

Elizabeth  
Gilbert

Eat  
Pray  
Love

ENGLISH  
LOVE STORY

Комментарии и словарь *И. С. Гавриш*



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Перед вами книга-бестселлер, которая была успешно экранизирована и завоевала любовь читателей во всем мире. Это автобиографическая и глубоко личная история про поиск и принятие себя, любовь к миру, путешествия и свободу.

После тяжелого развода писательница из Нью-Йорка Элизабет решает целый год путешествовать по миру. Три страны ее длинного путешествия, Италия, Индия и Индонезия, каждая по-своему учат Лиз радоваться ежедневным мелочам и не бояться нового опыта. В попытках обрести прочную почву под ногами она достигает гармонии с собой и встречает новую любовь.

Роман печатается с незначительными сокращениями и снабжен комментариями и словарем.

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# **BOOK ONE**

## **ITALY**

or

36 Tales about  
the Pursuit of Pleasure

## CHAPTER ONE

I wish Giovanni would kiss me.

Oh, but there are so many reasons why this would be a terrible idea. To begin with, Giovanni is ten years younger than I am, and—like most Italian guys in their twenties—he still lives with his mother. These facts make him an unlikely romantic partner for me, considering that I am an educated American woman in my mid-thirties, who has just come through a failed marriage and an interminable divorce, followed immediately by a passionate love affair that ended in heartbreak. This has left me feeling about seven thousand years old. This is why I have been alone for many months now. This is why, in fact, I have decided to spend this entire year in celibacy.

Giovanni is my Tandem Exchange Partner. He teaches me Italian and I teach him English. I discovered Giovanni a few weeks after I'd arrived in Rome, thanks to a big Internet cafe. He had posted a flier on the bulletin board explaining that a native Italian speaker was seeking a native English speaker for conversational language practice. Right beside his appeal was another flier with the same request, word-for-word identical in every way.

The only difference was the contact information. One flier listed an e-mail address for somebody named Giovanni; the other introduced somebody named Dario. But even the home phone number was the same.

Using my keen intuitive powers, I e-mailed both men at the same time, asking in Italian, 'Are you perhaps brothers?' Giovanni wrote back: 'Even better. Twins!'

After meeting the boys, I began to wonder if perhaps I should change my rule a bit about remaining celibate this year. For instance, perhaps I could remain totally celibate except for keeping a pair of handsome twentyfive-year-old Italian twin brothers as lovers...

But, no.

No and no.

I look for healing and peace that can only come from solitude.

Anyway, by now, by the middle of November, Giovanni and I have become friends. As for Dario—I have introduced him to my adorable little Swedish friend Sofie, and they've been sharing their evenings in Rome in a different way. But Giovanni and I, we only talk. Well, we eat and we talk. We have been eating and talking for many pleasant weeks now, sharing pizzas and gentle grammatical corrections, and tonight has been no exception.

Now it is midnight and foggy, and Giovanni is walking me home to my apartment through these back streets of Rome. We are at my door. We face each other. He gives me a warm hug.

'Good night, my dear Liz,' he says.

'Buona notte, caro mio'<sup>1</sup> I reply.

I walk up the stairs to my fourth-floor apartment, all alone. Another solitary bedtime in Rome. Another long night's sleep ahead of me.

I am alone, I am all alone, I am completely alone.

Grasping this reality, I drop to my knees and press my forehead against the floor. There, I offer up to the universe a prayer of thanks.

First in English.

Then in Italian.

And then in Sanskrit.

## CHAPTER TWO

And since I am already down there in prayer on the floor, let me hold that position as I reach back in time three years earlier to the moment when this story began—a moment which also found me in this exact same posture: on my knees, on a floor, praying.

Everything else about that scene was different, though. That time, I was not in Rome but in the upstairs bathroom of the big house in the suburbs of New York which I'd recently purchased with my husband. It was in November, at around three o'clock in the morning. My husband was sleeping in our bed. I was hiding in the bathroom sobbing.

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<sup>1</sup> **Buona notte, caro mio.** — *итал.* Спокойной ночи, дорогой.

I don't want to be married anymore.

I don't want to live in this big house.

I don't want to have a baby.

But I was supposed to want to have a baby. I was thirty-one years old. My husband and I—who had been together for eight years, married for six had built our entire life around the common expectation that, after passing the age of thirty, I would want to have children. But I didn't. I kept waiting to want to have a baby, but it didn't happen. And I know what it feels like to want something, believe me. When the magazine I worked for was going to send me to New Zealand, to write an article about the search for giant squid, I felt delight. And I thought, 'Until I can feel as ecstatic about having a baby as I felt about going to New Zealand to search for a giant squid, I cannot have a baby.'

I don't want to be married anymore.

In daylight hours, I refused that thought, but at night it came to me again and again. What a catastrophe. I had actively participated in every moment of the creation of this life—so why did I feel so overwhelmed with duty, tired of being the breadwinner and the housekeeper and the social coordinator and the dog-walker and the wife and the soon-to-be mother, and—somewhere in my stolen moments—a writer...?

I don't want to be married anymore.

My husband was sleeping in the other room, in our bed. I equal parts loved him and could not stand him.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **I equal parts loved him and could not stand him.** —  
Я одновременно и любила его, и терпеть не могла.

I couldn't wake him to share in my distress—what would be the point? We both knew there was something wrong with me, and he'd been losing patience with it. We'd been fighting and crying, and we were tired in that way that only a couple whose marriage is collapsing can be tired.

The many reasons I didn't want to be this man's wife anymore are too personal and too sad. On this night, he was still my lighthouse and my albatross in equal measure. The only thing more unthinkable than leaving was staying; the only thing more impossible than staying was leaving. I didn't want to destroy anything or anybody. I just wanted to slip quietly out the back door, without causing any consequences, and then not stop running until I reached Greenland.

This part of my story is not a happy one, I know. But I share it here because something occurred on that bathroom floor that changed forever my life. What happened was that I started to pray.

You know—like, to God.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

Now, this was a first for me. And since this is the first time I have introduced that word—GOD—into my book, and since this is a word which will appear many times again throughout these pages, it seems only fair

that I pause here for a moment to explain exactly what I mean when I say that word.

Let me first explain why I use the word God, when I could just as easily use the words Jehovah, Allah, Shiva, Brahma, Vishnu or Zeus.<sup>1</sup> Alternatively, I could call God 'That,' which is how the ancient Sanskrit scriptures say it. But that 'That' feels impersonal to me and I myself cannot pray to a That. I need a proper name, in order to fully sense a personal attendance. For this same reason, when I pray, I do not address my prayers to The Universe, The Force, The Supreme Self, The Whole, The Light, or The Higher Power.

I have nothing against any of these terms. I feel they are all equal because they are all equally adequate and inadequate descriptions of the indescribable. But we each do need a functional name for this indescribability, and 'God' is the name that feels the warmest to me, so that's what I use.

Culturally, though not theologically, I'm a Christian. I was born a Protestant. And while I really love that great teacher of peace who was called Jesus, I can't swallow that one fixed rule of Christianity insisting that Christ is the only path to God. Strictly speaking, then, I cannot call myself a Christian.

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<sup>1</sup> **Jehovah, Allah, Shiva, Brahma, Vishnu, Zeus** — Иегова (имя бога в Ветхом Завете и в каббале, он же Яхве); Аллах (имя бога в исламе); Шива, Брахма, Вишну (божественная триада индуистского пантеона); Зевс (главный из богов-олимпийцев в древнегреческой мифологии)

I have always responded with excitement to anyone who has ever said that God does not live in a dogmatic scripture or in a distant throne in the sky, but instead lives very close to us indeed—much closer than we can imagine, breathing right through our own hearts. I respond with gratitude to anyone who has ever voyaged to the center of that heart, and who has then returned to the world with a report for the rest of us that God is an experience of supreme love.

In the end, what I have come to believe about God is simple. When the question is raised, ‘What kind of God do you believe in?’ my answer is easy: ‘I believe in a magnificent God.’

## CHAPTER FOUR

So I spoke to God directly for the first time. In the middle of that dark November crisis I was interested only in saving my life. What I said to God through my sobs was something like this: ‘Hello, God. How are you? I’m Liz. It’s nice to meet you.’

That’s right—I was speaking to the creator of the universe as though we’d just been introduced at a cocktail party. But we work with what we know in this life, and these are the words I always use at the beginning of a relationship.

‘I’m sorry to bother you so late at night,’ I continued. ‘But I’m in serious trouble. And I’m sorry I haven’t

ever spoken directly to you before, but I hope I have always expressed my gratitude for all the blessings that you've given me in my life.'

This thought caused me to sob even harder. God waited. I pulled myself together enough to go on: 'I am not an expert at praying, as you know. But can you please help me? I am in desperate need of help<sup>1</sup>. I don't know what to do. I need an answer. Please tell me what to do...'

And so the prayer was Please tell me what to do repeated again and again. I don't know how many times I begged. I only know that I begged like someone who was pleading for her life. And the crying went on forever.

Until—quite abruptly—it stopped.

Quite abruptly, I found that I was not crying anymore. I lifted my forehead off the floor and sat up in surprise, wondering if I would see now some Great Being who had taken my weeping away. But nobody was there. I was just alone. But not really alone, either. I was surrounded by something like a little pocket of silence. I was totally still. I don't know when I'd ever felt such stillness.

Then I heard a voice. This was my voice as I had never heard it before. This was my voice, but perfectly wise, calm and compassionate. How can I describe the warmth of affection in that voice, as it gave me the answer that would forever open my faith in the divine?

The voice said: Go back to bed, Liz.

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<sup>1</sup> **to be in desperate need of help** — отчаянно нуждаться в помощи

I exhaled.

It was so immediately clear that this was the only thing to do. Any other answer—You Must Divorce Your Husband! or You Must Not Divorce Your Husband!—would not be true wisdom. True wisdom gives the only possible answer at any given moment<sup>1</sup>, and that night, going back to bed was the only possible answer. Go back to bed, said this interior voice, because you don't need to know the final answer right now, at three o'clock in the morning on a Thursday in November. Go back to bed, because I love you. Go back to bed, because the only thing you need to do for now is get some rest and take good care of yourself until you do know the answer. Go back to bed so that, when the storm comes, you'll be strong enough to deal with it. And the storm is coming, dear one. Very soon. But not tonight. I would call what happened that night the beginning of a religious conversation. The first words of an open dialogue that would, eventually, bring me very close to God, indeed.

## CHAPTER FIVE

Seven very difficult months later, I left my husband. When I finally made that decision, I thought the worst of it was over. This only shows how little I knew about divorce.

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<sup>1</sup> **at any given moment** — в любой конкретный момент

It was my most sincere belief when I left my husband that we could settle our practical affairs in a few hours with a calculator, some common sense and a bit of goodwill toward the person we'd once loved. My initial suggestion was that we sell the house and divide all the possessions fifty-fifty. He didn't find this suggestion fair. So I changed my offer: What if he took all the possessions and I took all the blame? But not even that offer brought a settlement. Now I was at a loss. I could do nothing now but wait for his counterproposal. My newfound spirituality made it essential to me that we not battle. So this was my position—I would neither defend myself from him, nor would I fight him.

Months passed. My life got stuck at the midpoint as I waited to be released, waited to see what the terms would be. We were living separately (he had moved into our Manhattan apartment), but nothing was resolved.

And then there was David.

All the complications and traumas of those ugly divorce years were multiplied by the drama of David—the guy I fell in love with as I was taking leave of my marriage<sup>1</sup>. I clung to David for escape from marriage. I inflicted upon him my every hope for my salvation and happiness.

I moved right in with David after I left my husband. He was—and he is—a gorgeous young man. A born New Yorker, an actor and writer. Independent, vegetarian,

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<sup>1</sup> **to take leave of smth** — прощаться с чем-л.

spiritual, seductive. Bigger than life. Bigger than big. Or at least he was to me.

David and I met because he was performing in a play based on short stories I'd written. He was playing a character I had invented. In desperate love, it's always like this, isn't it? In desperate love, we always invent the characters of our partners, demanding that they be what we need of them, and then feeling shocked when they refuse to perform the role we created in the first place.

But, oh, we had such a great time together during those early months when he was still my romantic hero and I was still his living dream. It was excitement and compatibility like I'd never imagined. We invented our own language. We made goals, vows, promises and dinner together.

The first summer of Liz and David looked like any romantic movie you've ever seen. At this time I was still thinking my divorce might proceed gracefully, though I was giving my husband the summer off from talking about it so we could both cool down. Anyway, it was so easy not to think about all that loss in the midst of such happiness. Then that summer ended.

On September 9, 2001, I met with my husband face-to-face for the last time, not realizing that every future meeting would need lawyers between us, to mediate. We had dinner in a restaurant. I tried to talk about our separation, but all we did was fight. He let me know that I was a liar and a traitor and that he hated me and would never speak to me again. Two mornings later I woke up to find

that airplanes were crashing into the two tallest buildings of my city. I called my husband to make sure he was safe and we wept together over this disaster, but I did not go to him. Which is how we both knew it was over.

It's not much of an exaggeration to say that<sup>1</sup> I did not sleep again for the next four months.

I shudder now to think of what I imposed on David during those months we lived together, right after 9/11 and my separation from my husband. Imagine his surprise to discover that the happiest, most confident woman he'd ever met was actually a dark hole of bottomless grief. Once again, I could not stop crying. This is when he started to move away, and that's when I saw the other side of my passionate romantic hero—the David who was cool to the touch, in need of more personal space than a herd of American bison.

To be losing David right after the failure of my marriage, and right after the terrorizing of my city, and right during the worst ugliness of divorce... well, this was simply too much.

David and I continued to have fun and compatibility during the days, but at night he visibly moved away from me, more every day, as though I were infectious. I came to fear nighttime. Most mornings, David woke to find me sleeping restlessly on the floor beside his bed, on a pile of bathroom towels, like a dog.

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<sup>1</sup> **it's not much of an exaggeration to say that** — не будет преувеличением сказать, что...

‘What happened now?’ he asked—another man thoroughly exhausted by me.

I think I lost something like fifteen kilos during that time.

## CHAPTER SIX

Oh, but it wasn’t all bad, those few years...

Because God never slams a door in your face without opening a window, some wonderful things happened to me in the shadow of all that sorrow. For one thing, I finally started learning Italian. Also, I found an Indian Guru<sup>1</sup>. Lastly, I was invited by an elderly medicine man to come and live with him in Indonesia.

I’ll explain in sequence.

To begin with, things started to look better when I moved out of David’s place in early 2002 and found an apartment of my own for the first time in my life. I saw the apartment almost as a sanatorium for my own recovery. I painted the walls in the warmest colours I could find and bought myself flowers every week, as if I were visiting myself in the hospital. My sister gave me a hotwater bottle<sup>2</sup> as a housewarming gift and I slept with the thing laid against my heart every night.

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<sup>1</sup> **an Indian Guru** — индийский гуру; «гуру» на хинди означает «(духовный) учитель, мастер»

<sup>2</sup> **a hotwater bottle** — резиновая грелка

# Vocabulary

## A

- abruptly** — (*adv*) внезапно, резко
- accomplishment** — (*n*) достижение; выполнение
- account** — (*v*) считать; принимать в расчет
- acquaintance** — (*n*) знакомство; знакомый
- adequate** — (*adj*) достаточный, соответствующий
- aesthetic** — (*adj*) эстетический; художественный
- affection** — (*n*) привязанность, любовь
- aimlessly** — (*adv*) бесцельно, бессмысленно
- ambitious** — (*adj*) честолюбивый; жаждущий
- ambivalent** — (*adj*) двойственный, противоречивый
- anticipated** — (*adj*) ожидаемый, предполагаемый
- appreciate** — (*v*) ценить; быть признательным
- assignment** — (*n*) назначение; командировка
- assurance** — (*n*) уверенность, убежденность
- astonishment** — (*n*) удивление, изумление
- awe** — (*n*) страх; трепет, благоговение

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