

“How beautiful!” Marilyn sighed and caressed the Sandman’s head.

“Now I remember!” Sandman lifted his finger. “She hadn’t been caressed or hugged at all either. Then I stroked her about twenty or thirty times and gave her some big hugs. And so did Helena’s Mum and Dad. In the end they were having such a good time among themselves that I snuck away quietly.” Sandman tucked the blanket under Marilyn’s jaw and kissed her on the forehead. Marilyn hugged the Sandman, blinked her eyes for a couple of times and then fell into peaceful sleep.

The pirate

“You know,” the Sandman said. “Today I’m going to tell you a story about a pirate.”

“A pirate?” Marilyn asked. “There are so many stories about pirates. Can’t you tell me about something new?”

“No, Marilyn, this pirate was very special. He didn’t steal treasures from ships. He even didn’t steal ships. He stole seas. He drank the seas up to the very last drop and took them to another place.”

“Where did he keep the sea?” Marilyn asked.

“In his cheeks,” the Sandman explained. “Once he had

gulped the sea empty, his cheeks were down to his hips and he had to support them with his hands, so that they wouldn't bounce against the ground."

"What nonsense is this!"

"Yes, that's how it went! He came, stomping, sipped the water in his cheeks and went away, stomp, stomp. He was such a nice old chap. For example, do you know how the Dead Sea came about?"

"Where is it?" Marilyn asked.

"The Dead Sea is in the Jew County, down in the south, even more down south than the Turks. It's not really a sea, it's more like a lake because it so tiny, kind of like our Lake



Vörtsjärv. But it's so salty that no fish can live there. This is why it's called the Dead Sea.”

“And how did the salt get there?” Marilyn asked.

“That's what I was meaning to tell you about. You see, after the pirate felt hungry after another attack, he wanted to cook something. So he took a ship carrying a load of salt with him on the way and started to make his way home. On the way he stumbled and fell on his belly with the ship. The ship was broken, of course, and there was salt all over the place. The pirate got angry, got up and spat the water that he had left in his cheeks on the ship and the salt. That was enough for a very small and salty body of water to emerge.



As fish couldn't live in such salty water, people started to call it the Dead Sea.

Stumbling caused a lot of trouble for the pirate. Once when he was carrying a sea in his cheeks in China, he stumbled upon a hill and once again fell on his belly. This time he swallowed everything and his belly got so big that his legs had no room to move. Then the pirate decided that he had to pee the sea out. He happened to be in the place where China and Korea meet. So the pirate peed the sea out. And although the water of this sea was a little bit more yellow than in other seas, it was still a sea. People started to call it the Yellow Sea.”

“But are there also black and white seas? Or a red sea? Or maybe a blue one?” Marilyn asked.

“I haven't heard of blue or green seas. Sea water is greenish or bluish anyway. But there are the White Sea, the Black Sea and the Red Sea – all thanks to our pirate, of course. For example, the story of the White Sea goes like this. The pirate decided to move one sea to the northern part of Russia, right next to Finland. He spat the water out but it froze straight away. The pirate sat and watched how the snow fell on the sea, covering the water with a beautiful white carpet.

“The White Sea,” the pirate mumbled and headed back to the south. So the sea was called the White Sea.”

“But the Black Sea? How did he make this?” Marilyn asked.

“Well, the story goes that once the Black Sea was in the middle of Africa. On its shores, there lived local tribes whose skin was so black that when they all went swimming together, the sea water became black. The pirate stole the sea and its name. And although the Black Sea is now situated to the north from Turkey where people’s skin is a lot whiter, the water of the Black Sea is still black. Isn’t it interesting?”

“And what about the Red Sea?” Marilyn enquired.

“With the Red Sea it was simple. Once on his way from Africa to India, the pirate was very tired and stumbled, his cheeks full of water. The night had fallen very suddenly, as it happens in the south, and the pirate’s foot got stuck somewhere. This time he fell in such an unfortunate way that his nose started to bleed. The sea ended up in the wrong place and got all red as well.”

“So what happened to the pirate? Does he still steal seas?”

“No,” the Sandman said. “He’s dead.”

“Oh boy. Why then? How did it happen?”

“He got too greedy,” the Sandman explained. “He tried to steal the Atlantic Ocean and exploded. The explosion could be heard far away. Many people thought that a war had broken out. Nobody could guess that a pirate had exploded instead.”

Marilyn didn’t know what to say about it. She thought and thought and eventually fell asleep.