

After a three-hour ride, you are transferred to a larger vessel. Finally, you are seated. Your blindfold and ropes are removed. You rub your eyes and look around. Sitting next to you is Claude DuMont, and, at the opposite side of the table, three Russian naval officers. The captain—a swarthy, pleasant-looking man—is standing at the far end of the table. He looks at you and says nothing for a moment.

"Feel right at home," he finally says. "Here, have some—how do you say?—Pepsi Cola, or would you prefer some Russian soup? And meet Captain Lindstrom, captain of a foundering sailing vessel, from which we rescued him. After going to all this trouble, causing you quite some inconvenience, I am sure, it turns out we didn't need to invite you here after all."