rooted deep in his subconscious and they would reciprocate continuously between him and his conscious.

He studied all day, but he never felt that it was enough. He studied for endless hours and learned about all the organs of the body. The human brain fascinated him and his attention was nailed by the hyper - perfections of the brain's functions. He admired the eye and many times he felt confused, without being able to give an explanation to how man had managed to conceive such a hyper - perfect mechanism of an organ. This incredible, divine organ can carry out ten billion calculations in only one second, really amazing!

Many times at night, they all gathered round the table and listened to him. He told them about the human body and they watched him admiring his way of speaking. Arriko's grandfather was then alive. He was very old, approaching his ninety-five years of age. One night, as Arrikos was telling them about the function of the cells, his grandfather said:

"Well, my Arrikos, is it right that there will be one day when Man will be able to live for ever and will never pass away, if a scientist makes the appropriate medicine that will make the cells not grow old;"

Arrikos thought for a minute and answered to his grandfather:

"In medicine, grandfather, everything is possible. From the very simple, to the most difficult. It isn't impossible at all, that a simple grass that grows in our garden and which we throw away because we consider it a weed, or even the combination of aspirin and carbon for instance, can make man young again, assumptions that can make him stay young for ever. But it might be impossible, since no one has accomplished anything like that until now!"

Grandfather thought for a while and said to his grandchild:

"What about you Arrikos, do you believe that this is feasible?"

The child smiled, looked lovingly at his grandfather and said:

“If we take into consideration that my great grandfather exceeded the age of a hundred and five, we have enough time granddad, don’t we?”

“What do you mean”? his grandfather asked.

“In ten years’ time, many things can happen!” said the little boy.

Kanella knocked on the door. She said “good evening” to everyone and sat down. “I heard that you are going downtown...”, she told Arrikos’ father, “...and I brought you the sample of the medicine that we want you to bring to us from the drug store, for my father in-law’s heart” and she gave him the prescription she was holding in her hands. “It’s a perfect drub. Since the doctor gave it to him, he is getting better. The only bad thing is that he sleeps for many hours and his ears are singing a little. Here, take the money!”

“Can I see something?” said Arrikos and he reached out for the prescription, so as to read it.

“It is indicated for people’s cure for hypertension and heart related inflammation. It is also efficacious against the side effects that are ten times more than the indications”. He thought about something, he gave the prescription to his father, but he didn’t speak at all. His sister rose from her seat and brought a cookie (courabie) to Kanella and a drink on a small silver tray.

In a way that displayed a civilized and polite person, the girl ate her sweet and drank a little of the liquor that was offered to her. She thanked them, as well as Mr. Fragiskos for his services, – that was Arrikos father’s name – she said “good night” and left.

“It’s a girl as good as gold!” said Arrikos’ mother, as she came back, having seen the girl out. The

elderly are the apple of her eye. Good for her! A merit on her side!”

Arrikos left and went to his room. He took a volume in his hands and was again to his basic purpose. The clock showed a quarter past three after midnight, when he decided to sleep. For many years, every night before he went to bed, his grandmother who had then died, parted his hair and then let him go to bed. But that became a habit of his and until now he does not want to relinquish this habit. In front of the mirror, the little boy with the comb in his hand was ready to execute the habit. Before combing it, a voice was heard coming from the next-door window and disrupting the silence of the quiet night.

“Fragiskos! Fragiskos!” a woman’s voice was heard, revealing that she was frightened and startled.

The child woke his parents up, who without delay opened the window and saw the woman who was no other than the wife of old Markos, the man with the locked up encyclopaedia who had refused to lend it to Arrikos, insulting him.

“Run quickly!” the old woman said, “Markos must be dead!”

In five minutes, everyone gathered at old Markos’ house. Arrikos was there, too. Cries were heard from the old man’s wife, all the house was trembling with shouts and cries. They approached the old man, tried to move him, they felt his pulse, but nothing, not even a whisper from the old man. But small Arrikos, who is very smart, had his own opinion. He sat next to the old man, trying to feel his pulse from other parts of his body, but his eyes fell on the bedside table where he saw small boxes of medicine. One was called “*Tavor*” and the other “*Lexotanil*”. Arrikos realized what had happened, when he felt the old man’s pulse using his delicate, sensitive, long fingers.

The old man had taken a double dose of the sleeping - pills by mistake, or even more and had fallen into very deep sleep. Mr. Fragiskos and the little child, immediately called the doctor who was at the other side of the village and in a while, all together were waiting for the old man to come round. The doctor gave him an injection and in half an hour, old Markos had opened his eyes and started looking at them with a vacant stare. The visitors stayed there for a little longer and then waved goodbye to the old couple and left for their homes. Arrikos parted his hair and felt happy and satisfied that he, too, had offered his help that night and then he went to bed.

When the schools broke off for Christmas, Arrikos was so good at his subjects that he broke all the records. His eldest brother Sotiros, extremely fascinated, asked him what he would like for a present. Arrikos had made Sotiros so proud those two years, with his devotion to his work and study, which was a flaming wish of his.

“I want you to help me...”, Arrikos answered, “...to explore all the untrodden parts of this land. I want to be a mountain-climber!”

“But what’s going on with you?” Sotiros asked him. “Do you want to get killed? Don’t you know that you are the person that we all expect to give glory to our family? We want you to be unique and do credit to our house. I want you to be a great man, that’s my dream!”

The clever boy Arrikos, thought for a while and said to his brother “You may repent what you have just told me, you may not be able to afford what your little brother wants, so don’t continue. I’ll buy, on my own, whatever is necessary in order to be a mountain-climber, I’ll go to the coffee shop and work there again”.

Sotiros gave Arrikos his word, and in a few days he enrolled his brother in the Climbing Society and bought whatever outfit and equipment was needed. Sotiros could never refuse anything to his angel-face little brother Arrikos, who always had a way to get round his brother.

Christmas was over, as well as New Year's Eve and the schools opened again. Arrikos' desk was looking towards the window and from there he could see the school garden and a small mountain dominating it. Many times would Arrikos look out of the window with a blank look and his attention would be split between his teacher and the attractive nature in front of him. Arrikos was very careful, he would never want his teacher to reprimand him. One day, as he was watching a bird that went and sat on the leafless apple-tree in the garden, pinching a forgotten dry apple, his teacher told him:

"I would really want to know what you're thinking about, what is in your mind. I've been watching you for quite long, something seems to have distracted your attention".

"I want to tell you something, dear teacher.", Arrikos answered. "I may be looking somewhere else, but I have my mind partly on what you are saying and I have heard whatever you have told us until now. But you made a mistake, and I didn't want to interrupt you at that moment, because you hadn't finished. You said 'cape with', but the correct form is 'cope with'"

"Yes", said the teacher. "That's right. And although I know it, I always misuse this word, you're right Arrikos".

"I am sure that you know it..", said the witty little boy, "...but sometimes, it happens that we pronounce a word in the wrong way, because we are used to hearing it in this way. We do it out of habit".

At that point, Arrikos showed what a sharp mind he has. An incisive mind that marks the twelve-year-old boy. He neither wanted to insult his teacher – who knew the right form of the word for sure – but didn't want the teacher to think that he was only looking at the bird and wasn't paying attention to what he was saying, either. The teacher had realized that he had to do with a serious and responsible child and was always trying to encourage him and prepare the ground for him to be happy and released from whatever burdens and obstacles he would possibly confront.

They became friends. They would talk for hours and Arrikos surely had an excellent instructor standing by him. The teacher used to be a schoolmate of Arrikos' elder brother Sotiros and they were inseparable friends since their childhood. But now that Arrikos had become a new member of the company, the genuine friendship was divided among the three of them, since Arrikos was too a pure and faithful member of the company.

The time elapsed and the school examinations came on. Needless to talk about Arrikos' marks of his certificate. What made everyone struckdumb, was the day when the School Sports were held. We've already said about the athlete called Arrikos, we all know about his capabilities, but today we'll talk about the tremendous child at the pole-jump event. We'll mention the ingenious athlete of this event that held everyone spellbound. Today we'll talk about the "hurricane" Arrikos and what he managed to accomplish. He succeeded in catching everybody's breath for more that half a minute and he boosted everybody's adrenaline to the utmost.

That day, the "winged" boy Arrikos tested the heart of everyone who had gathered in the

schoolyard. It was a strict test, which proved that everyone's heart was functioning well – everybody was in perfect condition–. All the other athletic events had finished and only the last one was left. It was the pole-jump event. In this event, three children were to take part, Arrikos, Nikitas and Menios, athletes with great capabilities. Menios started first and with a very splendid movement of his body passed quite above the bar. Nikitas did the same well. Arrikos' turn came then, he wanted from his very first attempt to raise the bar. Everyone was surprised at how high he had placed it. The bar was put very high. Mr. Antonis Panagiotopoulos, his teacher, who knows the way to boost his student's morale perfectly well just with a look and two words, gave him the pole, winked at him, Arrikos whispered something to his teacher and the teacher did his Cross.

For a while and with the pole in his hands, the angel-like, fair-haired boy Arrikos, concentrated. He looked at his brother who was sitting aside and went on. In seconds, he had embedded the pole in the ground, but the movement he made, cannot even be grasped by an imaginative person. He bended the pole, as if it were a coil and there was a moment when it took a vertical position, as if a divine invisible power had pushed it. On top of the pole, a human body was extending, keeping its balance and leaning on it with the interior back part of the palm of his right hand. Silence reigned everywhere! With their breath caught up and their heads raised to the highest point, they looked at him in amazement.

The crowd was watching an "eagle"... facing the location of the string's level and staying there motionless. No one had ever seen a more spectacular sight before, not even by an acrobat from those who visited the village from time to time. With an

ingenious movement, Arrikos sent the pole to his teacher, “as a present”, he passed above the bar and like a tree’s leaf in autumn, he ended on the mattress. He didn’t celebrate, he didn’t raise his hands for joy, not because he didn’t want to. He didn’t have time! That was the reason. His two noble classmates and competitors, Nikitas and Menios, ran towards him. They hugged him and started kissing him. After that, the rest of the crowd came rushing towards him. Arrikos was the focal point of every conversation in the village for a long time, Nikitas and Menios as well. Everybody was talking about their refined manners.

Arrikos’ fantastic performance was etched in the people’s memory for years, there they revolved that spectacular sight over and over and they sent it into the center of their memory forever. The act of his co-athletes was the beginning of something that all of us will see later on. This action of theirs was the great issue among the fellow-countrymen of the village for a long time.

“Well done chivalrous boy Nikitas, well done civilized man Menelaos!”

The black encyclopaedia was embedded in Arrikos’ mind and not even a part of it was incomprehensible to him. He even gave an intensive course to his brothers. Arrikos taught them everything about the eye, its parts, about the heart, he told them about its function, its failures. He talked to them as if they were his students, but his best student was his grandfather. Everyone was surprised, because despite his old age, he could remember many things from what Arrikos was teaching him, whereas the others had already forgotten everything the following day.

In order to prove that his grandfather was the best student, Arrikos got him to learn by heart certain muscles of the human body. Until the day when the

old man died, not even one muscle had he forgotten. The so-called "*Sternocleidomastoid*" muscle, the *deltoideus* muscle, the major muscle of the thorax, the two-headed muscle, the out slant abdomen muscle, the bender of the fingers, the inner buttock muscle and many other muscles remained in the "aged" mind of the grandfather for ever. Arrikos, while reading the encyclopaedia, found out about the role of heredity and gave an explanation to the phenomenon. He therefore gave an explanation only to one limb of the subject. There was another one, more important but until then, he hadn't managed to think of it.

And how could he guess!

It's August, two days before the celebration of Virgin Mary and Arrikos' father, Uncle Fragiskos, was getting ready for the slaughter of a calf that he had raised that year, according to the custom, so that they would celebrate that special day. He had also raised money from selling part from the calf's meat. Uncle Fragiskos called a few neighbors, as well as Bill Kopitas the butcher and in no time they had the calf lying down inanimate, since this is a calf's "destination".

Arrikos was anxious for that day to come, because he wanted to see and investigate the certain organs of the animal. He wanted to discover their anatomy, he wanted to know about their structure and whatever he could get from such a detailed test. He had been waiting for long, until the time when he had a big receptacle in front of him with the heart, the kidneys and other organs, which the skillful butcher was handing over to him one after the other.

"At first you must learn about the heart and the kidneys", said his father smiling in a jocular mood "This is Vasilis' desire (meaning the butcher) and later on you'll learn about the rest".

“It’s no laughing matter”, the butcher answered. “And don’t think that it is impossible that one day thousands of people’s luck will rest on Arrikos”.

Arrikos’ eyes beamed with joy by what Vasilis had said and with his right hand he turned the heart of the animal that was in the receptacle, upside down. “Come, so I will show you...”, he said, “...how each part of the organ is called”. He started showing them and everyone was watching strangely. *The upper circular vein, the lower circular vein, the aorta, the aortic bow, the hypocleidius artery, the caratid, the armhead stem, the lung cone e.t.c.* He picked up the butcher’s sharp knife and divided the heart into two pieces. *The right ventricle, the left ventricle, the right atrial, the left atrial. The minoeithis valve of the aorta, the mitroeithis valve.*

“The heart is full of valves!” his neighbor Dinos said. “And what on earth does it need them all?”

“It’s not only them, there are more”, Arrikos answered. “This one here, is called the *three tongue valve* and this is another one called the *lung aorta valve*”. Then, he showed them another one called *valve of lung aorta*.

He also showed them the way the blood circulates in the heart. “Look. This is the point from where the blood reaches the left ventricle” and he showed the right ventricle. “And from this point here...”, he showed again “... it reaches the left ventricle, after passing through the lung circulation”.

Everyone looked at each other and the father of the young “doctor” felt proud of his son. And then Arrikos continued saying: “... then it reaches the *left ventricle* and from there, it flows into the aorta”.

“If I understood right”, the butcher told him, “the heart is like a motor that never stops operating, with the only difference that the heart instead of carrying water, it carries blood”.

“You understood right”, Arrikos answered. “But it is an indestructible “motor”, since it works unceasingly for so many years, according to man’s record of life, without being damaged so easily. What is more, no other ‘machine’ has a more perfect system so its function can be regulated automatically, according to the needs of whatever it serves at the given moment. It arranges the amount of blood that will spring up in every phase of its function, the blood pressure and the speed of the flow in the blood-vessels e.t.c. And all this, according to the demands of every blood vessel and so you can feel how complicated and great this system of blood vessels is – arteries, veins, capillary vessels, blood-vessels e.t.c. – If it were possible to remove all the blood-vessels from the body and put them in a row, they would cover the whole perimeter of the earth”. Everyone wondered.

“Don’t you believe it?” said Arrikos. “It’s true!”

Silence reigned everywhere for a while, but then George asked Arrikos: “From what I understood...”, he said, “...the heart sends the blood to the body. But which is the organ that sends blood to the heart? Because the heart is also in need of certain substances and oxygen so it can work”. Arrikos looked straight in George’s eye and said:

“One day, I will take you as my assistant, your thinking this way is an asset of yours”.

George was the youngest in the company, around thirty-five years old, whereas the others were over fifty.

“If you give an answer to this too, dear Arrikos, I’ll take my hat off to you”, George said and scanned Arrikos’ bright face.

“Come, I will show you!” Arrikos said. “And I don’t want you to take your hat off to me. Can you see this artery?”

“Yes, I can”, said George.

“This one here?”

“Yes, I can see it, too”.

“Well, these are called *coronary arteries*. These are the arteries that give blood to the heart. The left one gives blood to the *left atrial* and the *ventricle*. The right one gives blood to the right *atrial* and to the corresponding *ventricle*.

George gave him a pat on the back and said: “Many are those in my age, who will talk about you with sympathy. Well done! Congratulations! We expect a lot of you Arrikos!”

The butcher and his assistants were preparing the slaughtered calf when a voice was heard: “The snack is ready. What do you want me to bring you? Beer or wine?”

It was Arrikos’ mother who had prepared a snack, as she always did, when she had visitors at home.

“Beer!” everyone said. “We want to cool our tongue a little!” Uncle Dinos added.

In a while, everyone was eating their snack and Arrikos’ father was filling up the glasses. They all took their glasses in their hands, clinked them and gave a wish to Arrikos, to be a great surgeon one day

“Days like this, the 15th of August...”, Arrikos said, “...are sacred and wishes come true, so I thank you all!”

He sent his imagination to corresponding periods of the future and said to himself: “Virgin Mary, I want you to help me, I truly want to be a scientist, I want to fulfill my dream that has been in my mind for such a long time. I want to help Mankind. And I will never forget to build a church on the mountain I was looking at, through my classroom window, I’ll do it for your sake. Help me, my Virgin Mary, to release Humanity from diseases!”

Everyone was eating their snack and drinking their cool beer, but Arrikos was still examining the organs of the animal, taking into his hands one after the other.

“That’s enough for today”, George said. “You can’t learn everything in one day!”

“You’re right...”, Arrikos answered, “...but I want to take advantage of this day, because no other day will I have the opportunity to have all these organs alive in my hands”.

They finished and then left. But Arrikos started his meticulous research. He took one of the kidneys in his hands and cut it up. He used a magnifier to find even the minutest details. He spotted whatever he knew from the encyclopaedia and nothing was unknown to him any more.

The time passed and he still had some organs to examine. “It isn’t that difficult for me to examine these organs, from what I understood”, he thought. “Till now, I could only imagine how the heart and the kidneys looked like, but now I have them alive in my hands”, he contemplated.

The child was right, nothing was difficult for him. Such a sharp mind could never find difficulty in learning something. But not everyone’s mind is like his. The child didn’t know that, he hadn’t realized how extremely ingenious he was, what developed intellectual powers he had. He felt a common person. He thought that everyone had the same understanding with him, but this had nothing to do with reality. A twelve-year-old boy knew so many special things. So young a boy, with so many capabilities. In a few years’ time, what else would this child have achieved?

Having an instructor behind him – such as his former teacher who has an exceptional personality – and his brother whose only concern was to see his

brother a great scientist, the little boy had all the assets for him. It was impossible for him not to attain his goals, very far had he managed to send his imagination.

It's the day before the 15th of August when we celebrate the Blessed Virgin and Arrikos, very early in the morning, was in front of a mirror in his house. As he was combing his hair, he felt like eating a fruit from the exotic ones that the old man Nicolas had in his garden and without delay, he ran and called him: "Grandfather... Grandfather!". The old man came to the window and gave Arrikos the green light, since he felt what was the reason of the child's coming. "Don't forget to close the door!" The old man Nicolas said. "Pick as many as you like, but don't leave, I need you for something!" Arrikos filled his arms, closed the door carefully and ascended the stairs. The old man Nicolas was waiting for him at the front door. "Come, come in, I want you to read a prescription out loud for me, which my eldest daughter Urania sent from Athens for her mother!" The old man opened a drawer and took out a medicine, he took the prescription and gave it to Arrikos. But before the boy had unfolded the paper, said to the old man: "Is it *Alzheimer – Peruisini's disease*, that grandmother Theodora is suffering from?" The old man didn't understand what the young lad had asked him and said to him:

"If the old woman is losing her mind is what you're asking me?"

"No, no. I didn't say that, but listen. This medicine is for the loss of memory in the pre-old age, for the weakening of mental functions".

"What did you say? Pre-old age?"

"Yes, pre-old age. It's a disease that appears at our forty-five till our sixty-five years of age".

“My wife is sixty-five years old”, said the old man Nicolas. Imagine her reaching her eighties! Then good morning paradise!”

“Don’t worry”, said Arrikos. “You never know what can happen. Science today, is making progress. Don’t get disappointed. Even with this medicine, there may be good results!”

“I don’t think so...”said the old man, “...this was the medicine that her sister used to take and in the end she didn’t know where she was and she was found lost in the streets. But I want you to read to me exactly what it says here” and the old man showed him the note with the side affects.

“A feeling of boredom and skin rash”.

“What does this mean, can you explain it to me?”

“It means that the person who takes the medicine, can feel tired, or he can even suffer an inflammation of her skin, or something like an itching. But this all, doesn’t mean that she will have all these side affects for sure”.

Arrikos thanked the old man for the fruits, he shook hands with him and went straight to his house. He gave many of the fruits to his grandfather, who always liked them, he received a blessing from the old man and they started savouring the exotic fruits, after having leaved one fruit for each of the rest of the members of the family.

Arrikos, while enjoying the fruits’ sweetness, had sent his mind somewhere else. His mind was stuck to the organs of the calf that were “waiting for him” in the fridge. He went and took the liver in his hands and as he saw his mother entering the house, he told her:

“Today, my dear mother, I will keep myself busy with the liver, that according to the encyclopaedia,

because of the multiple functions of it, it is considered the central 'laboratory' of the body".

Arrikos examined both its lobes externally. With a small but sharp knife, he started cutting it up into smaller pieces. Whatever part of it he had learnt from the encyclopaedia, he spotted it. But most of all, he knew its functions perfectly well. It was getting on for noon when he handed it over to his mother in pieces, keeping a full picture of it for himself and keeping it very firmly in his mind.

After lunch, it was the spleen and the pancreas's turn. Like a normal surgeon, he started the research gracefully and carefully. He spotted even the slightest detail, he searched and thought. His brother came in and approached him. Arrikos turned his head and looked at him with an attractive expression and said:

"Can you see this organ here?", showing him the pancreas.

"Yes", Sotiros answered, "I can see it. I also know about its function. It produces the pancreas liquid that contains enzymes, which are necessary for the digestion of food".

"And not only that", Arrikos said to him. "The pancreas has two secretions. The outer one, which secretes the liquid you just mentioned and the inner one, which secretes insulin that plays an important role for the burning of sugar in the organism. If it didn't do this, the hydrocarbons would remain unburnt and they would cause diabetes".

"And what are these hydrocarbons?" his mother who was beside them getting ready to make a cake, asked him.

"It's a group of organic substances that form the basic element of all living organisms. They are products that contain oxygen, hydrogen and carbon. Broadly speaking, they are called sugars and fats.

They are molecules, rich in energy and if they get split, we have water and carbon dioxide”.

“Now, you’ve enlightened me”, his mother told him. “Now, ask God, what a molecule is and what a fission is. But tell me something else, please, though I’m not going to understand. You said “diabetes”. Sugar and diabetes are different things? Not the same?”

“It’s the same thing, mother”, the young in age, but wise in mind boy replied. “We call it diabetes, because in this disease, we have extreme passing of sugar in the blood and in the urine”.

“Ok, I understood”, his mother told him feeling glad. She was happy, not because she had comprehended it, but because her little son, that delicate young boy who didn’t even approach his books some years before, now does things that not even in her dream had she ever managed to imagine.

At that moment, the dog’s barking was heard. Sotiros went out to see who it was. A neighbor of theirs, Mrs. Christina, with a plate in her hands, was just opening the gate. “I brought you some figs from my little fig-tree that Fragiskos had given to us to plant. My husband wants Fragiskos to taste them, since he is a lucky first and every year his luck will help the fig tree make a lot of fruits. But I didn’t come here only for that. I have a headache since morning and it hasn’t passed off yet. I don’t have any more aspirins left. Do you have any to give me?”

“Come inside, we’ve got everything you may need, Mrs. Christina!” Sotiros said.

The woman came in and sat down, leaving the plate with the figs at the end of the table that was full of the unbaked sweets that Arrikos’ mother was making.

“I’ve taken a packet of aspirins since morning and this awful headache hasn’t passed off yet. It must be an epidemic”.

Arrikos approached her and asked:

“Have you ever examined your blood pressure, Mrs. Christina?”

“Which blood pressure, Arrikos? What blood pressure can be found, since I’m a bag of bones? I may have a low blood pressure, my having a high blood pressure is out of the question. I think I see flies in front of me all the time”.

With one movement, Arrikos opened her eyes with the tips of his fingers. Very quickly, he dashed into his grandfather’s room and took a pill in the one hand and the pressure gauge in the other. He returned and put the instrument round Mrs. Christina’s arm. He started the procedure and before removing the instrument from her arm, he gave her the pill and told her:

“Put it under your tongue!”

And that’s what happened.

Arrikos put the instrument on a chair, he looked at the clock hanging on the wall and waited. Everyone had realized that the woman had a high blood pressure. But noone knew how high it was. Fifteen minutes passed and Arrikos put the instrument round his neighbor’s arm again. A sense of satisfaction was pictured on his face and a sigh of relief bore out their thought. In half an hour or more, the woman’s blood pressure had exceeded the dangerous level, but Mrs. Christina had proved to be a hypertensive person, like many other people in her neighborhood.

The pressure gauge of Arrikos’ grandfather, had one more patient to examine, since every day that elapsed, it was used to measure the blood pressure of

many neighbors and controlled the disease that spread rapidly in the latest years.

It was late at night when Arrikos with his brother's Sotiros help, had the brain of the calf in a big enamel receptacle.

"Come, so I will show you whatever we are able to spot, as far as the brain is concerned, because if I could discern all its parts and functions which I know only theoretically, I would be a perfect scientist now!"

"You will be one!" Sotiros added with emphasis, not being satisfied enough that his brother had not been one yet. He was happy though, for Arrikos' seriousness, which showed that he had the "know myself" quality.

Arrikos started! "*Outer skin, mesolobe, hippocamp, almond-shape core, paraegephalitis, the brain's stem, hypophysis, spinal cord*", e.t.c.

"Yes, Arrikos", Sotiros interrupted him, "but is the calf brain the same as the human brain? If not, whatever you're showing to me, doesn't correspond with reality..."

"No! No!" the young anatomist answered with a style of certainty. "Well, roughly speaking, both brains are the same. Only some central parts differ, which are more developed or less, each having their purpose. But there's no need to go on further, because we need four days to finish. Only one thing will I tell you. In order for this brain to reach a structural and functional point, it was subjected to various gradual modifications and developments, which were essential to the changing conditions that existed in all these centuries.

Sotiros, whose greatest dream was to see his beloved brother Arrikos an eminent scientist one day, was always asking him and Arrikos was answering, making Sotiros feel very proud. But at a moment, the clock of the church, sending its sound to Arrikos' ears

three times, let him know that he had to rest – not only he, but his brother too -, because Virgin Mary’s Day had just started to break and everyone was going to church to bow before her divine presence. This wonderful person called Sotiros, looking at his brother and “dressing” him – with his imagination-with the doctor’s white coat, putting the stethoscope to his ears, caressed and kissed his brother on his forehead and told him:

“If it’s needed, I will even be a sailor. I’ll travel alone, days and nights, in the wild waves of the dangerous man-sinking sea, or I’ll do whatever else there is to be done in order to give you the chance to study. Only then will I have done something special in my life, only then will I consider myself worthy and capable of existing!”

The conscientious little boy, with the blonde hair and the lovely eyes, looked at his brother with deep love, but before he was able to say a word, a word that suited that exact moment, he – Arrikos – snuggled into his brother’s arms, crying. Sotiros’ eyes were filled with tears, too. He embraced him tightly. At that moment, what reigned were physical emotions, which are very rare to meet in our days, feelings that many people would envy.

They went to sleep.

Arrikos woke up first of all the others, when the rays of dawn’s light “caressed” his angel-like face. The light reached his face through the half-open shutter of his window, which Arrikos had left intentionally before going to bed. He got ready and went to the market. The grocer was just coming down the stairs of his two-story house to go and open his shop, since a day like that, lots of people would visit him for a wax candle that was a custom of the celebration.

“Good morning, Mr. Thomas”, said Arrikos to the grocer.

“Good morning, my dear”, the grocer replied, bending down to catch the key of the shop, which jingling on the steps, had reached the door of the shop after having fallen from his hands.

“I would like a wax candle, Mr. Thomas, around one hundred and eighty centimeters!” Arrikos said to the good-hearted, fresh-saved merchant.

Being happy and with a graceful gait, Arrikos returned home holding the wax candle. All the family was getting ready to go to church. Arrikos was waiting for them in the yard, caressing the beautiful little flowers that were quite a lot, inhaling their fantastic aroma and putting his palms in front of his face, to enjoy their fragrance.

The sun was shining on Arrikos’ side and in combination with the beautiful flowers of the yard, the boy looked like a small Cyprus-tree standing among them and the sun was “admiring” the child, “smiling” at him with its broad smile of that special day. In a while, everyone gathered and started off for church. A thirteen-year-old boy in front of everyone, with a wax candle in his hands, a blue suit and a graceful carriage, had everyone’s eyes on him, as they were following him. Everyone made a thought about this rare person, everyone had something in their mind about the handsome likeable boy, the boast of their house.

The one imagined him as an Olympic Champion, the other as a political leader, or an inventor, or a judge and this went on.

Sotiros’ constant thought was to see his brother a doctor, but he went too far this time. During the walk from the house to the church, he had a picture of his brother as an eminent scientist, who had gone to receive his prize and the rest were escorting him for the great honour he was going to get. Well, what a persistence of Sotiros to see his family glorified! What

an ambition to see his younger brother on the highest step of Glory! And what a great desire of Sotiros to manage to make his country famous all over the World! According to Sotiros, Arrikos could accomplish all that. Arrikos was a great hope, as far as Sotiros was concerned. He was the future's brightest star, in the Greek blue sky! Arrikos was the glory and honour of his country! That's the way Sotiros had made Arrikos' figure deep in his soul.

They reached the church. The child that respects his parents and the older ones let everyone enter the temple first and then followed.

And that's how it happened:

With an angel-like face that revealed his intrinsic value, he lit his wax candle, did his Cross and prayed. Sotiros was watching him from the place he was standing. He was looking at him and was trying to become his thought-reader. As if by instinct, the young boy Arrikos turned his head and with his shiny eyes looked at his brother. Sotiros was sure that the big wax candle that his generous little brother had lit was for no other else but him, because he was accountable for that act of Arrikos. Yes, he had understood right. Young Arrikos prayed for his brother's good. He prayed, proving that Sotiros hadn't made a mistake when he had said from the bottom of his heart:

"I will also be a sailor, I will travel in the wild waves, so as to give you the chance to study. I'll pay for it!"

Arrikos had placed that promise of his brother deep in his memory. He "put" it there and it remained in his mind forever, unchangeable and glowing.

The family had already attended the Divine Service and the people filtered out into the yard. A set phrase was on their lips: "Many happy returns of the day". Quite a long time had passed and the square of

the church was now empty, waiting for the night to come, where the village fete would take place. Every year on that day, that's where everyone took to dancing and celebrated honouring Virgin Mary. It was noon and at Arrikos' house the table was spread for the family to eat. A happy and decent family were enjoying the food's tastiness, food that was prepared with such care by the women. The pure and bright-red wine, combined with the genuine soul of Sotiros, made him start singing. Beside him everyone was singing second voice and at a moment, Arrikos started singing a song in high spirits, a song which his grandfather used to sing and who left the kitchen to go to his room. He went back with a gold medal in his hands and put it round the neck of his little grandson, Arrikos. He had won that medal in his childhood, in marathon competitions that had taken place then and their starting post was at Gythio and the finishing line at Tripoli.

Arrikos' grandfather, who was a young boy that time, had come first, leaving the second runner almost five kilometers behind. He wished Arrikos to be an Olympic Champion one day and Arrikos kissed his grandfather's hand in gratitude and respect. Lunch was over, all the beautiful songs too... and everyone went to rest because at that night, a great fete was awaiting them at the town square and they would all have to be present and refreshed.

Arrikos' sisters cleared the table and then went to sleep too. Their stone house offered them its coolness and coziness and everyone enjoyed a light, sweet siesta.

It was late in the afternoon when Mrs. Dina, the neighbor, was "sending" her sweet voice to their ears, the time when Arrikos' mother was getting ready to call them for the coffee she had just prepared for them. Soon, everyone was in the kitchen enjoying the

coffee's flavour and smell. Mrs. Dina, holding a plastic bag full of grapes, visited them and asked for a bottle of wine to give to her father who was living in the next village with his wife. One of Arrikos' sisters, took a big bottle, filled it up with wine and gave it to their neighbor, who placed it on the floor and opened her purse to take out the money to pay for the merchandise.

"It is for free. Arrikos' father said. "Since the grapes that you brought to us, is wine as well!"

"Yes, but the only difference is that they have the shape of a capsule, they are not liquid", Mrs. Dina replied and everyone laughed.

She thanked them and left. The time passed and everyone started getting ready for the square. The instruments had already started to get tuned up by the musicians and tried out musically, sending their "experimental" sound to the whole village and the surroundings. When the organ players were assured that the instruments' sound was right and accurate, they started playing and the sweet song of the clarinet echoed to the nearest mountain peaks, offering an unprecedented sentiment.

People started to gather round and tables started to fill. The smell of the well-baked turkey was a delight for the nostrils. Lots of people had gathered and those who were in charge were made to send a truck to the nearby village, for tables and seats, which after their own local fete, were put in their warehouse. The musical instruments were playing unceasingly and the party was in full swing. Beautiful girls and handsome boys, wearing their brand-new dresses and suits were leading the dance. The old people were given a new lease of life that day and since they couldn't dance, due to their old age, their soul "danced" for them. They felt proud of the young

people and they wished them to reach their old age one day.

At that glorious night, in the frenzy of fun, the birds of the forests near the village stopped their joyful singing. The nightingales were incapable of opening their beak. All the living beings of the nearby forests and mountains had their attention drawn to the illuminated "Madonna" of the village and everybody enjoyed that veritable enchantment. All the living creatures were nailed on the attractive sound of the clarinet, the sweet and silvery voice of Mr. Christos Bistolas the singer and they didn't even have the courage to move, not even for a moment from their spot. They were enchanted by the violin, they were enthralled by the lute. Arrikos' family was sitting round the table, which was next to that with the musical instruments. It was almost time for their turn to go and dance. Together with them, some other friends and Arrikos' teacher. The teacher scanned the boy's face and realized the uneasiness of his former student, but he didn't want to say anything. Arrikos was muttering away to himself continuously. Sotiros realized Arrikos' concern too and before having time to ask him something, the family's turn to dance came. Arrikos, instead of following the company, approached the musicians and said something to the singer, who had just replaced the one and only Mr. Christos Bistolas - who needed to relax a little after having held his audience spell-bound by his perfect voice -. The singer gave a nod to the boy and the boy entered the family's circle of dance.

Arrikos' mother, father, sisters and all the women of the company danced and then came Sotiros' turn. Arrikos, with a firm and slender step, went to the musicians and the singer who was waiting for him with the microphone in his hand, gave it to Arrikos and sat on a near chair holding the

guitar. All the people were staring at the boy, nailed mostly on his gentle figure, but Sotiros looked at him without being able to believe that it was his younger brother Arrikos.

“My dear friends...”, a steady voice was heard on the loudspeakers, “...it is a great honour for me to be here in front of you, in order to sing a song to you, which is my grandfather’s favorite one and which I dedicate to him and to all of you, my dear friends and visitors that you are gathered here tonight to honour the great celebration of Virgin Mary with your presence”.

Silence reigned everywhere.

“I wish you to have fun”, said Arrikos.

When the people realized that the lissome and courageous fair-haired boy had finished, the applause and cheering they granted to him was unbelievable!

“I thank you so much!” he said to them and bowed.

The clarinet and the other instruments started to play “*Androuso’s mother is joyful, Diako’s mother is proud!*” Arrikos started singing and Sotiros led the dance. When Sotiros realized that his brother wasn’t kidding and that his heart was set to it, fascinated by his brother’s perfect voice, held his audience spell-bound with his evolutions and when he somersaulted backwards, he was given a standing ovation by the crowd.

When Arrikos had finished singing, his teacher was the first who came to congratulate and kiss him. The crowd applauded and Arrikos’ grandfather was crying for joy. The teacher darted a glimpse at Arrikos, received his approval and started dancing in front of the circle, leading the dance while Arrikos proved again that he was capable of singing until dawn. With a very slender way, the teacher was dancing the song “*Papalambrena*”, which Arrikos was

singing gracefully, proud of his teacher who was responsible for his learning the rudiments of knowledge.

His two schoolmates, Menios and Nikitas, were both beside him, till the end of the fete. They both proved once more, what intimate and genuine friends they were and won a special part in Arrikos' heart.

That night, little Arrikos was the person whose apparition remained etched in the people's mind for many days.

When they all returned home that night, Sotiros who was feeling fascinated by his brother, asked Arrikos what he would like for a present, since he had made him very happy and proud. The bright little boy, looking at his brother in the eyes and sending his memory to what Sotiros had said in the past, answered:

"You have laid a road with the most expensive carpets for my future, carpets laid with words you have said and thought about me. What else can I ask you for? You have made me great with your acts. You have granted me the most valuable thing that exists, your love and your interest. What else can you give me? Be sure, my dear brother, that I'll do my best to be equal to the occasion, I'll fight so you'll feel proud of me, I'll honour our family, our village, our country. I have visions of something that I don't really want to reveal at this moment, but if you insist, I'll tell you. It's of great importance, unconceivable, beyond the scope of the most developed imagination. It's something that if I manage to materialize, I'll make our country the centre of the world, before which all the people of the universe will bow!"

Sotiros was frozen with excitement, by what he had just heard from his ingenious little brother, but what else could he do since Arrikos' ambition was satisfied by that?

“Do you want me to reveal my plans to you?” Arrikos asked.

Sober-minded and discrete as Sotiros was, answered:

“I would prefer you to keep me in suspense, so I can feel the time be much more glorious, until you reach the fulfillment of your dreams. Go on and never forget, not even for a moment, whatever I have told you till now. My seal and my signature, invisible but indelible, are at the bottom of the contract that I have signed with my conscience for you”.

“For the time being, the only thing I can do...”, said Arrikos, “...is to pray to God for you to be fine, because without you help, I would never accomplish anything and I would make dreams for all these things in vain”.

It was late and they all went to bed.

The next day, they would go to the city together, to buy materials for the building, whose electrical installation was to be done by Sotiros, since he was an electrician. The sun had reached the middle of its path, which would drive it to the centre of the blue sky, when both of the two brothers got ready for the capital. In a while, they could see the first houses of the city and a large building that was the High School that Arrikos would go up its stairs in a few days for the first time.

“I have many good memories of this place”, Sotiros told him as they were walking on the road that was exactly at the front of the building. “I hope you feel the same one day, when, after some years, you have finished school and you happen to pass out of it”.

“I will try, I promise!” little Arrikos answered and visited all the classes of the school with his thought. But his fantastic and rare mind reached the moment when he would be holding an honour in his

hands, saying goodbye to his teachers, ready to enter a higher school, the University.

So far did the child's imagination go, even before it was time for him to pass the High School entrance that was in front of him.

They reached the shop where they would buy the building materials. Sotiros gave the shop assistant a piece of paper with the order listed and told him to prepare everything, so that they could pass by later and receive the goods.

"I don't have time for today!" the assistant said to Sotiros. "Come tomorrow, I'll have everything ready then, today my boss is absent and I am alone here".

They agreed, cause they couldn't do anything else and left.

"Let me take you for a walk to the Square of Areos!" Sotiros told Arrikos. "Let's go for an ice-cream and we'll leave for the village later. I have a friend who's the waiter there, let's meet him, he's an original and straight-forward person".

They walked along and were found in the central square of the city, beneath the church of Saint Vasilis. There was a girl on the square who stopped the pedestrians and asked questions, but no one knew what to answer. Further away, a man with a camera was shooting the scene. Sotiros and Arrikos went on the square. They hadn't even reached the fountain, when the girl approached them and said: "Can I ask you something? Please tell me, if you know" and she was looking at the young boy Arrikos, whose curly hair and lovely eyes roused her liking.

"If we know? Of course we do!" said Sotiros.

Arrikos replied: "With great pleasure!"

The girl couldn't resist the strong attractiveness of the blonde little boy and showed her admiration by kindly caressing his head.

“Do you know anything about the Lykeo Mountain?...” the girl asked them, “... where the games are to be held tomorrow?”

It would be unconceivable, not to know anything about the mountain, which in ancient times, was thought to be the centre of the earth. It would be unconceivable for Arrikos not to know something about the mountain where Zeus was born. It would be unacceptable, since Arrikos was interested in making his country famous.

“The Lykeo Mountain...”, the two brothers said in one voice, but Sotiros left Arrikos continue, “...is found in the centre of Morias (Northern Peloponnese), it is one thousand, four hundred and twenty metres high and it’s considered to be the Holy Mountain of the Arcadians. In ancient times, it was a place of worship for the ancient Greeks. On its sacred top, the “Lykea” festivities were held, which were the national celebrations of the Arcadians. On this summit of the mountain, Zeus was born, at the place of Kritea on the eastern part of the mountain. That’s the reason why they also called it “Arcadian Olympus” and its peak, “the holy peak”. On this mountain they honoured Panas, the most representative god of Arcadia and Apollo, as well as Hermes and others. On the peak of the mountain lies an altar of Zeus (Zeus of Lykeo), from where the most places of Peloponnese are visible”.

Arrikos continued speaking and a great crowd had gathered around him and watched. The crowd was watching the little boy, who didn’t stop at all. The girl showed that she wanted to thank them and ask someone else something, but Arrikos, realizing her intention, said: “I want to tell you something more and I’m finished!”

The girl couldn’t refuse and smiling at him, let him continue.

“In front of the altar, on the eastern side..”, he continued “...there are two columns, on which, in ancient times, two golden eagles were placed. The peak of this mountain was considered to be the centre of the earth. One eagle was facing the east and the other was facing the west and people believed that if the eagles flew and made a circle around the mountain, they would meet at this exact point, something that reveals that the navel of the earth was there”.

The next night, the local channel of the television had a program on, which showed the handsome little orator for quite a while and whose eyes sparkled while speaking, “checking” the people on the square as well.

The brothers reached the Square of Areos and sat to have an ice cream. Sotiros found his friend and waved “hello” to him, who at that moment, with a tray in his hands, was bringing the order to a company who were sitting under the awning. When the waiter finished, he went straight to Sotiros, they had a chat for a while and another little waiter brought them the ice creams.

“This is to be my treat”, the waiter said, feeling so happy that Sotiros had visited him, since a long time had passed since he last saw him.

Some hours later they thanked him, said “goodbye” and left. They returned home, both feeling very happy.

Arrikos was looking forward for the time to pass, so the schools would open again. Till then, he was helping his brother with the illumination of the building that he had undertaken.

The lights were installed in the building and August was over.

Arrikos, having a sufficient tip in his pocket, was found in the city. He was in quest of trainers and

tracksuits. When he found what he was looking for in a little shop, with a satchel on his shoulders entered a bookshop. A dictionary and some other books on the counter of the shop were already his. Arrikos was looking for something else, too. At a moment, his eyes fell on a book, whose cover had a human brain on and was entitled "*The magic, hidden power of the Brain*". He took it quickly in his hands. "WALTER MONTGOMERY GERMAIN" was the author of the book. He darted a glimpse at it and his eye fell on a comment that was made by another famous writer: "*The most robust book that has been written in the past years, for those who desire to use the magic sources of their mind. It is a book that convinces and enchants you*". This was what was written by the commentator, making Arrikos anxious to read it, as soon as possible. He put it together with the other books and with his own civilized way he paid for it, waved goodbye and left. A quick look on his watch made him quicken his pace, since in a little while, the bus would be leaving for the village and his new books, but most of all the last one, "were inviting" him to their wonderful pages. He got into a cake shop and bought some sweets for his family, as he always did when his finances allowed him to do so. He came out of the shop, feeling very happy and headed for the station.

A few meters before the entrance of the station, a gigantic block of flats caught his fancy. But approaching a little closer, he saw a man with a pole where lottery tickets were hanging and with his one leg amputated, the man was puffing his lucky tickets.

Mixed feelings prevailed in Arrikos' heart. The happiness that he felt a little before was replaced by sadness. He put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a bank note. In a very courteous way, as always, he gave the money to the man and bought a lottery-

ticket, taking with him that unpleasant scene that was in front of him. It was an antithesis that for quite a long time he revolved over in his mind. A palace that cost a million, standing like a mountain and underneath an invalid man like a little ant seeking food.

He boarded the bus with other fellow-villagers and reached the village. At a quick pace and with the satchel on his shoulders, the books in the one hand and the sweets in the other and with the unpleasant scene of the man with the lottery-tickets engraved on his mind, he stepped into the yard of his house.

His sister Aggelikoula with a general smile on her face, welcomed him, since she was in the yard of their house at that moment. Arrikos gave her the box with the sweets, kissed her and went straight to his room. He put the pair of tracksuits and trainers on, went out and stood on the landing. At that moment, the gate opened and came his father.

“Enjoy them!” his father, Mr. Fragiskos, told him. “I wish to see a gold medal hanging from your chest one day!”

“Thank you so much, my dear father”, Arrikos replied. “Come, I want to show you what else I bought today”.

They both entered the room and the young athlete showed his father his new books.

“Good for you, my dear child!” the father said, holding the goods in his hands, indicating them to his son. “They are an ‘invisible estate’ for you”, he told him. “Good for you, Arrikos! All the riches of the world are placed in here. Here are the real estates, the money deposits, everything is in here. If a person knows how to read and write...”, his father added, “...he can enjoy all the riches of the world. What if you possess buildings and money, you may be incapable of offering something to the people around

you. You have to be a person of integrity and truthfulness in your life. But, in order to be a virtuous and decent person, you need to be gifted with fundamental principles and wide knowledge and all these privileges can be granted to you only by moral systems of education. Because, while others will be building mansions that they may not live happily in them, other people will be living in hutment. But what is advisable is for all the people to have the necessary means for their dignified subsistence”.

Arrikos' thought went back to the handicapped salesman, who was standing in front of the block of flats. But before he could say a word, his father told him:

“If you go to the city again, take a look at that huge block of flats that is near the bus-station entrance. The whole huge building belongs to one person and just to him. He came into the money by an American uncle of his. The man who used to have the building was a lawyer”.

“Why, isn' t he alive?” Arrikos asked him.

“No, he has passed away”, his father said. “But let me tell you all about his story. The lawyer had a brother who was illiterate. The American uncle left the inheritance to both of the brothers, but the lawyer wasn't a good person and was unfair to his illiterate brother, giving him nothing. But if the kind ignorant man was educated, how could his devious brother be unjust to him? It would be out of the question”.

“Is the other brother alive?” the boy asked his father.

“He is a lottery-ticket salesman in the city, I have seen him many times in the streets”, his father told him. “But the most important is that a few years ago, the poor old fellow got sick, and they had to amputate his leg and now he's a cripple”.

“Do you think it’s him, the man I saw today in front of the huge building you are telling me about? There, at the entrance of the building was a cripple, lottery-ticket salesman, a man with one leg only. Do you think it’s him?”

Yes, it was him!

He’s the brother of the owner of the block of flats. He sat at the entrance of the building, selling lottery-tickets. But he was alive! He also had four remarkable children. As for the salesman – their lame father -, who was loafing about the streets, they had no responsibility towards him. Many times had the children begged him to stop working, but he was still there, at his post.

“But we haven’t finished yet, Arrikos...”, his father continued, “...we also have something else to say. We also have to talk about the lawyer’s family, who possessed the apartment. This man had two children, a boy and a girl. When the girl finished High School, her father sent her abroad to pursue her studies. He wanted her to be an architect. The first year she did quite well with her studies. But the second year, she got into drugs and the third year she was found dead in the park, near her house. The girl’s brother, without having the power to get over the shock of the loss of his dear sister, started drinking and became an alcoholic and later on a drug addict and in the end he committed suicide. The poor boy’s body was found half-eaten by the stray dogs in the forest of Sheih-Shou, in Thessalonica. They also found a letter written by him, saying: *“Our parents didn’t offer us what they ought to have done. Money doesn’t solve people’s problems. In every difficulty of our life, our parents paid and solved our problems, just temporarily. They never got deep in our heart and soul, they never taught us what they should teach us”*. Not a long time had passed when a man was found hung

on the balcony of the hotel, where he was living, enjoying his holidays at Rhodes with his wife. It was the lawyer, the owner of the block of flats, the cripple salesman's brother. A little later, the lawyer's wife invited the cripple brother of her husband to her house and offered to give him three apartments, which by law, belonged to him. The cripple salesman didn't accept the offer and said: "Don't try to disturb the equanimity of my family, don't try to change my children's way of life. We all live happily, don't take into account the fact that I'm a lottery-ticket salesman and a cripple man. I have got used to it all these years. Don't get me into troubles, because peace and quiet prevail in my house and this is enough for me!"

II

With the model of Tse Ge Vara

The time elapsed and Arrikos, together with Menios and Nikitas, were found in the High School for their first day. They had rented a small flat and they were going to live together. The Holy Water rites had already taken place at school and after a short while, the three of them, loaded with books just reached home. Exactly opposite them, an athletic-looking man with a beard and a brush in his hands was painting the balusters of his balcony. The children were going out onto their own balcony at that moment, holding a book in their hands. They sat on their chairs and started reading it. At a moment, they heard the man with the beard, saying: "Oh, what on earth happened here!" And he said so, because his brush had slipped from his hands and was then lying on the asphalt.

"Stay there!" Arrikos told him and ran downstairs to pick the brush up and bring it back to the artist.

In one minute, the brush was back in the owner's hands, since Arrikos had brought it to the front door of the man's two-story house.

"Come, so I can give you a treat, I have wonderful green apples from my village Partheni. Come in, please!" the man told the young boy.

He gave Arrikos three apples and told him:

“Give one to each of your friends, but tell me, are you new in the neighborhood?”

“Yes”, Arrikos answered. “We are students in High School and we live together”.

“In which school?” the man asked, revealing – by the way of asking and looking – that he had a certain connection with the surrounded High Schools.

“We’re all in the first one”, Arrikos said.

The man smiled at him and with a civilized manner said to Arrikos:

“I am a teacher of Physical Performance at your High School. I am glad we will be all together. How do you get along with Gymnastics?” he asked Arrikos, who was looking at the teacher with his shiny eyes.

“My friends and I am athletes and fellow combatants in the pole-jump event”, the boy replied and with his super developed imagination was found standing high up on a rostrum with his friends, having the Gym instructor as his coach.

What a fantastic brain, what a dreamy spirit!

“Come so I can show you something...” the Gym master told him, “...but call your friends too”.

In two minutes’ time, the four of them were in the teacher’s living room. The teacher gave them some orange-juice to drink and having a photo-album in their hands, they were looking at the photos, with great interest. What you could realize by their expression was their admiration and fascination towards the Gym instructor.

This man, used to be an athlete of the pole-jump event. His name was Mr. Kostas Brousalis. Many photos, color and black and white, depicted him ready to pass the bar, or rejoicing over his victory. And there were many other countless scenes of other kinds of competitions. Even though it was very early to judge, friendly feelings started to grow and by what was proved later on, no one had failed in

taking the gauge of one another. The children waved goodbye to him and left the teacher paint the balusters of his balcony.

A few days later, when the schools had started operating normally, the Gym master had all of them in front of him. It was the first time for them to work out with that instructor. "He is a great Gym master!" the three of them thought. But it wasn't till long, when the experienced teacher with the beard, realized the boys' potentials – since the three of them had stood out in skill – but his experience was "telling" him that each of them could be good at different kinds of sports. The instructor assumed that Arrikos would excel in the pole-jump event, Nikitas in the javelin throwing and as for Menios, despite his persistent refusal, the teacher persuaded him to follow the high-jump event. With the other teachers too, the boys got on perfectly well. But Arrikos was the child prodigy of the class.

That time, Greece, after a long period of exertion, undertook the Olympic games at last. By order of those in charge, the best athletes of all the schools were chosen and from those athletes, the ones with the best performance would take part in the Olympiad, which would be held in seven years' time in Greece. As it was natural, the three of them were chosen as three of the best ones, without delay. The Gym instructor of the school Mr. Kostas Brousalis, undertook the coaching of Arrikos personally, Mr. Thomas Mandros trained Menios and Nikitas was under the serious training of Mr. Thanasis Georgakopoulos, one of the best Gym masters in the area.

Time was passing by and the training was held with great zest and diligence. A healthy diet and life without overuses were preconditions of good training. The boys, without having a moustache till then, were

then starting to reveal their age of puberty. Their height was starting to grow at a rapid pace and they were starting to grow well-toned muscles.

It was February and there was a competition, taking place for the selection of athletes in Kalamata (Southern Peloponnese). There, the most excellent would be chosen, there the athletes from all over Peloponnese would display their abilities. In Athens, there was an extra competing centre for the Athenians, in Crete a centre for the Cretans, as for Macedonia and Thrace, their athletes' selection would take place in Thessalonica.

It was Sunday morning and the sun in that summer day wouldn't stop shining. They all set off and reached the capital of Messinia. Together with them were many athletes from Arcadia. It was a glorious day down there! Among the Gym instructors and the three athletes that couldn't separate even for one moment, was a teacher Mr. Antonios Panagiotopoulos. A man that was not mistaken in the profession he had chosen, a true psychologist, continually with that rare way of his, "doped" the boys with his words. Next to them, it was Sotiros, who did as much as he could, in order to boost the children's morale. He believed in the capabilities of the three young boys and he wanted to see them standing on the great rostrum, when the time for the Olympic games would come.

Today, these games come first.

Only when by law, they forbid the spiritual doping that the teacher had subjected them to, would the three Arcadian friends and co-athletes fail. Only then would they not be able to go to the semi-finals, only then would they not manage to enter the new stadium of Athens. If somebody measured their strength with a special gauge, the hands of the gauge

would show red and what accounted for that, was the moral boost of the teacher.

Everything was ready and the events were starting. Many sports were taking place and the Greek children, descendants of the ancient Olympian champions, made a tremendous effort and the most excellent ones were chosen. The events of the three fellow athletes were going to start in a while, since at that moment, the sixty-meter dash of women was taking place and they were all waiting until it finished. Like a thunderbolt, a young girl from Vourvoura forged ahead and like a bullet another girl coming from Megalopolis followed behind. Both of them passed the semi-finals and they accepted wishes and congratulations from the rest of the girls, who had learnt not only to win, but also how to behave even when they were beaten. The athletes for the high-jump event were ready and among them was Menios, waiting unabashed. The bar was at its place and the first athlete was getting ready. All the athletes were seven. Only two of them were going to be chosen. The first lad gained momentum and passed the bar. The same was done by the other athletes, as well as Menios too, who was second but last in the row to compete. The bar was put higher now and three of the seven athletes didn't manage to pass it. Four athletes were left and they were getting ready with the bar even higher that time. No one touched it, but the most experienced trainers had already realized who would have to leave next.

And that's how it happened.

One of the athletes, although making a generous effort, didn't manage to pass the bar and just dropped it. Three were left and only one of them would be out of the game, according to the regulations. Athletes with great strength – all three of them – were competing for the semi-finals. The bar

was now very high, due to the continuous perfect performance of the athletes and in a few while we were going to break the Panhellenic sports record, if one of the athletes managed to pass the bar. It was a very rare phenomenon for a sports record to be broken by thirteen-year-old boys. Well, the first one gained momentum and the bar stayed still after the athlete's jump above it. But the crowd didn't remain unruffled, since a new Panhellenic record was going to be set for sure. The applauding subsided and Menios cast a look at the bar, as if he wanted to say something to it, but a voice reached his ears, saying something that was nailed deep on his soul.

“Bring the rostrum of the Olympic Stadium to your mind!”

That was the phrase, coming from Sotiros' mouth, that made Menios change his mind. Yes, the boy changed his mind and didn't want to jump. He didn't want to pass the bar at that exact level. He felt much stronger now, he felt like a bird. This is what we call a “psychological boost”, this is what we call “feel in fine fettle”. They put the bar even higher and he was ready to jump. If he managed to pass above it, he would break the Panhellenic sports record for the second time within a few minutes of an hour. He gained momentum and instead of a small bird he was feeling like till then, he became an eagle. A royal eagle, - having been used to rent the air all these years - and having nothing to stop him, he left the bar untouched at its place. But the crowd didn't stay motionless, neither did the Panhellenic sports record stay unbroken. He broke it and together with his previous co-athlete, reached the semi-finals, since the last athlete wasn't selected, having not passed the bar. Neither the last athlete managed to break the record that Menios had beaten.

That event ended in this fantastic way and the javelin throwing was ready to take place with five co-athletes, who were competing against each other. After hours of duel, Nikitas and another athlete from Saint John of Sparta, named Dimitris Katsihtis, were selected.

Five children with well-shaped bodies, were ready to compete in the pole-jump event and Arrikos was one of them. A voice was heard, coming from the loudspeakers, that called the people to listen to significant events from the area of Sports and which had taken place that day, during the competition for the best athletes who would partake in the Olympic Games in Greece.

“Today, four Panhellenic sports records have been broken!” a voice was heard on the loudspeakers.

The crowd stayed silent, so that they could hear which of the sports had to do with that, since just in front of them some minutes before, the men high jump event record had been broken.

“The simple-jump, the triple-jump, the sixty meters dash, – all women’s records – and men’s high-jump event records were broken by young people, who were carving their way for the Olympic rostrum of the new stadium!” that was announced on the loudspeakers.

But before the applause could subside, the same voice kept on saying:

“I was just informed, dear friends, that another record has just been set in Thessalonica, on the pole-jump event. The last record is just history, since a student of High School has just managed to beat it!”

The crowds were clapping their hands again and then the pole-jump event in Kalamata started. Thousands of thoughts were crossing the children’s mind who were ready to compete. Arrikos, in an Olympic mood, awaited.

The competition set in and after a while, two of the athletes had to leave, so three of them were left to compete, one of whom would also have to depart in a while. Arrikos was one of the two left, since he had managed to pass the bar in all his tries. Like crazy horses, the three of them were fighting for the semi-finals. The people who had gathered in the stadium that day, would need quite a long time to forget about that event. But what they were watching at that certain moment, would make them wonder if it was a dream or reality. In that frenzy of the competition, the athletes were ready to set a new Panhellenic sports record. The bar was an inch higher now and the first lad, with a style that displayed that inside him a wild beast had grown, gained momentum and “took off”. People stopped breathing for a while, until the time when the boy from Peloponnese sent a message to their ancient ancestors.

“I will meet you again in the Olympic Games in Athens, there will I see you again”, that’s what he said when the bar didn’t even move from its position.

The second athlete didn’t manage to pass above the bar and dropped it. Then, Arrikos’ turn came.

The pole was so hot, due to the way Arrikos was looking at it and felt a shiver in Arrikos’ hands. The bar, dizzy from height as it was, “begged” to be taken to the storeroom to “rest”.

Arrikos did his Cross, he turned his head towards his friends and relatives, he looked at Sotiros, turned his head two degrees right and glued the apples of his eyes on his teacher. He had gained energy from both of them and he really needed it at that moment. Like the wind, he left his position and in seconds, the frightened pole nailed the ground, took the shape of an annulus, but afraid that it may forget and betray the man who had honoured it and would honour it for ever, as if it were pushed by a

great dose of explosives, it was catapulted into the skies. It gave a stretch and received a pressure on its higher part. It was Arrikos's weight of his body. The bar was strong, it didn't bend at all.

That exact moment, the fair-haired lad from Arcadia, gave a shout. "Don't let me down", he was heard saying.

Many people's heart had beaten wildly, thanks to Arrikos. This was not the first time. He had tested the endurance of people's heart many times, this little ingenious boy. Then, he repeated it. The only difference was that, that time he was not in his village. All the people were frozen with enthusiasm at the sight of the spectacle they were watching. The pole and the athlete were balancing on the same straight line!!!

But what was he waiting for up there, the small little "wind"? So many attempts had he made that day and he didn't feel tired at all. Or he thought that someone had to give him the order to stop "torturing" the sports instruments? Who told him to stay up there in that acrobatic and dangerous way? Was it that he didn't know the rules of the sport? No, no, of course not. It was not that he was waiting for somebody to give him the order to fall, neither the fact that he didn't know the sport well.

The pole was finally free and tilted backwards at a slow motion. A body from the other side of the bar, had decided to come down. Like an unfolded tissue, which fell from a lofty building onto the grass, he was found at last on the mattress.

Arrikos quickly got up from the mattress, he ran and grasped the pole in his hands and kissed it.

All the final efforts were made and Arrikos with the other lad passed the semi-finals. The third boy left. The two athletes had shared the new Panhellenic sports record and now they were getting ready to

break it again. The bar was now an inch higher than before and the two co-athletes, like wild lions were again fighting. After a long time's endeavour and having beaten the record four times, Arrikos managed to be the winner, since in his final effort the other lad failed.

The boys returned to Tripoli triumphant and they continued their lessons and training.

Did you say anything, dear sirs who dope people giving them steroids? Did you say anything, you who seek these substances? You, official quarters, what do you say about this? If you haven't understood how the necessary substances are produced in human's body by themselves, listen now: Our thought is enough for this. By using the thought, the brain gives an order to the body and the body, in its turn, produces what the brain asks it for. Take special scientists out of Universities and send them to schools and to other places of our country to play football, basketball and whatever other sport with children. These scientists can reach the correct way of thinking and turn the tremendous power of their brain to action. Remember Arrikos' teacher, model yourselves upon Arrikos' brother, who without using forbidden substances, was able to produce matters of great importance.

The three friends, Arrikos, Nikitas and Menios, apart from the track events, they were also engaged in mountain climbing. Arrikos was a little older in this sport compared with his other roommates and having a sharp mind that was in continuous action, it was natural for him to stand out. He was the captain of the company and the other boys showed him their admiration. Arrikos' great passion for Medicine and the way he talked to the other boys, made the boys lean towards this science. Arrikos was excellent in

imparting his knowledge to them and using his outstanding method, fascinated them.

There had been a lot of times, when the boys got lost in untrodden places, most of which were found in Laconia, on the mighty mountain called "Taygetos". Together with other friends, they had risked life and limb on the steep, full of snow parts of the mountain, but these "wild" boys couldn't be "tamed". As March was over, the boys were found at an inaccessible place of the mountain. But for a cave that was there and in which they had to stay when snowfall broke out and they lost their bearings and couldn't reach the place where they had arranged to meet their other friends, they would never return home. Being inseparable friends as always, they were looking forward to returning home, as long as the weather got better. The other friends of theirs, managed to return to their houses. The weather, instead of getting better, deteriorated as it was getting dark. The snow fell continuously and the cave, as if it were a mother, a sister or a beloved one, protected them in its warm "breast".

Right opposite the cave's opening, a light reached the boys' eyes as the black darkness reflected in the white, snowy mountain. The snowstorm had abated and the scene was fantastic. An amazing combination of wild, white and black solitude, with a light just opposite them on the other short leg of the mountain, carried them away from the thought of danger and gave joy to their soul. If their beloved folks were not in dismay, they may want to stay there for quite a long time, forgetting about food and water, since they would never want to change such a rare scene for anything in the world.

"It might be a monastery", they thought. "Someone must be there".

Arrikos came out of the cave and with a loud voice, he started shouting rhythmically in the hope of being heard by the person that might be there. A loud voice came to Arrikos' ears later on, which asked him:

“Are you a mountain-climber?”

“Yes”, answered Arrikos. “And what about you?”

“I'm a monk, don't worry, I am in communication with the other monastery in which there's a telephone. I'll let your parents know, don't worry!”

It was not until long, when a light, different from the previous one, made its presence felt, at the far end of the endless cave, creating a spectacular view that would never leave the children's memory. A lantern in the hands of a man dressed in a frock, lightened the tunnel and sent rare pictures to the eyes of the three boys. Animals, birds, trees, oceans, a sun setting, as well as round-shaped moons, drawn on the walls of the tunnel, nailed the young boys' attention, who were watching full of enthusiasm and awe.

A dog, wagging its tail in a friendly way, showing its best intentions and being the escort of its master, approached them. The dog stood in front of them and in a way that is characteristic to its class, 'greeted' them.

Then a face, full of smile and love said them hi.

“Hello, my dear lads!”

He stretched out his hand and a divine fragrance reached their nostrils. It was a rare fragrance that revealed the presence of the sweet-smelling plants of the mountain. The kind monk asked them how they were found there and leaning his hand on Arrikos' shoulder, he ensured them that they should not be afraid of anything, not only because their parents would be informed about where

their children were, but they would also have a friend behind them.

“Come with me!” the upstanding monk said in a silky voice.

In front of them went the tracker dog and all of them followed. An unconceivable by a normal mind walk, carried them away. The monk explained whatever they found in front of them was and a rare frame of mind could the boys read on his face.

That unprecedented walk had almost ended. The monk paused for a moment. The three children did the same and the dog continued. But in front of them, there was a dead end. The children were puzzled. A quick pace of the dog and a high jump of it, made it disappear. The children and the monk approached and a big hole appeared in front of them. The man in the frock, explained to them that they had to pass through the hole and he was the one who made the start. Two small crevices in the rock, fit their toes and they managed to climb. One after the other, they passed through the hole and a church appeared in front of them. All around it, there were different kinds of Byzantine religious paintings on the carved stones, which nailed their attention.

Three small hanging oil-lamps that were smouldering, ‘welcomed’ them.

At a certain moment, they felt a large eye caressing them with its look. It was the Eye of the Almighty, drawn hundreds of years before with the best materials of Nature. It had remained unchangeable by the flow of time, like yesterday’s work of art from a significant Byzantine hagiographer. The picture of God that was illustrated, was looking at them sympathetically.

A rare emotion prevailed in their heart and the three of them did their Cross respectfully. They all walked a little farther and a diffuse light dazzled them

for a while, as the monk opened a door, with Saint John the Baptist drawn on it. They also entered a small room. It was the place where the believer monk used to live. A material on a stone base was burning, producing intense light and heat, making the beautiful cell shiny and warm.

At the left, there was a small window from which a few hours before, the blessing light of the cell had reached the eyes of the ice-bound mountain climbers. They were chatting when at a certain moment, Nikitas' eyes fell on some black-covered books in a built-in cupboard. He asked the monk about the books and the monk answered to the boy that the history of the mountain was there entered up, according to tradition. And that the mountain used to be the centre of a great civilization.

The monk rose from his seat and took one of the books in his hands and which he managed to hold with great difficulty, since it was very heavy. He gave it to Nikitas and when the lad opened it, he saw that it was made of a material that didn't go bad easily with the passing of time. He looked at its pages for a moment and then gave it to Arrikos who was watching from beside Nikitas, as if he were an illegal reader.

The boy, who had carved the finest paths of the future with his imagination, set his mind to working hard, when his look fell on geometrical figures, representations and drawings which reminded him of street-planning of cities. It was the map of the mountain that noone until then, knew what all those figures, representations and drawings stood for, according to the monk's words.

The small in age, but great in intellectual culture boy Arrikos, wanted to take a look at all of the books and in a way that it was impossible for the monk to refuse anything to him, Arrikos asked the

hermit's permission, full of anxiety and in a while, the second book was in his hands and his eyes scanned the pages, one after the other.

A thought in his mind, made him approach the small window, put his palms on the right and left of his temples and scanned the horizon. If he were asked what he would wish for that moment to happen, he would give one and only reply.

To be blocked by bad weather, as many days as possible, up on the mountain, in the treasure of the priceless books, the monastery ...

His mind was bleak. Nothing was in it at that certain moment, apart from the content of the heavy books and the inestimable value of them, that he had managed to estimate till that moment. But when would he manage to read the pages of all those books of the inestimable significance and the unknown materials that they were made from? A whole world was found inside them, a whole Science of that particular era, all in unknown letters, that didn't even resemble the forms of writing that Arrikos had met until then.

But the person who had placed them there, revealed his hyper-advanced intellect, which Arrikos immediately realized. The mental powers of the record-man Arrikos, were in a very high level. Arrikos wasn't a monk, he wasn't a common mind. The supernatural, spiritual glory of his age was sending him, that night, to the beginning of a new course of the humanity, for a new different future.

That spiritual person, who had stored matter in his books, was wise. And this could be proved by one and only reason. In order for that tremendous scientific perfection to be perpetuated, he had described everything in the writing they used at that time – showing his unprecedented spiritual powers – and had depicted everything by using accurate

symbols and perfect figures and representations. In order for someone to comprehend their meaning, he needed to be a person of high-levelled intelligence. Arrikos had this privilege, he had it deep in his brain.

Plenty of walnuts, original honey and figs, were in front of them, waiting for the boys to taste them. With their pure flavour and tastiness, they quickly reached the boys' empty stomach and there they would leave their goodness.

It was late and they had to sleep. In a nearby cell, three small beds were waiting for them and with their soft and comfortable mattresses, they "welcomed" the boys. The lads nestled down among the spotlessly clean covers that were scented with wild flowers and didn't even feel the cold on their bodies. They fell asleep, as if "Hypnos the God" was lurking beside them.

It was midnight. Arrikos was dreaming. His tireless mind was "strolling around", leaving his body alone on the mattress.

In the morning, trying not to frighten the body because of its absence, his mind returned to the relaxed body again.

He got up. It was snowing continuously outside.

A small little bell was sending them the sweetness of its sound, "wishing Good morning" rhythmically. The monk, having the kindness to show his cooking abilities to the boys and since it was time for lunch, started preparing the food. But before having lunch, three glasses of pure, fresh milk from a dark-black goat, were lying on the clean, all-white tablecloth, waiting for them.

The boys said "Good morning" to the man who was preparing their meal and sat round the table.

"The best sleep of my life was this, tonight", said Nikitas, looking at the monk who was holding a small candle in his hands and was trying to light it, so as to

put it on a small, silver candlestick that was on the table.

After having put it there, they all stood up, they did their Cross, the monk said a prayer and then they drank the tasty milk.

A very old Philips radio was broadcasting songs and at a moment, the news report reached their eardrums. "*Bad weather will persist all over the country*", were the first words of the announcer. On hearing the news, an euphoria reigned in Arrikos' soul. The more they stayed there, the more he would learn about the old books of the inestimable value.

They continued listening to the news, when at a moment, the barking of the dog made the monk turn the volume of the radio down and turn his attention to the other monastery which was opposite, on the other leg of the mountain.

From the dog's barking, the monk could make out that someone wanted something. A woman's voice was heard, escorted with the long vowel "i", even more stretching, so that the Spartan name of the monk, would reach his ears quicker.

"Priest Meneli!!!!" a nun was calling him from the other monastery.

Priest Menelis came out and answered in reply.

"The children's parents are on the phone, asking about them!" the nun said.

"Tell them not to worry!" the monk told her. "They're here with me and we're all fine. Tell them not to worry. Did you heaaaar?"

Only the nun heard, with that loud voice, or Mr. Elias Katsichtis down there in the village "St. John", too?

Young April was fighting with wild old-March for five days, but in the end, March submitted to April's spring vigour. Those ten successive days on the mountain were a beautiful period for the three of

them. For the sharp-witted boy Arrikos, it was a “University degree”. For this young boy who has the ability of advanced understanding of life, it was the best thing that could ever happen in his life.

A treasure of broad knowledge had been carried to his rare mind from the findings in the monastery, which may have been the only ones in the world. The child didn’t have enough time to comprehend all the meanings of the representations, but he realized, from the very first moment, that the future of humanity was hiding in there. What he managed to learn in that short period of time, was that thousands of years before, on that mountain, there was an inconceivable, as far as today’s facts, institution of Medicine.

But all these were not easy to comprehend, you couldn’t just simply give an explanation to all those representations, to all those symbols. You needed time, you needed spirit, many other things were needed, too. All those books, were worth the same as all people’s life. If they were found in the hands of the illicit dealers in antiquities, then all the dreams that had whirled past Arrikos’ mind till then, would be given an end.

He didn’t know what to do. He couldn’t reach a conclusion. If the other boys said something about those books after leaving the mountain, who knows whose ears would the existence of the books reach?

“The monk...”, the rational teenager thought, “...must be protecting them all these years. But, if someone else learns about the books and steals them, then what is going to happen? “A man...”, Arrikos meditated, “...that decides to be a monk, surely believes in God. It’s God that he devotes his life to, living in seclusion. It’s God that he glorifies!” “My friends...”, he thought, “...are pious. Only by mistake can they do harm!”

He left from the cell and in a flash was found inside the church. He did his Cross and whispered: "Guide me God, to find a solution to my problem, help me do something!" He raised his head and looked at the dome, from where the Almighty's Eye was looking at him in a kindly way. With a little candle in his hands, he walked towards the candelabrum, which was in the centre of the church. Before having time to light it up, an idea crossed his mind. "I will talk...", he thought, "...about the books' value to my friends, I will also tell the monk about it. I will impress upon them the significance of the books for the good of Mankind. I will invite them here, under the Eye of the Almighty, so that they will give me their word that they'll never tell anyone about the books. That's what I'm going to do!"

He lit the little candle, he did his Cross, looked at the Eye in respect and went back to the cell.

Priest Menelis, realized that Arrikos was perplexed and asked him:

"Something must be troubling you. Can I help you?"

With his eyes glued on the priest's face and full of respect and sobriety, he was "hidden" inside the soul of the man in the frock, for a minute or more.

As sharp as a needle as Arrikos is, he scanned the monk's face and thousands of thoughts crossed his fantastic mind. He looked at his friends and after giving them a wink, they went towards him. All of them in the middle of the cell, looked at each other. With an expression that revealed the gravity of that moment, he told them: "Do you believe in God? Are you praisers of his?"

The monk was frozen.

Nikitas and Menios were looking at each other. Silence reigned everywhere.

“If you believe in God, come with me!” Arrikos said, relieving their silence.

Without another word, he made for the church and the rest followed him.

Four people were standing under a huge Divine Eye and the three of them were in agony. They were waiting to see what the man was going to do and who whispered something, having raised his head. Having his hands raised, he was then heard to say:

“Your grace is great, my dear God. Give us your guidance!”

Arrikos put his hands down and looking at everyone with love said: “In this monastery that God has sent us, the future of humanity is hidden!”

The monk’s eyes flashed on hearing those words, he was in complete bewilderment.

Menios was looking at Arrikos in a strange way and Nikitas was at a loss for words.

“But before I continue, I want you all, under the Eye of the Almighty, to give me your word that you will never open your mouth and say anything to anybody about what I am going to reveal to you right now. Under the Eye of God, all of us will vow that we will keep our word and we will never break this vow. Do you give me your word?” Arrikos asked, but before he had received an answer, he continued: “I swear to God to keep my word!”

“I swear!” the three of them said in one voice.

“I swear to God and to all the Saints!” the monk added.

“Now listen and note my words”, Arrikos said. “In these antiquated books, a whole science has been written. In these books, from what I have understood so far, a Science has been stored, which used to exist thousands of years ago. In here, data of medical nature are written and which, civilizations that existed that time, used. From what I have

understood, there was a great civilization of spiritual superiority. In these books great facts of paramount importance have been written”.

Only the eyelids did they move every now and again, to moisten their eyes with their tears and their breath was faint and irregular.

“In one of the volumes, I saw a map. Somewhere close to here, if I understood right, there is a whole town. At a certain point, I saw a huge building, like a hospital of today did it seem to me. If I interpreted the symbols right, that’s the way it must be. I hope I’m not wrong”.

“I hope so, my dear child”, the monk said, interrupting him. “I hope, my dear God, that things are just like this”, the monk in the frock added.

They all joined their hands together, forming the shape of the Cross, looked at the Eye and said again: “I swear to God!”

They went into the cell and started chatting again. The monk took one of the books in his hands and while opening it, he found himself in front of a drawing. “I can’t understand anything...”, he said, “...nothing comes to my mind!”

Arrikos took it in his hands and showing it to the other children, asked them: “Can you please explain to me, what this means here?”

They tried, but to no avail. The kids didn’t resemble Arrikos in genuity, they were not gifted with such great capacity by nature. Arrikos explained to them for hours what the representation symbolized and yet, with great difficulty did the boys understand. They may not have comprehended immediately, what the picture showed and meant, but the monk had realized, from the very first moment, the inner world of the children and the way the lads thought of their friend.

The monk, despite the fact that he didn't have the capacity to understand what the books made of the unknown material meant, he had the ability to understand what material the two boys were "made" from. And this material was for sure of excellent quality. The monk may have felt bitterness that he couldn't understand the books' representations, but, being a man of remarkably good nature, he was very glad for the excellent quality of Nikitas' and Menios' character.

"And what are we going to do now?" asked the monk.

"Now we have to be careful, so that the books will not get lost", said Arrikos. "They will stay in here, until the proper time for us to use them comes. This is not the right time".

A snow blockade was the occasion of the beginning of a future history of Medicine to be written, from that place in the small and beautiful monastery of John the Baptist. In that sacred place was held the "engagement" between the hidden spark of a vanished -due to an unknown reason- civilization and a modern super-advanced brain and in a little while the "wedding ceremony" was to be held.

That's where the treasure was going to stay for the moment, there would Saint John look after it.

The doors of the monastery would be always open for the three friends, whether it was snowing or not.

With the monk escorting them, they reached the other monastery. The boys said "goodbye" to him, they thanked him for what he had offered to them, showing their gratitude towards him and set off for Sparta.

The monk loaded with the best impressions by his young visitors, returned to his monastery. From that day on, he had shouldered the responsibility to

guard the material of the paramount importance, whose value had been unknown to him till then. Now, he had a great responsibility on his shoulders, for those rare items and he couldn't have peace.

Many thoughts crossed his mind and ways to protect the books. After having been in deep pensiveness, he finally reached the happy mean and in a few days, the books were put in a place that was very difficult for them to be lost or destroyed and in that way the monk regained his peacefulness.

Later on, when he came in contact with the children, he informed them about the place that the books were, cause it was reasonable for them to know.

Priest Menelis was now unruffled and he found the tempo of life again. But the three children were preoccupied and especially Arrikos, who had visions all the time. Not only had he set unconceivable goals for the future, but also not even in his dreams could he leave his mind at peace. For Arrikos, who had made so many dreams, his visit to the monastery was the best thing that someone could ever offer to him. The only difference was that, this "someone" wasn't a mortal. For the pious little student of High School, this "someone" was God. "Only God...", thought the devoted to God man, Arrikos, "...could have protected these books of the utmost importance from destruction, for so many thousands of years". When he was alone and in peace of mind, Arrikos had visions of a perfect and healthy world. But when he used his mind to the maximum, he would try to find the way he could fulfil his dreams. He had believed – very deep in his conscience – that one day, he would manage to do something for the good of Humanity.

It was time for the examinations and they hadn't even realized how quickly the time had passed. With an honour in his hands, Arrikos was descending the

stairs of his school and a man, who answered to the name of Sotiros, was waiting for him.

It was his brother.

In a while, Menios showed up smiling and behind him followed Nikitas, who with his smiling happy face revealed his satisfaction. Being first in class, too, they entered Sotiros' car.

Just a little time later, they reached Tripoli, bringing with them their will and only that. Now they returned home being top students and excellent athletes, since all of them were going to participate in the Olympic games. But they also had the secret of the mountain with them. So many things had been accomplished in a short time and by so young children.

In the summer, their teacher at the village held graduation exercises in honour of the boys, showing his undivided esteem and satisfaction towards them and making it clear, once more, that he was always behind them.

All July, by order of the coachmen, the athletes Arrikos, Menios and Nikitas had to rest. But generous Arrikos, who never forgot to pray to God for the good of the people that had helped him, was found working at the construction site, where his brother Sotiros worked and who in vain tried to persuade Arrikos to stay home and rest, since the training that would start at the beginning of August was going to be very hard. The time of the Final Olympic games may not had come, but there were other competitions to be held, too.

The word "fatigue" didn't sound well in Arrikos' ears and especially at a time when his brother's body was scorched by the sun, at the building under construction. The word "tiredness", was something that the young lad had thrown off from his body. This young human being, believed that man could throw

off all the bad elements from beside him and replace them with others which were more useful and constructive.

He put his faculties to the test and his target was one day to manage to subject a living species to something extraordinary. This precious creature – Arrikos – that was found among people, couldn't conceive one thing. He couldn't realize the spiritual superiority of his and he thought that all the people were capable of thinking the way he did.

That summer, a Greek-American person had come to Arrikos' village for holidays and stayed at a relative of his, who was living there. That person was a professor of Medicine, who worked at the University of Boston.

The house he was living in, was next to the building where Arrikos and his brother were working. One morning, as the doctor was wandering in the garden, enjoying its beauty, he felt an intense pain on his left leg and after a while, his leg got swollen.

The doctor realized that a snake had bitten him and immediately called his cousin:

"Some snake has bitten me on the leg!" he told him and before finishing his words, his eyes fell on a viper, which was crawling towards the half-crumbled wall that was in the corner of the garden.

The doctor tried to get out of the garden, but before he had managed to reach the small wooden door, he lost his senses and collapsed to the ground.

"Help!" his cousin shouted as he faced that sight.

After a while, five or six people had gathered above the doctor, all in a panic, who didn't know what to do to him.

A huge scaffolding on which Arrikos was standing holding a chisel and a hammer, making a hole in the wall, as if there were a loud earthquake,

was it moving, as the young workman was abandoning it. It was creaking, as if an invisible power was shaking it, so as to pack it off to another place.

Like a deer that somebody had turned it away, did he ran and jumping over a wall that was over three metres high, so as not to lose time by running around the house, he was found above the luckless scientist.

“A snake bit him on the leg!” they said as Arrikos had bent above him, trying to make him regain consciousness.

At that exact moment, the sinewy athlete of the pole-jump event, would show his merit to youngsters and older people, that at that moment more than fifteen people had gathered around him, watching with breathless attention. Now would Arrikos’ talents and assets come to light, not as far as the athletic event that he excelled in, is concerned and that everyone knew about it, but as far as something else is concerned, which Arrikos would inform them about, immediately.

Calling into play his mental powers and the composure that he was well known for and by which he was dominated to a great extent, transformed a grave incident that could send a great scientist to the nether world, into a simple unpleasant incident.

This small in age man, that the adjective “small” in its literal sense didn’t suit his mentality at all, with lightning movements and an unerring co-ordination, brought the doctor round and sent an important message to the doctor’s students in Boston.

He told them that in a few years’ time, many of them would meet him. He informed them that in a few years, they would not visit his country only to admire Acropolis and other sight-seesings, but for

something else too, much more important and significant.

The fourteen-year-old robust young boy, not following the caution that made it essential not to make action that reminded everyone of protagonists in films of adventure, managed by sucking blood out of the doctor's leg, to send the poison to the ground and the man to the bed of the hospital and not to the nether world that the venomous reptile wanted.

When the professor of Medicine recuperated and was out of hospital, he first thanked and congratulated Arrikos and asked him what he would like for a present, since he was the man who had saved his life, endangering his own life and limb and thanks to his efforts would he return to America, to his family and students.

Arrikos, the person of remarkable humbleness, without even thinking, answered to him:

"I only did my duty and nothing more, I did what my ideology ordered me to do. My placing in a part of your memory would be the most expensive present, it would be the best thing for me!"

The professor, charmed by the words of his little saver, squeezed his hand gently and said:

"You will always be there..."

The doctor was just about to say something else, but a tear that rolled from his cheek was a picture that hid some hundred words more in it.

When he managed to gain control of his words, the sensitive intellectual said to Arrikos that it would be a great pleasure for him, if one day he would have him as his undergraduate at the University of Medical Science.

"I would be glad if I managed to reach that far", was Arrikos' answer.

The professor's experience finished happily and the summer reached the beginning of its end. In a few

days, the classrooms of the schools, full of anguish and recalling the past school periods, would be ready to welcome the boys. They were waiting like the nests are waiting for the swallows, like the shepherds are looking forward for the spring to come.

The much-desired day came and the children were filling the classrooms. Arrikos' soul was also filled with power and more desire for learning, since a teacher, talking to the students and teachers of the school, made Arrikos' action – that he had saved a doctor's life – known to everybody and with a protracted applause did everyone honour him. They honoured him and at the same time did what they had to do for further action, for admirable deeds that sent the values of Mankind to the top of the pyramid.

Five months had passed, since then, when the postman knocked on the door of Arrikos' home and informed his mother that six big parcels had been sent from America and they had to collect them from the post office of Tripoli.

Everyone was surprised, when Mrs. Stamata - Arrikos' mother- told them about it.

“Parcels from America!” Sotiros said. “Who may have sent them?”

He took the car and drove to the post office, without delay.

The six big parcels had the name of Mr. Vasilis Papadopoulos on, as their sender, the professor of Medicine that Arrikos had saved his life. The parcels contained encyclopaedias of Medicine, for the small saver of the eminent doctor who had realized the bright spirit of the boy and wanted to make him enter the bosom of Science as soon as possible.

Arrikos' eyes flashed with pleasure when he saw all those books in front of him and which his brother Sotiros had brought home. He was dazed by their excellent quality, but he couldn't restrain his

enthusiasm, as he realized that the encyclopaedias were of the most modern and exclaimed:

“All the world is on my side, everyone is for me, I don’t have the right to let them down, I will fight for people’s good in all my life!!!”

The doctor’s act was a stimulus for Arrikos to fulfil his goals. This was another great asset for success.

He stuck into the pages of the books, whose content was written in two languages, Greek and English.

In there, he spent hours, days, weeks, months, years studying. From those books, he gained knowledge, which people who have a true relationship with Medicine would envy. Those encyclopaedias were not the kind of encyclopaedias that were commonly sold on the market, neither like the encyclopaedia that the open-handed coffee-shop owner had granted to him some time before. Students at University were taught from those encyclopaedias, scientists broaden their knowledge by using them. This distinguished human being that answers to the name of Arrikos, didn’t find it difficult to assimilate the content of the books.

The second year, was a period that left good recollections to the mind of Arrikos, Menios and Nikitas. Excellent in school, with acts and behaviour that all the teachers had something good to say for them.

Training took place daily, with efforts towards perfection.

In the summer, the doctor who had granted the encyclopaedias to Arrikos, was again in Greece. They chatted for endless hours, the two of them and the great scientist, Mr. Vasilis Papadopoulos, had realized Arrikos’ spiritual abilities even better.

One night, as they were chatting with Sotiros, the doctor told him:

“This child most possibly has the brightest mind of our times. He is a rare existence, he is a spirit sent from God. This child, remember that, is the future of Medicine. We all ought to help him, it is our duty to do so”.

He proposed taking Arrikos with him to America, when he would finish Secondary School, but Arrikos, having drawn up his plans, didn't agree to go, he thanked the professor of Medicine for his offer and told him:

“Our country, the homeland of the founder of Medicine Hippocrates, will one day become the centre, from where all the ill people will come from every part of the world to ‘purchase’ health. A supermarket of medical products have I imagined my country to be!”

As if he were a fossil was the doctor looking at the young child.

“Yes, Mr. Papadopoulos”, Arrikos told him. “Greece, in a few years’ time, will organize the fate of people on this planet”.

The doctor was about to say something, but before he could say a word, Arrikos told him:

“But before all these things are done, there is something else that will take precedence”.

The doctor managed to pronounce the phrase: “What, my dear Arrikos?”

“Before these things are done...”, Arrikos continued, “...Greece will manage to be the country which will hold the Olympic Games permanently. Here is the place where the Games will take place, since they started from this country!”

The professor was lost in deep meditation. His eyes revealed the depth of his contemplation.

“This country...”, Arrikos continued, “...either they want it or not, will become the centre of the

whole planet. The new Olympic Anthem that I composed some time ago, will be heard loudly and permanently in this country. The rostrum will be steadily “decorated” with more Greek athletes and the stadiums will shiver and tremble”.

“I wish so”, said the doctor. “But please, tell me, how do you explain all these things, my dear Arrikos?”

“Mr. Papadopoulos...”, continued the fair-haired, spirited man, Arrikos, “...I say that I sense it. Up to now, I have never been mistaken in my predictions. I have dreamed and I pray to God for this to come true, of finding myself on the rostrum. And from there, I want to honour my family, my village, my friends, our great in ideals mother country!”

“The words you say are very inconceivable”, the doctor told him. “The Olympic Games in Greece and a supermarket of Medical products in Greece, too? These dreams are inconceivable by a Man’ s mind, Arrikos!”

“Yes, yes, you’re right...”, the child replied, “...but rest assured that this is how it’s going to be like and remember that!”

The doctor looked straight in his eyes, full of satisfaction and told him:

“A mind like yours, is capable of doing everything. It can accomplish anything in the world. What I have to tell you this exact moment, is that whatever you need me for, I am at your disposal. Always remember this, never forget it!”

An endless smile of pleasure, from the face of the gifted young man, revealed his satisfaction for what he was told by the scientist Vasilis Papadopoulos.

Arrikos, shook hands with the doctor and told him: “I am grateful to you Mr. Papadopoulos. It’s certain that I will need your help!”

The boy - having a great man in front of him who, with the experience that he had, showed that he adopted what the child was telling him and was listening to the child's words with seriousness -, came out into the open.

The young lad unburdened himself to the man and he had made no mistake in his appraisal of the worth of the professor that was standing in front of him.

The young boy didn't only open his heart to the man that day. The roads that led to the fulfilment of his goals were opened, too.

The sparkling spirit of Arrikos made the professor wonder, he was absorbed in the child prodigy Arrikos who made a lot of inconceivable dreams, despite his age. All this went on for long.

Many times, Arrikos, in the conversations he was having with the professor and supporter of his, he would talk about matters that were unconceivable by a man's brain. Every day that passed, he would say something new, which in the end, the doctor would adopt.

"The difficult thing...", said the doctor once, "...isn't how you're going to make something, but how you're going to invent the way that it must be done".

"But why don't you want to come to America to pursue your studies, when you finish Secondary School?", asked the doctor. "There, the State will offer to you, whatever you ask and with your rare spirit, you will become one of the most famous and eminent scientists in the world. Minds like yours there, don't go to waste. You will even have bodyguards to protect you".

The small "angel-like" boy smiled, looked at the doctor with a sophisticated eye, nodded his head and said".

“I don’t object to what you’re telling me, but deep in my conscience, I have believed that only in this country is it possible for the most perfect and fantastic applications of Medicine to be fulfilled. No sickness in a few years’ time will be an obstacle to the ways of therapy that I have imagined and which I will apply for the total disappearance of diseases from the face of mankind. No disease will torment people after the application of my new methods. Only in this place is it possible for this to happen. Only the Greek nature is gifted with the substances and materials that are needed for this purpose”.

A huge question mark had covered the doctor’s face and the only thing he could do at that moment, was to watch Arrikos in bewilderment. Many thoughts crossed the famous doctor’s mind, but before he could ask what and in what way it was possible for that to happen, Arrikos said:

“I esteem you, I respect you and I am grateful to you for what you have done for me. For the time being however, I wouldn’t want to tell you more about this very important matter we are discussing now!”

The professor of Medicine, respecting Arrikos’ wish, didn’t make him embarrassed and answered to him:

“It is my honour to tell all my friends in America about the existence of such a great man of intellectual powers. I wish you were my son!”

Attending the third grade of High School, the future glories of Greek athletics: Menios, Nikitas and Arrikos, were standing in the pages of sports newspapers and not only there. They studied and cultivated the land, where one day, the small but healthy little tree would grow and from which they would cut the branches and make wreaths to decorate the heads of distinguished athletes.

The flame of their will for success made them more anxious and an incessant tendency for distinction came upon them. They took part in meetings and sent messages of success to all the athletes of the world, who in their turn, fought for the best. The medals were getting more and more.

A special period in the World history of athletics was taking place. A different era in the chronicle of athletics was "born". Many world records were broken by the frenzied competition of the athletes. The sports editors had never felt such heightening of suspense in their lives again. The international noble emulation of the athletes was such that a French commentator wrote:

"Let's get ready for radical changes of the rules. Let's get ready to face demigods!"

The keen commentator was not mistaken in his predictions.

Some time later, there were considerable amendments of the rules. Prizes for athletes were established and that was the beginning of something fantastic in the area of athletics. With the right changes that took place worldwide, the stadiums filled up with athletes and we had a tremendous change in the life of young people.

With the great participation of children in the athletic events, the people in charge all over the earth, believing that they had the most and better athletes, didn't hesitate to adopt an idea, which a person in charge of a big country brought to light.

The president of the committee of the Olympic games in that country, proposed:

"The country which will manage to win the most gold medals in the next Olympic games, will be the one which will have the honour to welcome the following Games at its place"

After a lot of negotiations, the members of the International Olympic Committee decided that that suggestion should be put into practice.

After the vote that was taking place in Nagan of Japan, the International Olympic Committee, through its President, announced the results and most of the countries had approved that suggestion, which clarified that, that country would be able to welcome not only one Olympiad, but as many as the power of its athletes would permit and that if this number exceeded number three, the Games would permanently be held in that country.

There was an international reclassification and many billions were spent for the improvement of the conditions, with the purpose of the better performance of the athletes, something that entailed the winning of more medals.

Not a long time had passed, that the scientists, sociologists and others couldn't believe in what certain investigations proved to them.

Drugs and juvenile delinquency, suicides and visits to psychologists and neurological clinics, had taken a descending course. The owners of coffee shops and games of chance, covered for a few days, the facade of their buildings with different kinds of colorful protective shields or whatever else and you could see sportswear on the shop-windows, when the protective shields were removed.

Well-drilled athletic bodies were seen in the streets of the cities and villages, that sent you to the era of Ancient Greece, which was full of life and vigor.

The cities were full of gymnasiums and the prizes increased in number. In Greece, the Union of Gym Owners established ten prizes a year in each city and the value of the prize was such, that it would be very difficult for a young athlete not to be bent on winning a prize.

The agile boy Arrikos, with the forceful man Nikitas and the “aerostatic” boy Menios, were at their last year in Secondary School when they were found in Cyprus, in order to take part in meeting competitions that were held there. Three seventeen-year-old lads, with well-drilled bodies, three shining stars of the Greek blue sky and inseparable friends, were enjoying the most magnificent scene that was in front of them, at a beach outside the city “Ktima”. A girl with a slender frame was windsurfing in her own wonderful way. But as the girl was showing her eccentric, fantastic technique, a luxurious private boat, with a clumsy manoeuvre of the young steersman, fell on her and wounded her left thigh.

That exact moment, Arrikos was on a big rock, which was called “The Rock of the Greek man”, where according to the myth’s version, goddess Aphrodite was born.

The sea changed color and from blue and shiny that it was before, it turned red from the girl’s blood.

The excellent diver Menios, like a dolphin he ran first to help her and Nikitas followed, rending the waters.

Without being able for an explanation to be given, Arrikos was watching the unhappy incident from the rock that he was sitting on, without doing anything.

Lots of people gathered there, watching full of anxiety the two vigorous bodies of Nikitas and Menios, who were trying to take the bleeding, injured girl out of the water.

Menios, not having anything to stop the bleeding on the girl’s thigh and being smart enough and composed, he took his bathing suit off and managed to stop the bleeding in a way. Nikitas, after

having seen the result of his friend's action, he did the same, too.

The bleeding stopped.

The two brave lads, tried to take the beautiful girl out on the shore. The distance they had to cover wasn't long.

Feeling calm, since they had managed to stop the bleeding from the girl's wound, they headed for the shore. But a horrible scene took place in front of them. A big fish appeared, showing its fierce and bloodthirsty intentions.

"A shark! A shark!" the people that had gathered there and were watching the girl's salvation full of anxiety, cried out.

Two promising figures of the stadiums were in danger and a girl, too. The up-and-coming stars of athletics and a beautiful girl may not be alive in a while. They might die in the strong, sharp jaws of the bloodthirsty shark. The hopes for the rostrum would crumble.

This is what "Common Sense" says. However, the rationale of a man whose name is Arrikos – the fair-haired boy who is forged with physical and spiritual powers – other things urge him to think.

There are no words to describe what happened. No pen is able to write clearly what followed.

The bloodthirsty shark, seeing that the water had changed color, like an arrogant beast did it behave. Either from satisfaction, since it had the best food in front of it, or whatever else, it did circular movements round the three nice-framed, young bodies. The shark had believed that everything belonged to it. It had imagined that nothing was able to deprive it of anything and since it was sure about that, it didn't get in a hurry.

But how could the shark know that a man who had burst out from the shore as if he were a

hurricane, with a two-meter harpoon in his right hand, which was on a boat near him, would approach it and fight with it!

An infuriated, wild lion, in the body of a man, approached the huge dog-fish and forgetting about tradition, that wanted that wild fish undefeatable, Arrikos was ready to fight with it.

The heart of the people who were watching the scene, had forgotten to continue functioning. The people's breath was frozen. But what they saw with their dry from immobilization eyes, not even the most daydreaming person has ever brought to his mind.

The bloodthirsty fish, very quickly vanished on the high seas, leaving a deep dike behind it, because of its speed. And the flower of the Arcadian land, Arrikos, proved once more that he was not only capable of breaking the record, but the tradition, too.

Everyone went out on the shore and one of the most spectacular scenes had taken place, which was going to remain in the people's mind for many years. In the mind of everyone, who was lucky or unlucky to have witnessed that scene.

The competitions took place and the Greek children returned to their motherland with a gold medal on their chest each and with a great man, Arrikos, decorating the front pages of the Greek newspapers and not only them.

A sketcher, called Andreas Koupparis, described the event in an afternoon Cyprian newspaper as follows: He showed the shark being scared away and when it was far away from the shore, in the open-sea, the shark was turning its head frightened, to see if Arrikos was still chasing it. And underneath, the illustration artist wrote: ***"Shark! Shark! You have been annihilated!"***

As the time elapsed, the three Arcadian athletes “filled” their bodies with strength and they forged the iron bases of their vital energy.

At school, they were the patterns and in society, innumerable were those who would want them as their children, relatives or friends.

A trio from the pure Arcadian land, had built the strongest foundations for the skyscrapers of glory.

Great fear had seized Sotiros’ inner world and their acquaintances and friends were praying to God for them.

Sotiros had a feeling of insecurity, as the three young men gained more prestige. Many times he sprang out of his bed, this original man Sotiros was suffering, he was afraid for the life of the three shining stars. He had made great dreams for these three lads.

Who is able to know what was inside Sotiros’ mind? Who can comprehend his desire?

The mighty material that formed the foundation stones of that trio, was Sotiros, the gym instructor Kostas Brousalis and the teacher Antonis Panagiotopoulos. With their advice, they had dismissed every trace of thought of failure and they constantly urged the young athletes to do their best.

The javelin whistled in the air, as it was shot by the well-exercised hand of the fantastic athlete Nikitas, that reminded everyone of a very powerful cannon and it vanished in the distance. The bars shivered with awe from the approach of the aerostatic bodies of the vigorous boy Menios and the ever-growing man Arrikos.

In the area of athletics, these boys were the “thunder-bolts” that rent whatever appeared in front of them. They were the demoniacal horses, that burst out in the streets, as the supernatural power penetrated their bodies and urged them to do so. In

their life out of the stadiums, they were all ordinary and humble children, who respected everyone and everybody talked about their morals. There wasn't even one Sunday that the brilliant young boys were absent from church. As for Arrikos, many times he helped the priest and Menios and Nikitas chanted.

The time had elapsed and the three boys were nearing finishing Secondary School. The new archbishop of Athens and of all Greece, with the great sensibility that marked him, asked the Ministry of Education for the names of a hundred and fifty graduates from all Secondary Schools around the country, who had managed to get the best marks. He wanted to present something to them for moral satisfaction for all their distinctions in their school subjects that year.

Some days later, the examinations took place and the Ministry gathered one hundred and fifty names of the top students and sent them to the Archbishop. Among them, were the names of Arrikos, Menios and of course the javelin thrower Nikitas.

The great man, the Archbishop, who had the approach of young children as his dream and their bringing back to church, organized a special ceremony, so as to meet the excellent students intimately and offer them presents.

Meanwhile, the boys had already sat for the Panhellenic examinations and the three of them were, as sure as fate, that when the results would be announced, their names would be from the first ones that would stand out on the lists of the successful candidates.

It was July 17th, on Saint Marina's day, the day of the dispensation of the gifts to the students that had had the top marks was set and in a big room of the Archbishop's palace, all the brilliant people of literature had gathered and waited.

It was not until long, when the Archbishop was in front of them and with a smile full of love, he greeted them all.

After offering a short but significant speech to them, showing his loving disposition, he informed them that the gifts were nothing else but a plane ticket to whichever place of the world, each of them would like to visit, with all the expenses paid for fifteen days of residence in the place of their preference.

He left them think for a while and the secretary of the Archbishop soon had the list with the desired place for each of them, in his hands.

One person had chosen America, another person Canada, someone else a country in Europe, a girl chose Johannesburg as the place of her preference, another one the Holy Land and so on...

Arrikos, with his inseparable friends Menios and Nikitas, fascinated by the life and work of the legendary rebel for the freedom of peoples Tse Ge Vara, said that they wanted to visit Bolivia, so they could step on the land where the untamed and in good shape giant Tse, had left his footprints, fighting with his partisans in the forests, for the freedom of the people of his country, for the peoples all over the region and not only them.

Not even ten days had passed, when the three of them were found in La Paz, the Capital of Bolivia. They asked the people in charge to take them to the places where the unrestrained man Tse Ge Vara, used to write his heroic epopees, to become the symbol of bravery for the young people nowadays.

So the three fine upstanding lads of the Arcadian area, stepped with a light and cautious gait, on the Bolivian territory and they had a feeling of awe within, while being in the Bolivian jungle, where the

greatest rebel of the latest generations used to have his camp.

Tse Ge Vara was once ready to make the jungle a centre of training and education for the rebel candidates who would be on his side and would help him and who could come from other neighboring countries, so as to be trained to start the revolution simultaneously in all Latin America. This, of course, was never materialized, because they were seen by the American army and their plans were queered.

The restless Arcadians, asked the people in charge to leave them alone for a while, so they could stroll about in the dense forests and after having received instructions so as not to get lost, the lads were given their permission and with great caution and devoutness did they walk on the sacred places where legendary Tse had passed and fought for the freedom of the unredeemed nations.

It wasn't easy at all, to describe what the three young men were feeling within, when the fantastic fiery voice of the excessively brave rebel Tse, was reaching the organs of their hearing.

With the eyes of their imagination, they could see the sacred footprints of the hero on the ground, they could hear him singing. His speeches and poems reached their ears, the songs and the poems that Tse Ge Vara sang and recited to his comrades-in-arms could the boys hear.

"Where did the man of the superlative stature breathe his last?" they were wondering. "Where are his sacred bones?" they soliloquized.

Many times during their walk, they heard the imaginary shots from the insidious weapons that gave an end to the life of the rebel doctor who fought for the freedom of the peoples in Latin America.

As they were walking, a terrifying cry was heard and a noise from something that rent a batch of trees

with great speed, took their breath away. They didn't even understand what it was! When, after a while, they had got over it, Arrikos looked at his friends straight in the eyes, with that intent look of his and told them:

"Tse Ge Vara's life has tempted me a lot. His struggles for freedom have ravished me. What have we offered to Humanity? What have we done for the good of Mankind?"

Arrikos sent his mind to the interior of Mount Taygetos in Arcadia and fell silent for a while. Suddenly, he changed the expression of his face and with a voice, full of self-confidence, said:

"It was Ernesto, the Titan, Arrikos, Menios and Nikitas will become Iapeti!*" (Greek Titans).

They boys looked at him in a strange way and asked in one voice":

"What do you mean?"

"Tse was the angel of peoples, but we shall become their God!" answered full of vigour, the plucky, fair-haired boy Arrikos.

At that moment, he felt a shiver penetrating his body. He felt a jerk all over his body, by what he had brought to his mind.

"In a few years' time...", he thought with his pioneer and clear spirit, "...the idol of the younger generation will not be that demigod only, but other men will have managed to reach him, too. Tse didn't have time to complete his sacred aim, but we will manage to accomplish ours!"

Innumerable thoughts crossed his mind. Like a formidable hurricane did his mind start working.

"Let's go back now!" Nikitas was heard to say.

"We have walked far enough, we mustn't get lost, cause they will start searching for us. It isn't easy for them to find us here, in these inaccessible forests. Until the chased Gods of the Incas come

back, as the Indians say, we have enough time in front of us. Then Tse Ge Vara will come, too and all of us together, will fight for a better, juster and more decent humanity!”

How could he possibly know!

As if they had been ordered, they did an about-turn with one movement the three of them, but what they saw when they turned their bodies was unbelievable. They got frozen.

An enormous snake had raised its head up, more that a meter over the ground and was looking at them, ready to attack them showing its quick-moving tongue.

“Don’t be afraid!” said the self-controlled man Arrikos to the other two boys. “It’s harmless, at least as far as its poison is concerned. The pupils of its eyes are circular and its poisonous teeth must be missing, too”.

Before Arrikos had finished his words, the colored reptile coiled itself round Nikitas’ body, with the purpose of killing him. But the poor snake didn’t know that if the giant, with a heart of a lion Nikitas, puffed out his iron-like body, not even a bullet from a cannon would be able to penetrate his thousand-times exercised body. It didn’t know that there was another demon, in a human body that answered to the name of Arrikos who had a brain always ready for action. He knew what he had to do, even in this very difficult situation.

The poor snake hadn’t realized that another “panther” called Menios, was able to cut it into two pieces, if he caught it in his two strong hands. In that place, that day, what was said proved to be right.

There, the three young men carried off the prizes of intelligence, mettle, speed and gallantry. There, Arrikos won the title of the most cunning Odysseus, a title that followed him in his whole life.

The trimmed snake, tried to squeeze Nikitas in its lithe body and kill him, but the athlete Nikitas, blew his body out and resisted the snake. The snake soon surrendered and writhed on the ground, because Arrikos, with the sharp knife that he had with him, managed with lightning movements to give it innumerable poisonous knife wounds and cause profuse hemorrhage to it. And the only thing it could do, was to move its graceless tail desperately.

When everyone had come round that horrible incident, Arrikos made a wooden cross and stuck it in the body of the snake and taking a photo, said in memory of that incident:

“It’s a pity that your judgment failed you – from what has been proved scientifically, snakes have the more right judgment from all the other creatures of the animal kingdom that exist on earth!”

Armed with more courage and self-confidence now, they took the way back. They reached the place where their escorts were waiting for them and after recounting what had happened, they all returned to the place of their residence, to the city of La Paz, which may act as a Capital city but Soukre was typically the Capital of the country.

Another day, they visited the museum called Tse in the city of Belgrade, which was made in memory of the hero Ernesto and a feeling of responsibility came upon them, when they were ready to write something in the book that was there for the visitors.

They looked at each other in the eyes with a question-mark on their faces - an act that revealed that they had to think of something serious to write, which would stay on the paper for ever - and Arrikos first took the pencil in his hands in devoutness, bent over an artistic, wooden table where the book was, he brought Tse in his mind, he looked at him with that

radiant, full of masculine genuineness look and wrote:

“The more cowardly a hero’s murder is, the more glory does his name win!”

The three of them signed, in a venerable way, but Nikitas, apart from his signature, he wrote this too: **“GREECE-FREEDOM”**, giving a last look at the large picture of Tse that was there and that on the top of it, were two flags, one of which was the symbol of the country where Tse passed away and the other, the flag of the country where he was born. They bowed and left.

The three great and inexhaustible sources of literature and athletics, asked the people in charge to show them round the area, near Belgrade, where, according to information that they had, the man of the superlative ideals had been buried, together with his rebel-mates.

And that’s how it happened.

What they saw in front of them, was the excavations that the Bolivian government was conducting, in case it would find the old bones of the devoted to Man rebel doctor and his comrades-in-arms. With their mind constantly focused on Tse, they visited many other places, they went to the governmental Palace at Soukre, which was an impressive building of the Renaissance and colonial style. They were found at the University in the city of Orouro and in other spiritual institutions. They were taken to mines, they got to know other forms of art and archeological places, too.

The days passed and they had to return.

They bought several goods – presents for their parents and relatives – and after giving thanks to the people that guided and helped them, they said goodbye, leaving excellent impressions and having obtained pleasure, delight and honour from the flight

that was righteously theirs. The great rebel was engraved deep on their memory with crimson letters and they returned to their country to continue their struggles.

III

I'll cure you

Not many days had passed, when a peaceful night, Arrikos had a strange dream which made him fall in deep contemplation.

He couldn't give an explanation, he racked his brains days and nights, he couldn't sleep at all.

Sotiros, realized that his brother was preoccupied and asked what troubled him and in what way he could help him.

Arrikos, having his grandfather's words in his mind, that someone mustn't reveal his strange dreams, unless a long time has passed, hesitated to say anything to his brother.

In a few days, though, the results were announced and all the boys had entered the Medical School of Athens' University, with the only difference that Arrikos had broken the record once more, since he was found to be the first among the first ones on a panhellenic scale.

Only then did he decide to reveal his strange, inexplicable dream to his brother, Sotiros.

"I had seen...", he told him, "...in my dream, that I was in a huge marble threshing-floor, mounting a

thoroughbred white horse, whose horseshoes emitted flames as it was trotting along the slabs. Being arch-like on the proud horse, I was riding through the threshing-floor and round me, there were a lot of people, calling out to me in a rhythmical way:

”Doctor, saver, oh great doctor!’ they cheered”.

The imaginative man Sotiros, acting as an interpreter of dreams, explained to Arrikos that he had had that dream because he excelled in the examinations.

But, how could he possibly know!

Time came for University to start operating and the three lads were then found in the Capital permanently. A friend of Sotiros from the army, George Laskaris, had an apartment in Aigaleo, in Grigoriou Kydonion Street, near the sports-field and they were allotted it to live in.

The generous and upstanding man Laskaris, offered to surrender his flat totally for free, but in the end he yielded to the refusal of the students, who were gifted with ingenuity and pride and they all agreed that the boys would give him half of the price of the rent.

There, in that small apartment, they entered with piety and proved how useful the three of them were, for their motherland and their fellow-beings. Three promising young boys, with the archangel man Arrikos standing out, into how many tons of precious metals would their nominal worth run, in the future International stock markets?

It was their first year at University and the longing for learning boy Arrikos, made his teachers think a lot. Restless and anxious as he was, he was thrust into the laboratories and with his sparkling mind he was experimenting.

But who was able to watch him!

Menios and Nikitas, although they had both excelled in the exams, the only thing they managed to do, was to execute Arrikos' orders, helping him in that way, but in the end, due to the sterling character of the shining star Arrikos, they all felt that they had contributed a little bit to the foundations of their work.

Both of them loved Arrikos and were concerned about his health a lot. Lots of times, he experimented on his own body and this frightened them. They were afraid for him!

Training went on and the medals from the various athletic events decorated the small flat. George Laskaris, the owner of the flat, wherever he was found talked about those lads and extolled their capabilities and the simplicity of their character. One day, he told Arrikos and his loyal friends:

“An intense feeling of happiness is produced within me, when I reflect that in my little flat, people of your class live. Men like you, boys that honour their families, their friends!”

The humble boys, with the originality of their soul and the generosity that marked them, answered to him in one voice:

“It's our honour that we are acquainted with you. We owe you a lot for whatever you say and do for us! In a part of our memory...”, Menios added, “...you will have a permanent place!”

Laskaris' best man, a surgeon called Thanasis Stoyos, owned a clinic at Piraeus and when he heard of those children and the mental powers of Arrikos, he wanted to meet them.

That's how it happened!

Laskaris brought them in touch and the doctor, as if he were a fossil, hanging in the air was he looking at Arrikos, who was talking to him about matters that had to do with science and its future

and which the brilliant boy from Tripoli presented in his own way.

At a certain moment, when Arrikos was at the peak of his fantastic elevation, the doctor interrupted him and looking at him with an expression between wrong concept of the present and exploratory reflection for the future, told him:

“I’m as sure as fate, that in your previous life, you were creating human beings on another planet – by putting the appropriate ingredients in a glass tube at night and at dawn, the foetus would have already taken its starting shape. This isn’t just a brain, only a divine interference can account for this child prodigy” and the scientist did his cross.

Later on, Arrikos used to help this talented surgeon in many of the operations that were performed there.

In the college precincts, the curly-haired man Arrikos, was a shining star and in the area of athletics he was an Adonis who was attracting everyone with that well-proportioned body of his. In society, he was an example of morality and dignity, a true knight. He believed in friendship and never did he betray anybody.

As far as his concern and interest in his two flatmates and childhood friends is concerned, no instrument would be able to gauge its moment. He talked to them for many hours about the evolutions that he had in his mind. Nights and dawns, Arrikos’ mind produced the best brainwaves.

And his inseparable friends watched him enchanted and believed in him. Arrikos **had the certainty, deep** in his conscience, that whatever the mind thought, Man was able to materialize it, **as long as he believed in it.**

Arrikos had imagined his own philosophy of life and the evolution of Man and not only that.

A student of the most of the philosophers of the world, from whom others he rejected and others he adopted. Many times, his mind would go to mythology, to the inexplicable phenomena and he was trying to give a logical answer.

The boys were nearing finishing their first year of university and an incident that occurred one Sunday morning, in the operating theatre of Laskaris' friend, Thanasis Stoyos, at Piraeus, was an incontestable evidence on how Arrikos believed in his powers and what the future had in store for him, because of him.

As a retired teacher was lying on the surgical bed and the surgeon had completed the incision and was getting ready to remove his gall, the surgeon fainted and collapsed on the floor. A nurse got frozen with fear and her face took a deadly color.

"And now, what do we do?" were the only words she managed to mumble.

"Now, we'll perform what has to be performed", answered the self-controlled prospective surgeon Arrikos and with lightning movements he made a quick check-up on the doctor and after making sure that the man didn't have anything serious, he put him on a stretcher that was near there, so he would come round and grabbed the surgical instruments with his gifted with steadiness hands.

In a way that would remind everyone of Professor Barnant at the height of his glory, he removed the full of stones gall of the teacher who was unconscious and with a masterly movement, he sent it to the recipient for a few minutes' rest, casting a searching look at the half-dazed surgeon, who was lying on the stretcher, too.

Until the doctor came to his senses, the student from Tripoli had been pronounced a surgeon and the

only thing left now was to take off his surgical gloves and do his Cross.

Everything ended successfully, noone heard of that unlucky incident that would stain the credibility of the surgeon and the promising Arcadian boy, until he finished his studies gained money from that clinic, money that was necessary to cover his expenses, without being a burden on his parents, neither on his willing brother.

The first year was over for the three inseparable friends, but excellent recollections had stamped themselves on the boy's memory and which would never fade with the lapse of time.

Many fellow-students of theirs, were on holiday then and relaxed, but Arrikos, Menios and Nikitas, not only were they preparing themselves for the Olympic Games, working-out hard, but they were working at the same time as well. Arrikos at the clinic at Pireaus, Nikitas and Menios were giving private lessons to small children, assisting in that way their families financially.

That summer though, something unpleasant happened to the family of the generous man Arrikos, something that dispirited them and made their knees knock. The pillar of that proud house got sick and the doctors didn't delay to diagnose his illness. Sotiros' brain, had been affected by the untamed, cell-eating cancer and the hopes for healing were very few.

It was Sunday and the family was getting ready to eat. – But who felt like eating at a time like that? – Everyone was eating mechanically, so one would give courage to the other.

Sotiros was seating right opposite Arrikos and at a moment, a strange expression could he see on Arrikos' face. Sotiros brought something to his mind and without being able to restrain himself, he burst out into tears and hugging Arrikos said to him:

“What are you thinking about, my brave brother? Did you bring the day of my funeral to your mind?”

“No, no!” Arrikos answered emphatically. “The day of your marriage did I bring to my head!”

“But...”, Sotiros was ready to mumble something, but the little boy Arrikos didn’t let him continue and caressed his half-bald from chemotherapy head, lovingly.

“Sit down...!” Arrikos said, “... and listen to me carefully! The greatest things that I have managed to achieve in my life till now, have been thought out at a moment whose duration was not more than five seconds. I did the same now and I’m sure that my thoughts will not betray me!”

“What do you mean?” Sotiros asked, with the perplexity drawn all over his pale, skinny face.

“Do you know how the ancient Greeks symbolized cancer, my dear brother?”

“With the crab, if I’m not mistaken”, Sotiros answered.

“You’re not mistaken at all, that’s how it is. With the crab did they symbolize it!” and Arrikos sent his thought to the Mount Taygetos again. “Some years ago...”, Arrikos continued, “... you had told me -and I have never forgotten your words, I’ll always keep them in my mind,- that you would even be a sailor in order to pay for my University studies”.

“Yes...”, Sotiros interrupted him, “...I wanted to do my duty. That’s how an elder brother who loves and protects his younger ones should think, but you haven’t needed my help till now. If you happen to need me, I’ll offer my help to you, despite the fact that I’m with one foot in the grave”.

These words of Sotiros, were something that armed the inner world of the little doctor with the strength of a Titan. Arrikos stood up and a terrifying

bang did he dart on the inanimate table. He opened a hole in the middle of it and with a loud yelp he cried out:

“I’ll cure you!”

Having unswerving faith within, which could even throw down the greatest obstacle that would appear in front of him, he took the inseparable people of his life with him, got into Sotiros’ car and reminding everyone of a champion of a rally race, they set off for Mount Taygetos.

The skillful “golden eagle” of the Arcadian land Arrikos, that even the steering-wheel trembled in his sinewy well-exercised hands, three times did he make his friends’ heart beat so strongly, until the time when they reached the age-long sacred mountain of nearby Laconia.

They left the car at the village of Anavriti and walked to the monastery, where the monk welcomed them with a feeling of pleasure and joy.

The hermit, read a feeling of agony in the children’s eyes, but it wasn’t until long when he learnt what was going on.

A feeling of deep sorrow came upon the monk, when he was informed about the distressing news, which was soon drawn on his lean and honest face.

Without losing time, the restless boy Arrikos, asked the monk to give him those ancient books that he had placed in the crypt and the bearded monk did it willingly.

With his eyes producing light of a thousand lighthouses, the blonde, curly-haired boy Arrikos, was attentively raking through the pages of the first book for the crab. Disappointed at not finding it in that book, he was turning over the first pages of the second book at a fast pace, when, at a moment, the expression of his face changed and with a searching look he nailed his eyes on the picture that showed a

crab. He had made the first step towards what he was most anxiously searching for, he had lit a dim light in the tunnel of the mysterious labyrinth. Some strange shapes nailed his attention and made him feel the need to use his brilliant mind to the top of its function.

For all his great effort, he didn't manage to give an explanation, so he put the book on the small table. Before leaving the book from his hands, a thought impelled him to bring the volume again to his knees. A brainwave sent him to the last pages of the book and solved the mystery.

"At last!" he stammered, heaving a sigh of relief and he did his Cross in devoutness.

There, he found what he was looking for, there he located what he was seeking. A whole page was now his, for what he had taken pains to find, for what he was most desperately longing for.

A human brain was depicted and right in the centre of it was a crab, which had its pincers opened and was eating part of the brain. A depiction that did not take the smart boy long to interpret.

"Here is cancer, that affects the brain!" he thought.

This was what the representation showed and Arrikos hadn't made any mistake in his contemplation at all.

Next to that, there was another shape with another brain, having a different color of the eaten by the crab part of the brain and at the right there was some grass, where the crab had breathed its last, showing its abdomen in the sky. Underneath, in a more vivid and bright color, that covered the entire spectrum with the same tone, there was another brain delivered from the crab's bite.

How many times did Arrikos wipe his all sweaty forehead and how many times did his friends ask him

if he had found anything, is impossible to count. The only thing we can say for sure is that the generous monk didn't stop, even for a moment, to pray to the Almighty and to do his Cross in devoutness.

In this sacred part of the universe, in a little monastery on the mighty wind-breaking Mount Taygetos, a would-be doctor was then writing the introduction of the new medical history. A talented intellect of the Arcadian land, there, on the glorious Spartan land, was drawing up a draft-contract with the nicely shaped fingers of his right hand and with his left one he had grabbed Death from its hair and squeezing its head on the paper, he bullied it violently to sign!

The undying and undefeated Attila of the Universe, that day lost the first battle in the passing of centuries, a poisonous arrow was subtracted from its quiver. But, would Arrikos manage to destroy all its arms rack with the poisonous arrows?

Showing to the monk that grass with the crab, Arrikos asked him:

“Do you know this plant, father?”

The monk looked at it, but nothing did it remind him of. Never again had he seen it in his life.

“We have to find it!” Arrikos said. “We have to search!”

And that's what they did.

They all sipped a cup of coffee and headed for the mountain to find the herb.

It got dark and still, they hadn't found anything. They returned to the monastery and relaxed. The restless Arcadian record-man, stuck into the books and only at dawn did he close his eyes for a while.

In the morning, they all went to the mountain again, for the grass. They didn't even leave an inch of the ground that they didn't search. But nothing was found again.

The next day, the same thing happened. It got dark, without result.

A week had passed and the herb hadn't been found yet. A feeling of anguish reigned in their heart and their strong desire steered their agony up.

The monk was continually praying to God and the boys not even for a moment did they take the fantastic form of the herb out of their eyes.

They had reached the highest peak of the mountain and a hundred meters in front of them, the all white church Saint Elias appeared.

A deafening wind made its presence felt, a frightening hurricane would send them to Sparta, as if they were leaves from a plane tree, if they hadn't had time to box themselves in the opening of a rock that was luckily found in front of them.

The storm abated and one after the other, they entered the country church with the monk entering first. They lit the hanging oil-lamps, they chanted, they bowed before the icons and then went outside again, to search for the herb.

About a hundred and fifty meters away from the country church, there were three small roads, one on their left, the other on their right and the third one straight ahead, made them pause for a while.

"Where are you going now?" said Nikitas. "Left, right or straight ahead?"

They all thought...

"Let's go right!" said the monk and we wish God would guide us.

They hadn't even moved from their position, when a strange cloud, passing above their heads and heading straight ahead, turned into a white dust, which formed a wide straight line when falling. A shudder passed over their bodies and they felt that their hide would be cut off from their flesh. Then, they all did their Cross.

They followed the straight line for many kilometers.

One moment, a hut next to a big threshing floor appeared in front of them and two white horses raised their heads and cocking their full of grace ears, they looked at the boys and neighed!

They hadn't even taken ten paces forward, when a dark-complexioned middle-aged man with curly-hair and a saggy moustache welcomed them.

They sat for a while and chatted.

Arrikos showed him the herb and asked if he knew it.

"I must have seen it at the tap of Koumoundouros", the man said. "But I'm not sure, but go and take a look. This way, a little further away, is the tap" and he indicated them the way.

They thanked him and left.

At a moment, the sound coming from the bells of a flock, reached their ears.

They walked forward.

The sound of the bells was now accompanied by the melodious hearing of a flute and a dog realized their presence and came at them.

"Trahili..." the shepherd's voice was heard. "...What's wrong with you?"

The dog shied and an old man with his sleeveless long overcoat on his shoulders and the flute in his hands, popped up in front of them.

"Who are you? What are you looking for?" the old man asked and ordered the dog to calm down.

They approached each other and said hello.

"We're looking for the tap of Koumoundouros!" they told him.

"Come with me!" the old man said and headed for the tap.

About fifty meters away from there and under a plane tree, a stone that had the shape of a tile, with a

two-headed eagle carved in its hallow, refreshed the shepherds, the goats and the sheep with its purling water for many years.

“This is the tap, you’re looking for...” the shepherd said “...and I am Mitsos Koumoundouros, but what do you want it for”.

Arrikos opened the heavy book and showed the herb to the old man.

“Do you know this herb, uncle Mitsos?” he asked him.

The shepherd turned his head at the left and sent his look to the ground.

“Can you see that bush over there? That’s what you’re asking for, my dear lad” and the old man indicated it with his hand.

Arrikos approached it and bended down to touch it, but he didn’t have time to do so, since the shepherd grabbed his hand quickly.

“Don’t touch it!” he told him. “It’s poisonous! My grandfather, who has died, used to call it ‘the Killer of the crabs!’”

“What do you mean?” Arrikos asked the old man, having felt a relief within.

“If a crab eats it, it’ll be dead in one minute and the strange thing is that, if the crab sits near it, the same luck will it have again in July and August. The rest of the months, nothing will happen to it, unless the crab eats the herb. But what do you want it for, tell me!”

“Are there any crabs around here, uncle Mitsos?” Nikitas asked.

“Wait and you’ll see!” the old man said and lifted a stone up, which was near the ditch that supplied the region with water, from the fountain.

But, instead of finding a crab, a snake almost bit his finger. Uncle Mitsos, trampled its head with his boot and threw it on a bush for eternal relaxation.

Then, he lifted another stone, but neither a snake, nor a crab was found.

But under the third one, two crabs were found.

“And now the experiment!” he told them amusingly, holding both of the crabs in his dark callous hands.

From a distance of half a meter, he threw the one of the crabs onto the grass and all of them waited, with their neck stretched and with an inclination of their body towards there.

The crab didn't have time to move, not even half a meter away from the bush and stayed motionless.

Motionless and dumb did everyone remain, until the time when Arrikos raised his hands and exclaimed:

“Oh, my God!”

The crab would never be able to do something like that, since only living creatures do have voice. The dead ones just rest dead”.

“Do you want me to try with the other crab, too?” asked the old man.

“No, no, uncle Mitsos!” Arrikos replied. “I would like to take the crab with me, alive!” he said, after having thought about something before.

“And what do we do now?” Nikitas asked. “How are we going to cut some of the grass, since it has much poison on it?”

“And how are we going to use it?” Menios added.

“Come here, so we can rest a little...” Arrikos replied, infused with hope. “...and we'll see” he said making for the tap, that near it there were seats made of tree-logs, where he sat to rest.

Priest Menelis was still looking at the crab and the herb.

“Well, well, well... what is nature!” he whispered and did his Cross. Everybody sat down.

The intelligent man Arrikos, wasn't worried about how he was going to carry the full of poison herb, but something more grave preoccupied him. What troubled him was how he was going to use that substance, so as to cure his brother of cancer.

It seemed thought, that the great scientist that wrote those books one thousand years ago, had too much brain in his cranium and, comparing it with Arrikos's brain, there must have been something common in their way of thinking.

The Arcadian student, thought for a while: "It's impossible for a mind like this that wrote the book, not to refer to the dose of the medicine that must be taken by the patient. But, where has he written it?"

He started looking for it in the pages of the heavy book, which had made everybody sweat while carrying it.

Arrikos was trying to interpret the intellect's way of thinking by concentrating on the shapes, in case he would find what he was looking for.

Much time had passed, but he hadn't managed to understand anything.

"Let's go", said the blonde "doctor" at a certain moment and rose from his seat.

He leaned over the tap, drank some purling water and washed his face.

"First, I will offer you a meal!" said uncle Mitsos. "And then, you can leave. Is it okay, my dear lads? I have Spartan rusks, skim-milk, cheese and tomatoes".

The old man went into the little shed and brought the meal.

Due to their being tired out, they thought that, that was the most delicious meal they had ever had, that's how they felt, since they were so hungry.

“What are you going to do with the herb, Arrikos?” the shepherd asked him. “Will you take it with you?”

“If I don’t find the right quantity of its ingredient, uncle Mitsos, I won’t make a move, since something like that would be a false move”, the lad replied. “The herb will stay here, but keep an eye on it”.

“Don’t worry”, said the old shepherd. “Behind that little slope...”, he said indicating, “...there are thousands of plants like this, there are whole acres of such plants”.

“It’s my turn to carry the book now!” Nikitas thought and took it in his hands.

As if by instinct, he opened one of the last pages and his eye fell on a pattern that depicted the sun.

“The sun is a kind of remedy, I suppose”, Nikitas told them. “It must cure a certain disease, too. Look, it’s illustrated here” and he showed them the patterns.

“It can’t be possible!” said Arrikos. “I can’t believe it!” and grabbed the book from Nikitas’ hands, giving him a smile of thanks.

The quick-witted boy Arrikos, had understood what the patterns that representing the sun stood for, even before grabbing the book from Nikitas’ hands.

That’s what we call “insight”. Minds like his were rare.

The sun wasn’t only on that page. It was on many other pages. The radiant sun was playing the role of the clock now and according to it would the patient take the medicine.

Arrikos, turned many pages so he could find the dose of the medicine, which was what concerned him.

He finally found it.

A sun at the left, which was rising and underneath a leaf from the herb, signified that the

patient should have an intake of the medicine equal to this, which was contained in only one leaf of the herb.

Adjacent to that, at the right, there was a man having the shivers, something that must have had a special meaning that Arrikos didn't manage to explain at that exact moment.

In the next picture, there was a sun in the centre of the sky and underneath were two leaves of a herb, which made it clear that at midday, the ill person should take the double dose of the medicine.

In the third picture at the right, there was a moon, something that brought out that the medicine had to be taken at night, but instead of the whole leaf, in that representation, there was only half of the leaf.

That's what the inventor dictated and that's what the sick should do.

But how many days would that therapy last? Even to this question did the highly instructed scientist give an answer, by using a simple method, which would be saved throughout the centuries. Eight days all and all were enough for the therapy. And because that certain man was by nature gifted with a high standard of intelligence, in spite of the passing of centuries, the methods that were used that time are still being used today and which, however, ceased to be practiced at a certain period of time.

As for the case of this kind of cancer, the interpretation could be considered easy, but for the cure of other organs suffering from cancer, as well as for other diseases, what was happening?

There were combinations that needed mind and time to be explained. Arrikos had both these privileges. But most of all, a deep desire of his, to offer something important to Humanity, to infuse people with hope and happiness, to rid them from

diseases, all this had armed Arrikos with power for the fulfillment of these goals.

The Greek record-man was imbued with that natural impulse that urged him to believe in this great vision. His instinct never deceived him.

“I will make my country the most shining star of the world!” he said many times. “I’ll turn it into an international institution of health”.

Only he knew what else his full of grey matter brain had imagined!

But, let’s go back to the tap of Koumoundouros.

In a safe way, Arrikos cut twenty-eight leaves of equal size – that was the number that was needed for the therapy – and placed them in a wooden box that was used for putting herrings in, a box that uncle Mitsos gave to him for the safer carriage of the grass and then, they all got ready for their return.

The road didn’t frighten them that time, they were going on a route that was smoother, since from that point on, the morphology of the ground changed.

They thanked the good-hearted shepherd, took leave of him and went downhill. A path led them to the village called Pikulianika, where George Aspiotis with his car, drove them to Anavriti, where they took their own car to return to their village in Tripoli.

The monk, returned from Anavritis to the monastery on foot, where the most precious for humanity material was hidden, having now a volume less, since Arrikos had taken it with him.

At a fast pace, as if they were competing in a rally race they returned to Arcadia and reached the first houses of their village, but an unpleasant incident was waiting for them. Old Sotiros, the most beloved one in the family of Arrikos, had breathed his last and the bell was tolling continuously.

The whole village grieved about that person’s death. It was him, who returning from abroad years

before had given all his property away to his fellow-villagers to his motherland. But the old man Sotiros, was not alive any more, he was dead.

Arrikos, having the wooden box in his hands and whose content was unknown what could offer for the future of Humanity, passed the gate of his house and made for his brother's bedroom.

Deeply ill as he was, Sotiros was sleeping. Arrikos didn't wake him up. He sat beside him and with a great sympathy looked at the meager, totally pale face of his brother. After a little while, sweat was rolling down Sotiros' forehead, his breath changed its rhythm and uneasiness was revealed by the countenance of his face. His breathing became stronger and his sweat was rolling down like a river.

"He must be having a dream!" Arrikos thought. "He must be dreaming about something very serious".

And suddenly, a cry shook the room violently.

"With strength!" and Sotiros suddenly opened his eyes. He squeezed Arrikos' hand gently and told him what he had seen in his dream, still holding his hand tightly.

"I saw...", he told Arrikos, "...that you were in our orchard and a peacock flew from somewhere, came in front of you and sat on your knees. You bent down and took it in your hands. You admired it so much! I was standing a little farther and was looking at you. As you were caressing the blue-green plumage of the bird, a totally dark, tall man that was at the rear of our orchard, approached you and asked for the peacock. You refused to give it to him. Then, he stretched his totally dark, long hand and tried to grab the bird from your hands. You turned left and let the peacock free. The bird came and sat in front of me. The dark-skinned man attempted to come near me, but you prevented him from coming. And then, you had a fight. Although he was more than two meters

tall, he didn't manage to beat you. Your arms and your body looked steely. You were very strong.

At a certain moment, he acted in a very cowardly way. He bit your neck, so he could suck blood from your caratid. You stretched your strong hands out and coiled them round his waist. Then, I shouted to you: **'With strength'**. You squeezed him so tightly, that you cut him into two pieces and you threw him on the ground!"

"And what happened to the peacock?" Arrikos asked. "Did it leave?"

"No, I took it in my hands, but then, I woke up!"

With a sparkling look, Arrikos looked at Sotiros and asked him then:

"Do you know what the peacock symbolizes, my dear brother?"

"No, but tell me!"

"The peacock is the symbol of immortality, that's why we find it in many churches, but how is it that you don't know it?"

"Arrikos! Arrikos!" his mother's voice was heard calling him.

Arrikos went out of Sotiros' room and said something to his mother, in reply.

In a little while, all of them had gathered in the kitchen talking.

"From tomorrow on, the therapy starts", Arrikos said at a moment and darted a searching but optimistic look at Sotiros.

They ate their food, chatted for some hours and all of them then, with the hope under their pillows, went to sleep.

Arrikos didn't want to rest. He didn't feel the need to sleep. This brilliant human being didn't stop searching the book at all.

It was getting on for daybreak and what his eyes had seen, those things that he saw and interpreted,

didn't leave him the mere doubt about the credibility of the content of the book. In one of the book's pages, he saw something, which had already happened to him, he was as sure as fate for that.

He was stirred.

A small brain and underneath, there were fruits, the same fruits as those from the rare tree of the old man Nicolas' garden. They were exactly the same. Next to that, there was the body of a child, which meant that the medicine had to be taken by a person in his childhood. And near it, there was another big brain, with a more vivid color.

He didn't need to think a lot for the explanation, he understood it immediately.

"This....", he soliloquized, "...is why from the last student I used to be in school, now I am the best one. This is the reason why nothing is incomprehensible to me. But what a great power do I have in my hands?" he thought. "What can I accomplish having this treasure!"

With the optimism surged up within, he put the book on the bedside-table very carefully and in a little while, he fell asleep.

In the morning, the sweet melodious chirp of the swallows that were standing on the wire for hanging clothes, in the garden, woke him up and "sent" him to prepare the first dose of the medicine.

Sotiros was still sleeping. Arrikos woke him up, he prepared two cups of coffee and the medicine and waited for him. In a short while, his very ill brother was with him and they both tasted their first sip of the coffee. The medicine was on the table and in a while, it would start to act, but before this was done, the God-fearing lad, did something that made his brother's eyes mist one more time. He knelt before the icon in prayer and with deep faith, whispered:

“Our Lady, help me cure my brother and one day I’ll build a church in the cause of yours!”

It was the second church that Arrikos had promised to Virgin Mary and he hadn’t forgotten about his first promise of course. He turned back and gave the medicine to his brother.

“Help me, my dear God!” Sotiros said and drank the bitter medicine.

They turned on the radio. Some news that they had been waiting for, for a long time and which was a great honour for their house, was a prize-giving to Arrikos.

A long time before, a universal competition in Sweden had been held, for the new Olympic Anthem that, from then on, would be chanted. Arrikos had taken part, with his own anthem and had won the first prize, so the new Olympic Anthem that was going to be sang in the Olympic games, would be the one that Arrikos had composed.

“What a great honour for our house! What a paramount glory for our country!” said Sotiros and caressed his brother’s nice head. “Will I be alive though, to hear it?” he added.

“Not only will you be alive, but on your chest will I hang my first gold Olympic medal!” answered the imbued with optimism, generous boy Arrikos.

Not even fifteen minutes had passed and Sotiros felt a shiver all over his body and almost lost consciousness.

“Hold me!” he said to Arrikos and Arrikos clasped him in his arms.

There, at that point, was proved what a sharp mind Arrikos had and how he dealt with a difficult situation like that. Although Sotiros was fading in his hands, Arrikos didn’t lose his composure and sent his mind to the representations of the book that showed a man shivering, after having taken the first dose of

the bitter medicine, something that he couldn't explain that certain moment when he had seen it.

"Don't be afraid", Arrikos told his brother. "It's the reaction of your body to the medicine, that's exactly how it's represented in the book".

In ten minutes' time, Sotiros had come round and Arrikos had reached – with the eyes of hope – the day when his brother would be cured and that sweet daybreak was he enjoying.

Eight days had passed and the medicine on the "marble threshing-floors" of Sotiros' body was fighting with Death. In a few days, we'll know who will lay his opponent on the ground. Who will moan and groan while falling down.

In two months' time, the Olympic games were to be held in our country and Arrikos, together with the other boys, were getting ready.

The future demigod had believed deep in his conscience, that he would cure Sotiros and his thought was found on the day when his brother would have a gold Olympic Medal on his chest, something that Arrikos had promised to him. This was in his mind for that moment. This was what he was dreaming of.

Eighteen days had passed since the end of the therapy and Sotiros, holding a hose in his hands and before nature had revealed the whole sun, was found watering the flowers in his yard. He was cheerful and much stronger that day and the fresh air of victory "caressed" his face. He had had the first sweet taste of redemption, he had felt the first signs of his salvation. In a little while, he would know the final result, well-being, gradually superseded sickness and he was restored to his strength again. His pale, thin face, regained its natural color and the weight of his body increased. The range of Arrikos' glory increased, too, and his fame would expand on an international basis.

Friday morning and Arrikos, together with Sotiros, were visiting the X-ray Laboratory of their friend Louis Papadacos, in Tripoli. An axial tomography would be the evidence of whether or not the medicine had come up to expectations and to what degree point.

The axial-tomography was completed and in three hours' time the doctor would have a clear picture of the result.

They visited their friend Panagiotis Katsafanas and returned to the radiologist on time. When they entered the waiting room, the doctor was standing saying goodbye to a patient and immediately called them to his office.

"God has blessed you!" said the radiologist. "A real miracle has been worked! There has been thorough disappearance of the cancer, not even a trace has been left!" and he sent his mind to his uncle who was at his last gasp.

The scene that followed will permanently stand out in the doctor's memory in his whole life.

The two brothers embraced. The lads were crying but Arrikos' mind, whose inner world is like an angel's, was found in hospitals and clinics, giving hope to the sick. He was sure that he had tamed the scourge which from ancient times was mowing people down, he was sure that the rapacious disease was under his control.

When they came round, they revealed to their friend, the radiologist, that the therapy had been performed with the use herbs and the doctor told them about his uncle who was suffering from cancer in the liver and asked Arrikos to help the ill person regain his health.

"Something tells me...", Arrikos said, "...that this herb isn't for all the forms of cancer, because only the brain is mentioned in the book. If it was

compatible to all forms of cancer, why was only the brain depicted?"

"Do something for my uncle, Themis, too", the doctor said. "He's my mother's brother. He was the one who gave money for my studies! Help him please". The boys said goodbye to the doctor and left. With two, very light but of durable material wings on their shoulders, both of them, like two-headed eagles behaved...

The extremely intelligent boy, talented even in poetry now – after being awarded a prize for his anthem – had entered an unrealistic, continuous function and was drawing up thousands of plans, because he was sure, that having those books in his hands, he would become almighty. He wanted, however, to strike a balance in the world and had to use them in his own best and fair way. If they were found into the hands of ruthless people, the game would be totally lost.!

Arrikos dreamt of humanity to become a glorious Paradise... "The time has come for the fat cows", he thought. Arrikos knew what he was doing. He knew what he was holding in his hands, perfectly well.

"We have to secure the books, even better", Arrikos told his brother, as they were returning to their house. "We'll go and take them from there and put them somewhere else to study them".

They reached the village and entered their house. Their parents were waiting for them at the gate, but what happened is impossible to describe. In a short while, Menios and Nikitas were with them and all together were talking about the important incident, exulting. They decided to visit the monk again, to take as many of the precious Medicine books as they could.

The next day, they reached the Mount Taygetos.

Priest Menelis, learning about the full recovery of Sotiros, exclaimed”.

“You are great my Lord and your work is admirable!” and he knelt before a priceless icon to praise God.

The men announced their desire to the monk.

“If it is for the good of Humanity...” the generous priest said. “...take all of the books and leave. But beware! God will punish us if we don’t help the poor and the underprivileged”.

The mind of Arrikos who had his moral boosted, was now to the uncle of the radiologist who was suffering from cancer and Arrikos was taking pains to help him.

“All of you, search...”, Arrikos said, “...in the pages of the books and wherever you see a crab, tell me!”

They were still on Mount Taygetos.

All of them were searching the pages of the books and the size of their pupils changed from the one moment to the other.

Quite a long time had passed and Menios managed to locate a crab. That crab, though, wasn’t on a liver but on a stomach. But the doctor’s uncle was suffering from cancer of the liver and not of the stomach.

They continued the searching and Arrikos himself located the ill human organ and started to investigate it. This time, the therapy wasn’t so simple, because it had to do with many combinations of the herbs – the killer of the crab wasn’t absent of course – and much more difficult was the analogy and the way the sick person would have to take the medicine.

It was the first time that Arrikos hadn’t managed to find a solution to a problem, within a reasonable period of time. A labyrinth of combinations and prohibitions nailed his attention for

hours, but nothing did he accomplish and he got in despair!

They carried three more books to the car with great toil, and after saying goodbye to the monk, they returned to their village, in Tripoli. They placed the precious books in Arrikos' room and Menios with Nikitas, not even for a moment did they leave Arrikos alone. All of them were trying to give an explanation, but they had great difficulty in it.

It was deep midnight when they decided to return to their homes. Arrikos had given way to a spite, a strong feeling of competition for victory had spread within him.

«I won't sleep...», he said to himself, «...if I don't manage to give an explanation!»

The day started to break and a thought, whose duration was not more than five seconds, pierced the membrane of his fantasy, reached the chamber of his memory and began to gel.

“At last!” Arrikos exclaimed and sprang out of his seat.

He had given the explanation!

With the wreath of victory as his pillow, he fell asleep. That victory of Arrikos was of great importance, because the liver, due to its numerous functions, was considered the central laboratory of the human body and the fact that it had many functions entailed that its cure was very complicated.

The bright mind of his thought, managed to find a solution in the end.

But what a great science was this for that time, what had Man succeeded in doing! But also, what did Arrikos “hold in his hands!”

The sun was rising when Arrikos woke up.

“If I manage to cure the liver too...”, he thought, “...all the other things will be a piece of cake for me.

Help me, my dear God! Work a miracle once more”, he soliloquized.

Not a long time had passed, when the two inseparable friends of his, were with him. That day, they had to search for the herbs. Noone knew about those herbs. Noone had ever seen them in their life. But the sacred mountain Taygetos –Who knows whose god’ s seeds had sprouted up there– did its duty again. That’ s the place where all the herbs were found and the very difficult therapy started.

For the ten following days, Arrikos would be in anguish. For all that period, he would be under great stress. If he managed to cure that ill person too, who knows what he would be having in store for us for the Olympic games that were coming? Who is able to know, to which height he would order the people in charge to place the bar for him?

The first dose of the medicine was in the ill person’ s stomach, without a reaction to be expected. Everything was going with a swing and the ill person continued the therapy to the letter.

Arrikos and the other boys were leaving for Athens in a while, since the preparations for the Games were to start and they had to be there.

On Virgin Mary’ s Day, the cure was reaching its end. In a few days, the first signs would show up, if there would be any of course.

On the fifteenth of September, the beginning of the Games was to take place and all of Greece was heartbeating. Themis’ organism was fighting with the disease and some faint signs were ready to send out a hopeful omen.

Arrikos, Menios and Nikitas were at the last stage of their preparation for the Games and waited in readiness.

The first twenty-four-hours of September had passed and Themis, down there in Arcadia, had gained the first days of his new life.

A telephone call from him sent them an encouraging message. He let them know his sense for positive results. The check-up that he had gone through didn't show anything the alarming.

"I want a thorough check-up of yours, until the time when I take the pole in my hands again", said Arrikos.

"Of course...", the man replied, "...but I am already sure about the result and I have regained my strength as well!"

It's September 10th and the radiologist was holding the tomography of his uncle. He was looking cautiously for traces that may exist from the disease, but nothing was found. Arrikos had sent that disease off and carved a new way for the salvation of humanity, placing the first foundations for the heavy walls that would block the entrances of the cemeteries of the whole Universe.

It was noon and Arrikos with his two inseparable friends and his coming back from Hades brother, were found in the flat in Grigoriou Kidonion Street at Aigaleo, chatting. The four walls of the living room were covered with miscellaneous medals that the great glories of the Greek athletics had won at meetings and other events.

Arrikos seemed pensive and his devoted brother, who always stood by him, realized that something was troubling him, so he asked him:

"What is in your mind again, where have you sent your thought? To the smashing of your personal record, you must have sent your mind, is it right?"

"No! no!" Arrikos answered with a very serious look. "I broke my personal record the day when I beat cancer hollow. In the era of the permanent holding of

the Olympic games in our country have I sent my mind”.

“With a mind like yours...”, Nikitas told him, “...and with a titanic power in your hands” – meaning the priceless books – “you can accomplish everything!”

The generous boy Arrikos, looked at him in the eyes and answered:

“Without you, I wouldn’t be able to manage anything. Man can’t succeed in anything without somebody behind him. Our very genuine friendship arms me with energy. This is what gives me power”.

- With his unparalleled morale, Arrikos had exceeded all the limits. Now, he was getting ready to cut across national borders, too! –

IV

Galloping in front of Glory

The opening day of the Olympic games was close at hand and the country was swarming with thousands of foreigners. Athens was vibrating during of preparations. A new stadium of a hundred thousand seats, that had been erected in Attica, would soon test its endurance. It would prove to us the competence of its constructor.

According to the new regulations, the country that would win the more gold medals would be the one that would welcome the next Games. Our country had been bent on attaining this goal of its. Our athletes had very much believed in this supreme vision. In a little while, we would get to know the results.

September 15th and the radiant sun, with a childish diffusing smile, covered all the Greek territory. The Attic sky had turned away the few clouds that were in it and only numerous swallows flew acrobatically in the deep-blue canopy of the sky.

People, like hungry ants made their way towards the super modern stadium, where the beginning of the Games would take place in a while.

It was a quarter to twelve and the heart of the people was beating anxiously. In five minutes' time, that wonderful technological achievement, through a satellite, would reach all the longitudes and latitudes of the earth. It would go into all people's houses all around the planet.

We were at the crowning touch of the opening ceremony and the touch of the Olympic torch was a fact. The top athletes presented themselves and the word "**PEACE**" formed, after the geometrical position that they took.

Arcadia flirted with Glory.

The Olympic Anthem that Arrikos had written was being chanted. Thousands of eyes had misted, innumerable bodies felt shiver. But there, on a tier, somebody's eyes were crying continuously. Someone's body was trembling as if shivering with cold. It was Sotiros, who some time before, had believed that he would never witness the Olympic games, he had believed that the end of his life was close at hand. But the man who was in front of Sotiros at that exact moment, with many other athletes and whose anthem was heard on the loudspeakers, kept Sotiros with him, he raised him from death. How could Sotiros not cry now? How could he not have the shivers?

The anthem had already been sung and five hundred white doves, as if directed by a hand made five rounds above the stadium and disappeared. The unity of the ancient and Modern Greek world, as the anthem as well as the peaceful character of the Olympic games that were taking place in our country, were something really special.

In a few days, we would get to know whether we would experience that kind of honour in our country again, or this vision of ours would faint forever.

The first day of the Games, was in honour of Baron Pierre de Coubertain, who had thought of

using the ancient Greek view, for the promotion and creation of contemporary Olympic Games. Reciting of poems and dances, took place too.

After a number of lectures that Coubertain had given in U.S.A, Great Britain and France, on the 25th of November 1892, he had announced, in Sorbonne, that the Ancient Olympiads would be repeated in a modern way. On the 23rd of July, 1894, at the end of a convention that had lasted six days, where representatives of fifteen countries had taken part, the repetition of the Olympiads had been officially declared.

The first Olympic games took place in Athens, in 1896, from the 24th of March till the 2nd of April, with an entry of two hundred and eighty five athletes, who represented fourteen countries in forty-two specialties of ten different athletic events.

It's worth mentioning that three later Olympiads hadn't taken place, because during that period, the Two World Wars had broken out. All the other Olympiads were held successfully and each of them was welcomed by a different city, as it had been decided at the convention of Sorbonne in 1894.

Paris and London were the only cities that welcomed the Olympic games twice. Our country, for the past few years, had asked for the Olympic games to be permanently held here in Greece, where they had started. But the rules had changed – according to the spirit of the author of this book of course – and the procedure was starting for the election of the country, which, according to the most gold medals, would welcome the Games forever.

The opening ceremony had finished and all the people attending the Games were holding a souvenir-medal in their hands and having their mind focused on the next day, which was virtually the first day of

the games, were filtering out of the stadium in good order.

September 16th and in many competing fields, the athletes were making their best efforts. The smart marketing plan, sent the hundreds of sight-seeings of our country to the whole of Universe.

Millions were the eyes that were watching the efforts of the well-drilled athletes, full of admiration. The adrenaline that flew into the athletes' and sport-fans' body was such, that noone could imagine.

The glories of Greek athletics were making super-human efforts. They had given their word of honour, that they would fight with the rest of the big strong men of the world, they would try to win the more gold medals.

The records one after the other were beaten and that unprecedented rivalry of the talented athletes would remain a landmark in the history of the Olympic games.

It was the 17th of September and five gold medals had the fine up-standing lads of the glorious Greek territory won till then, using their potentials and only them. In a few days, the medals would be hanging on their lion-hearted chests.

The beautifully figured girls for the sixty meters dash, were getting ready for the start. A "bang!" was heard and Athanasia Panopoulou from the village Vourvoura of Tripoli, like an arrow sprang and in six and a half seconds broke one more record, offering a gold medal to her country.

A wild and noisy celebration made the stadium tremble.

The time for the high jump event had come and Menios was getting ready for his first attempt. The bar was high up at 2.35cm and the top athlete of this sport, like a swallow that flapped its wings he passed above it, after making a tumble in the air and fell to

the mattress then. But he had a rival who was very strong and who passed above the bar in his first attempt so easily and quickly that noone had time to realize. The bar was now up at 2.40cm and Menios was getting ready. He took a run-up and “took off”. The bar was still at its place and the fine lad was again on the mattress. An expression of puzzleness was on the face of the foreign athlete and with a nod of his, they understood that he wanted the bar higher. The bar was at 2.45cm now and the agile man was up in the Skies. The competition was at its peak and the sports-fans in the stadium felt anxious.

But what would Menios do?

The height was great and the opponent was unbeatable. But the lad had given his word to win the gold medal and he was now fighting for it.

At that moment, what came to his mind was what Arrikos used to tell them some years before.

“If you believe in something..”, their friend Arrikos had said, **“...you’ll accomplish it for sure! If you don’t believe in it, then just don’t make the attempt!”**

And this, was what came to Menios’ mind at that exact moment and he did so. He called into play all his powers and ordered the bar to be placed 2.55cm high. Arcadia’s “pure-bred horse” was concentrating. With his imagination, he was found quite above the bar and was getting ready. At that moment, a loud voice coming from the bottom of his heart, ordered him:

“Even if the bar is placed at the height of three meters, you have to pass above it, without even touching it! **For the Glory of Greece you are committing yourself to manage this!**”

Like a golden eagle, the lad is “flattering and flying. The untouched bar stayed unmoved at its place and the medal would be hanging on his well-

exercised, hairy chest in a few days. The stadium was trembling! The other athlete, despite his efforts, didn't make it. He failed in all his attempts.

A piece of news that came from Faliro, excited the spectators in the stands which were luckily constructed of excellent materials. The thorough bred stallion of the Greek land, Andreas Adonopoulos, from Mygdalia of Gortinia, broke the world record in the 400m obstacle race and one more gold medal was added on the score board. Athens trembled as if by an earthquake those days, Greece vibrated. Our excellent prepared athletes sent messages of glory to our ancestors, and our forefathers were proud and happy of their descendants. In a little while, they would also know about the size of the Glory's wreath, which would decorate the head of the Greek children.

The Greek children manifested an unyielding competing strain. They wanted to keep their oath in the extreme. Their dream was to win the more gold medals and their passion was unrestrained.

The competition was at its height and new records were set. Some people who had made history in world athletics, were starting to lose their glamour. Smaller countries were getting into the Game of claiming the next Olympic games and Athens was fighting for the torch.

That unprecedented emulation seemed to carve new roads for future International Athletics. The new World treaty for the Olympic Games – by all appearances – had the pure competition as a result, something that was significant and desirable, an issue of positiveness. The gold medal of a Greek woman at the triple event, was sacred that morning, to the goddess Athena, the protectress of ancient Athens. That woman was beautiful Danae -Arrikos' beloved one- and a student at the School of Medical Science in the Capital of Greece.

It was September 24th and having won nine gold medals, we had well-founded hopes for our dream to become true. But that day, was the day when another figure of Tripoli, with his very strong hand, would prove to everybody what class he belonged too. It was robust Nikitas that it would be difficult for his opponents to confront him.

The time came and the first shot was a fact. A star of this event had made the fans' heart beat anxiously, since he exceeded the limit of 98,4 meters, that was the record and he approached the 100 meters. Silence reigned in the stadium.

And then, another javelin thrower gathered speed and made his first attempt. The fans were frozen, they were dumbfounded. The javelin was thrown 100 meters far and the lad upped in the air rejoicing over his success.

Silence reigned everywhere. Not even a whisper was heard. Having to fight two giants, what would Nikitas manage to do? He took the javelin in his hands, balanced it in his palm with accuracy and got ready. He concentrated for quite a few seconds and started.

A tremendous shout came out of his mouth, making the stadium tremble and the javelin, after making a whistle in the air as if it were a strong north wind, went farther than 10 meters and embedded itself into the ground.

A stout assistant of the stadium barely had the time to protect himself from the javelin and was lucky that he was not found pinned on the ground, as if he were a traditional Greek souvlaki with the spit. He would never imagine that the javelin would go so far, as to reach him.

The stadium trembled as if an earthquake shock had taken place and the chanting "**GREECE - GREECE!**" echoed in the ears of the people on the

tiers for quite a long time. Nikitas raised his hands gallantly and waved everyone a greeting. The other two lads, after coming round from this unexpected result, they competed with each other for the other two medals.

The gold medal belonged to Nikitas and to his country.

Nine plus one equals ten. A number that classified us in the first rows of the scoreboard, among the first three athletes that, according to appearances, would be the contenders for the next Games.

We were approaching the end and the unfair competition had taken tremendous dimensions. Terror was caused by the degradation of those who used various illicit means against friendly competition, in order to obtain benefits for their country.

Some countries, not being able to participate in the race of the contenders for the gold medals who competed by using legal means, took advantage of the power of money to obtain these medals. Up to a point, they achieved their goal. A great country had reached the top and after that one, Greece followed – the country of Great Alexander -. That country had won twelve gold medals, we had won eleven and it was one day before the end of the Games.

A girl from Sparta, Vassiliki Katsihti, an athlete of the long-jump event, sent a message to all the great leaders on the earth, proving that down there in Laconia, at the foot of the perennial and sacred Mount Taygetos, the undying ancient Greek spirit still existed and led the athletes.

“Friendly competition and only this!” she answered when they offered her two hundred thousand dollars so as not to perform as well as she

could and betray her country, in order to solve the financial problem of her life.

With a jump that reminded you of a hunted deer, she went farther than 7,5 meters and placed our country to the top of the pyramid. Now, Greece had just one opponent country that was there competing, after having used illegal means.

With twelve gold medals for each country, the two contender countries were waiting for the results.

September 26th and millions of people from all places of the world, were glued to their screens, full of anxiety, waiting for the final competition.

Three sports-events had remained and in a little while, we would know to which country the torch would go, so as to open the next Olympic games.

An athlete, who was a yachtsman in the Aegean Sea, Elias Katsihtis, won glory for the Greek sails, gathering the greatest score and sent our country alone to the top. We had two more events, though. Nothing was finished yet.

In the jam-packed stadium of a hundred thousand seats, three women were ready to throw their sphere as far as they could. The competition was of crucial importance, because if the Greek girl won the medal, we had already taken the ticket for the next Olympiad to be held in our country. If not, only the pole-jump event could secure that victory to us. Only to that event could we rest our hope.

Everything was ready and the first girl shot her sphere. The athlete of our country, made a wonderful throw of the sphere, but in a while, the third athlete sent it farther than 23 meters and set a new world record offering her country one more gold medal, since the other girls didn't even manage to approach her good score, despite their good attempts.

A hundred thousand people were on the stands and they were having difficult moments. Our country,

having won thirteen gold medals was on the top, together with the other contestant country and the heart of the people of the two countries had already increased its pulse dangerously. Endless silence reigned in the stadium of Athens, but at a moment, the chant **“HELLAS – HELLAS!”** was heard when a fine up-standing robust lad with cypress-like carriage appeared.

It was the flower of pure Arcadian land, Arrikos, who, in a little while, would compete with the other two public idols of the pole-jump event, so it could be made clear to us, which country was going to welcome the next Olympic Games, whose anthem of the two countries would echo in the Skies.

Two hundred thousand eyes were nailed on the three stars of the athletic event. And how many billions of eyes were watching through their TV all around the world was difficult to know.

A more critical moment in the history of such events was difficult to have taken place again. If the third athlete managed to win the gold medal, he would send our country to the choosing by lot, together with its adversary and then luck would play the most important role and not the capability of the athletes.

The two countries that had the hope to welcome the Olympic Games for ever, had reposed their hopes in the two “giants” of the athletic event and the people that were glued to the screen of their TV, were waiting with superlative anxiety.

Stir, uneasiness and a feeling of impatience were on the full of their production.

The bar was 6,20cm high, waiting. The first athlete was getting ready for his jump. –He was the third one, who -because of his previous efforts that were not satisfying- regardless of his attempt now, would not be able to be the winner– He gathered

speed and wasn't late to prove that his two other competitors would have great difficulty in doing as well as he did.

The spectators, in spite of that critical moment for our country, applauded, proving our Greek civilized instincts.

Our great adversary was having turn now and was getting ready. A top athlete, with great capabilities, gathered speed and as if he were a spring he jumped and passed above the bar. The heart of the Greeks was throbbing and innumerable people did their cross.

An agile, full of muscles man, a student at the Medical University of Athens, was getting ready for his jump and all the stadium was shaking. He gathered speed and passed quite above the bar. At his coming down though, he hit the instrument and made it fall.

The spectators were frozen, not even a breath was heard. The people were sunk in sorrow and disappointment. Not even a word was heard. The first athlete was getting ready for his new attempt and the bar was an inch higher, since Arrikos did not make his two other attempts with the bar at 6,20 cm. He gathered speed and the bar was moved and fell from its place. The other lad, with the pole in his hands, was ready, too. Like a bullet from a gun, he jumped. But, although he passed the bar, he hit it with his leg and made it fall on the mattress, making it disappointed with the lad.

Every moment was full of agony, so it was not advisable for those whose heart didn't function well, that they should experience such moments.

Arrikos, with the pole in his hands, gathered speed and was "launched" like a rocket, but although the bar once again was quite under his body, it was

touched by his leg again and fell down. He had only one more attempt left. What was he going to do?

The other two lads made one more attempt, each with the bar at 6,21cm and failed. Arrikos left his last attempt for a greater height. But the same was done by his two fellow-competitors and now they all had one more attempt and were getting prepared.

They put the bar 2cm higher and the first athlete concentrated for quite a few seconds and as if he were a chased beast, he started. The pole was embedded in the ground and the athlete was "launched". But, unluckily for him and his country, he didn't manage to pass above the bar, so the great chance for him, for the time being, was lost. He was waiting for the other two athletes' jump in agony.

The other lad, a hard-beaten adversary, was ready for his last attempt. He gained momentum and "took off". But unluckily for him, too, the bar was found on the mattress, together with his body and Arrikos was now left alone for his last attempt, which was the final criterion of whether the next games were going to be held in Greece or not.

The most critical moments of the Games were taking place and the breath of the Greeks was taken away. Millions of eyes from all the parts of the world were nailed on the nice-figured body of the young Greek, waiting.

Silence reigned in the stadium!

A hundred thousand people were on the tiers, but not even a noise was heard. Their heart was changing its beat dangerously and Arrikos, having the pole in his hands was making his last, preparatory movements.

A tremendous shout was heard, coming from the spectators' stands, from Sotiros' mouth and the phrase "**to the Clouds**" was the very best for our

young athlete, who at that exact moment the date of the next Games would determine.

Like a bolted thoroughbred stallion, he burst forward and the pole was embedded in the ground. What happened at that moment, not even a daydreaming mind could ever conceive. It was impossible for a man to believe it, if he hadn't witnessed it. Like a small rocket was Arrikos launched and when his pole took its vertical line, he became an extension of it, balancing his body on top of it as if he were an acrobat.

Never a scene, as magnificent as that one, had ever been witnessed by anybody in competitions.

He bent his hand a little, pretending that he wouldn't pass above the bar, making the Greeks' heart beat anxiously and with a wonderful aerostatic movement, he offered Greece the gold medal and the chance to welcome **the next Olympic Games** in our country. The cheer "**HELLAS - HELLAS!**", coming from one hundred thousand mouths, reached the great rock of Acropolis and from there, it echoed through Attica.

The two-headed eagle of our country, holding the Greek flag in his hands, like a chased deer was he rejoicing over his victory in the stadium.

Such moving moments, the Greeks had never felt before. A would-be-doctor from Arcadia, offered them the best, what they were waiting for with such a great desire.

- **"Boisterous wind" of our country, great-winged "golden eagle", how could you not become the idol? How could you not earn an indelible place in our heart? -**

In this triumphal way did the Games end. Our country was crowned with Glory, the athletes took their medals and the Anthem - which the "winged" doctor, Arrikos, had written by himself - was sung:

**You Ancient Greeks
with the great spirit,
who have given the good example
of friendly competition,**

**Come here today
or send your angels
to see or to learn
about your glorious descendants.**

**We are here today
standing on the rostrum,
to remind everybody that the OLYMPIC spirit
will never fade.**

**The immortal spirit
that remains throughout the centuries,
is a sparkle which becomes
a blazing flame for the events.**

**The spirit leads nations
as well as enlightens them
and decorates the body
and the soul of the athletes.**

**Eternal Ancient spirit,
impregnated with peace,
you are an endless spring,
a civilized spirit.**

**You are the joining link
which connects the past
with the present
and conciliates peoples.**

**You wreath with laurels
unfading for years
and cultivate healthy competition in life
forever and ever.**

The people in all the cities and the villages of the country filled the streets celebrating. That frenzied celebration, which the stars of our country caused, due to their fervent will, lasted two whole days and nights.

When things settled down, the Mayor of Skiritida, Mr. Kostas Katsafanas, in order to honour the four gold Olympic Champions, Athanasia, Arrikos, Menios and Nikitas, who had won glory for their country, spared money and organized a celebration whose magnificence many people envied. They slaughtered five hundred lambs and the people gathered from the nearby places, exceeded ten thousand in number. All the church bells of the village, were ringing joyfully for quite a while and three cannon-shots fired from the rock of the Holy Apostols, gave the signal for the celebration to start. The bandstand, decorated in a wonderful and unconventional way, presented something unusual. The wonderful band of Spyros Polykandriotis, a beloved friend of the Olympic Champions, proved how important he considered the fete of that night to be, since he very often extolled the event that night. It's needless to say that the band gave the concert without accepting to be paid. Spyros' personality was well known to everybody, he always laid more stress on culture than on money.

Everything was ready for the fete to start. At a very big table, Arrikos, Nikitas, Menios, Danae and Athanasia were sitting with their relatives and

friends. Among them, were the gym-instructors Thomas Mandros, Thanasis Georgakopoulos, Vagelis Matzouranis, -who was the President of the Athletic Association of Vourvoura and who had pushed forward another Olympic Champion in the javelin throwing in 1908 in London and who's name is Haralambos Zouras-. Kostas Giannopoulos was there, too, as well as Kostas Brousalis, married to the local girl Kiki, the retired teacher Antonis Panagiotopoulos and the former instructor of the four Olympic Champions and the beloved woman to all of them Georgia Kouppari with her husband George Panopoulos - parents of the crowned with laurels athlete, Athanasia-.

The excellent teacher rose from her seat and with that graceful gait of hers, she got on the bandstand. She sent her greetings to the crowd and delivered a wonderful speech, extolling the adored young athletes for whose sake was that celebration being held, on that special day.

After she had made her speech, she added:

“Have a good time and I hope this municipality will win more glory one day”.

“But, does greater glory exist?” the people exclaimed and all of them cheered.

As the humble teacher was resuming her seat, the beloved to everybody Chris Javelas, who was sitting at the next table with friends and relatives of his, stood up, congratulated her and asked to say a few words, too, about the fantastic athletes who had managed to wreath with laurels the humble but glorious village and make its name known worldwide.

But he didn't manage to say anything, since he was deeply touched, so he was made to resume his seat. He leaned over the head of his nephew George Agelopoulos, the General of the armored units, he whispered something to him and the General stood

up and with the gait and carriage of a genuine Greek, he headed for the bandstand and took the microphone in his hands. In a way that revealed a simple and civilized man, he offered a fine greeting to everybody and made an announcement:

“Mr. Chris Javelas,...”, he said, “...fascinated by these triumphal events in honour of the Olympic Champions of our municipality, is donating his house to the village, for the accommodation of the Health Centre, or whatever else serves his fellow-villagers”.

Chris Javelas, the benefactor, was imbued with the greatest satisfaction of his life that moment. And that was because all the Olympic Champions stood up and thanked him by kissing him lovingly and full of excitement and the crowd made the square shake with ovation.

That day, Arrikos’ grandfather who was approaching his one hundred years of age, led the dance first. Some years before, he had offered Arrikos his own gold medal, wishing that his grandson becomes an Olympic Champion one day. The old man danced in an upstanding way to the song of the village, which Arrikos had written for those who had emigrated to foreign lands and which Nadia Karagianni, a singer from Arcadia, was singing with her rare crystal clear voice.

What happened that night was very difficult to describe. At a certain moment, the Olympic Champions were found leading the dance, each one with their company. The musical instruments were playing the song “*Androutsos’ mother is glad, Diakos’ mother is proud*” and our glories made the crowd applaud continuously, with their dynamic figures. Such a spectacle is rarely met nowadays.

Such a celebration has never taken place in the past centuries. The people enjoyed fascinating

moments that night, forgetting about their worries and troubles caused by all sorts of problems.

Only one person was not feeling tranquil within. Only one of them was simultaneously present and absent.

It was Arrikos...

He was there body but not heart and soul. His mind was in hospitals and clinics, he imagined people suffering from the accursed disease and felt uneasy.

“We have the medicine in our hands.”, he thought, “There is no time to waste. We have to hurry up and save as many dying people as we can”.

When the day broke, the crowd gradually started leaving and the people of the village were back to their normal tempo of life.

In the afternoon, Arrikos invited his inseparable friends Nikitas and Menios, for something very important that he wanted all of them to discuss. He thought it over for many days and was trying to find the best way possible, for the spread of the application of the therapy to the sick.

“If I give the medicine to the pharmaceutical companies...”, he thought, “...I’ll earn millions, but I’m not quite sure that the medicine will be given to the dying people and I don’t know what else may happen. Many things can happen. We have experienced a lot of things in this voracious world”.

Arrikos the humanist, was not wrong at all, many things could happen.

The three of them were found talking at Arrikos’ house. They were talking about the way to grant the medicine and the cure. The former cancer patient Sotiros was there with them and he looked like a teenager now, after his full recovery. Nikitas suggested that they should sell the medicine to companies and use the money on humanitarian aid. Menios suggested giving the medicine to a

pharmaceutical company and build hospitals with the money, where poor and indigent people would regain their health.

Sotiros, who some time before was found with one foot in the grave, told them:

“I suggest that this piece of news, should spread worldwide, so that those who are laid up, being at their last gasp, can be cured”.

Arrikos, thought for a while, he wiped the sweat off his brow and said magniloquently:

“This is what we’re going to do. To make it known to everybody so as for the dying or about to die people to be cured first and immediately”.

At that moment, the man who some time before was holding the ticket for his admission to the cemetery of his village, looked his little, in age only, brother Arrikos straight in the eyes, sent his mind to the bowels of the earth and with misted eyes, he clasped him in his arms and told him:

“Saver of humanity, can you remember that dream of yours where you were riding an all white horse, on the marble threshing floor? I have just found the interpretation of your dream”.

“You are right...”, the lad answered “...this is how that tremendous dream can be explained”.

- But still they hadn’t given the whole explanation -.

The following night, all the channels on TV had the cure of the accursed disease by the Olympic Champion Arrikos, as their first item. They also showed Arrikos talking about the medicine and the procedure and making them known all over the world, so that there wouldn’t be a shrewd one who would exploit an ill person.

The piece of news, reached all the parts of the world very quickly and the road leading to the sacred

Mount Taygetos, where the divine herbs grew, was congested with cars.

A journalist, who asked Arrikos why he hadn't taken advantage of the miraculous medicine, in order to become the wealthier man in the world, received the following answer:

“Because my parents and my brother Sotiros, taught me that I must love people more than money. That's why I didn't sell the medicine and I decided to give it away”.

A year later, there was no form of cancer that could not be cured. All of them were dealt with, as if they were a mere cold.

- You, fine upstanding young boy of the glorious Greek land, you who have saved the sick, try to prevent the extinction of Mankind. You can do it! You are gifted with the wit that is needed, so you have the power too, to achieve this -.

V

“Fluttering towards Taygetos”

It's April of the next year, the boys were in the fourth year of University and a World Medical Congress was being held in London, firstly to honour the Greek saviour of peoples and secondly to think out a way to cure a new disease which attacked a great number of the population worldwide, making the affected people become blind within a short period of time.

Balkans were sunk into the maelstrom of war and the supposed protectors of peoples were killing innocent civilians, they destroyed hospitals which would hospitalize ill and wounded people and compelled people to leave their homes and become refugees.

In a spotless huge room of a hotel, the top scientists had gathered and were waiting for the banquet to start.

The introducer started the procedure.

Nikitas, Menios and Danai were present, as well.

“We are here, dear friends...”, said the middle-aged grey-haired, bearded introducer, “...to honour the student and great **Greek humanist** for his immense offer to mankind, as well as to think out a way to cure the new scourge which attacks a great number of the population of our planet”.

The introducer said many other things and concluded by saying:

“We will ask, our friend from Norway, Mr. Xamsoun Knout, to come to the rostrum to deliver his speech in honour of the Greek saver”.

The Professor of Medicine went on the forum and started his speech. At a certain moment he said:

“The enlightened student of Medicine, succeeded in ‘taming’ the disease, something that for many years, other scientists all over the world had not managed to accomplish. He deserves our warm congratulations, for his hard, but fruitful efforts”.

At that moment, the humble and modest boy Arrikos rose from his seat, he apologized for breaking in and said:

“I beg your pardon, Mr. Professor, but I have to tell you that neither did I tire nor did I spare time and money. The honours don’t belong to me, but to those who made the invention, to those who wrote the books, to nature which endowed me with intellect and to God who enlightened me”.

The room shook with applause and the lecturer, after drinking some water, added:

“I wish our humble Greek friend is fine, because all the peoples in the world need him!”

Many other scientists had delivered their speech, when the time came for Arrikos to go on the rostrum and make his own speech. Then, he would be granted a memorial tablet; of pure gold, which they had prepared for him and after that, they would go on, to the second part of the banquet, to talk about the new disease which made people blind.

“Please,...”, said the person in charge of the organization, “...let’s call the Greek man in honour, to say a few words, too”.

Our Olympic Champion rose from his seat and with a manly and upstanding gait, he went on the

rostrum and approached the microphones. He adjusted them according to his height, looked at the great professors of the world with his eyes flashing fire and started:

“Ladies and gentlemen, a student from the small country called Greece, is found in front of the top and more distinguished doctors of the world. What a great honour, what a supreme glory! Before having finished University, I am found honoured in such an important counsel. I really have difficulty in believing this. But, my dear ladies and gentlemen, it’s true that I am here, in front of you. The divine power that drove us on, to find those sacred books, the enlightenment that it gave to me in order to be able to interpret the advanced, at that time, Medical Science and nature which is endowed with whatever Man needs, all these have contributed to my being here right now. They have given me the chance to enter this room and I thank them all”.

Everybody applauded! They gave the ovation laying more stress on Arrikos’ personality than on his capacity as a scientist, which was indisputably proved.

At a certain moment, Nikitas signed to him by raising his hand, having his fists clenched. He wanted to tell him that he is not just a student and a common inventor, but an enlightened intellect too. Menios and Danai did the same and they offered him a very sweet smile. They didn’t let him be humble any more, they wanted more of him. Arrikos felt encouraged and started.

A torrent of mental elaborations was coming out of his mouth, as if it were bullets from a machine-gun and reached the ears of the great people that were listening to him. He told them about things that were taught only during highest studies. He talked to them

about inconceivable medical methods that his tireless and unfailing mind could think out.

- Papadopoulos the professor, must have known exactly what he was doing, when he provided Arrikos with the most modern encyclopaedias -.

At a moment when Arrikos stretched out his hand for a glass of water, a professor asked him:

“Are you really an inhabitant of the earth, or they have sent you here from another planet?”

On the tide of his own enthusiasm, Arrikos smiled gallantly, he sent his mind to the books on Taygetos and went on talking. His face was brightened up and the beam of his eyes was sending hopeful messages to the people worldwide. He had believed, deep in his conscience, that having those ancient books in his hands, which brought out the advanced for that time culture and with his overpowering, perceptive spirit, no disease would be able to handicap him. Nothing could obstruct him of fulfilling the **universal dream** that he had made in his inventive mind and wanted to materialize them with frenzied passion.

When he decided to conclude, he told them:

“I would like you to forgive me for having worn you out; I believe that you pardon me”.

He provoked rounds of applause and was given the memorial tablet that presented a young man who was killing a crab (the cancer) with an arrow and then they had a break.

During the intermission, almost all the professors that were present shook his hand and congratulated him. Most of them invited him to their country.

The break was over and they got ready for the second part of the congress, which, as we said before, had to do with the new disease that attacked Man.

Ulof Augustos, a Swede professor of ophthalmology, went on the forum and started delivering his speech.

“It seems...”, he said, “...that this planet is dogged by an eternal curse and people can never be left in peace. We cure one disease, but another one appears. But what is happening, anyways? What explanation can Man give to this phenomenon? It has hardly been a year and a half since the completion of the cure of cancer and four thousand people became blind after having been attacked by the new disease. The president of the wealthiest country in the world, for instance, who produces the more callous criminals, is at the last stage of sight loss and two of his collaborators have been attacked too, according to appearances. In my country, this disease spreads in rapid succession”.

Arrikos was there body. His mind was “fluttering” towards Taygetos, with great speed. Part of his thoughts entered the books, as if it were an eddy of a wind and another part of his thoughts was in the way he could use that power to achieve a balance in humanity, if he managed to find the cure for the new disease.

“With the rapid spread of the disease...”, said the scientist that was speaking at that moment, “...in five years’ time, half of the people on earth will be leaning on white canes, while the other half will be escorting them, if there will be any”.

At that moment, the Adonis of the Greek land Arrikos, this tremendous intellect, fixed his eyes on the imaginary face of a ruthless criminal that was in front of him, entreating him to do something so that he would regain his eyesight.

A giant, imbued with mixed feelings stood inside him and being devoted to Mankind, Arrikos thought:

“You warmongers, predatory birds of the flesh of human beings, who infringe on people’s rights, uncouth and uncivilized egotists, Atheists and disrespectful people of the international institutions and rules. In a while, all of you will first sign the protocol that we’ll bring in front of you and then you’ll regain your eyesight. Help me God!” added the lad who fostered respect for the rights of people.

Many other scientists talked too and expressed their opinion about the grave medical matter. They agreed to meet again, wishing their goals to be fulfilled soon and then left.

The Greek children returned to Greece and without lingering on, they went on the Mount Taygetos again, since the four heavy books that they had in their hands, didn’t mention anything for the cure of blindness.

They reached the monastery, but the door was locked and the monk was absent.

“He must be around”, said Nikitas. “Let’s call him”.

They called him but nothing. They had been waiting for quite long until the clergyman showed up, having a full bag on his shoulders. He left the bag down and they shook hands.

“I had gone to a spring, not far from here...”, he said, indicating, “...to get some water, since our water supplies have been exhausted. It is good for those who suffer from rheumatism, too. Since I invented it, I have picked up health. What a saving medicine!”

They entered the monastery and in a short while the monk had one of the books in his hands, giving it to Arrikos. Directly after that, he gave one to Nikitas and Menios was soon after holding his own.

Carefully, but at the same time quickly, they searched the books’ pages, to find something that had

to do with the eye and the therapy. Unfortunately, the three of them were found turning over the last pages of the books, without an answer.

They had a beverage, made by the monk who used the leaves of a bush on the mountain and they reposed their hopes in the other three new books.

They entered the pages of the books quickly and full of impatience, but a feeling of despair came upon them again.

The clergyman left his cell, went under the Eye of the Almighty in the middle of the church and prayed to God.

One book was remaining, that would determine the fortune of those who had been attacked by the new galloping scourge and had lost their eyesight. That would determine the fortune of the unlucky future ill people, whose number was unknown.

The monk knelt down, kissed the ground and did his Cross in devoutness.

“Work your miracle, my God”, he whispered and then stood up.

He approached the lads and told them with a quivering voice:

“Don’t worry, God is great. He won’t leave peoples be ruined. He’ll help humanity”.

“I hope so”, the three of them said in one voice.

The monk left the church in a quick pace and headed for the crypt to get the last remaining book, which was old but immutable in time and may be a saving book for the whole planet.

Returning and holding it into his arms, like predatory birds were the lads moving towards him to take the book in their hands.

Menios was the winner, who turned the pages of the book as if he were a whirlwind. Arrikos and Nikitas were right next to him, as close as possible and having their faces close to each other, they were

anxiously waiting to see the image of the eye, that would relief humanity, which was under severe strain.

They were about to finish the book and were in a cold sweat, since nothing was found and their heart was ready to burst. There was one page left and Nikitas grasped Menios' hand, which was about to turn to the next page and said:

“Leave it, wait!”

They all looked at each other with a question drawn on their face and Arrikos, whose pulses vibrated his whole body, brought in mind the words of the Professor of Ophthalmology, that in five years, half of the people of our planet will be escorting the other half who are blind and whispered:

“Oh, Virgin Mary, please work a miracle”.

At that moment, Nikitas was ready to turn to the next page, which was also the end of the book, but didn't have time to do so.

A flame, which was followed by a loud sound, like a firework explosion left the eye of the Almighty, ended up in a corner of the floor, after it had opened a big hole and gradually went off.

All of them froze. They stood there motionless. The monk knelt down, raised his hands and said:

“Very great is your grace, God!”

Arrikos, who had always fostered great faith in God, added:

“There...”, meaning the spot where the flame had opened the hole, “...something has been buried, we have to search. But turn the last page of the book, too, Nikitas”.

Nikitas turned the page and their eyes fell on two pictures that illustrated Man's circle of life, from his very young age, till the age of an old man and next to this was another circle, where the old man of the illustration ended in an adolescent. There were also

other odd symbols, inexplicable for the moment, as well as references to other books.

An unrelieved shiver ran through Arrikos' body and his upper and lower jaw, were trembling like the horseshoes, of a swift-footed horse on a cobbled road and he was not able to stop their unintentional tremor.

When he managed to come round, he explained to the monk and his friends, what those two symbols stood for and from that time on, a fresh ground may have been broken for the human kind of our planet.

It was not long before the lads dug the hole that was opened by the flame, by using a digging tool and were found in front of steps, which led downstairs, but they could not continue farther down, since, from a certain point on, it was pitch dark, so they had to go back.

Their feelings were mixed, since they hadn't managed to find the start point of the cure for blindness in the books, but they had contrived to have their hopes raised by whatever else they saw before their eyes.

"My instinct...", said Arrikos who was always optimistic, "...wouldn't deceive me. There must be more books somewhere else".

It was late and they had to sleep.

What came to Arrikos' sparkling and restless mind before he fell asleep was difficult to describe. How many people he saved from death, was impossible to count. Not even the times he fought with death and knocked him down can we know. How many seats of war he managed to extinguish, not even he was able to describe. And all those were in his own world, which was structured with kindness and were created by his imagination. But, would he manage to accomplish all that for real? Would he

“block up” the gates of Ades by using his well-drilled and vigorous body?

The next day and before the sun rays had reached the highest peak of Taygetos, the monk and the three friends were getting ready for their unknown course, from the point of the dark steps and on, the existence of which, they didn't even know until the previous night.

With two firebrands lit, which turned the darkness into a sun-drenched day, as well as three more, just in case, the four men started tearing down the strange steps, until the time when the cold was so intense, that it made the boys stop.

They turned back and felt as if they were found in a furnace when they reached the first step.

They made four uniforms out of thick blankets, they muffled their heads up, in a white woven cloth that the monk gave them and like Inuits, they started again for the exploration.

They had counted seventy steps when the ground got level.

They paused.

They looked left, then right and the only thing they saw at that moment, was a small square with a small statue of unknown material in the center of it, which represented a bird that looked like a peacock.

“It's the emblem of immortality”, said Arrikos to them and caressed its left wing with his blue with cold hand.

They were walking along a fifty meters tunnel, when Nikitas' look fell on a golden human hand, which was on a pillar, indicating a certain direction. They continued walking along the tunnel which led them to a huge oblong room, where to the right and left there were red colored human models.

In front of each model, there was a big oblong stone vessel, like a packing case, with shapes and

letters embossed on the top of the cover, whose weight must have been more than five hundred kilos, by a quick estimation. Its numerous handles on the other hand, were embodied with the cover.

“What could possibly be in these vessels?” Nikitas asked. “How could we find out?” he added.

They looked at each other with a searching eye and in a moment, the imaginative boy Arrikos answered:

“What is represented by the corresponding models. But, be ready for it. Each of the vessels contains a preserved in the passing of centuries human body and remember my words”.

They all turned into marble. They remained motionless, looking at him.

“Let’s open them”, Menios said, “I believe that we can lift the covers”.

“Even if we could uncover the vessels...”, Arrikos said, “...we would never attempt something like that, since we don’t know what other substances there can be in the vessels for the preservation of the bodies. All these must be written somewhere. I believe we’ll find some more books. They may have managed, in their own way, to reach very low temperatures for the preservation and if we uncover the vessels now, we may turn into ice-cubes in a few seconds. You never know...”

“And what’s the aiming for?” asked the monk. “Why did they preserve them? To do what with them?”

“If I tell you what my mind orders me to think...”, Arrikos said, “...you may consider me crazy and go back to the monastery. But we want you here with us, a member of our company”.

“Tell me...”, the monk asked him, “...and I will neither consider you crazy, nor will I leave, I’ll stay here with you”.

Arrikos was a little hesitant and looking at the monk with that intent look of his, he asked him:

“Are you sure you came out of your mother’s womb?”

“Yes, yes”, mumbled the hermit, “from what...”, but Arrikos interrupted him.

“Don’t be sure that Man can only be born, because I believe that we can be created another way, too”.

The recluse thought for a while and answered:

“A mind like yours, can accomplish everything, even human beings can it create. But let’s come back to the frozen bodies, my dear boy Arrikos”.

“All these dead people, can come back to life...”, said the witty man Arrikos, “...and they may open their eyes”.

Nikitas and Menios were motionless like statues, the only thing they managed to do, was to blink their eyelids once in a while, to moist their eyes with their tear, since it was about to become frozen because of the unbelievably low temperature of the room.

“And ho can this happen?” the uneasy monk asked. “What about their heart, their blood?”

“Their heart will start functioning again, with the right method...”, said Arrikos, “...as for their blood, we’ll give them some of ours. By using the right knowledge and technique, everything can be done”.

The bearded man, nodded his head, put his right hand on the left shoulder of the fair-haired boy, looked at him lovingly and full of admiration, and told him:

“You are a great man, you’re a priceless treasure. I would like to live and admire your creditable achievements. God bless you, my dear lad, you are the one who will restore the stability of our dying planet”.

“Thank you very much”, Arrikos replied and he sent his mind to something, so that the monk would be able one day to admire his achievements, something that he had wished him before.

With the firebrands in their hands, Menios and Nikitas walked to the end of the room and Arrikos and the monk followed. They were found in front of a gate, where, to the right and left, were two statues. The left one represented a woman in labour and the right one, a man who had a butterfly on his palm, which was ready to flutter.

They paused and looked at them.

“Did butterflies exist then?” the monk muttered.

The imaginative boy Arrikos, whose thoughts were inexhaustible, scratched his forehead in awe and exclaimed:

“My dear god, what lies ahead?”

- But why did Arrikos react like this? -

“Butterflies.”, mumbled Nikitas. “There must have been some reason for their being here, if I understood right they must have done something good so as to be found here”.

“No, no”, Arrikos told him, being certain about his reasoning. “By relating the two statues, a conclusion can be drawn”.

“What conclusion?” asked Menios anxiously.

“The butterfly symbolizes the soul, something that makes us think that somewhere here, on this sacred mountain, the very witty scientist of that time, must have been able to create a new existence”.

“But how?” Menios asked.

“By using some elements that are found on earth and under the right circumstances of course”, Arrikos told him.

“You mean they were able to make a human organism?” asked the clergyman.

“To have been able to create a human organism, in its form and function of today, is out of the question, since in order for Man to get the form that he has today, millions of years had to pass”.

They passed the gate and were found in front of a scene, which caught their breath. They were all frozen, in the full sense of the word, by what they saw before their eyes.

A huge square and in the middle of it, there was a statue, representing a creature in horse body, with human head and hands and it had two big wings on its back. They stood next to it and looked at it in amazement and in a moment Arrikos, who was well known for his quicker way of thinking, told them:

“If I’m not deceived in my thinking, this species must have been their own invention, an interbreeding of human, animal and bird, with the view of moving even in the air and cover extremely long distances”.

To the right, there was another statue. It was a human body, which had big wings on its back, its body was covered with bushy hair and it was holding a two-headed bird in its hands. To the right there was a third statue. It represented a big fish, with human head and hands. It looked a lot like the water nymph, but instead of two, it had one big eye in the centre of its forehead and to the right and left two more, smaller ones. A little further, there was a creature, which looked like the “okapia” – a relative of the kangaroo -, but its incredibly singular body scared them. This animal was made in a way that it could move towards two directions, forwards and backwards, it had two heads, one was in the place where a normal animal has its head and the other on the opposite part of its body, with a neck but without mane.

In certain parts of the room, there were many scattered unknown objects, such as strange vessels

and tools that cannot be found today. On the walls around the square, there were embossed illustrations and shapes, figures of strange creatures, organs like hearts, lungs and birds with two heads, something that made the lads and the monk think that a medical institution must have once been there.

“All these, are useless to us...”, said Nikitas at a moment, “...if we don’t find the other books, too”.

The monk walked a little farther and at a certain point of the right part of the room, he saw a big picture, embossed on the wall, which showed volumes of books, placed in a way that formed a small amphitheatre.

He called the lads and Menios and Nikitas approached him. Arrikos was in front of a strange figure, on which he had nailed his eyes.

“What does this bas-relief represent?” asked the hermit anxiously.

The boys sat there for a while and looking at it, they thought. At a certain moment, Arrikos approached them and as he saw the embossed amphitheatre with the books, he said to them immediately:

“Somewhere here, must be their teaching room, but where?”

They started searching, in the hope of finding another exit, which would lead them to an amphitheatre. After a long time, they still hadn’t managed to find anything, until Nikitas left everyone struck dumb.

He had spotted a door, underneath the illustration with the amphitheatre that was painted on the wall, which was difficultly discerned and opened it by pushing it with all his strength.

The firebrands were almost exhausted and they lit two others, for more light.

They went inside and paused. They looked left, then right and their eye fell on what Arrikos had notified to them in advance. He was right that there was an amphitheatre there, at the rear of the room, in front of them. Exactly behind them, twelve books were found, the same in color and shape as the ones they already had in their hands. A feeling of tranquility came upon them at the sight of the books and they heaved a sigh of relief.

What they mostly admired, was the reading desk that the speaker of that time used, on which they had painted a sun and the earth was shimmering in the rays of it. The earth was painted in such way, that you thought you saw it from above having all of it in front of you, with plains, mountains, oceans, rivers and whatever else that was impossible to describe.

“What a great technique!” said Menios in admiration.

Nikitas, joking, took one of the books, put it on the reading-desk and told them:

“Today, I’m going to talk to you about the creation of the world, but be seated my friends”.

They all sat down at the amphitheatre – it was a good chance to relax a little – and Nikitas started the “lesson”.

They sat there for quite a while and having a book each, they set out for their way back.

“Tomorrow the rest”, said Arrikos and all of them agreed.

They returned to the monastery, with the delight drawn on their faces and having their moral boosted, they were armed with abundant impetus to “enter” the books without losing time, being sure now that in there, they would find what they were looking for with ardent desire.

The monk was cooking and the boys were turning over the pages of the books, as fast as they

could. The hermit was putting the first plate with the food on the table, when Menios sprang to his feet screaming:

“But still, it is here”, he said and they almost broke their heads as the other boys rushed towards him.

Four pages, full of human eyes, in different representations nailed their attention for long. How could they think about food!

The servant of God, had heated up the wild artichokes that he had cooked twice and finally they decided to sit at the table and eat.

“It’s difficult to make head or tail of it”, Menios said. “Having in front of us so many pages, what are we going to interpret first?”

“I agree...”, answered Arrikos, who had sent his mind to another world, “...but I’m sure, that with Virgin Mary’s blessing, we will succeed in this too”.

“You will, my dear Arrikos”, added the clergyman, receiving a look that was not very pleasant.

“Without you, I would not manage to accomplish anything”, answered the modest Olympic Champion, “If I were alone, without you, I would be nothing”.

The next day, in the morning, as they were getting ready for the mountain to take the other books, too, Arrikos asked them:

“Do you know what scares me the most, in this world today?”

“The new scourge, of course, which will soon turn the planet into a huge hospital for blind people”, Nikitas answered.

“No, no, my faithful friend”, Arrikos told him. “No disease is able to scare me. It’s something else that the mere thought of it, makes my knees knock”.

“What, my dear Arrikos?” asked the monk who was very anxious.

“All these predatory beasts of human beings, these scoundrels who worship money as their God, I wouldn't put it past them to even extinguish this sacred mountain, on which the future of humanity rests”.

“And what's the reason for their doing something like that?” the monk asked, more anxiously.

“It's simple”, Arrikos – the humanist, but harsh on the unscrupulous – said, looking at him and “reading” the purity on his face. “Because many of them take advantage of the diseases that attack people and fill the banks with dirty money. But now, that we will wipe out all diseases from our planet, how will all those who are used to living in luxury, glamour and exploitation, take it?”

“If I understood right...”, said the good-natured bearded man, “...you aim to find the cure for all the diseases that attack Man”.

“Listen to me, dear Father”, said the record-man and sent his mind very far, to the time when he was a student at school and had thought of something great. – He had thought then, of making a concoction and rid Man of his torments -. “I have believed that one day, we'll manage with the blessing of God, to make an ingenious medical concoction which we will insert in the human organism to protect people against diseases”.

“A vaccination?” asked the hermit.

“A panacea-vaccine against all diseases, Father. We will strengthen the defensive system of our organism, so Man will hardly be attacked by diseases”.

“What about animals?” the monk chipped in.

Arrikos “caressed” his face with a sweet look, but couldn't resist kissing him on his forehead.

Their eyes misted with tears.

They went from the monastery to the mountain and vice versa, twice. They put the eleven of the books in the crypt, taking the one that was necessary to them and left.

They reached Sparta and visited their friend Stavros Argitakos for a while and from there, crossing the street of Kokinorahi (Tsun) and inhaling the ambrosia of the smell of the orange-trees, they continued, to go to Arcadia.

Arrikos was the driver, and it was the first time he hadn't made his friends heart bit anxiously.

Nikitas wondered and asked him:

"How did you change your way of driving today? How is it that you aren't in a hurry?"

"Why should I hurry?" answered Arrikos, who was sure about the cure for that disease, too.

"People are not in danger of dying of blindness. Cancer and loss of sight have nothing to do with each other".

"You're right", Menios told him. "We should not hurry, for fear of having a car accident". – But Menios hadn't understood what the gifted intellect – Arrikos – was thinking at that moment.

"I'll use this medicine...", the endowed with ingenuity man Arrikos thought, "...when the right time comes. This is not the right moment".

- Later on, we'll see whether the man whose concern about the society constitutes a top figure of culture, will fulfill this thought of his or not -.

They reached their village and went to their homes. Arrikos, having the book on his lap, glimpsed at its pages and feeling sure he would give the right explanation like the other times, he chatted with his parents for quite a while and then went to bed.

The next day, they left their all-green village and set off to go to Athens. They had the book of inestimable value with them and who knows what

else that kitbag contained, who was able to guess its value? On Nikitas' shoulders, who carried it, the ingenious mind of Arrikos, could see – with the eyes of his imagination – the whole earth being carried by his friend.

What an ingenious mind, what boundless imagination Arrikos had!

VI

Legend and sacred symbol

The forth year was nearly over and Arrikos, Danae and Menios with Nikitas, were in a park in Aigaleo, talking.

A fair, curly-haired little boy, left his grandmother's lap, rushed towards the company of the Olympic Champions and hugged Danae. The girl held him in her arms, stood up and asked him:

“What is your name, little boy?”

“Arrikos”, the little child answered.

Everyone was at a loss!

His grandmother approached and they all started to talk.

“He has not been baptized yet...”, the grandmother said, “...but his parents will name him after our Olympic Champion from Arcadia, who found the cure for the accursed disease and saved my daughter, his mother. She was dying, she was breathing her last. May God bless our lad who has saved people and delivered my own child from death!”

“How is your daughter now?” Danae asked.

“She is pregnant and opened her shop again, which was closed when she was ill”.

“What is your daughter’s name?” Arrikos asked and immediately sent his mind to the thousands of letters he had received from people he had cured.

“Galanomatis...”, but before she had the time to pronounce her first name, Arrikos took the words out of her mouth.

“Irene?” he told her.

The woman was bewildered.

“Yes, why, do you know her, my lad?” she asked him.

- Of course, Arrikos remembered not only her name, but also what she had written in her letter to thank him for what he had done for her -.

There was silence for a while and suddenly the woman knelt down, intending to kiss Arrikos’ feet.

She didn’t have the time to do so, because Arrikos grabbed her and lifted her up. She clasped him tightly in her arms and burst into sobbing and tears. She had recognized him.

When she rallied from the shock, she told them that each and every time she went to church, she would light a candle for the savior of her child and pray for him.

The words of this woman sent Arrikos’ mind back to a vow he had made to The Virgin Mary, at the time when his brother got ill and he had to keep this word. He had promised to build a church in her favour and this promise would always revolve over his mind.

In a few days, all four of them sold their gold medals and the little church was built. Every year since then, on the 8th of September, they celebrated her grace, admiring at the same time, the beautiful country church, which Arrikos’ friend Kostas Mitsios, an agriculturalist hagiographer and poet illustrated gratuitously with holy icons. Only a church could they build with those medals or even an entire city?

Later on, they built a second church of The Virgin Mary, which Arrikos had promised to build, when he had asked Her to help him be a scientist.

The fourth year was history for all of them, as history would soon be the new disease, since Arrikos didn't need long to find the right medicine-herbs for its cure.

A friend of theirs, who was studying in Switzerland and had been infected, regained his sight in fifteen days. He was the first patient to be cured, the one to confirm the effectiveness of this man-saving treatment.

In a while, Uncle Dimos from the village was cured and a friend of Sotiros' in Alexandroupolis, regained his sight, but all three of them in utmost secrecy.

But why?

Why didn't the Great humanist, Arrikos, make the medicine known to everyone?

It had been four months since the conference in London and from a number of four thousand patients, we had now reached the number of one hundred and nineteen thousand and a half. The whole world was in turmoil and scientists couldn't pinpoint the cause for this blindness.

It was May, the fifth year and from a number of one hundred nineteen thousand and a half blind people all over the world that had been recorded at that time, one million, one hundred and forty-five thousand were suffering from the disease.

The blind president of the most powerful country in the world, with a white cane in his hand and escorted by his dog, was walking in his garden, recollecting moments of the past and many times had regretted for whatever he could have done right but didn't, and for all the harm he had done to humanity.

The Olympic Champion Arrikos, was recollecting moments from the future.

Yes, you're reading correctly, from the future. Because, Arrikos was beyond the past, the present, even the future, with his sparkling, discerning spirit and was now found in another time beyond the future.

The war of the Balkans was still on. The present leaders of the world, with the use of systems they had, fell pleasure at the sight of human flesh, shoulders, chests, entrails, eyes, brains, ripped children's stomachs, thrown on the ground and scavengers eating them hungrily.

Those human-like creatures with their weapons, wanted to cover the Balkans with blood. They wanted to turn the area into ashes with their nuclear weapons and with the acid rain that would follow to pollute the soil of the neighboring countries, too. They wanted the people to inhale oxides of uranium and in this way to cause irreparable genetic disorders in the generations to come, so that they could sell their commercial products later, pretending to be curing them.

But something very serious awaited all these immoral creatures, unless those vultures felt the Olympic Champion's power and eliminated him.

But, as we have mentioned previously, the mind is superior to all weapons and Arrikos who was well equipped with a good one, awaited.

The sympathetic to the unprivileged and persecuted record-man Arrikos felt like an enraged tiger towards the scum of the earth. Arms and drug dealers he would crush their bones would he catch them.

Day and night, his conscience was troubling him.

“I will throw them in the sea and without remorse...”, his lips cried out, “...find another way to punish them”, his conscience ordered him.

It was June now of the fifth year and under the pressure from the peoples who filled the streets, the iniquitous war of the Balkans came to an end. The calamities were irreparable polluted wounds that would remain, “bleeding” and “uncured” for years. The new scourge had spread so quickly, that the balance of Mankind had been disturbed.

Eighty millions of people have lost their sight and among them leaders and Secretaries of States, Members of Parliaments, scientists and simple officials. The whole planet was in a state of chaos.

All the services malfunctioned and the drug dealers had never been found in a more productive period of action than that, since they were not restrained in their illegalities by the “non-existent” services.

But, as they were knocking about, on their own devices, un-accountable for what they were doing and spreading death especially among the younger generations who had taken recourse to drugs artfully and on other people’s responsibility, the Greek Police surprised everyone.

They managed under international collaboration, to break up one of the bigger cartels of drugs worldwide and arrested their masterminds. Five hundred billions of dollars was the cartels’ worth, but they didn’t stop here. **And, there is no money for the poor and honest ones according to them.**

The very witty man Arrikos, was testing his friends’ and fiancée’ worth. He wanted to be as sure as fate, about their dignity, since he had to assign confidential and very dangerous missions to them.

He wrote a letter, different for each one of them, where the supposed real prescription for the disease

was written, pretending to be afraid of being himself attacked by the disease and gave it to them.

Twenty days later, he pretended in a really devilish way, to have lost his sight and waited to see what they were going to do.

All of them proved that they stood by him.

Menios was so angry with Arrikos that he didn't talk to him for a whole week. As for Nikitas, he hardly kept himself from hitting him. And Danae was crying disconsolately for what Arrikos had "done" to them.

Arrikos was determined to make the medicine known worldwide!

He appeared on TV and made the existence of the cure that restored sight, known to everybody.

At the same time, he called groups of moral judges, politicians, scientists, journalists and others, irrespective of their religion, nationality, color and race, to join forces with him, for the formation of a global, immaculate and almighty Power, which would lead mankind to the right track.

He said that noone would take the medicine, unless his great vision was materialized.

His brother Sotiros, knew everything about the cure, just in case.

Twelve months later and as the galloping scourge had grounded two hundred million people in their houses, interior representatives of an international superpower, consistent of intellectuals from all over the world, as well as pure and concerned about the future of our planet people, would meet in Athens, to take their final decisions.

The number of the members of the superpower, was more than one and a half billions and its supporters demonstrated in the streets of the Capitals every day, calling for the punishment of the warmongers, the hardened killers of people and the callous criminals – the drug dealers –

The unprecedented in interest world conference, had been arranged to take place in the hotel called "Great Britain". The resolutions were going to be taken there, that was the place where the people in charge would be elected.

Five hundred heads of conscience from all over the world, would enter the hotel in a while, to take their seats.

And as everything was ready, the ingenious and far-sighted Man Arrikos, proved his class.

He changed the place where the conference was going to take place and instead of the hotel "Great Britain", the top and moral men of the whole universe, adjourned to another big hotel, in Varkiza.

But before having time to take their seats, a huge cloud of dust was spread over the center of Athens, due to a tremendous explosion. The hotel "Great Britain" was history.

Some cowards, villainous worms of the underworld, had blown it up.

Fortunately, there were no casualties, since the people in charge had time to provide against them.

The promising men, who peoples rest their hopes on, being unabashed and faithful to their duty, were ready to start the historic conference in Varkiza.

Less than an hour after the opening of the meeting, thousands of people had surrounded the building, shouting **"DEATH, DEATH TO THE UNCONSCIOUS!"**

The people in charge, tried to disperse the crowd but to no avail. They managed to convince them, only when they assured them that **an international and thorough catharsis would take place.**

By order of the government, the hotel was guarded by tens of policemen, who had come from all the districts of Attica and the conference lasted three whole days and nights.

They decided to form an international law court, consistent of impartial and honest judges and to call all those who were responsible for the war to testify under oath, as well as the heads of the narcotic lists who made a fortune by ruining the younger generation.

Arrikos was elected to be the headman, since everyone had voted for him by raising their hands and three deputy-commanders, a general secretary and a fifteen-member secretariat were elected as well.

Among them were Menios and Nikitas, steadfast men towards their morality and genuine supporters of their almighty friend Arrikos. They were now the representatives of the most places in the world and having their momentous oath in mind each of them, they left.

Six months later and the galloping scourge had effected almost half of the population of the world. The leaders tried to persuade Arrikos to give them the cure. They offered him millions of dollars, marks, pounds, but Arrikos was adamant on not taking it.

“No,...”, he thundered out, “...unless you destroy your weapons! No,...”, he cried, “...unless you vanish them from our planet!”

A paranoid leader threatened him:

“I will turn your country into a prey to the flames!”

“Not even a sling will I leave available, for you to do away with sparrows”, Arrikos replied, without being abashed at all, since he had peoples on his side.

Everybody would yield to his unswerving privileged position, everybody would reconcile himself to this. They would destroy their weapons, too.

The Moscow Tribunal had already been set up. Hundreds of warlike people arrived to speak in their

defense, uncountable were those who were found guilty and were put in prison.

It had been one year since the Conference in Varkiza took place and all weapons had been buried deep underground.

They would be kept down there for ever, there, deep inside the earth's core, far from the peoples had Arrikos and his collaborators buried them.

The time has come for Arrikos – who had the capacity to discipline people – to make the cure known to everyone.

The “vultures” of war, were guarded in their cells in Moscow, awaiting the judgment.

Arrikos appeared on TV and after having delivered a caustic speech about those ruthless beasts and the fate of theirs and having shocked the whole universe, he revealed the cure.

People rushed into the woods, so as to make the medicine themselves, since it was nothing else but part of the bark of a cedar-tree and a chestnut-tree, boiled in sunflower oil.

Just in fifteen days, the people recovered their eyesight and Arrikos was declared a **demigod**.

What was weighed heavily on his mind, was the Tribunal.

He was fighting in two fronts. The one was the infuriated peoples who pushed him to punish the criminals and destroyers of the younger generation – the drug dealers – relentlessly, something that found him in favour of it at times when he was irate. The other front, which was invisible on the one hand, but mighty on the other, was his psychological constitution. He found it hard to decide what to do.

He fluctuated between two decisions.

Three years passed until the judges gave the verdict.

Three hundred of those immoral and ruthless criminals, received the Capital Punishment sixty times, three hundred eighty of them were sentenced to death fifty times, five hundred sixty received the Capital Punishment forty times and eight hundred fifty were to be executed ten times.

What surprised the public more was that one hundred sixty top men of the heavy drug list were sentenced to death eighty times.

All of them would be shot dead, in an abandoned stadium of the former Soviet Union and admission would be free.

Despite that universal achievement though, our planet was in confusion and it took a long time until the results were seen.

But the great dream of the enlightened intellect Arrikos was fulfilled and being a triumphal and unparallel victor and a great man of vision, he became the sacred symbol of the universe.

Being a leader now, he was riding a white stallion and like a wind was he galloping along the “roads” that led to fame.

All the people adored him and noone was able to stand as an obstacle to his universal visions.

The day for the first fifty warmongers to be sentenced to death came and the executioners got ready.

“A last wish?” asked the person in charge, a little before the command of execution.

“We want to see the triumphant hero of the whole universe, Arrikos”, all of them replied.

The executioners looked each other in the eyes in wonder and the person in charge, asked them again:

“Another wish, what you have already asked me is impossible”.

Silence reigned for a while.

“Get set... Fire!” the person in charge ordered the executioners.

But before he had ordered: “... Fire!” he changed his mind.

“Put your guns down and wait”, he ordered.

He thought for a while and then said:

“The execution is adjourned indefinitely”.

All of those who were imposed a death penalty, went back to their cells and the person in charge got in contact with his superiors.

A few days later, a resolution was made for the sentenced to death criminals, to hand a letter over to Arrikos. And that’s exactly what happened.

This humble man Arrikos, took the letter in his hands and read it.

He tried to bring something in mind, in extenuation of their atrocious crimes, but to no avail.

Nevertheless, despite his generous attempts, none of their acts was able to touch him.

Only scenes of violent war revealed themselves in front of Arrikos’ eyes, human corpses half-eaten by birds of prey, rubbles, carnivorous birds on corpses and flies in half-opened mouths and abdomens of murdered children by the guns of those ruthless and callous criminals. Only those scenes could Arrikos see on the imaginary pages of history, which he went through in his head.

Despite all this, he thought as a human.

By his own admission, the executions were suspended temporarily – with ulterior purpose to be cancelled – but they projected transparencies on overhead projectors everyday, for the criminals to watch, which showed scenes of the blood-curdling wars, that they themselves had brought about. As for the drug dealers, they were shown films with their own crimes, which were corollary of their easy but

outlaw way to be rich, regardless of the fate of the younger generation.

Despite their moral callousness and their relentless inner world, they had no stomach for those scenes. At the sight of those ghoulish and appalling spectacles, they crumpled up and in the end some of them became mentally retarded or went mad and some others committed suicide, each one of them in a different way. But all of them left their indelible scars on people and they would remain as obtrusive, mentally deranged, mean creatures in the history of humanity.

With his titanic power, Arrikos who is imbued with extreme passion for the fate of peoples and especially the underprivileged ones – he had more than two billions of supporters -, he established an autonomous committee, whose Secretary General was Panagiotis Noyfelt, a cousin of Arrikos from Panagiotis' mother Vasiliki Chroni. And as a former great Power had stated that: "We want the planet to be like this", Arrikos made the start for an as just as possible solution of the national, racial and religious matters.

By what the experts had stated, in order for something like that to be accomplished, quite a long time was needed, but in the end there would be a desired result for everyone, since the differences of the peoples would be resolved without the use of weapons – which Arrikos and his company had buried in the depths of the earth.

Some years before, Arrikos who was a little boy then, had told the professor Vasilis Papadopoulos: "I'll make our country a supermarket of pharmaceuticals". Now, that he is a graduate and a distinguished doctor, like his friends Menios, Nikitas and Danay, recollects those unforgettable moments, which have been engraved on his memory.

He had studied all those “sacred” books that were found on the Mount Taygetos, he had given all the explanations needed, but in front of that inconceivable for today’ s facts medical schooling of those days, he thought hard: “If I put that science into practice nowadays...”, he meditated, “...I’ll bring about radical changes and realignments, I may cause irreparable social upheavals”.

All this, was because the books that he had in his hands, contained data, which if he put into practice today, the most possible is to cause destabilization. And Arrikos would be accountable for all this, so he constantly turned it over in his mind...

“You should intervene...”, his reasoning ordered him, “...in every difficulty of our planet and use your power accordingly”.

Arrikos had complied with this order:

“For the time being, I will make the “panacea vaccine...”, he told his friends, “...which I had promised to the monk too and I will keep my grandfather imperishable and then we’ll see”.

“The monk too, don’t forget the monk!” Nikitas told Arrikos spontaneously.

“Ok, both of them”, replied the record man Arrikos, smiling at Nikitas and nodding his head.

“None of them”, his innate inner knowledge cried from within.

Arrikos, the legendary man of vision, the almighty and rare scientist, made the “panacea vaccine” and even Man shook off various diseases.

Let’s refer to one of the thousands of similar cases that happened to the man of superlative morale and intellectual stature Arrikos, as to have a taste of what a genuine Man is.

One day, when Arrikos was at his house in the village, somebody tapped on the door and Arrikos’

younger sister who was on holiday at the village then, went and opened the door.

A woman with very beautiful features, appeared in front of Arrikos' sister and after apologizing for the inconvenience, she asked if the person who had become the legend of the whole universe was there.

"Yes, he's here", replied the girl. "Come in and I'll call him".

"If he's sleeping...", said the woman, "...don't wake him up. I'll wait for as long as is needed. I just want to see him. I am in great need; I have a very serious problem.

"My brother is not sleeping, my dear lady. He never rests at midday, the only thing he does is to study, read and meditate. Come in".

They entered the living room and the woman sat on a chair and waited for Arrikos to come. Two minutes later, the man went out of his room and then straight in the room where the woman was waiting. Arrikos looked like an earthly God to her when she saw him. His eyes were aglow with intelligence.

The kind lady, rose from her seat and introduced herself to Arrikos.

"My name is Vasiliki Katsichti and I'm coming from Saint John of Sparta. I would like you to help me".

"If I can, I will right now. What's your problem?"

"My son is very ill. Some years ago, he lost both of his kidneys and was subjected to transplantation, but now he lost the kidney that was transplanted to him and might stay alive. Please, do something so that my son will not die. We have suffered a lot of torments in our life, I don't want my son to die and I will give you whatever you want. As many pieces of land as we have. We will sell them, we'll do whatever you ask" – and her eyes misted in despair -.

“How is the kidney complaint of you son called, can you remember?” Arrikos asked anxiously and used his mind to the full of its function.

“Speiromatosclerosis”, the woman mumbled and looked Arrikos in the eyes, in an imploring way that bent his knees.

“Listen, my dear lady”, the boy told her and his eyes beamed with joy, something that revealed that he had something good to tell her.

“The kidneys, as far as this complaint is concerned, are not totally dead, they can be cured. There is a medicine that will make them function again, in the same or even better way than before”.

The woman’s look was fixed on Arrikos’ face and her eyes glew with relief.

“Which is the cure?” she asked and embraced the young scientist tightly. “Tell me, please”, she said.

“In this case...”, Arrikos told her, “...the ancient Greek scientists, who had their institution in the center of Taygetos and where I and my friends found the medical books, gave to the sick three apples daily, because they contain kersetini, piktini, tannini, galaktini, telaning, kytarozi and many other substances, which help the complaint be cured. This is what we are going to do for your son, too. But before leaving from here, I would like to point out something to you. As you said before, you intend to sell your property, so as to give me money if I save your son from death. Listen to me please and act accordingly. I will cure your son Takis, since God has endowed me with the power to do it. God sent me to Taygetos, He is accountable for my finding the ancient books. But you have to know that never in my life have I asked an ill person for money, neither am I going to do it in your case. Your son will be the one who will farm the pieces of land that you possess, until he reaches his ripe old age. As for me, I’ll visit

him at his orchards and I will pick oranges, mandarins and lemons, which will be grown by his own hands. What do you say, do you agree, will I have the right to do so? Besides, I have sacred ties with the life-giver Laconia. Well, do you agree to this?"

The woman had no time to say a word, because she burst out into tears.

When she came round, they offered her a sweet and an orange-juice and then chatted. Arrikos informed her about the way Takis should use the medicine, the woman thanked Arrikos many times, from the bottom of her heart, she said goodbye and left.

With the feeling of hope keeping her company, the woman returned to the hospital in Athens, she informed her family about the news, boosting their morale and they started the cure immediately.

And while the lad could hardly open his eyes till then, in seven days he got out of bed and was found walking in the corridors. He was fifty kilos before taking the medicine, but eight days after the treatment he weighed himself and was fifty five and had regained his strength. In fifteen days, he was discharged from hospital and his brother John with his wife Tasia and their son Elias, drove him home in the village "Saint John" and he continued taking the medicine for fifteen days more.

Twenty-five days later and a Sunday morning, Takis took his dog in the car and full of vigor and life, he reached the Mount Taygetos, like he used to do before losing his transplanted kidney. That day he felt as if he was given a lease of life. As if he had wings on his legs he ran behind his hound, through rough stones and undergrowth. Like a deer was he passing through wind-swept passes and like an eagle was he "fluttering". Finally, he was found on the peak of Taygetos, where the all-white country-church of Saint

Elias was, he went inside, lit the small hanging oil-lamps and knelt before the icon of the Saint, in prayer. He thanked him and when he went out, like a spring wild flower did he look like on a big rock where he went and sat.

With mixed feelings, he scanned the vast expanse of Sparta and the surroundings, which the mountain dominated.

At a moment, he raised his hands looking at the deep blue sky, on the canopy of which, were many motionless, like acrobats birds and uncountable swallows. He exclaimed: "Thank you God, thank you so much and have the person who cured me in good health, protect him against any suffering, don't forget this, never forget it, can you hear me?" and started crying sobbingly.

Of course God heard his wish and protected Arrikos in all his life. And the healthy and refreshed man Takis, visited the humanist Arrikos, thanked him and kissed him on his forehead for the great good he had done to him.

The cure was soon spread and all those who had problems with their kidneys, instead of being subjected to transplantation or blood transfusion, were back to their normal tempo of life and prayed for the person who, without asking for money, cured them and rid them of torments and suffering.

Arrikos, never disclosed the medicine for the mental development, which had acted on his own mind completely by chance. He laid more stress on spirit than on anything else and having this as his principle, he taught his students at the original International Educational Institution that he made in Athens.

There, entered small students and came out distinguished scientists.

These people, with the superlative mentality quotient, will guide Humanity in the future, since they will play a momentous and ruling role in the great change of the world, which the fire-raiser of injustice, Arrikos, had dreamed of, for the reformation of the abject societies of the planet, which is morally dying.

When they asked Arrikos why he didn't make the great medicine known to everybody, he answered:

“Because from my educational institution will graduate “humans” first and then “scientists”. If I give it to other people, great scientists will surely graduate from it, but I’m not sure that they will be “humans””.

At many critical moments of human-kind, with this power that stems from his clear fantastic and sharp-witted spirit, he turned out to be a shield and a protector of Mankind and with his great fame and brilliance, he became a **legend** that will be imparted from generation to generation, to remind to the very mighty of today, **that the great and almighty ones, may be found being the losers of the future.**

For his superlative offer to Mankind, leaders of States and those in charge rewarded Arrikos by hoisting the flag of Greece to the flagpoles of all the Parliaments of the world, as well as with the fact that the Olympic games would be permanently held in our country.

In two other Olympic games, they were all crowned Olympic Champions again, making the shiny star of our country even brighter.

THE END

This is what they wrote about the book:

- The newspaper "THE RESEARCH OF TRIKALA".

A novel good enough for a TV series

... Television nowadays, must prefer the promotion of this novel, to make a scenario based on it, so that people will watch it and especially the younger generations. The plot, the truth and the originality of it, are going to touch everybody, for sure. So, for the projection of "ARRIKOS", a TV station and a film director who will work in high spirits, are needed. The protagonists of his work are of simple but special character, who help the plot progress eventfully, but with a flow of well-balanced imagination. **That's why, there must be a TV series based on it.**

- The newspaper "FREE PHILOLOGY"

Takis Natsoulis writes:

Christos D. Stratigopoulos: "Arrikos" (The Idol of Universe), novel, Tripoli 22100. This book, which is beautiful and cautiously written, will fascinate the reader.

Every sentence of the novel, has the sign of his own personality and from the first till the last page, it's like a live picture. I can say that it is indistinguishable from a theatrical play or a TV series, which would fascinate its audience, its

viewers. Indisputably, he would steal the show, if he would be present at a theatrical show.

The reconciliation, the bribery, the neighbour's wickedness, make his heart "bleed" even more and he identifies them with the brilliance that marks the people of Tripoli. And a personal admission: The wonderful book of Christos D. Stratigopoulos, carried my innermost being away, it touched my heart to the utmost and enlightened me to a great extent...

- The newspaper "The Old Man of Morias"

It's a novel, but with what kind of construction, originality and plot most of all, and fabricated imagination?

And with a leading actor and hero, who is so robust, so brave, such a fighter, who does not yield to any obstacles, he fights for the prevalence of idealized principles and values, on a world basis, being a sacred symbol, who, if he had the luck to be the leader of a co-operative world, he would save humanity.

With his character and his struggles for universal ideas, he carves the road that each one of us have to follow, in order to be rid of the unacceptable idols that the oligarchy of materialism has imposed on us, trying constantly to make us live with them.

"Arrikos", is virtually declaring the revolution that should have already been declared, with the purpose of the restoration of those ideals, which were formed by our ancestors in so many thousands of

years, enlightening the mind, spirit and soul of all the people in the universe.

“Arrikos” is a modern “Spartakos”, who declares the revolution against all sorts of materialism and globalization.

He is the one who leads the brain, the spirit and the soul of modern Man, against the cursed consumer society, in favour of which, the modern Man has lost, or is about to lose whatever privilege nature and our enlightened ancestors have gifted him with, leading him to death and destroy, since it is clear and proven that Man without principles and ideals cannot achieve anything, he has no future.

What about the author?

We won't say anything, because even if we say a lot of positive things about him, we still will be unfair to him. His brainwave for the “creation” of a hero like “Arrikos”, makes whichever comment prohibitive. In addition to the fact that we admire him warmly, we recommend to our subscribers and especially the young ones that they should buy this book, since it is instructive.

- The newspaper “Prokopi”

Mr. Antonis I. Panagiotopoulos writes:

“Arrikos”. Some months ago, I received the book entitled “Arrikos” and later on, a poem with the title “Antonis Panagiotopoulos the human”, framed. The sender was the poet and writer from Arcadia, Mr. Christos D. Stratigopoulos.

The book on the one hand, “got ready for me to read”, the poem on the other hand was commented on, by the members of my family, who expressed their review with great love and “with their very flattering opinion about the poet and writer”, who has spiritual connections with me. I thanked him for the poem, not virtually though, since I was pressed by certain matters.

The first days of the third ten-day-period of July 2002, I was found in the “Nordish coasts of Greece”, in Tsakonia and especially in Tyros. I enjoyed the Arcadian beauty of nature to the utmost, dentelated coastlines, the blessing of the Virgin Mary’s monastery in Elona, the village Cosmas, which is full of fir-trees and I enjoyed the simplicity of the people of Arcadia.

In times of tranquility, the first book that I chose to read among many others that I had taken with me, was my former student’s of High School in Vlahokerasia of Arcadia in 1968-1969, Mr. Christos Stratigopoulos. The new novel is entitled “Arrikos”.

In the first blank page of the book, he had written a dedication to me: *“You had wished me once, to gain intellectual powers and more experience and since I respect you a lot and I take into consideration your counsel, I tried to materialize this wish of yours. Now, you will tell me if I’ve managed it. With great love and boundless respect, your former student, Christos D. Stratigopoulos, March 2002, Tripoli”.*

His dedication was tempting – to a great extent – for close and careful reading of all the pages of the book, which are 174 all of them and with a title that needs its own etymological explanation. Even from the introduction, it is evident that the bar will be placed even higher, until we reach the time when the

protagonist wins the gold Olympic Medal as well as the fame of an Olympic Champion.

The poet – prose writer, Christos D. Stratigopoulos, with his successful stamp in all of the pages of the book, has intelligence, agility, sense and competence as his aim, he grabs every opportunity that appears in front of him with his thirst of learning and secures the fruits of the investigation, without getting round the Arcadian idiom. The ethnography of characters, the careful entry of incidents, the projection of religious and ethical principles, the restoration of customs and law, as well as the exceeding of personal limits, are those elements that reveal, with simplicity, the whole essence of the Arcadian nobility, which is equivalent to the enviable success, the pioneer progress which is marked by offering, altruism, the “rising of the bar” in all the struggles of life where victory is gained, honour is offered and glory prevails.

Experience, literary plot, inspiration of prose, poetical inspiration, careful presentation and permeation in the religious Orthodox truth and national principles, is the “well-made suit” which Christos D. Stratigopoulos has put on “ARRIKOS”. “ARRIKOS” is a different, in substance and style, written work, which is not only preparing us for the flights of imagination, but also for openings of the Arcadian golden eagle in the skies, in days of spiritual poverty and national alienation. **Arcadian golden eagle of the spiritual world**, the Mount Taygetos with the herbs is yours, the Lykaio is also yours for rise the bar even higher, the Arcadian Kafkasos with the hanged Prometheus is yours, too, as well as the whole Arcadia, Morias, Greece.

... Yet, the great dream of the enlightened thinker Arrikos was fulfilled and being a triumphant victor now, as if he were another Great Alexander, an unrivalled man of vision, becomes the sacred symbol of the whole universe.

Being a major leader now, he crosses the roads that lead to fame, mounting a white stallion and galloping like a wind.

All peoples adore him and nobody is able to stand as an obstacle to his universal visions.
