October 21st 2016

Dear Diary,

 I’m sorry that I haven’t written for a long time but I had a hard time of my life. I met a man who told me a story of his life. He was young, about 18, but his life story was more colourful than the biggest rainbow in the sky. I want to tell you, Diary, what he told me. I cried all night, because he’d shown me that I always could make my dreams come true and I’d always have a strength to fight, even if I didn’t know about it.
 Dan Tomillton was a famous gymnast. He’d been training every day and he wanted to get a gold medal in a big competition. His coach saw him as a future star. Sport was all his life. But engrossed in seeking fame and gymnastics he didn’t see what was really important in life.
 One night he had a dream. He was taking part in a very important competition. He was swinging on a bar and at the final trick he fell down and butchered his leg. He woke up sweaty and frightened. It was the worst nightmare he’d ever had. Dan went for a short run to stress out.
 He arrived at the patrol station. Suddenly he saw a man. He had two different shoes. His face looked tired but wise and experienced. With white hair, a beard and deep blue eyes he resembled a philosopher.
 They started to talk. The man told Dan that he couldn’t see the life around him and notice that something always happens. There are no moments when everything stops. The gymnast thought that he’d seen the old man somewhere. But where was it?
 Tomillton called the man ‘Sokrates’. He always shared with him some wise thoughts and quotations about life, which were hard to understand. Once he said: ‘You can’t see the life you live, every day looks the same, you get up, you train and you fall asleep. You’re blind to values of life and your mind is replete with rubbish!’. But how could a stranger know so much about Dan’s life? It was so complicated. It was the first meeting with the man, but the gymnast didn’t know that it was the beginning of a new chapter of his life and that in a few days everything would change.
 Dan went to a practice. He was doing some exercises to make himself stronger, when he saw Sokrates sitting under the ceiling. He screamed and fell off the rod. He asked the man what he was doing there. The answer was that he was watching how Tomillton was trying to focus on exercises, but he couldn’t. In the old man’s opinion his brain worked all the time and the fear complicated all the tricks he did. ‘You have to put out all the rubbish! Fear stops you from showing what you can do. Forget about everything and live just for today. You are living at the moment, not yesterday, not tomorrow. Today, now’. The man decided to train the gymnast and show him the sense of life, because Dan couldn’t waste it. The boy didn’t believe him but he thought that he could try.
 Next night Dan couldn’t sleep so he went to visit Sokrates. The man asked, if he come for the third time because he couldn’t sleep. Tomillton came back home. When he was putting his motorbike into the garage he saw Sokrates standing next to the door. ‘What is he doing here?’ thought Dan.
 The man said that the gymnast was riding too fast and it was dangerous for him. He could have an accident. But Dan started laughing and told the man that he always rode fast, because it was fun. He couldn’t see that his words were a total nonsense and he really could destroy his life. But this kind of sports stars can’t see anything. They are blinded by fame and they ego is bigger than you can imagine. For Dan sport was the whole life, so if he had an accident and for example ended in a wheelchair, he could forget about his life as a super and famous gymnast. But he didn’t care.
 Sokrates wanted to meet Dan on the bridge. The gymnast had an important practice, so he asked to hurry. Then the man pulled him off the bridge and Dan fell into the water. Ha was furious. ‘Why did you do this?!’ he shouted. Sokrates asked what he was thinking about when he was falling down. But Tomillton didn’t know. The wise old man said that this was the way to success. Dan has to throw all the fear rubbish away and not to think about anything. Just live for the moment. It was wise and the gymnast knew about it. Something happened and he opened his eyes a bit wider.
 Once Dan was riding as fast as he could. But suddenly he saw a cat on the road. He tried to avoid it and he lost control of his motorbike. He crashed into a car and flew high in air. He landed on his feet but he fell down and hurt his head. The pain was horrible. And then there was only the dark…
 He woke up in hospital. His leg was in plaster from thigh to foot. He was frightened. Dear Diary, as you see, he damaged his life, as I said before. Blinded by fame, totally inexperienced, he lost all his dreams like winning the championships and actually he destroyed all his sports side.
 I started to cry when he told me about it. I still remember his words, I can hear them in my mind and I feel them in my dreams at night. ‘I damaged all my life actually at my own request. I got a depression and I felt like I was nobody. I’ve been addicted to my life and suddenly I couldn’t even stand up by myself. My despair was maybe too big, because I could have ended on a wheelchair. However my leg was broken in 16 places and only a metal bar held my leg in one piece. At best I’d be able to walk by myself in 10 months as my doctor said. I fell into blues and I was held captive by it. My beloved sport was my whole life and after an accident I felt like I was dead’. He confessed to me. I was so sorry with him and I couldn’t even find words to say it.
 As months passed he felt worse and worse. His friends from gymnastics lessons forgot about him and only his coach sometimes said ‘hello’ to him. He went to the petrol station. Sokrates looked at him with his deep blue eyes. ‘I told you. I told you that you couldn’t see the dangers or the value of life’. Dan asked what he should do right now. All his dreams and ambitions were lost. But the man decided to help. He started to train Dan.
 They began of swimming in the pool and doing push-ups. And slowly, after some time, Tomillton tried to make his legs stronger. It hurt but he didn’t give up. He wanted to make his dreams come true and he practised every day as hard as he could.
 After three months of training hard he tried to do a trick called ‘swing 3’. It was the hardest trick anyone had ever invented and nobody had ever done it. But Dan could do it. He did it and he felt that his ready for championships. As you can see, he the gymnast didn’t give up and after an injury he came back stronger and more determined. He went to his old gymnastics club and asked his coach if he could take part in the championships. But his coach said ‘no’.
 ‘You’re after a year-break of gymnastics. It’s impossible to get ready in such a short time, Dan. I’m sorry’. He said. Tomillton said he had trained, and he was ready and he asked the coach to see the trick which he’d learnt. But the man said ‘no’ again. Then Dann started to cry. For the first time of his life he was crying. He’s tears were small but bitter. He felt like somebody who had been thrown away because of his injury. It wasn’t fair. It was so unfair that the gymnast started to shout at his coach. ‘You gave up on me, you took me out like a rubbish and you also don’t want to see what I’ve learnt! It’s like ‘after injury’ means the same as ‘the worst’! I can’t believe it!’ Dan was furious. I felt so sorry for him because I did believe that he could take part in a competition and even win.
 After this fight Dan got out of the club. He came back after a few hours when nobody was at the gym. He wanted to stress out and he started to do his best tricks. Then a coach appeared in the gym, because he forgot something. He saw Dan doing his tricks and he discovered a real talent. He knew that before the injury Tomillton was very good, but after it he was even better. He decided to put Dan into the championships.
 Next month Dan appeared in a hall with hundreds of other gymnasts at the championships. It was the time of his life. He started to show his tricks. But before doing his final and best trick he stopped for a moment and said: ‘I’m throwing away all the fear rubbish. I don’t live for yesterday or tomorrow. I live for now. I’m living at the moment and I can see and feel a life I live”. And he did it. It was amazing, everybody was clapping their hands and chanted his name. He won. And he made it to the final and made his dreams come true.
 Dear Diary, Dan is the best example that even if you think that everything is lost and that you lost totally your life and your self-confidence you have the power to fight. You must just find it.