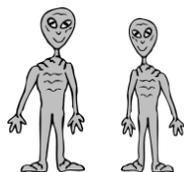


EUGENE AND THE TWO ALIENS

Based on a story by Maksim Nasurdinov

Translated with **Hal Ames**



Eugene was thirteen years old on the day his life changed forever. He was a normal kid with the same problems faced by most teenagers. He didn't like school very much. He only had a few friends.

Mostly, he liked to listen to his music. He had a lot of music on his MP3 player he had downloaded from the internet. He always walked around with his earphones in his ears, and he had a bounce to his step.

Eugene was a daydreamer. He always dreamed about being a superhero. He loved to read comic books and watch movies about his favorite heroes. He had superhero costumes in his closet that his mother had gotten for him over the years for Halloween. He didn't let his friends know that he had kept them. It would be too embarrassing. His favorite was Ironman.

One Friday evening, while he was laying on his bed, listening to his music, he heard a strange voice.

“Good evening Eugene, how are you today?” the voice said.

Eugene sat up quickly and looked around the room. No one was there. He took out his earphones and listened for the voice again. Still, no one was there.

After sitting up for a few minutes, trying to figure out where the voice was coming from, he lay back down on his bed and thought to himself, “I must have imagined it.”

He put his earphones back into his ears and began to listen to his music again. A few minutes later, the voice returned.

“Hi Eugene, why didn’t you answer me?” the voice said.

Eugene sat up on his bed again and looked around the room. Still no one was there.

“Who are you?” Eugene asked.

“We’re your friends,” the voice said.

Suddenly, in front of him were two teenage boys. One had red hair and freckles. He had a big smile on his face. The other one had black hair. He looked very serious.

“Who are you guys?” Eugene asked. “What are you doing in my room?”

The boy with the black hair said, “I’m Romando and this is Terius. We are here to help you.”

“Help me?” Eugene asked. “Why do I need help?”

“We’ve been watching you for a long time,” Terius explained, smiling at Eugene. “We’ve been sent to help you with all your problems.”

“Problems? What problems?” Eugene asked. “I didn’t know that I had any problems.”

“You’ve always wanted to be a superhero, right?” Romando inquired.

“How’d you know that I want to be a superhero?” Eugene asked.

“We’ll explain that later. What’s important is we’re here to make it happen,” Terius spoke up.

“How are you going to do that?” Eugene responded very surprised at what they were saying.

“We have special powers,” Terius explained.

“I don’t believe you,” Eugene said almost laughing.

“OK, Eugene, watch,” said Romando.

Just then, the boys disappeared and in their place, were two black birds. Just as quickly, the boys returned to normal.

“How did you do that?!” Eugene exclaimed.

“Okay, here’s our story. We’re from the planet Kurios of the Frongorian system on the far side of the Milky Way. We’ve been sent here to help you find your full abilities,”

Terius explained.

“My full abilities? What does *that* mean?” asked Eugene.

“Many years ago, you were sent here to Earth to learn the language and the culture of these humans. Your memory was blocked so you wouldn’t remember your life before. Now that you are old enough to understand, we were sent here to teach you how to use the inner talents that you were born with. We’ll help you to remember who you really are, and then you’ll become just like us,” Terius continued.

“You mean I’m really like you?” Eugene asked very surprised.

“Yes, and we’re here to teach you all you need to know. With the powers you have inside you, you’ll become a superhero in no time at all!” Romando replied.

“Where do we start?” Eugene asked excitedly.

“The first thing you need to learn is how to improve your life. We’ll teach you how to do the things you need to do to become a better person. We’ll show you exercises to prepare you for your next steps. Then we’ll train you to fly and to move things with your mind. After that you’ll be able to teleport to any place on Earth in a matter of seconds,” explained Romando.

“Wow, I can’t believe it! Am I dreaming?” Eugene asked as he rubbed his eyes.

“We’ll start tomorrow. Get a good night’s sleep, and in the morning, we’ll return,” Terius said, and then suddenly they were gone.

“That’s so cool. Am I really going to be able to do all those things? I only dreamed about being able to do this!” Eugene said loudly to himself in his room.

Eugene didn’t sleep at all that night. He was thinking about all the things he would be able to do if he had the powers. He was ready to begin his training, and he didn’t want to wait until the next day.

Since it was Saturday, he had all day to work with the two aliens.

In the morning, Romando and Terius returned.

“Are you ready to start?” they asked Eugene.

“You bet I am!” Eugene answered. “Where do we begin?”

“The first thing you need to do is to become active in your school. You have to develop your leadership skills and improve your relationships with the people you live and spend time with,” Terius explained.

“How do I do that?” Eugene asked.

“We’ll help you. You’ll be the only one who will be able to hear us. When you need help, we’ll give you the words to speak. Soon you’ll be able to do this on your own,” Terius answered.

During the weekend, the boys talked with Eugene and practiced the things he needed to learn to be a better person. He learned the physical exercises and did them over and over.

On Monday, when he returned to school, Terius and Romando gave Eugene things to say that impressed the people around him. After a few days, Eugene became a very popular person. The kids at school began to like talking to him because he was so smart and funny.

Terius and Romando helped Eugene with his homework, reminded him of his chores, and gave him things to say, which began to change him into a very responsible person. Even his parents saw the change.

Over time, Romando and Terius had to help Eugene less and less. He was doing it all on his own. People liked him and respected him.

A couple of months later, Terius and Romando told Eugene it was time to learn the next lesson. They were going to teach him how to fly.

Eugene got very excited. This was what he had been waiting for. Eugene had done the physical exercises every day. He had prepared himself the way Terius and Romando had taught him. Now he was ready.

“OK, so what do I do now?” Eugene asked.

“We’ll start small. Stand on your bed, and then just lean forward. Look straight ahead and let your body do the rest.”

Eugene had a big smile on his face. He put his arms out and leaned forward.

‘Thunk!’

“Ouch, that hurt,” Eugene said after he fell onto the floor.

Looking up at Romando and Terius he asked, “What happened?”

Romando and Terius looked at each other in surprise.

“That should have worked,” Terius said. “Try it again.”

Eugene rubbed his shoulder and climbed back onto his bed. He put his arms out, looked straight ahead, and leaned forward again.

‘Thunk!’

The same thing happened.

“Ouch! That really hurts. Are you sure this is how it’s supposed to work?” Eugene asked, in pain, while lying on the floor.

Terius and Romando whispered to each other.

Then they said to Eugene, “We need to go now. We’ll be back soon. Try not to hurt yourself, OK?”

“Sure, but what’s wrong?” Eugene asked.

“We’re not sure. We’ll tell you when we come back,” Romando said, and then they both disappeared.

Eugene looked around to find them, but they were gone. He sat down on his bed and rubbed his shoulder, which was sore from falling onto the floor.

“Why can’t I fly?” Eugene thought to himself, feeling very sad. “I’ve done everything they asked me to do. I’m doing my best. I don’t understand.”

Eugene tried a few more times to fly, but each time he just fell to the floor and hurt himself again. Then he gave up. It just hurt too much.

Then one evening, while Eugene was doing his homework, Romando and Terius appeared in his room.

“Hi Eugene,” Terius said.

“Hey, where have you guys been?” Eugene asked. “It’s been over a week since you left.”

“Well, we’ve been researching your problem. We’ve been trying to figure out why you can’t fly,” Romando answered.

“So, what’s the problem?” Eugene asked.

“It seems that you aren’t one of us after all. We made a big mistake. You really are a human and you are the child of your parents. There’s another boy named Maxim we were supposed to see, but we got mixed up on our directions,” Terius explained. “We’re really sorry, but you won’t be a superhero after all.”

Eugene was sad. He wanted so badly to be a superhero.

Romando spoke up, “The good news is you did everything we asked you to do, and now you are doing much better in school, you have many friends, and you are succeeding very nicely in all that you are doing. If you continue to do what we taught you, you’ll have a very good life.”

Romando tried to make Eugene feel better.

“I guess you’re right, but I really wanted to be a superhero!” Eugene agreed. “Will you ever come to see me again?” Eugene asked.

“Perhaps, but you won’t see us. We’ll be watching to see how you’re doing in your life. We’re very proud of you, and we’re so sorry we made such a big mistake,” Terius said.

Then Romando and Terius disappeared.

Eugene sat on his bed feeling very sad, but he knew he would have a better life because of what he had learned from the two aliens.

VOCABULARY (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. download _____ | a. ability, natural talents |
| 2. superhero _____ | b. move to another place quickly |
| 3. culture _____ | c. guides people, leader |
| 4. teleport _____ | d. people who have special powers |
| 5. exercise _____ | e. to get from the internet |
| 6. potential _____ | f. amaze, astound |
| 7. leadership _____ | g. well liked |
| 8. impress _____ | h. traditions, how people live |
| 9. popular _____ | i. workout, keep fit |
| 10. alien _____ | j. from another planet or place |

TRUE / FALSE

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Eugene likes to listen to music. | T / F |
| 2. Eugene had many superhero costumes. | T / F |
| 3. The aliens were from Mars. | T / F |
| 4. Eugene was 10 years old. | T / F |
| 5. Terius had black hair. | T / F |
| 6. Eugene learned to fly. | T / F |
| 7. Eugene worked hard to learn everything. | T / F |
| 8. Eugene was from Kurios. | T / F |
| 9. Eugene was an alien. | T / F |
| 10. Eugene wanted to be a superhero. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Who came to visit Eugene? ____
 - a) Tom and Jim
 - b) His parents
 - c) Terius and Romando
 - d) Simon and Theodore

2. What did Eugene want to be? ____
 - a) superhero
 - b) police officer
 - c) teacher
 - d) teenage boy

3. What did Eugene improve after his training? ____
 - a) his homework
 - b) his muscles
 - c) his reputation
 - d) all the above

4. What happened when Eugene tried to fly? ____
 - a) he fell onto the floor
 - b) he flew to the moon
 - c) he floated in his room
 - d) he disappeared

COMPREHENSION: (*Write a complete sentence to answer the question.*)

1. How old was Eugene?

2. What did Terius and Romando teach Eugene to do?

3. What did Eugene have in his closet?

4. What was Eugene doing when the two aliens came to his room?

5. Where did Eugene get his music?

6. Who could see the two aliens?

7. What happened when Eugene tried to fly?

8. What did Eugene want to be?

9. How did Eugene become popular at school?

10. Where did the two aliens come from?
