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To the Best of My Memory: A Most Unique Vacation

I vividly remember our great family vacation in Florida. The year was 2011, and my mother was pregnant with my brother. We drove in the car for a long time, struggling to find the hotel. My father stopped and asked a man where it was. Doing some more driving and double-checking directions, we finally arrived. We entered the spacious reception room, which might have had a lot of wood in its interior. Me and my father sat on a couch (or was it chairs?), waiting. On a table, there was the wooden model of a 19th century sailing vessel. I told him the story of a ship called the *Mary Celeste*, discussing some documentaries I’d seen. Sometime later, we were told our room was being readied and cleaned after its previous occupants. Making the best of our time, we went to eat outdoors, ordering some meat, fries, and, I think, a salad. I also ordered a 7Up. After food, we might have (or might have not) waited a little more, before finally being invited back in. Room 218 was spacious, with a twin bed, and, perhaps, a smaller bed in another corner. The television was small, seemingly from the nineties. That same evening, we discovered we had access to the Russian channel we regularly watched at home. My mother’s favorite series was playing. This disappointed my father: mom would take over the TV again. Next come the partial memories: I ate ice cream sitting on a drawer’s chest, afraid to come down, though the height was less than a foot. Every day, we went to breakfast, ordering things like eggs and bacon, tea, and desserts. Every morning, we visited the pool, where I swam and dived for a couple of hours.

One night, I woke up, hearing my parents arguing about something. I did not understand the context, nor did I care. I simply asked for a tissue and went back to sleep. The next day, they told me I had slept through an earthquake, and my father had been scolding my mother for worrying too much, especially since she was pregnant. A kid at the pool had a very interesting toy ship, and I became obsessed with getting one. Every evening before going out for a walk, I played UNO with my parents, and had placed a bet that if I win a certain amount of games in a row, they will buy me one. I lost that bet, and, at one point, got extremely upset about it. That evening, at a tavern, my father told me I shouldn’t be jealous of things others have. For the rest of the vacation, I kept hoping that my father, a welder, could build an RC ocean liner for me. In fact, I talked about it so often that my parents said he would, if I completely stopped talking about ships until we returned. But, of course, I couldn’t keep my mouth shut, losing that bet as well.

At some point then, my mother and I met a Russian-speaking woman with her child in an elevator, and had a brief conversation about mosquito repellants, My father promised me a cruise if I improved my walking. On our last evening at the hotel, we witnessed an open-air music performance, while munching on more delicious food. There are many unique things about that vacation. But perhaps the most unique of all, is the fact that we had the chance to visit Florida without even entering the US, as “Florida” is the name of a four-star hotel in Greece where we were staying.