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*“There are days in your life, even better than birthdays, when you and a new friend discover the world, in all its swirling, star-spangled moon-bright splendor.” Can you recall a situation like this when you were getting to know a new friend? What was it like? Describe it.*

I would like to tell you the story of how I met someone who I can truly call my best friend at the moment, someone with whom I've experienced a great variety of events, both joyful and sad. But let's go back to day when I first met him.

We met in the summer, in mid-August. At that time, I was 16 years old and had just passed my state exam and solved problems with school, so I was relaxing before starting 10th grade. I was extremely introverted and withdrawn, so most of the summer I spent either at home or alone on the basketball court, monotonously throwing the ball into the hoop. On that day, the weather was nice, and as usual, I went to the basketball court near my house, which was empty most of the time. At some point, I noticed that someone else also came to this site and began to calmly throw the ball on the other half of the court. After a while, he approached me and suggested playing HORSE, to which I agreed. We started the game, during which we struck up a conversation, and surprisingly, it was very easy for me to talk to him, sometimes even joking as if we had known each other for years rather than just a short time. At that moment, he seemed to be my complete opposite, he was very sociable, whereas I was introverted. After some time, he suggested just taking a walk, and as we walked, we talked about everything that came to mind, finding more and more common topics and interests. I was very surprised when I realized that we had spent the whole day doing this, because my talking and spending time with unfamiliar people usually ended quickly. In the evening, we sat on a bench and freely discussed quite personal topics and experiences. This conversation may have seemed mundane or even boring to most people, but this conversation filled me with delight and partially changed my worldview and attitude towards communication. I had found someone with whom I could speak freely from the heart, someone to whom I could open up. At that moment, I didn't foresee where our communication would lead or would we even continue to communicate. However, after that day, our communication didn't stop. It became regular and gradually grew into a strong friendship.

Perhaps there weren't any particularly significant events in this story, but I can definitely say that for me, that day became a dear memory. It not only allowed me to find a friend but also to change my worldview. After that day, I started to change myself. I became less closed-off and more sociable. I gained qualities and emotions that I had sorely lacked in life, so I can confidently say that that day was better than my birthday. It was as if it opened the doors to a reality that had previously been only a dream for a closed-off and introverted person like me.

In conclusion, I would like to add that that day is remembered not only by me but also by my best friend. We often reminisce about it, diving into happy memories. I won't specify the exact date, but I can say that every mid-August, we celebrate the day our friendship began, shifting all our work from that day to others.