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Lasiuly Moore

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Prologue

The winners don't fight because they have no rivals.

Lasiuly

This is the story of Lasiuly and her exceptional enthusiasm. We wanted this magnificent creature to inspire the whole world. This story teaches us that love will grow if it can be shared. Lasiuly is a textbook heroine, a champion by nature. We know that she would smirk knowing she is the leading lady in this tale and that sharing this story would help whoever came across it. Lasiuly is by nature a selfless person who has an innate ability to be humble and confident. Her confidence comes from within. She knows she is different, unique and she embraces it.

Lasiuly by trade is a communication expert. But her skill goes beyond just words. She communicates using her whole self. She uses her charisma, her emotions, all her life experiences and channels that energy to make things happen. Her will is the catalyst and this special power is what moves her to seek out and explore the right lands and navigate the right waters. Lasiuly does this all without causing ripples in the water. She has an uncanny stealth like competence.

Lasiuly has many goals and is always seeking new horizons. She can see what others cannot. She looks beyond the norm. This also gives her the ability to be bold and creative. But she

does not let this go to her head. Lasiuly gets noticed without striving to be noticed. She is edgy with a sense of poise and elegance. Anyone that meets her naturally gravitate to Lasiuly like the Earth orbiting the sun. They crave her warmth and her liveliness. Lasiuly's passion and brilliance illuminates and it highlights her steadfast goodness. This could explain why she is the top manager or maybe because Lasiuly is Lasiuly. Sometimes moody, yet always brilliant, she fights her restlessness by finding a thousand reasons to smile. With her longtime friend, Virginia, and a red string bracelet that is much more precious than a jewel.

September 27

*We need a lighthouse, when the sea is stormy.
If there is no lighthouse, we must build one.*

Lasiuly

Lasiuly was born in Long Beach Los Angeles, to the south of the county, but nobody knows exactly when. What is certain is that those years were characterized by the most maliciously vindictive gang war for dominance over the territory. These gangs consisted of mostly young disadvantaged have nots from different cultural backgrounds. It seemed that they all were in constant state of perpetual conflict.

Lasiuly was born in a middle-class family, Lasiuly would never involve herself in these territory wars, but she could feel them buzzing around her and that troubled her.

Long Beach was like a apple pie and everyone wanted a slice. There was not enough pie to appease the masses. Angry masses fueled by madness, rage and resentment that leads to destruction and death. She knew that violence was not totally to blame but also the senselessness of this war. But this war was all these poverties stricken uneducated youth knew. This was their life. Thinking about their hopeless existence makes Lasiuly sad, and her blue eyes cannot hide her sorrow for people who suffer or do not know how to get out of this wretched life and succeed.

Lasiuly studies psychology and majors in communication and she excel in these fields, first in New York, and then in the international fashion industry.

When attending grade school in Long Beach, she meets Virginia, they become best friend and they share their lives and joys. There are no secrets between them, not even on that September 27, when Lasiuly received an unexpected gift in Long Beach. On that day, late in the afternoon, she was taking her walk on the shore to collect ocean crystals returned by the stormy waters. These are the moments she cherished. The wind and the water made a hypnotic melody and the energy she felt made her feel alive because of her fantastic symbiosis with the power of nature. She felt like she could touch the sky with her finger. On that day, however, the waves were fiercer, and the ocean air was getting colder. Suddenly, after feeling a shiver running down her spine, she found herself submerged by that whirlpool of salt water.

The infinite blue ocean, darkness, emptiness and a sense of solitude. It was dark when she woke up many hours later, the waters were calm.

In her right hand she was still holding her small crystals, while on the left wrist she noticed a simple red string bracelet she had never seen before. She was amazed that she survived and instantly knowing that she received a virtue and a destiny that down the road will turn out to be a nightmare.

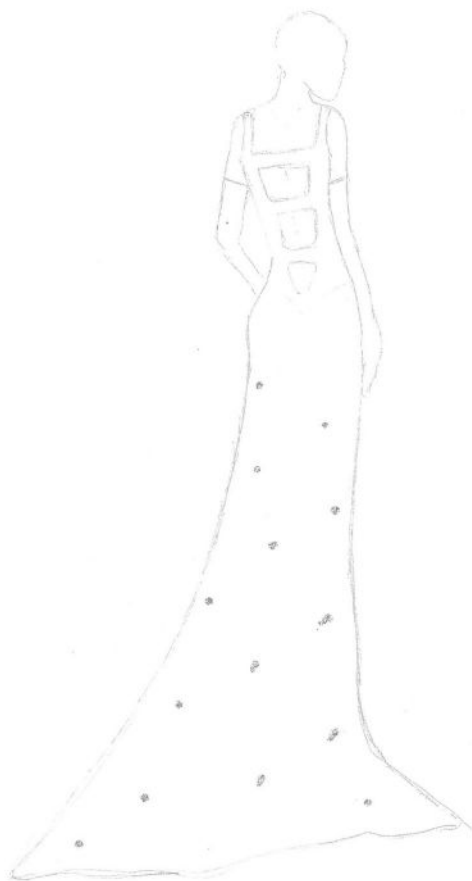
She could not remember what happened, but she had the feeling that Virginia had been next to her, knotting that red string and talking sign language, the only language she knew, since she was deaf-mute – telling her that remembering a detail is much more important, sometimes. Lasiuly realized that on September 27 she was born again. She felt a new surge of life was given to her and finally everything made sense.

After all, Lasiuly's story is all about that gift. A story that can only be explained by that red string, more precious than

any other jewel she had ever owned. An indelible memory and a new direction, on her wrist and in her heart. Everything was clear now. If you really want something, it will happen, and Virginia will always be next to her, even thousands of miles away.

Lasiuly is a new woman, ready now to live that adventure. She pushed herself out of the storm and now she found herself standing at center stage. She moves slowly, with elegance, as if she were dancing. The flow of time and space has its own rhythm of harmony. Lasiuly seems almost like a mythological character but she is so profoundly human. She knows that reality is what we want it to be and by writing down her thoughts and emotions every night she retains that humanity.

She knows that difficulties are nothing more than an opportunity to pursue serenity. With a bit of luck and her overwhelming energy, she will be ready to seize all opportunities.



Virginia

*They say eyes are the mirror of the soul,
I say Virginia's eyes are the peace of mine.*

Virginia has left California to move with her family to London. There she completed her studies in Business Administration and Finance at the London School of Economics and Political Science. She is deaf-mute from birth, and Lasiuly also learned sign language to communicate with her.

Virginia is cool and collected and she is vivacious. She is not particularly fond of being pitied. Virginia knows her limitations, but she does not view it as a negative trait. She fine tunes her other senses to make up for the one she wasn't given. Over time she notices her senses heightening. This has made her intuitive, strong and sensitive.

Lasiuly and Virginia know that long-distance friendship is not easy, but they know when a bond is unbreakable it is just a matter of geography.

London is the perfect place for Virginia. It is refined without it being too stuffy and it's lively, yet not overwhelming. A perfect balance of elegance and comfort. Virginia was quite comfortable in London. It is where she feels just like home. London is a city that welcomed her with open arms and she holds this city with a high regard.

Virginia doesn't even mind the long periods of overcast skies and frequent light mist-type precipitation. For her it gives London an aristocratic charm with a hint of modesty. As she strolls London in the mist she admires the Victorian Architecture and the view of the city from Primrose Hill. The city is so vibrant, and its history is long.

Virginia works in her family business, a leading company in the costume jewelry industry creating jewels for brands such as Tiffany, Bulgari, Pandora, Michael Kors, and Lasiuly.

She is the purchasing department coordinator, and she is the one who selects colors and materials for Lasiuly's jewels.

Virginia is enthusiastic and positive. With her bobbed, copper brown hair, her dark eyes and her porcelain face, she is the image of vitality and determination: a tender heart and a steel mind. She has panache and her instinct helps her take in every single detail. Through this special talent, that Lasiuly has helped her grow, she can decipher any hidden meaning of a pose or a move. This gives Virginia an edge when it comes to relationships.

She spends her free time offering her support to many foundations for deaf-mute children and parents who want to help their children deal with this handicap in the best way, and she is pleased that she can contribute and give them hope for the future to do that.

Life is a gift, Virginia has no doubt about it.

And her happy and lively sweetness hides all her confidence, her perseverance, her successful life. She is such a passionate woman that she never loses hope. Every challenge is a possible turning point, and she embraces it with a smile.

So balanced, ironic and nice, she is the perfect Lasiuly's alter ego. They share things, talk about them, and support each other.

They are soul mates, as Virginia likes to say.

Talking every day is not that difficult with today's smartphones and technologies. Anyway, what's the point of using SMS, emails or even skype if you can feel someone as if she were next to you? They miss hugging each other, of course, but they can still make up for lost time, mostly in London.

Just like any best friends they argue a lot, because there are no subjects taboo between them. Lasiuly and Virginia's friendship is steadfast and true. They have no need to hide their flaws from each other or sugarcoat words.

Naturally when they argue they get mad, then there is just silence. A silence that is reflection of sorrow that brings them back together. These moments are what help their friendship grow. They use these learning moments to improve themselves for each other.

An endless friendship, made only of new beginnings, empathy, projects, new discoveries, small or huge goals to be achieved and plenty of mutual support.

When Lasiuly feels discouraged, overwhelmed and needs a break from reality she knows Virginia will always be there to soothe her.

When Virginia is anxious, and her life feels like it is spinning out of control, Lasiuly is the one that stops the spinning. Virginia is thankful for that and it's because of Lasiuly unswaying devotion and constant encouragement she has been better at expressing her feelings. They were born to complement each other, and their relationship is like a tide ebbing and flowing that generates wealth and wellbeing.

To get in touch with her emotions Lasiuly prefers writing and spending some time alone when Virginia is not around. In moments of quiet solitude, Lasiuly connects with her most intimate, innermost and most genuine self. Virginia did not have the chance to follow Lasiuly's career, she could not see those small and rare fragments of her amazing professional

skills, and yet she can imagine how talented she is. She knows those sincere eyes, and her talent better than anyone else. And Lasiuly loves Virginia. She even loves her surprises, because Virginia is the only person who can enter her secret and private world. Lasiuly does not like talking about her personal life. Virginia understands this just from her own past experiences with false friends. Lasiuly says that looking in Virginia's eyes is like seeing what is happening around her. Virginia knows how much Lasiuly loves and cares about her, and those words are just one of the many ways Lasiuly shows her affection.

A matter of *needreams*

*Understanding the needreams of others is a great virtue,
in life and in business. Creating needs is pure magic.*

Lasiuly

Lasiuly's professional success was not gradual. Thanks to her studies and her publications on the role of emotions in marketing, her first speech at a seminar for young managers entranced the audience with a revolutionary game on the humanity of numbers.

Looking at one of the typical charts with the silhouettes of women and men representing and quantifying the reference market and trends in terms of appreciation of products or services, Lasiuly stimulated the participants' imagination by inviting them to give them a face, a name, and a character.

She wanted those managers to see people, feel their desires, understand their expectations. And she really managed to engage them, like no other new business project had been able to do. This made her smile and even more confident. They were intrigued by that approach, yet worried about the variables that they could not get completely under control. It is split by a fierce competition where bringing down the prices was the winning move.

In New York, as in the whole world, nothing is more important than a business record. A business needs to reinvent

itself on a regular basis, and old strategies are no longer adequate. There are too many proposals, businesses compete on price, technology is constantly evolving, and profit is the only thing that matters, both in business and in life.

Those young managers were asked to bring innovations: identifying the needs and expectations of their audience before and better than their *competitors*.

They were attending that seminar to learn more about successful formulas and solutions, but Lasiuly preferred to work on the bigger picture, rather than on mathematical formulas. Engaging with them, she helped them understand that they were doing nothing but focus on the same field, without making any progress.

Some of them were pretty good at making a profile of those figures, but tended to identify them with their world and their vision. No one was able to cross the boundaries of that chart, or even imagine something that was missing within those boundaries. They were all trying to prove themselves and others to be the best rather than really stand out. They were nothing but the projection of the brand they were representing and defending.

Then, Lasiuly started talking about *needreams* (because dreams are needs, and vice versa, that's what Lasiuly says): those managers and their companies, those of the public, business *needreams* and personal *needreams*. With her clarity, her confidence, and her passion she really managed to make everyone feel at ease, and everyone was finally able to see unexplored scenarios, discuss original ideas, explore unknown areas and distant lands. Everyone was starting to find a way out of the confusion.

The added value of emotions, influenced by Lasiuly, had stirred the imagination of all those present. The funny thing is that those managers were amazed at themselves and all the potential they had inside. Feeling free helped them work on

their imagination. Sweet talking Lasiuly encouraged them. She inspired them to look beyond themselves. She roused them which lend them to think outside the box. These young managers could only memorize phrases written by hand on the large whiteboard.

One referred to the cruel gang fights in Long Beach: *If too many people throw themselves into something, they will inevitably shatter it in a thousand pieces, and only fragments will remain.*

The other one was a real source of inspiration for the entire audience, which was now entranced: *We can really be effective only if we concentrate our energies where they are needed and desired.*

Many of those managers, indeed, when answering a question or making spontaneous comments, confessed they were stunned by that “discovery”: needs and dreams come from a spark which makes them such. When it comes to business, identifying and creating needs are both essential.

Look where you've never looked before, look where others do not look. With these last words, Lasiuly wanted to urge her audience to do more, rather than say goodbye. She always liked finishing her speeches with a bit of good advice, and with her usual resolute candor sweeping away tension and doubts.

Young, beautiful, ethereal as a chosen soul, she had impressed dozens of managers who now believed they did not have a solution to the global crisis. Of course, her speaking skills did a lot, but there was something more than her words: something in her eyes, something about that red string bracelet, that sensuality mixed with a sublime intelligence, and even her inflexible sweetness when talking about dreams.

On that day, Lasiuly, found The Jewel Facing Rockefeller Center Hotel, in the heart of Manhattan, on her way, and started her incredible career as a business management trainer.

Life in progress

*Wishes are our daily work schedule. Every day.
And then, one after the other, when they come true,
they become the pieces of the mosaic
of the person we want to be, gradually, day by day.
Lasiuly*

One year later, with her enthusiasm and her empathy, Lasiuly had become one of the most popular management trainers.

And every time it was like the first time. She felt like she was growing up with those managers, learning what they were learning, and they loved that attitude. Maybe that's why she was so appreciated as a trainer. Energetic and sweet at the same time, eager to grab hold of every single opportunity, Lasiuly was sublime and inspiring. "Developing skills" was one of the subjects of her work in progress and life in progress, as she liked to call it, saying that work is part and an expression of life, which affects and is affected by it, that's why knowledge and evolution are so important. Nothing is immutable, and there is no one who is so competent in his field that does not need or wish to learn something new. Lasiuly spoke these words with a smile, always repeating that wanting to learn and knowing that there is always more to learn is a privilege.

So, that life in progress was the reason behind that continuing curiosity and interest in new things, that good will and gratitude for new opportunities.

She also discussed with those managers another important aspect of skills and their acquisition. Knowledge is never enough, not even when theory is adequately supported by practical experience. Talent, according to Lasiuly, must be developed to reach the final goal which is to stand out. We need to know what to do and how to do it. Knowing when it is the right time to do it is also important, of course.

It's something more than our educational background, or even our attitude. Both are needed to keep us going. We need the spark to keep studying. We should want to exchange ideas and our views with other people. This is how we learn and grow. The concept of competence was clear to all of them. The very definition of competence is the ability to do something successfully or efficiently. They knew how important it is developing both personal, social and method skills. However, while their technical skills were strong and constantly updated, they seemed to struggle with those transversal skills that Lasiuly regarded so important.

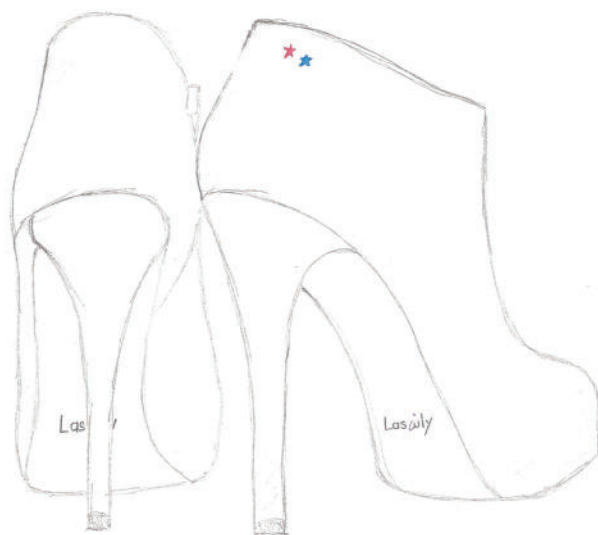
The concept of resilience was not so difficult to understand for those managers, who were attracted by the idea of strength, perseverance, resistance to stress, positive thinking to solve problems, accept and face challenges, self-motivation, and ability to react to problems. Other skills, on the other hand, were something new to them, they found it hard to understand their meaning and relevance.

What they needed was a practical example, and Lasiuly just happened to be the personification of that emotional intelligence she was talking about. Some transversal skills, indeed, can really make the difference, and it did not take them too long to identify important aspects and understand that

they needed to be improved. Knowledge is not enough if it is not used along with some other skills. Understanding others and communicating are also key factors to negotiate, manage teams, increase performance, and even to make operations leaner.

Guided by Lasiuly, they finally explored the horizons of relationships and creativity. They learned how to self-direct themselves and they learned how to speak and write clearly and effectively. They could manage their emotions and those of others. As Lasiuly was writing the words “life in progress” on the whiteboard, with her long, chocolate brown hair swaying on her back, everybody in that room could still see her bright blue eyes. They could not forget that expectant and inspiring look, charming and infinitely human. Lasiuly was a star, a star that did not seem too far. She had that effect on everyone. At the end of every lesson, every course, every conference, anyone who had the opportunity to listen to her speeches, could also steal a piece of her soul.

Always be ready to seize all opportunities, from everything and everyone, she liked to repeat. Get used to listening to, and even feeling everything that is around you, including things you only imagine. Dream, make wishes, be part of the flow, and feed it, if you can. Life is a challenge, but we can challenge our life by surprising it with our imagination and our genius. It’s a work in progress, which means that it is never over. There is still a possible turning point, an idea that can inspire us.



The charm of diversity

*Our will is like a magic wand:
it makes things happen.
If we believe in its power and we exercise it,
we will be rewarded.
Inspiring others to do the same is a priceless gift.
Lasiuly*

Lasiuly was now holding courses addressed to all sectors, junior and senior managers, the startup phase involving new lines or markets, business transformations, business expansion, and even ordinary management.

From the City to the entire state of New York, her name was now on the list of the most experienced and charismatic trainers: her classes, workshops, and seminars were always sold out. Her reputation preceded her, along with her charm, following her like a shadow, like her own scent. A delicate, yet persistent scent everyone was able to recognize. Her young and kind face, framed by chocolate brown hair, with that joyful and convincing smile, and those sky or ocean blue eyes, was about to become a sort of legend now that her fame was crossing the borders of the Big Apple. Nevertheless, Lasiuly continued to grow her talent, working on her sensitivity, and increasing

her knowledge. Like a sponge, she absorbed skills and qualities from all the people she met, to use them for her classes. Speaking to the top managers of major beauty brand institutes in the US, she was able to charm them with her enthusiasm and her positive attitude, without ever sounding annoying, because an acute, deep and versatile mind knows the benefits of levity at work.

It was clear enough to those experienced executives that that virtuous charm and that ability to handle situations could not just come from her studies and her speaking skills. Knowing that those words would help them revive their companies in a moment of crisis, contraction of demand, and surplus supply, they wrote down every single word pronounced by Lasiuly. In a scenario characterized by cutthroat competition, where bringing down the prices was the winning move, everyone was willing to do everything to keep the business going. Lasiuly was aware of that situation but did not imagine it could be that difficult.

So, she had to move away from the main topic for a while, to show them a way out of that maze, talking about the celebration of a new ideal of beauty, that beauty that comes from originality, inner well-being, serene seduction. Any products, services and treatments offered to potential clients must be long-term investments, whose added value is given by the unique experience offered. By promising authentic charm rather any miraculous rejuvenation, they would become the best allies for their clients, that's what Lasiuly said while writing these words the whiteboard: I use x, I do y, and I feel great. It's simple, right? It almost sounds like a slogan. But there was much more, it was clear. When life and business fall apart, clients need optimism, joy, hope. Think outside the box, she kept repeating. Fighting to get a piece of the same pie is pointless (just like those gang fights in Long Beach), and clients were

now tired of turning to luxurious beauty centers that offered standard treatments and made only ridiculous promises. It was time to imagine a different project, revolutionize that industry, create a sensual, yet accessible innovative beauty program, focused on the value of the person, for example, to offer clients a unique experience. And why not explore new and different markets?

«Beauty and wellbeing are energy. You need energy to take care of yourself and your unicity. Your job is to instill, inspire and respect that energy, the energy of men and women of your target market». Calmly, yet firmly emphasizing those concepts, she continued, «Stop running on the same track, do something different, climb a mountain, explore new lands. Change everything». «You should know», she continued «that everyone wants to stand out, and, that to be unique we must be different. Some competitions are just pointless, expensive, or just not worth it. Think about it, and good luck!». That's what she said looking her audience in the eyes. The applause that followed made her blush and smile sincerely. «What a great day» she thought on her way back to The Jewel Facing Rockefeller Center Hotel, and that room on the 11st floor, where she felt now like home. New York can be a rough place, indeed, but that hotel was so cozy and comfortable, and even romantic, that she made it her office and her shelter, and having her was a pleasure for those working at The Jewel, who cuddled her and were always so helpful.

The fact that her room was occupied by other guests when she was away did not bother her at all. It was her room. Period. Her scent, that “delicate mix of lotus flowers and chocolate”, as she used to describe it, had invaded that room (at least that's what the cleaners said). Moreover, The Jewel was on the 51st street, a stone's throw away from the University where she had studied psychology, and she loved that neighborhood. It was

the eve, the eve of the big day. One more day and she would see the giant Christmas tree from her window. She had planned to stay for another two weeks, indeed, and she could not miss that incredible spectacle from there. She still had a few hours, after a quick dinner, to fantasize about those moments, staring at that place that was getting ready to house that majestic Christmas tree. Crouched on a comfortable armchair, wrapped in a large cashmere sweater, while sipping her hot chocolate, she stared out and then at her fuchsia and silver notebook, the one she used to write down her thoughts every night, before falling asleep. But not without texting Virginia to tell her all the emotions she had experienced during the day. «What an incredible day! Helping others to see another beauty, the real beauty, and offering them some good ideas for the future has been a magnificent experience. So, today is the day... The spruce is coming! I'm so excited! I miss you... wish you were here». «Awesome! I had no doubt about it. I think about you. You know I'm there, next to you... I'm on your wrist! ». Lasiuly laughed at those words, while she kept touching her red string bracelet.

The eve

*We are not pawns in the hands of fate.
We have our imagination and we dream
of turning it into reality.
We just must remember it. Always.
Lasiuly*

It was a starry night, but Lasiuly was pretty sure the snow was coming. She could feel it in her bones. She had this sixth sense about this. Lasiuly and snow had a special bond. She could smell it like how a hound dog could pick up viable scents that no other creature could do. Those stars, indeed, were not as bright as usual, and the air was getting colder. She loved snow, and she loved winter in New York, as much as she loved autumn rain in London. It's just a detail, some might argue, but weather can tell you much about a city. It can show you its real nature, and New York, with its huge Christmas tree, was even more beautiful than ever in winter. Or maybe it was just that charming tree that created that magical atmosphere. Waiting was the most exciting part, but Lasiuly could not imagine it without Virginia, so she fell asleep, and she saw herself and Virginia, the Christmas tree and their future projects in her dreams. She had been working on that project for months, and Virginia was the only one who

knew it was now time to make it come true. Something was still missing, of course, that's why she needed to talk to Virginia.

In her dreams, she was decorating that majestic tree with her desires, her vision, her resolutions, and she was so excited that she woke up long before dawn. Luckily for her, she was at The Jewel, where everything is possible, even pretending it was time to wake up. So, when she went down to the second floor, where there was a comfy lounge with a TV on and everything guests could need to prepare a hot drink, she was only wearing her pajamas and her socks.

Two cops were enjoying a break while drinking a cup of coffee in front of the TV, and Lasiuly, after smiling back at them, sat down on a red chair with her lemon and ginger tea. Although it was two o'clock in the morning, she could find that kind hospitality she loved so much, and she started thinking about her two weeks off work. A couple more days, and she would be finally free to enjoy New York Christmas atmosphere. She had planned on taking long walks on the 5th Street, thinking about her next leadership and team building lessons, and visiting MoMa, the Museum of Modern Art, to discover Andy Warhol and the American dream. She had planned that visit for her first free day after the seminars. While she was thinking about her upcoming projects and adventures, all the faces of the people she had met in the last days came back to her mind, one by one and all together: the faces of those who had so passionately attended her classes, the young face of the receptionist with whom she had chatted the night before, once back to the hotel, the faces of those friendly waiters who had served her dinner. They see Lasiuly as a humble and happy fairy, and they do not even imagine how much she is inspired by them, and all relationships in general. Serving and cuddling such a loving, polite and helpful person is always a pleasure. Kindness generates kindnesses, as they say. After all, Lasiuly loves to collect sensations, intuitions and com-

plicity. She knows the value of gratitude, she practices gratitude, and this is rare. She knows she is lucky to have Virginia, and to meet people and find new opportunities, and she is grateful for her life, and the ocean, with its tiny crystal drops. She thinks about the ocean every time she touches her red string bracelet, and she thinks about her friend, who knotted it that night, and she becomes sad. Sometimes, being alone is hard, and even such a magical creature knows human fragility.

Lasiuly closed her eyes. The cops got back to their work, on the street, the hotel was quiet, and there was just a replay of old news on the TV. She was finally ready to go back to sleep and say goodbye to that sweet sadness. She got up from the red armchair on the second floor and went back to her room, where she noticed a message from Virginia on her cell phone: «Let's think about each other as we have never done before. It will make us feel closer. Good night ».

She could finally smile again, and dive into that bed, to enjoy a well-deserved break. Breaks feed creativity, that's what Lasiuly say. Contemplation helps her to get in touch with the energies she needs, to reflect on her ideas, to better see the flow of events. Perhaps it is she who drives that flow with her enthusiastic attitude, and her imagination shaping the reality. Refreshing her body and soul helped her find the resources she needed for her projects, find new directions, make the impossible possible. At 8 in the morning, now refreshed, Lasiuly was already in front of the mirror for make-up. Nothing too heavy or eye-catching, she just wanted to be glamorous and elegant at the same time. She was wearing a jersey sheath dress whose shade was just a little darker than her eyes, and a pair of 5 inch black platform boots. She almost bursts out laughing. She was waiting for the snow to fall, and she was wearing those high heel boots! She looked at the sky, however, and she realized it was not yet time for that marvelous spectacle.

So, after grabbing her bag and her coat, she left the room. She was hungry, and she headed for *Caffè Bene*, which was not far from Times Square, on Broadway, for breakfast. Their muffins and Italian cappuccino were not bad at all. Before putting her phone in the bag, she replied to Virginia: «I'm hugging you tightly».

She raised up the collar of her cobalt coat over the beautiful blue-light blue rose scarf that Virginia had given her, and she was ready to enjoy the fresh air and that frenzy, guided by her instinct. Walking elegantly, she left behind her that sweet and sensual scent able to tickle even the coldest noses, and she had her usual smile, while everyone seemed to be in a hurry. But Lasiuly was in no hurry. She loved those moments before something magical happened, before the big Christmas tree arrived, before her next business meeting, waiting for the night to write down her thoughts, or talk to Virginia. That suspended time was a great opportunity to focus on her goals, give the right importance to people and days, moods and feelings. After all, there is nothing insignificant in the world.

Manhattan

*With a good intonation, you can be a beautiful voice
standing out of the choir.*

Lasiuly

The huge Christmas tree was a thought that made Lasiuly happy, and Manhattan and New York, with their harmony were the ideal setting. She knew every single corner, where everything seemed to be in the right place, yet she loved visiting the same place at different times of the day, at dawn and at sunset, during the day when the streets were crowded, or at night. This had nothing to do with being nonconformist. She simply did not want to be a slave to her habits. Swimming against the tide could be thrilling, and Lasiuly was a curious person, especially after September 27 and the ocean storm. She thought of those mazes from which you can only come out with a clear mind, and those problems we keep on trying to solve by doing the same things, rather than seeing them from a different perspective, or using our imagination. And she knows how to use hers, just like Virginia. They could spend hours imagining things that had nothing to do with reality. She felt better after breakfast, and she was now ready to take a walk and think about all the ideas she had in mind. Those moments were precious, because they gave her the opportunity to go beyond appearances, and really see what was behind all the things,

situations and existences she encountered on her path. Even she, a popular and admired trainer, hid a pain that was not perceived by distracted or superficial people, but Virginia could see and even feel it. After all, such incredibly sensitive people are quite good at seeing beyond the end of their nose. Being positive, however, helped her a lot, and she wanted other people to understand how important a positive state of mind is. Grabbing her bag with an arm, she could not help noticing her red string bracelet, and think about Virginia. If they had been together, they would have rushed to Tiffany, so she did not think twice, and she headed for the 5th Avenue. Of course, she knew she had to work for her next classes, but Tiffany can be really inspiring, she thought. After all, Tiffany is not just a famous brand, it is a myth, a state of mind, a timeless legend that makes our eyes shine bright like diamonds. Everything at Tiffany reflects what we want to be, rather than what we want to have. Success is nothing but an endless seduction, nobody knew it better than Lasiuly, and Tiffany was pure seduction. She had visited the Tiffany store in Milan, on via Della Spiga, the one along via dei Condotti in Rome, and the one on Old Bond Street in London, but her favorite store was the one in Manhattan. She did not even have to come in to enjoy that atmosphere and feel like Audrey Hepburn. She also wanted to take a trip to Central Park, and she was excited at the idea of that mix of emotions. That oasis dominated by skyscrapers was a real *needream*, a sort of dazzling representation of human work perfectly blending into the most authentic landscape. Central Park, with its differences, ingenuity, humanity, and spatial design, can be an exciting place. She did not have much time available though, she had to return to The Jewel to admire the big Christmas tree, organize her notes on leadership, and text Virginia.

A break, however, was exactly what Lasiuly needed to think about her little secret. Although she was working mainly as a trainer, she had not quit her job as a project manager for a cosmetics

company. That's why, the day before, she had talked so passionately about a new ideal of beauty to major senior managers! But there was more. She was expecting to be promoted to marketing top manager. She loved that job, but it was not her final goal, and she was working, encouraged by Virginia, on a new project. All those new and old thoughts were spinning through her mind while she was walking through Central Park. She was grateful for all her achievements, as she always was, yet she felt like a caged animal. She kept repeating it even during her training lessons. She had learnt it from those gang fights in Long Island, and she thought about it every time she looked at her red string bracelet. Don't bite off more than you can chew, or you'll end up choking. Pretty trivial, right? But Lasiuly was not a trivial person. Listening to her heart and her head, she walked elegantly through the park, trying not to attract anyone's attention, but it was impossible for that mix of charm and modesty embodying all the souls of Manhattan to go unnoticed.

Walking about a mile up and down the park, she could admire the art deco of the GE Building, the beating heart of the Rockefeller Center, the Trump Tower, the evergreen charm of Tiffany, Central Park expanses of green. Then Broadway, with its musicals, its pop art, and those illusions of power and fame. The houses almost touching the sky, that incredible succession of luminous signs, that confusing fusion of cultures. An uninterrupted film set, that's what that corner of Earth was for Lasiuly. A place where any comedy could be staged. After all, life is just a comedy. All dreams can come true in Manhattan. Too bad that Virginia was not with her. She would have been much happier. She knew how to turn off her anxiety.

Yes, anxiety could also hide behind that mountain of smells, colors, sounds, impressions, surprises, that Manhattan was. Feeling alone was easy, even for Lasiuly. However, the thought of a refreshing shower at The Jewel, a cup of herbal tea with background music and the views of the spruce she would enjoy from her room already made her feel better.



Optimism

Fears are wasted energy.

We should use all our resources to always be optimistic.

Good thoughts can do a lot.

Lasiuly

The Rockefeller Center was not just crowded, as usual, it was fibrillating. The green giant had arrived, and some zealous workers were trying to arrange it using powerful machines. Lasiuly stood watching them for a while, before enjoying the warmth of The Jewel and a cup of tea. They were working hard, but she was not surprised. That tree was a real star. Lasiuly almost wanted to close her eyes and open them only when the spruce was ready, with its lights and decorations. However, the preparation phase also had its charm. She loved unusual things and propitiatory thoughts, and that ritual, despite decades of tradition, always had the same effect on her.

After all, the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree is a real symbol of America. An unofficial tradition that began when some people working at the construction site of the Rockefeller Center decorated a much smaller tree with cans, paper and foil. America was still coming out of the 1929 Wall Street Crisis and wanted to leave the Great Depression behind it. So, as the years passed, the spruce

grew in popularity, to become a popular event, and a holiday phenomenon.

For Lasiuly it was a sort of window opening onto the horizon, a good luck ritual, and an extraordinary opportunity to reinvent herself and evolve, year after year. In fact, there were all the ingredients for a true legend: the search for the right spruce, the use of trailers to transport it, its preparation, the tree lighting ceremony that marked the beginning of Christmas holidays, and the wishes visitors made before it. She loved every single moment of that event. From her room, she had the chance to enjoy the show, while reading her notes for her next class, the next day. In the meantime, she had opted for a cup of hot chocolate instead of tea. So, after taking a photo of the work in progress and sending it to Virginia, she did not have to wait too long for her friend's reply: «Almost there! So many dreams and projects, this year, for our spruce! A big hug, my precious». Of course, Lasiuly had planned to ideally decorate the Rockefeller Center tree, in Manhattan, also with Virginia's projects and dreams, although this thought made her sad. Being together and enjoy that amazing atmosphere under the huge tree and those days would have been much better. Oh, well! thinking about each other would still help them feel close. Having planned some exciting yet complex seminars, she had got two busy days ahead. She knew she could end up speaking to a skeptical or distracted audience. She had chosen a bold title that most of them could probably find hard to understand, however, if the classes were sold out, as usual, this was also due to her choices and intuitions. The subject was not within everyone's reach. After all, Lasiuly knew that not everyone would understand the importance of "emotional intelligence for leadership and team management". It would become the main topic she would discuss throughout America, and even beyond, before large groups of entrepreneurs and top

managers from major companies, but she did not know it yet. Of course, she wanted that cycle of seminars to be successful, especially since Virginia had shown her support. She drew much from Daniel Goleman, a famous American psychologist and writer, who first used the term “Emotional Intelligence”. Indeed, those concepts were familiar to her. She did not just appreciate those insights, she embodied them.

She had chosen that apparently too broad and difficult approach because she believed that breaking the rules could be rewarding, sometimes. Leadership and team management were two widely discussed, and now even trivial subjects in the business world. Even Lasiuly had held several lessons on the topic, but every time she felt like there was still so much to investigate and explore. Goleman’s legacy was a land to be discovered, knowledge to be further investigated for a new awareness, the discovery of a sensitivity capable of great things. Emotional intelligence was a cornerstone in every field, but Lasiuly had planned to discuss and relate it to charisma and authority, relationships skills and team management. «Optimism, adaptability, initiative: all aspects of emotional intelligence that anyone can learn and put into practice». Although those words were pronounced by Goleman, they almost sounded like Lasiuly’s personal mantra, especially since September 27, and since she had gradually learned that virtues make the impossible possible.

But there was more, much more. Focus can lead to greater happiness, for example. According to Goleman, focus is the key not just to problem solving, but also to better relationships and empathy. It even helps us see the beauty and enjoy it. Focus is good for learning, for perception through all senses, for our ability to fantasize and free our creativity. Thinking about all these opportunities Lasiuly felt excitement. After a hot shower and a cup of chocolate, crouched on the armchair,

she enjoyed the views while reading her notes on the tablet and writing down her personal comments and some examples, including the gang fights in Los Angeles. Why? It's quite simple. She thought emotional intelligence could really help understand those situations and interact with those people and their frustration.

Whenever *needreams* lead to a convulsive and despotic war against the enemy, this results only in destruction and frustration. Only if we fully believe in our journey and in our originality we can reach goals. This is what Lasiuly used to say. «Enough with your lessons! You know you will be great, as usual. Eat something and get some rest. Love u». Interrupted by Virginia's text, Lasiuly closed everything and went to get dressed for dinner. In front of the bathroom mirror, she repeated one of her mantras: «Always wear your best smile. Do everything that makes you and the others feel good. Including smiling». She was ready to put on her lipstick, according to the same ritual: candy pink for the upper lip, red for the lower lip. Mixed together, those shades gave her a romantic and sensual look. She wore a tight-fitting black suit with a pearl-gray voile shirt, and a pair of black court shoes with fuchsia heels beautifully matched with the scarf.

There is always a bright side, and she wanted to stay positive. She took care of herself, even when she was feeling blue and she needed a hug. Virginia's hug. She texted her back: «Thanks, V. No worries, I am going out for dinner. But I miss you. So much». It would be a quick and light dinner, anyway. She just wanted to stay in her room, from where she could admire the spruce, close to the moon, that would be stunning, in the clear sky. And what about the snow? When would it come?

Leadership

*A journey into emotions is a unique opportunity
we can all seize. We just need a little attention,
and some moments of happiness.*

Lasiuly

Those present knew quite well how much leadership was important to manage their teams. Skills and experience are simply not enough to influence employees, develop group performance, create an effective and positive organizational environment. Entrepreneurs and top managers need to improve other specific skills to exercise empathy and charisma, to always be recognized as a leader.

Everyone knew it, but few knew how to put it into practice. They knew how to handle stress and emotions, rather than really control them. Many preferred to wear a mask to pretend to be calm and impassive, in control of the situation, especially when facing difficulties. On that day, however, perplexity had given way to hope, skepticism to curiosity. Lasiuly, that young and gifted woman, was to them a sort of lighthouse in the storm, a star helping them find their way. She broke the ice immediately by inviting them to visualize relaxing images, flashes of memorable vacations, moments of family intimacy, sports pleasures. She also asked the participants to provide some details of their

thoughts, to create a cozy and sharing environment. There were even some hilarious moments.

Finally, after that recreational break, she invited them to pay attention. After getting their attention, Lasiuly showed them some leadership styles. She started by talking about visionary leaders, who define ideals, goals and objectives providing a clear direction to follow, but without affecting the behavior of their followers, to stimulate them and spread enthusiasm. Then, she analyzed the coaching model, based on dialogue, listening, and guidance. A coach motivates the team, assigns tasks and supports each member of the group to help them grow and build self-esteem. The third model discussed was the one of affiliative leadership. Affiliative leaders are good at building relationships, sharing ideas, and promoting harmony within the group.

Accompanied by a direct and sincere smile, those words sounded real and compelling, and managed to make those managers introspect, while she scrutinized their faces trying to guess what types of leader they could be. A democratic leader, she continued, promotes participation in the decision-making process by taking all opinions into consideration. Finally, she decided to discuss the last two leadership models - authoritative and coercive leadership – for which she clearly had some concerns. An authoritative leader defines the objectives if all his/her collaborators have understood them and have adequate skills to reach the goals, or replace them to perform some tasks, without promoting participation. Authoritative leaders control every single detail, provide precise directives and expects others to stick to their plans: they do not value people and are only interested in the result.

Lasiuly knew perfectly well that all strategies can be effective, and even authoritative leadership and coercive leadership - two styles very distant from her and her vision – could help,

in the short term. Coercive leaders can get excellent results in no time, while authoritative leaders are great at handling emergency situations. However, both styles – she explained to her audience – usually do not work in the long run. And when they work, this is usually because the team is already close-knit and competent, and knows how to work under pressure, even without being motivated. It was clear that Lasiuly preferred other styles of leadership, those that required skills she considered more relevant, such as emotional intelligence. A leader who recognizes and keep his emotions under control, and understand and takes others' feelings into account, knows what to do and knows how to lead his followers, encouraging their passion, strengths and commitment, to success. «It's like music!» Lasiuly exclaimed. «And you can even hear that music when that leader is around. Because a leadership that exploits emotional intelligence affects interpersonal relationships, the team, the company and much more. A resonant leader connects with his collaborators, arouses interest, is persuasive, knows how to strike the right notes, lets others express their potential, discovers hidden talents, manages conflicts, knows how to teach and learn, is empathic, builds trust and boosts optimism. This is the most effective style of leadership, because it builds a solid team, which becomes unbreakable».

Resonant leaders put themselves on the line - Lasiuly wrote on the whiteboard - yes, they do not fear their or others' emotions. Indeed, they know how to exploit them, turning them into opportunities. They know their strengths and weaknesses, and those of their teams, and know what to do to evolve, to face challenges, to undergo changes. They question themselves, take responsibility for their choices, investigate problems, capture the mood, know what the expectations of their teams are.

«It's like music, yes. A music that produces positive, functional, productive and effective energy. A resonant leader is like

a conductor, like that sublime creature that enchants people with its velvet voice and the power of clarity. That emotional intelligence is like an explosion you cannot avoid noticing».

Beyond Goleman's thought, which had inspired her work, there was her, Lasiuly, who was the perfect example of how being empathic, strong, and respectful can be effective. Yes, with her unique grace and elegance, and her big blue eyes and chocolate brown hair, Lasiuly embodied the perfect combination of femininity and resoluteness. «A real marvel» someone whispered. She and her communication skills were one thing. So diligent and tireless, Lasiuly believes that conveying knowledge and enthusiasm, that rare mix of wisdom and inspiration, is a mission, and everyone can feel her enthusiasm.

The best leaders - she continued - are those who adopt different approaches based on the situation, and do it naturally and quickly, like an instinctive automatism. They are good innovators in every area and business sector, they see new situations and difficulties as opportunities, not as threats. To do that, they work hard on their emotional intelligence to improve it. They first work on themselves to develop that instinct and its potential.

«Familiarize with your and others' emotions. Give them a name and a role. Strip them and look for their essence, use them as a picklock, a stroke of genius, a handshake, a peace treaty, a road sign. Their value is immeasurable and universal». It was like the icing on an already delicious cake. They well are willing to start that unusual training, and this made Lasiuly smile. She wanted that lesson to end like this, with that general euphoria, but she had not finished. She had to add something. «If you want to convey knowledge, you must make it yours. Talking about examples and virtues is not enough. Be that example and make a virtue yours». Then, she got to the point of her speech. «Focus is everything. Focus is the

ability to select some elements in a situation, based on the goal we want to achieve: whether you are in a meeting or during a negotiation, you need to know what the result is you want to get, the goal you want to achieve, the role you play, the work to be done». Focus works like a filter, and Goleman's message is quite simple: we need to focus on what we are doing even if it is difficult, resist multitasking and distraction that deviates that focus.

This strategy is used to get good results and solve problems, but it also helps us to appreciate what we do and to better connect with other people. The same ability to read the emotions and understand the point of view of other people, which is called empathy, comes from the attention we give to others. Attention is strictly related to mindfulness, which is the ability to stay here and now, without losing focus, while minimizing our efforts. Attention is also related to the way we take care of ourselves and our emotions, is self-awareness and awareness of our desires. Finally, attention helps us connect with that stream of consciousness that boosts creativity, as well as with other people and the surrounding environment. When we focus on ourselves and other people, we open the door to happiness – she wrote on the whiteboard.

«Focus is the first ingredient for a good leadership, so please think about it». She was almost touched by the positive vibrations she could hear. Touching her red string bracelet, Lasiuly sent a message of freedom: feel free to embrace your emotions and give them a place in your life. «That freedom will make you discover unimaginable resources». «Thank you. Thank you for your attention». She was grateful for those new emotions, that enthusiastic consensus, those warm handshakes and that vibrant atmosphere, but she was tired. She gave her all, as usual, and after so many hours, the only thing she wanted was spend the night alone at The Jewel, having dinner in

her room, texting Virginia, and watching the Christmas tree getting ready for the holidays.



The glad game

*Joy and pain are feelings, lessons, opportunities.
Treasures that accompany you
in your most important journey: the one into yourself.
Life can only be grateful for the care given to our emotions,
and will lead us to places and moments we have strongly desired.*

Lasiuly

That night, the spruce had one more reason to stretch its branches and almost touch Lasiuly to comfort her. Going through her daily emails, in fact, had made her nervous. “Nothing but jealousy”, the sender had concluded inviting her not to give too much importance to that “gossip” of which she was informed with that email. It was not the first time that one of her colleagues said something offensive about her to put her qualities in a bad light. This time, Lasiuly was accused of having the Pollyanna syndrome, because she was too optimistic. In psychology, the Pollyanna principle is the tendency to remember positive things and events more accurately than unpleasant ones.

In other words, she was accused of denying reality with her positive attitude, because she was not able to deal with her real emotions and difficult situations. She tried to imagine her colleague’s face when delivering his diagnosis. She knew him

quite well, and she knew how well he could hide his malice behind the facade of pity. He wanted to discredit her, but he knew he had to be cautious, so his strategy consisted of insinuating doubts, instead of being honest about her.

She was furious. She was irritated by that accusation and by his attitude. It may sound weird, but her qualities were also her weaknesses. First because everyone thought she just wanted to show those qualities, and secondly because superficial people see them as a threat. Yeah, Lasiuly's colleague thought she was a rock, a sort of machine programmed for success. She had no intention of confronting this situation openly or showing him any signs that he was better than her. He was a creep.

It was not the first person, and not even the first time, but that situation made Lasiuly feel dejected. Even being so angry made her sad, because she realized those incitements were affecting her good mood and wasting her energy. She was not a rock or a robot, and she only could vent his anger with the mirror; she clenched her fists and tightened her jaws to avoid screaming, but the tears flowed down her lovely face.

For a few minutes, even her room at The Jewel, her beloved home, seemed hostile to her. Why am I so angry? What's the point of working so hard? Why am I here? Negative feelings, such as hate and anger, only hurt those who fed them. She knew it but handling them was not easy as she thought. At least not immediately. She was not a machine, and her smiles was sincere. She had to process that situation, restore the rhythm of breathing and find her lost balance. Like an unaware Red Cross nurse, Virginia had also done her best to raise her friend's spirits. Her long and sweet email only mentioned positive things, such as Lasiuly's project, Manhattan, and some of her important business achievements. The final line, then, invited her to reflect on a crucial aspect: «Words count, we know

that, Lasiuly, but actions speak louder than words”. Virginia was referring to something that had happened to her a month before, and that she had shared with Lasiuly, but those words were also perfect for that situation. «Poor Pollyanna» Lasiuly whispered. After a few seconds he burst out laughing. «Poor you, sneaky colleague!»

Pollyanna was an intelligent, positive and delightful creature. A perpetual light. A hymn to life. A rare example of wisdom. A true and happy fighter. He, on the other hand, could only be an unhappy man, a pessimist who could not handle another people’s happiness. Then, she felt sorry for him and his poor life. She could not remember his smile, only his evasive and cold eyes. She realized she was just wasting her time and energy. She instinctively looked out the window, and the spruce majestic branches seemed closer than ever.

She finally felt better. She had so much to share with Virginia, she had to take a shower and have the dinner she had ordered, read her notes for her last lesson, stop by the second floor for her night tea, and maybe have sweet dreams. It was almost time. That bare spruce would be soon ready for Christmas celebrations. She thought about her red string bracelet, her desires, her existence and her expectations, and she felt thrilled and excited like a child. Yeah, she was instinctive, just like a child, and she loved it. But she was also determined as only a real woman can be. What she did not know was that that mix also made her extremely sexy.

She put on her head a pink and white polka dot cap, and she was finally ready to enjoy a hot shower and the unmistakable scent of her sensual jasmine body wash. Pure emotions, like happiness, fear, sadness, anger. Her body, soul and mind were finally back together. All emotions are important, she often repeated. She had no intention to deny them, as his colleague had insinuated. *Au contraire!* Emotions are part of

our background. They are a treasure. Our treasure. And she reiterated this concept even during her lessons.

She recalled Pollyanna's song: «You may say I'm a fool/
Feeling' the way that I do/You can call me Pollyanna/Say I'm
crazy as a loon/I believe in silver linings/And that's why I be-
lieve in you!». Virginia was right. Actions speak louder than
words. After putting the colorful vegetables she had taken
from Cucina & Co. in the microwave, she realized there were
other emails, in addition to the one that contained her alleged
diagnosis, that were worth reading. One of them invited her
to Milan. Milan, Italy! She wanted to return to Italy so ba-
dly. Of course, she was not always enthusiastic about traveling
the world, being alone at her hotel, far from Virginia, but she
loved doing her job well, discovering new things, creating op-
portunities, seeing new places. The unknown must be explo-
red, and can really be full of surprises. And she loved Milan
and its happy hour, the majestic Duomo, the Teatro alla Scala,
the shop windows on via Monte Napoleone and that creativity
typical of Italian people.

After eating her vegetables, she had a bowl of blueberries.
She loved blueberries. She savored them slowly, on her ar-
mchair, to fully enjoy their taste. She still had some almonds
to eat, to delight her palate, but she decided to wait and eat
them later, perhaps while emailing Virginia.

Effective thoughts

*Every time we focus too much on efficiency and effectiveness
to achieve results, we can get hurt and fail.*

When we are effective and efficient, we reach our goals.

Lasiuly

«My dear Virginia, reading your emails make me miss you even more! Your ideas are well thought out and I've been thinking about the project too. In 24 hours I will be able to work on it with all my heart's content. And I will have the view of the Christmas tree to keep me happy.

«Your email came at the perfect time to give me a self-esteem boost. That unpleasant colleague of mine has said other horrible things about me. He said I suffer from Pollyanna's syndrome. Can you believe it? Pollyanna's syndrome! I was fuming at first, but then I felt pity for him. So, what if I chose happiness, like Pollyanna? I know thinking about is just a waste of time, but there are times where I am so tired of competition, cynicism and laziness. I should not be in such a bad mood, I know. I just wish I was not so sensitive and could be calmer. At times feel like my gift is more irritating than a blessing.

«Okay, enough with this humdrum business! I miss you. Wish we were in front of the Christmas tree! I want to see you. My schedule is full until January, then I will fly to London.

It's time to get back to my notes and my almonds. Love you».

She loved almonds. They could feed her sweetest dreams. Lasiuly went through her nightly beauty ritual. She brushed her teeth, washed her hands and put her snow-white cream on her face. She had been using that camellia oil cream she had found in an old London perfume shop with Virginia for years. She loved the “silk skin” effect it gave her.

After her beauty ritual, Lasiuly sat on an armchair with her laptop to read her precious notes. It would be a day entirely dedicated to management efficiency and effectiveness.

She was a living example of efficiency and effectiveness, indeed. However, she knew she had to be more persuasive than usual. Although the participants used to deal with those primary needs typical of the corporate world, she had her own personal vision to be conveyed, of course.

Those managers were usually stressed by strict rules and these rules did not always get the desired results. Lasiuly has seen that the old training models did not meet the expectations, as desired. These old models produced exhausted managers who were vexed by their failures and this caused anxiety and stress. These companies had no time to manage these feelings. Lasiuly obviously knew that good performance comes hand in hand with physical health, mental balance and emotional energy. When your thoughts and actions are in sync then naturally efficiency and effectiveness come with it.

The preconceived notion in many companies are that numbers and time dominate and people accept that as the truth. The difficult part was to make it clear that there is a precise relationship between time and goals and that it takes method to make it work perfectly.

The three elements, where, how and when, were often confused, betrayed, mixed. This only produced frustration and lost opportunities.

As the saying goes slow and steady wins the race. It is better to be consistent, which could take longer than acting hasty.

Ceaseless efforts, even at a slow pace, will bring good results. On the other hand, occasional efforts, even at a faster pace, will seldom bring great results.

Lasiuly took deep breaths, looking at the magical spruce that in a few days would be the main attraction in New York. That anxious waiting warmed her heart. The Rockefeller Center that she loved so much was the colossal set of a show of pure magic. The air was saturated with that fabulous desire that Lasiuly considered the very essence of life. Her plan of apple cinnamon tea was thwarted by the overwhelming feeling of sleepiness. So, she had to rest. She could hear her bed and fluffy pillows calling to her, so she quickly made up her bag for the next day and slipped into her comfy bed.

On her bedside table she had *Destructive emotions. A Scientific Dialogue with the Dalai Lama* by Daniel Goleman, which was a good source of insights for her and her classes. Giving into her anger was not an option and the one of the points of her seminars was to help others understand how essential it was not to fill their mind with destructive emotions. Negative thinking is our enemy. It diminishes our enthusiasm and motivation. It adds to indecision, inertia, procrastination and outright derailment of our goal-directed actions. It defeats us. It beats us. It creates the “bad luck” that we will later lament.

She had read that book countless times, but it refreshed her mind and made her feel at ease.

She was awoken by a clear dawn and the smell of snow was in the air. She was hungry, so she quickly got ready for her day. She took a black and white pant suit from her closet that gave her a femme fatale look, but she tied her hair to look more professional. She chose a red coat matched with red boots, and she put on a lipstick of the same color. She preferred to play up her femininity without trying too hard.

Outside the Jewel the air was cold, and her cheeks had turned red and of course she forgot her scarf. She raised up the collar of

her coat to shield herself from the cold. As she walked she did not go unnoticed. She was graceful and stylish. She was beautiful.

That day she expected her working environment was dominated by chauvinism and she was correct. She felt she had to clear the air: she is a woman and she had no time for such non-sense. This had nothing to do with feminism. She did not

want to be a feminist. She was simply a person among people. A woman who did not want to be a man, and who did not like men who did not support women.

That stupid competition was pointless, and she did not want to be part of it.

Her audience had already the pleasure to meet her colleague, the one who said she suffered from Pollyanna syndrome and other similar banalities. Banalities, yes. She should not have even thought about it. Because every time she did it she got angry, and she did not want to stoop to his level, but she would not let herself pushed around. Every company needs women, and by the way, skills, efficiency and effectiveness should not be evaluated based on sex!

Thinking about all this stuff, she did not forget to look at her majestic green giant. She was hungry, and she needed her breakfast before walking for about a mile to reach the hotel where the Ak course was held. And she had so much to think about before meeting her class! She was nervous, obviously, and a little scared, but she was so enthusiastic about that new lesson! She knew how important it is to meet commitments, but she also knew that there are no winning strategies and trainings without the right attitude. A positive attitude, of course.



Energy

*We are beings full of resources that need our passion
to achieve minor and major goals.*

*We must take care of ourselves, our resources,
and our passion.*

If you really want something you will get it.

*And so, being efficient and effective
is only our way of using our magic when we need to.*

Lasiuly

Lasiuly seemed to effortlessly glide on those red heels. She looked flawless even with the few strands of hair she purposely hung free on that black and white suit that highlighted her graceful curves. She was striking and exquisite. Lasiuly knew all too well what the power of seduction could do. She used it to her advantage. Lasiuly and Virginia playfully dubbed her special charm as the magnet effect. This naturally helped Lasiuly be in harmony with the world. Her intense beauty and magnetic charm made her seem almost fairy like.

While there were very many who wanted to look like her, very few were those who questioned her happiness. They believed hers was a simple, happy and lucky life. It took a lot of

sensitivity to imagine and understand her dedication, her torments, her commitment. Lasiuly knew that this was her role in that journey of collective growth and well-being. She knew it was worth it, that being a beacon in the stormy ocean was still a gift she had to take care of. She did her best to remember that the sun is always there, even behind the clouds. As she was greeting people in her class she glimpsed at her red string bracelet and this put her at ease.

After a brief but warm introduction, Lasiuly had the impression of being under scrutiny. Those gentlemen were paying attention, she had no doubt, but she did not know if they were there to confirm or question her qualities. She had all eyes on her.

She felt uncomfortable, but she managed to control the situation and she finally started her lesson. One hour later, everyone seemed more relaxed.

However, there was still someone who was just bored and tried to question her skills on the pretext of a rhetorical question. The guy, with a honeyed yet annoying voice suggested that her speech was trivial, and he was not roused by it. His colleagues didn't look so confident as he spoke down to her. That could be enough to put him back in his place, but Lasiuly still wanted to play her cards to prove she was a woman, a real woman, and she was proud of it.

She did not like the idea of being a vindictive person, but she could not tolerate such snubs by people who just wanted to diminish her work, without even knowing what they were saying. Some people think they are smart but end up being just inappropriate.

So, she made her move.

«Timing is everything. We must be rapid. How can we be effective, in the way you just outlined, and quick at the same time?» the guy asked.

«Maybe I have not been clear enough about my idea of rapidity and even efficiency. An action is effective if it produces the desired effects. Timing is up to you. You are supposed to know when to speed up and what to do. But being rapid without being effective is pointless, isn't it?» Lasiuly replied.

She simply wanted to make it clear that being shrewd has nothing to do with effectiveness.

Thankfully after taking the blows without replying, the guy remained silent for the rest of the lesson hours. The guy had made a bad impression and some of his colleagues were even laughing behind his back. She continued talking about effective and efficient management, with detailed explanations and some exercises. Lasiuly managed to involve even the most skeptical by creating a playful atmosphere that incited learning and it made the situations more real. She provided thorough explanations and she referred to LA and its gang wars to drive the point home. She spoke with sweetest most passionate smile she recommended to keep away from frustration and its downward spiral.

«Foresight is your salvation. It will make you look forward and further. It will keep you from being insolent. It will give you the space to organize thoughts and actions in a targeted, incisive, energetic way. Yes, energy, that energy that feeds well-being and motivation. Efficiency and effectiveness are rooted in our health, preparation, enthusiasm, trust. As well as your imagination, which no one should of be embarrassed about». These were the words pronounced by Lasiuly with that contagious romanticism that nailed everyone to her magnetic optimism. I am sure some people make take what Lasiuly said as naïve, but this had nothing to do with being naïve. It was a wise philosophy of life.

During the break, she received nothing but compliments, and everyone was enthusiastic about her lesson and she could

feel the euphoria around her. That's exactly what Lasiuly wanted. It was as if each of them had received the right instrument to play their favorite music to compose, all together, a beautiful symphony. She was touched by that positive ambiance which provided new inputs and pearls of strength. Her job was to teach, yes, but she learned so much in return. That was the secret of her success.

The two hours after the break flew. Everyone could now see winning scenarios and every word spoke by Lasiuly fed their elation. This was just more food for thoughts for Lasiuly.

However, she was exhausted, and she really needed a break from work. That was her last day and she was exhausted and her break from work was a long time coming. Now she could finally enjoy Manhattan and all the Christmas festivities. She wanted, and she needed to recharge her batteries. She enjoyed the magic Christmas, and, of course the giant Christmas tree.

She said her goodbyes to everyone, but she really could not wait to get away. The last person who spoke to her was that man who had tried to question her skills. He apologized (or at least he tried), and he congratulated her on her work. Their reciprocated smiles were almost like him surrendering to her and she took that triumph happily.

Lasiuly was finally free to rush to The Jewel. She quickly changed out of her work clothes and then she could finally enjoy herself. She couldn't contain her excitement. The only thing that would make it perfect would be Virginia by her side, but Lasiuly tried to look at the bride side. She would have so many things to tell her, so many details, so many emotions to share that it would be like being together again.

In the coming days she focused on her magical tree and this brought out sheer excitement out of her.

«Hi, V. I am enjoying a cup of hot chocolate. Hopefully this will help me survive the cold New York air. The spruce is

incredible! I am overcome with emotions every time I look at it. I just wish it would snow. I have a to do list a mile long, but I am so excited I don't care about the weather. I will tell you everything, Virginia... I am mentally hugging you. Can you feel it? »

Virginia replied immediately:

«Lasiuly, don't forget to hang our dreams on the Christmas tree. Get some rest tonight! Tomorrow there will be no time for that! Love you».

They were not together, and she could not help getting sad. Her friend was doing her best, but she still felt like something was missing.

Oh, well! Sometimes you just must accept the things you cannot change, but Lasiuly was pretty good at turning her wishes into reality.

She thought about what Virginia had told her. She was right. Taking a walk would be enough for that evening. She needed to restore her energy.

Needreams, that inner universe that can reserve a thousand surprises: an almost infinite reserve of delights of the soul, a continuous source of inspiration and vigor. The authentic engine of the world. Human beings are made of flesh and *needreams*.

That's why she continued to feed her creativity.

It takes passion and inspiration to make *needreams* come true. How beautiful were those thoughts invading her mind! They were able to take her to another world, a happy world. She put on a pair of slightly faded jeans and a pair of 5 inch heeled black suede platform ankle boots and she pulled up the hood of her quilted jacket. She looked hungrily at the delicacies that were waiting for her from the windows of the Rockefeller Center stores. All types of fruit, snacks and cupcakes teased her taste buds. As if the hot chocolate had not given

her enough calories. But it was Christmas time, and this was her way to celebrate life and she deserved it. She decided that the next day she would wear the same outfit because it was comfy.

Right now, she was ready to relax for the next day. She drew a hot bubble bath, put on her favorite nighttime cream and started reading a romance novel. She already felt like she was connecting with her inner self and recovering her flow. The Jewel was the ideal place for this relaxation. The big tree outside didn't hurt matters either. She was full of happy serene thoughts. Her mind kept circling around the snow. She felt it in her bones that snow would come.

She put on her soft lavender silk pajamas and wrapped herself in her cream cashmere over-sized cardigan and she sat on her armchair with her legs dangling from the armrest. She smiled. Life can really amaze us, if we are open to it.

Making people falling in love with us

We are what we can tell, we make people fall in love.

Like a few drops of inebriating perfume.

Lasiuly

Lasiuly carefully chose her diaries and notebooks. After relaxing for half an hour, she grabbed her pens and books. She preferred lined paper and covers in leather or handmade precious fabrics. She loved using technology as much as the next person, but she loved the vintage charm of paper and ink. She used a ring drawing album with special paper she could easily carry with her in any bag.

Those items were irreplaceable. She could do without most guilty pleasures, but those accessories were essential to her creativity, she treated them with care and she considered them as her inseparable travel companions. In a case matched with her diary she kept her blue, black, red and green large and soft tip pens, a pair of soft pencils with a white body, a sharpener of the same color, a bread-based eraser, a yellow and a fuchsia highlighter, a red and a blue marker with a medium tip so that the ink did not penetrate the pages, and pastels of all the colors of the rainbow. She also had a Montblanc fountain pen she had received as a gift for her graduation, and some spare blue cartridges.

Lasiuly also used spreadsheets for her plans, charts and scales but nothing could compare to the smell of paper and the elegance of her round, clear, and lively handwriting. That small and carefully selected stationery kit was much more than a habit for Lasiuly. Even just touching them made her feel better and helped her remember details. This usually helped her solve whatever dilemma she was trying to solve.

She didn't feel the same way about her laptop. The laptop was cold and hard and didn't give off the same emotion. She managed a balance, combining traditional and modern innovation. Both were essential, and she used them as needed.

She could spend all day and devote herself to this special expression of happiness. Lasiuly was certain that everyone had a draft of their own fate and could then write the rest of their story. It took a combination of good will and positive feelings for the story to take the desired turn. Then it should respond generously to the hopes and aspirations and make all wishes and *needreams* come true. Those notebooks and pens knew her determination and her enthusiasm, they were a portentous concentrate of her energies, candor, and efforts. A sort of Virginia in a portable format. She had repeatedly let Virginia look at her notes, she was happy to share her secrets, ambitions, fears with her, because Virginia knew how to interpret those lines. That too was an unimaginable complicity. Her sketchbook was the proof of her inventiveness and her passion.

She prepared a comfortable shoulder bag to have with her everything she needed to stroll along the streets of Manhattan. The spruce would give her some ideas to write down on one of her notebooks. Two more nights and she would finally enjoy the Christmas lights at Rockefeller Center. The entire world was getting ready to celebrate that moment. But she did not have to wait, she could simply close her eyes and relive the past years in her mind.

She needed, and she wanted that moment.

Things happen, if you really want it, even without elbowing your way through. This was Lasiuly's mantra.

She knew that her studies, training, travels, the experience gained at many companies and with different professional roles helped shape along with her red string bracelet the events that happened on September 27.

It was time to tell the world who she was. It was time for her projects to become reality.

Lasiuly as a communication expert was infallible. It was obvious that her words left a lasting impression. Her enthusiasm and charm were contagious and irresistible. She didn't let this go to her head. She was humble because she knew there were unforeseen circumstances that were beyond her control. She had reached that perfect balance between reason and emotion that made her confident but never arrogant.

She had been working on what she considered as her breakthrough for years, investing, calculating and thinking about every single aspect. She had talked about every single detail with Virginia and conducted several markets analyzes.

She had to evaluate all opportunities, consider the risks, have as many projections as possible, hypothesize the most varied scenarios, and her diaries would help her focus on her life and see her future. She had no doubt about that.

She could not imagine how many colors she needed to represent that mess of emotions, euphoria, and fears, and to bring her very essence to the center of an extraordinary commercial journey. There was so much philosophy behind her projects. She needed a clear mind.

Yes. She thought about Pollyanna, her enthusiasm and the glad game.

Beauty is everywhere, if we have the vision to see it. Difficulties are exceptional opportunities, that's what Lasiuly used to repeat.

She maybe did not know how much she had in common with Pollyanna, but she was her muse, and she was proud of that.

Although she was already happy with her thoughts, Virginia's message made her feel even better.

«*My Dear* Lasiuly, I had planned to surprise you, but I did not want to ruin any of your plans. My parents bought me a coach ticket with a one-week stay in New York. I will leave on December 26. I'm so excited... what do you think? »

«Virginia, your parents are the best! Tell them THANKS! Let me know at what time you will be landing, I will see if I can book a room for you at The Jewel. Do you realize how lucky we are? Me, you and our spruce. Awesome! »

She did not wait for her reply and she called the reception.

«*Miss* Lasiuly, tomorrow morning Helene will confirm you the room availability. We would do anything for you».

Lasiuly had no doubts, The Jewel was her "home", and it would also be Virginia's home.

The Jewel was a busy place, of course, especially that time of year, but for Lasiuly they always accommodated her requests.

She had asked for a room with her usual courtesy, apologizing for such a short notice and explaining that her friend was trying to surprise her. Peter, charmed by that attitude, could not help telling her not to worry about anything.

After all, Virginia could sleep in her room, but she wanted her friend to be comfortable. She laughed in her head thinking about all the space she had occupied in her room, the wardrobe, the bathroom cabinet, the study corner. Virginia would have poked fun at her for that mess, and she still would have managed finding her space, but she really hoped Helene could meet her request. So, the only thing to do was getting ready for Virginia's arrival at The Jewel.

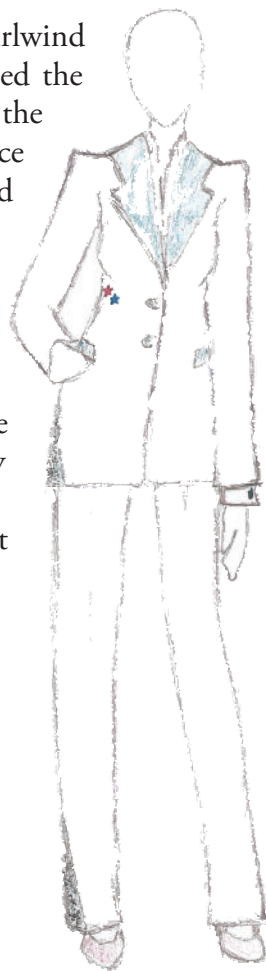
She slept soundly cradled by those flashes of joy. Confused yet happy images, phrases, handshakes were flowing slowly in

her mind. And stars. Little stars, repeatedly. Like small but vivid flashes, or symbols. There is no night with no stars, in fact, although they are not flashy enough to be seen by a diffident or distracted look. She even dreamed of the ocean and its waves, with the wind on the background, the salt water and small crystals.

She could have woken up dazed by the whirlwind of memories and fantasies that had populated the darkness, but as soon as she put her eyes on the red bracelet, she almost felt Virginia's presence and she smiled when stretching. She looked like a young girl getting ready for her first date. She was excited.

Manhattan was waiting for her. The spruce branches were almost ready to offer their spectacular choreography. The thought of her diaries, her sketchbook and the crowd on the street made her feel incredibly alive.

She rushed her beauty routine and she got ready to talk to Helene.



Feeling joy

*We must take care of our genius and stay connected
to the spirit that suggests ideas and directions.
Never lose contact with the power of mental representation
of joy, because, if we want our dreams to come true,
we must tune in to their wavelength, think and act as if
we were already taking a journey through them.*

Lasiuly

At The Jewel Helene was reception manager. She was an efficient and direct woman, maybe a little abrupt, but with Lasiuly she put aside that stiffness. She had changed a lot since Lasiuly had been staying at The Jewel. Surprisingly, she liked Lasiuly, she was the woman she wanted to aspire to be. She noticed she smiled a lot more and she felt more at ease and she had taken off that imperturbable armor she was hiding under her pinstriped suit. Now, she looked sensual and sophisticated in her uniform.

She was happy to confirm to Lasiuly that she had a room available right on the 11th floor, on the same side of the corridor. Helene welcomed her with a smile: «Lasiuly, The Jewel is pleased to have your friend here, as one of our special guests. She will be staying in a room on the 11th floor, next to you».

«Oh Helene, I could just hug you, I want to hug all of you!»

«Do it, if you want to. I do not mind». Helen did not even believe her own words, and she blushed.

They really hugged each other, there, at the reception. Helene suddenly felt full of energy. Lasiuly thanked her and wished her a good day. She left and sent a confirmation message to Virginia.

Lasiuly took a deep breath once she was outside, she put on her black leather gloves and she lightly slapped her face to make sure she was not dreaming. The Rockefeller Center was so crowded and noisy, that she knew everything was real, and she was just a stone's throw from the spruce.

“Day by day, what you choose, what you think, and what you do is who you become”. She suddenly remembered Heraclitus's words, one of her favorite quotes, indeed. She was about to spend days taking care of herself, having fun with Virginia, and focusing on her projects, and those words were inspiring.

She wanted an Italian coffee and she headed straight to Eataly, at the end of Fifth Avenue, without even looking at those inviting shop windows. She finally had time and she wanted to enjoy it, but she still had priorities. She had many things to say and to do with Virginia, and she had to focus on her project.

All she needed were her feet, the subway and some cabs and they could go anywhere. New York at Christmas time is a carousel of opportunities and attractions. There is no way you could get bored. Lasiuly did not know what boredom was, she had so much to do and to learn that she had no time for that.

Just a few sips of that Italian coffee, with its irresistible aroma, was the best way to start her day and she felt she finally had the energy she needed. She resisted to the temptation of an appetizing Sicilian cannolo, but she treated herself to two pastries.

Her first day of total freedom had just begun and it was great. The ideas she had been collecting for months began to take form in Lasiuly head. Her notebooks almost wanted to jump out of her bag. There was a whole human world to observe, including those chilly passersby who were waiting for Christmas celebrations. She did not miss a single breath, a single detail. Each person was a story she tried to guess. She observed everything right down to their shoes. Clothing was her passion, it can tell you a lot about culture and latitudes, tastes and trends, aspirations and quality of life.

Fashion is the world of *needreams*. Yes, it is all about need and dreams: creativity identifies or creates common feelings, through bodies, things and places that feed it and that, in turn, are fed by creativity. It responds to an instinct and generates an instinct. She reflected on the look and its changes over time and in different areas, trying to find a common thread and investigating all the possible outcomes. She tried to identify distinctive features and common symbols of a group or a condition, their extravagance, or those elements that stood out or were considered as minor.

She had been thinking about the dynamics of image and communication for years, for business and for passion. She knew how to entertain whole audiences of branding and brand storytelling experts. She was able to recognize the brands of an infinite number of items and objects. And she spent a lot of time observing streets, behaviors, ambitions and choices. People and their personalities intrigued Lasiuly.

Lasiuly was not attracted by wealth or luxury. She was confident that many women and men were looking for that one special article of clothing that would reflect their unique personality.

She knew very well that many purchases were made driven by emotions and romance. After all, she perfectly knew how to

address business communication, launch a line or a collection, and promote new beauty treatment or the latest generation make-up. Values and style were dear to her, and she mentioned them both in her classes. She loved uniqueness of items and she was good at finding the missing piece.

The shop windows offered indescribable quantities of items, but nothing really stood out. Too often they all looked the same and mundane.

The feeling in the air was that of excitement. People were so excited, and Manhattan good mood was contagious. So, Lasiuly just had to stop and take a break from everything and enjoy that show, with her smile and her strands of hair which were now finally free.

She would take care of her future a little at a time. On September 27 she had received a mission and a gift. It was huge responsibility, something that often anguished her, but it was so worth it. The privilege of making things happen wasn't for Lasiuly benefit or happiness, in fact, her job now was to help others find their own happiness. She was more of a symbol like a star or like those small ocean crystals.

She moved away her glove and she touched her red string bracelet.

She had a message to deliver. It was an opportunity to disclose the secret behind that power she had to make dreams come true.

Lasiuly was now in her soap bubble, all that fantasy and energy she could put in her notebooks. She was meditating and planning to make a change in her life. She would start her own company, which would be the exact projection of her journey into the secret of spells.

There were many, many things to consider. Lasiuly used to analyze every single detail, never underestimating the risks or being superficial. She liked being guided by her instinct too.

She wanted to express herself, to plan and design her projects. It was her main source of enthusiasm, candor and authenticity. After all, visionaries who have the strength and the courage to build their own reality create splendor, and she was motivated and creative enough to bet on her dreams.

What she had to do was taking care of the practical aspects in detail. Sometimes, even the best business adventures come to a bad end because they are not supported by a good work plan.

She was not just focused on business, Lasiuly was committed to her mission, that's why she was so cautious.

«This could be a real revolution» she thought, while she was distracted by the stalls dominated by skyscrapers. She could not resist all the temptations! All that tourbillon of decorations, Christmas parades and lights had hypnotized her.

She would take a small break to have some fun, and then she would rush into her warm room, with her diaries and her colored pens, and admire views of the Christmas tree, of course.

That was a great source of inspiration and energy too and thinking about it made her smile. Nothing in the world could ruin her good mood, not even that icy cold.

Manhattan positive vibrations, children and adults sharing the same feeling of excitement and love, and new resolutions: there was nothing better than that.

The year was about to end. A new year was waiting for her, a year full of surprises and expectations. We must love our genius – she had written the night before and feed it with passion and romance.

Looking outside, colors and a positive attitude were all she could see.

Secrets and magical recipes

Energy is a self-feeding motor.

*With a little bit of inspiration, a good dose of strategy,
a few positive thoughts, fun is guaranteed.*

Needreams are not just common, they are contagious.

Lasiuly

Lasiuly's worlds were all in her notebooks. All those drawings come to life. They would dance along the streets of the world guided by an inner spirit. Those sketches were ideals and prodigious forces, splashes of beauty, caresses of joy. Every stroke, every nuance, every color, contained Lasiuly's thoughts and her love. Lasiuly's eyes sparkled and they held secrets. She had so many magical recipes that she could finally share to all women.

She was surrounded in a special, almost dreamlike light. Maybe it was her fuchsia pink lipped smile and her long shimmering purple eyelashes. Her hands caressed the paper and highlighted words and quotes. Each quote contained a spark and words hit her like a burst of brightness that she put together in a single montage to focus on the bright path of her project.

Lasiuly knew that all those words had power. The power to become reality. Her red string bracelet called to her more than usual. And she wanted to answer that call.

And in the meantime, all those things that she could imagine to be beautiful and ready to wear, perfume and adorned women were pieces of her heart at parties. She knew they would have her name. She knew they would have her values and her energy.

She almost laughed. It seemed like just pure vanity, but that confidence was above all a wonderful opportunity.

There, at the World Financial Center, now Brookfield Place, in Lower Manhattan, she was having a lunch with sushi, sashimi and hosomaki and she was focused on her diaries and her stationery kit.

Her full attention was on the drafts, formulas, quotes and colored strokes and this helped her see the full visual of her plans. She wanted to enjoy the views of the Winter Garden Atrium and then stop at the lucky tree.

Lower Manhattan, after 9/11, which had destroyed the Twin Towers, had returned to life, and she saw it in all that triumph of architecture reaffirming the greatness of New York and the American spirit.

The lucky tree was just a pear tree surrounded by oak trees, the only one that survived the disaster and had completely recovered. All visitors touch what has become a real symbol of resistance and hope, one of those symbols so dear to Lasiuly.

However, her first stop was still the glass pavilion dominated by the towers and overlooking the Hudson River. It has a huge atrium embellished with real palms and adorned with plants and flowers with pure art installations and shops. It was a pure treasure chest of precious moments for Lasiuly.

Then there is that mix of heights, cement, water and nature, a way to find a balance between *needreams*.

From there, she could reach the Esplanade, a stone promenade offering stunning views of the New Jersey skyline, located on the opposite bank of the Hudson. Lasiuly knows that the

perfect time to discover that area is at sunset, when the sun began to dive into the water, with the Statue of Liberty in the background. The perfect view she could enjoy with Virginia.

All the destinations that came to her mind suddenly became soothing to do with her friend, Virginia. After all, The Jewel and the Christmas tree were enough for her and her projects. Hanging around would still help her focus on details. She enjoyed that euphoria and relaxation. Plus, the walking was still a great physical exercise.

Other intense months were waiting for her and a break would be good for her.

So, she planned what to do in the next few hours: first getting back to The Jewel, reserving a table for dinner at Del Frisco Double Eagle, second devoting herself completely to fashion and glamor, third dining and fourth resting. In fact, that was precisely the eve of the spruce celebrations, the next day she would be filled with pure joy!

She decided she could not miss her visit to the pear tree. She looked at it and did not just want to touch it but hug it tightly to thank it for being such a source of inspiration.

At The Jewel the receptionist informed her that the snow was expected in the next few hours, probably in the evening. Everyone knew how much Lasiuly loved New York Christmas time and snow. She did not talk much about her personal things, in fact she was a mysterious woman, but everyone knew how much she loved that period of the year.

She put on her comfy clothing and she went down to the second floor for her bedtime tea and her causal chat with the tourists who were there to discover the Big Apple. Receiving smiles in return was priceless. A smile can open many doors, almost all doors - she had find that quote in one of her diaries just a few hours before.

On the bed, lying on her stomach and leaning on her elbows she wrote to Virginia:

«Here I am, trying to organize my notes, resolutions and plans. I read my words and I hear them beat, once again, inside me. My sketches are the illustrations of a fairy tale, the tale of life. I will have to work hard, plan every single detail, but I am happy! Waiting for you to come here, on December 26, my dear Virginia».

«Hello! I was just about to write to you! You will make many people happy, I am so proud of you. I cannot wait to fly to NY. I am daydreaming of my upcoming visit».

Lasiuly planned on creating her own fashion lines. She had her collections, her wardrobe of wonders, her beauty case of spells. Fashion and glamor, for a life full of inexhaustible energy. She felt energized but also incredibly light, her imagination took her everywhere she wanted to go. She could see the shop windows, streets, and houses, and those faces that would light up with amazement and contentment.

She knew fashion and she knew even better the mechanism of *needreams*, that fascinating unconscious sphere capable of creating expectations, demand, supply and trends. And she also knew the inner strength that generates a style.

She thought about Pollyanna once again, about her complex personality and her overwhelming charm. She thought about her red string bracelet, her stars, her tiny crystals and her creativity. Everything was flowing into a lucid plan. Her emotions would be felt in the pattern of fabrics, in the buckle of belts, in the powder of make-up, in the bottles of perfume, between the folds of a baby doll, on the strap of a watch or hanging from a necklace like a pendant.

She would sell them, of course. But every garment, every item, would also have been a gift.

A privilege and a great responsibility, this was for Lasiuly the gift of making things happen. It was hard to feel like a magical entity, like a fairy, but it was the best role she could have in this world.

She focused on the faces she had memorized. Faces that were ready to party, not just to celebrate Christmas.

She clearly saw before her eyes the flashes of all the signs and decorations that she had observed during the day. They gave her the energy to do the things she wanted to do.

She was not afraid of stores trying to attract those faces, she was not competing, she did not want to swim with the sharks. What she had to do was embrace those faces, give them a reason to celebrate, influence them with her positive thinking.

Lasiuly knew she had to stand out and give value to things, she would change her strategy and offer an adventure. This was she could embrace many faces. Thinking about those complaints she had heard during her lessons about that competitive stress and profit crises made her sad. That dejection inevitably killed imagination, and companies risked strangling themselves with their own noose. She was the only one who could see a different scenario, alternatives, escape routes. She tried to explain them that sometimes a market niche is much more profitable and rewarding, that there is always someone out there to whom no one had proposed what he or she was waiting for, and that imitations never lead to successful results.

We all need to express our identity, our personality. We all want to look good and feel good. We all want to be the protagonists of our story. What we are looking for is something that identifies us, that reconciles us with ourselves, that makes us play the role of our favorite character, that places us where we can feel just one step from heaven. Here is what Lasiuly had written in her damask blue silk notebook.

An inventor is not only the person who gives birth to an object that has never existed before. An inventor is also someone who reinterprets the use of a common item. It is a matter of color, fit, comfort, durability, quality. But also, and maybe above all, of essence. Yeah, the power of things created by

Lasiuly was their message, what they represented, the feeling that was inside them.

Needreams and emotions always walk arm in arm. She could have fallen asleep lulled by those reassuring thoughts if her appetite had not knocked with a certain insistence. The dinner at Del Frisco would be a cheerful, tasty and charming moment. She would come back there with Virginia, but now she deserved a night for herself.

She got dressed and she put on her makeup. While she was changing her bag she briefly looked out of the window. Surprise! She saw large and soft snowflakes coming down and she was moved. It was not really snowing yet, but it was enough for her. Another wish that had come true.

Without making any noise, she grabbed her quilted jacket and she left the room: no cab, she would take a walk this time.

Lights, energies and virtues

I turned an ocean storm into dreams, emotions, and energy.

They have become values and virtues.

Positive thinking makes magic happen.

*These lights, now I know it, are sunrays
passing through the clouds and surviving the night.*

Lasiuly

She was quite impressed with Del Frisco. It had exceeded her expectations. Now she was in her room on the 11th floor of The Jewel Facing Rockefeller Center Hotel. She loved the view of the snow-covered spruce which was now ready for the great gala of the next day. She couldn't wait to see Manhattan under the blanket of pure white fluffiness. She was enthralled watching all the preparations and she lost track of time and went to bed later than she wanted.

She curled on the armchair wrapped in her cashmere cardigan and she enjoyed the show. This was all she needed to write and draw.

A reality dream, not just an inaugural ceremony and a triumphal celebration. For Lasiuly it was much more than a celebration in style. It felt like an overwhelming breath of life. That fairy-tale atmosphere was fueled by the energy, trust, and

vehemence of millions of people who just wanted a little happiness, hope and excitement.

There are thoughts that make us invincible. And there are moments made to inspire them. We lose only if we cannot seize those moments. She jotted all this down in her notebook.

Lasiuly was there, in that blissful dimension of thoughts and moments necessary for serenity and success. And she knew that this was the true strength of the present and the future. Sheltered from the ocean storm but alert, ready to catch every ripple, to move, to evolve, to grow, to read the sky, to listen to the wind.

Lasiuly thought to herself “We are all unique. And there is always a different way to see the same things. But it is fortunate that we must remember to have, every day. Having invincible thoughts without feeling invincible is the attitude we must have since we wake up in the morning until we fall asleep at night”.

She smiled. She was always enthusiastic, but she may sure she overdo it. That instinct concealed her modesty, but also her foresight and prudence. This helped her feel, watch and find what she needed, she had built a solid path of spirit and skills.

“The best victory can be achieved without fighting”. And everyone who attended her classes understood that it was not just a philosophical illusion, but an incontestable truth.

Thick snowflakes were coming down on, landing on the branches and its lights, now ready to pulse in a wonderful twirl. Watching them without surrendering to dreams was impossible for Lasiuly. So, she tried to focus on her sketchbook and draw. With that kind and accurate zeal, she managed to create beautiful sketches with all sorts of precious details with a heart, a face, a voice.

Her *needreams* came to life through those models.

It was exactly what she wanted. She wanted to be the interpreter of that fantastic kaleidoscope and give it to the whole universe. She didn't consider them clients, but friends, trave-

ling companions, partners. Her brand would be the entrance ticket to the dimension of authentic well-being, where feelings are in perfect balance. She would take their hand and lead them into her fairy tale. That was her mission.

Her red string bracelet was illuminated by the twinkling lights that were being placed on the spruce. This made Lasiuly immediately feel a warm energy crossing her body. Even though loneliness sometimes brought melancholy and restlessness, there was no reason to be sad or afraid. Optimism was the only weapon that could help her fight those feelings.

She had not even noticed that a message from Virginia had arrived an hour before:

«What about your collection of positive thoughts? They will be galleries of exclusive pieces. No doubts».

Virginia knew how to encourage her!

Lasiuly laughs. Galleries of exclusive pieces. Yes, Virginia was on to something for sure. Fierce competition was a minefield she had to avoid. She had to be different, but luckily for her, she knew how to do it.

That window attracted her like chocolate, almonds, berries. Indeed, even more. She wanted to meet her magical spruce.

She could only sleep a few hours to kill the time that separated her from that moment. A sleep full of sounds and images, like the prelude of a date

A quiet dawn surprised her while she was stretching out in her pajamas before the alarm sounded. Maybe it was just the show that was making everything so silent.

The snow, hooray! The night the universe had conspired to bring Lasiuly the joy she was looking for. The spruce stood out against the soft snow like a giant gift box. It looked ornate and proud, waiting for its lights to be turned on.

Lasiuly rushed out of bed as she had never done, even on her busiest days. Excited like a child and wrapped in the soap

bubble of her fantasies and her projects, she burned all records: she took a shower, got dressed, put on make-up and dried her hair in under an hour. She put on her jeans, grabbed her shoulder bag and her quilted jacket, and she left the room. She did not want to miss a thing. She did a tour at Macy's, where she would be surrounded by wonderful Christmas decorations, a quick visit to the ice rink and then she would join the crowd under the tree, waiting for the lights to be turned on.

But she would first stop at Magnolia Bakery, at the intersection with 6th Avenue, to have breakfast.

The streets were filled with Christmas decorations. She would not deliver her letter to one of those Santa's, maybe she would leave it at the foot of the huge tree, but she really liked that music, the bells, the legend. Tradition mixed with innovation. It was so exciting. The crowd of tourists, the snow that made everything softer and shinier, the busy shops, the skyscrapers that seemed to protect that event. This made Manhattan alive and euphoric, even more than usual. Every corner was made special by something, sometimes even just the grandeur of all those colored reflections.

The ice rink was crowded. The children were holding Christmas treats, and noises and voices were coming from the stalls of the markets.

Everything was perfect. It was the perfect celebration atmosphere.

She wished she could pause time briefly. She tried to get her fill of incentive and emotions. It was like being in a huge, amazing park full of surprises and stunning views. The hands of the clock were running, in that tourbillon of emotions. She was ready to party.

She headed to the Rockefeller Center several hours in advance, walking along 5th Avenue to admire its golden angels.

She had to somehow find a spot in the crowd that would gather at 7 pm to watch the lights being turned on.

Lasiuly was already shivering and not because she was cold. A lot of snow had fallen and the temperature around zero was bearable surrounded by that human and architectural warmth. Lasiuly was excited as if she were on a launch pad, surrounded by that tumult of skyscrapers and colors. She felt like she could fly.

When the thirty thousand LEDs were lit, and the majestic Swarovski star shone on the spruce before the amazed eyes of the audience, Lasiuly felt an indescribable pleasure. Awesome!

She was stunned. Everyone was stunned. That amazing setting emanated lights and suggestions that pierced the sky, twirled like fireworks, bewitched like mermaids.

Lasiuly was dazed by that glittering triumph. Her eyes were filled with tears. Tears of joy. Manhattan was celebrating that magic. It was pure magic, indeed. Lasiuly perceived the prodigy of that energy and remained motionless under those shocking lights. She tried to look around but saw nothing but an infinite bright horizon. She was no longer even attracted by the faces, the shouts, the cries, the giant screens, the songs and the speeches.

After all that excitement, she found a moment to focus on herself, and she realized she was finally herself, she was not playing any role, she was not wearing any armor. It was just her, with her *needreams*, her anxieties, her passions, her secrets. She was finally free to tremble, cry, hope, believe. She let herself be penetrated by those aftershocks, that phosphorescence, those special effects. A series of flashes that took her breath away. Her dreams were just before her eyes. All the pieces of the puzzle were in place. The final image was her image. A perfect projection of her project with all its nuances.

The smell of snow, the sparkle, the warmth of the adventures she was pursuing were a succession of powerful suggestions. She thought about those people praying under

the tree. Their wishes, their dreams. She realized that she could not write and tell what she was feeling: she would not be able to find the right words. The spruce seemed to swarm with treasures. It was almost like hugging those people. Despite all that intensity, Lasiuly's heart was at peace and through those colored flashes, she could see her rosy future for a moment.

When Lasiuly saw all her sketches hanging from the branches of the spruce, that moment her fable began: a catwalk of love, euphoria, contentment.

She wished she could hold Virginia close now, but she felt her and could even smell her scent. Her beloved Virginia was a presence, never too far from her.

She felt suddenly light, and she finally had a clear idea of her to-do list. She would do them one by one, and the things she wanted so badly would happen. After studying her strategic plan and market analysis for months, after freeing all her creativity, she finally knew what to do.

Each of her products would have a specific identity and a specific virtue. She would offer value to those who would buy her clothing, her accessories, her leather bags, her cosmetics or her glasses. Not just products, but a lifestyle. Would they understand the mystery behind that project? Or would they simply enjoy those amazing products? She did not know, and she did not care. She just wanted those people to enjoy her gifts, be happy and stay positive.

She touched her red string bracelet, closed her eyes and tried to imagine herself placing her necklace of values and virtues on a branch of the tree, so that they could become opportunities and joy for those who would choose her items from a window shop. Yes, because they would embody and show off the magic of invincible thoughts. After all, she was just selling positive thoughts.

She reopened her hand she had closed into a fist, focusing as much as possible on her sketchbook, and she found her tiny crystals.

Of course, there may be dark moments, but we just have to open our eyes and believe in our dreams to make them come true.



Revealed emotions

*How beautiful to finally see our emotions,
like reality revealing itself.*

*We need passion to stay alive and see new horizons. Thou-
ghts, trust and some crystal drops!*

Lasiuly

Del Frisco would be busy that night like many restaurants in the area, but Lasiuly had already bought what she needed in the afternoon, so she could relax and think about all the incredible emotions of that day. Not even the snow could soften all that clamor and it was so beautiful, the atmosphere was lively and soft at the same time, just like lights turning off, like the sunset gradually leaving room for the night, like a mix of confused emotions.

Lasiuly observed and absorbed everything she found on her way. Every fragment of idea or sensation was a useful and profound thought for her. Meeting the spruce was like meeting her emotions. And there was nothing, not even the most exclusive window shop, that could interpret her *needreams* like the spruce did. There, under the tree, she felt her heart light up with the lights and she was sure she was not the only one. Everyone gathered there, at Rockefeller Plaza, had the same feeling.

On her way back to The Jewel, dancing down the sidewalk and smiling, she was grateful for that magnificent evening and she made her solemn promise to inspire and create emotions.

People were not looking for another piece of clothing or for an elegant necklace. They wanted sentiments. People tend to be influenced by emotions rather than reason or fact. Lasiuly was a businesswoman, but she would not forget she was also a client, with the same humanity and wishes of all other people. She would create exactly what people were looking for. Products that reflected their trust and their passion. After all, Lasiuly knew passion quite well. No matter if she was wearing slippers or stiletto heels, she was a passionate woman.

Her busy agenda was all about the word “passion”. And passion was what she had in common with Virginia, she loved her more than anyone in the world. Passion is our lifeblood – she used to repeat to the managers who attended her seminars. Passion can do much more than our skills. Creativity is what makes the difference, what makes us give our best.

She never got tired of repeating those concepts because it was the blood in her veins and the biggest responsibility she had was to keep people’s desire alive. She wanted them to believe in their possibilities, their wishes, their future, believe in diversity. She knew how nature works: there is nothing that looks exactly like another, each has its own personality, and this was the treasure that anyone could find. Lasiuly had the map that could help people find that treasure, as well as their happiness. Since September 27 at Long Beach, her red string bracelet kept her tied to virtues, secrets and magic that made things come true. Things happen because we want it, she used to say.

She was already wearing her comfortable clothes when she went down to the second floor for her hot chocolate. Finally, on the armchair, wrapped in her long and warm cardigan, she

held the cup in her hands, pulled up her feet and took a long breath.

She would spray some magic potion on her creations. Each item would have had her stars and crystal drops. Lasiuly was a branding expert, and, what was more important, she knew a lot about *needreams*. Her brand would symbolize the lotus flower, transformation, beauty, longevity.

Yeah, that's why she loved so much the essence of the lotus flower, a beautiful flower that comes from the mud without being contaminated by it. The lotus flower was a symbol of encouragement, a symbol of strength, and ancient wisdom. She was fantasizing on the amazing vigor of simple things, on the universe and on all those opportunities observation and attention give us. She had learned so much in the last years! She had analyzed and evaluated everything, she had a mission to accomplish and a clear path in front of her.

After all, she had always been an innovative woman. She had to focus on operational issues by giving life to her models. She would have to make a series of practical choices to implement her project. She was a communication expert, and what she needed was a motivated and enthusiastic team. This is what Lasiuly was planning to offer to her potential clients. A united, skilled, enthusiastic, flexible and proactive team that could face any challenge. Working with the right team was a key aspect – she often repeated this concept during her classes. Working closely with different companies, she had the proof that what she believed was true. Flourishing and cutting-edge companies were guided by far-sighted and empathetic leaders who valued everyone's contributions and shared with their employees a common vision, while companies in crisis were characterized by an authoritarian and scarcely effective leadership resulting in a hostile environment, as well as bad results. She would listen to all her collaborators, both individually and

collectively, she would learn and understand their aspirations and utilize their qualities, their skills and promote their imagination, and in turn they would help find the answers to her questions.

She took her drawing sheets and colors and she created new and original sketches. She had traced her footsteps, her signs of recognition, what would make every model unique. A small silk pocket with her crystal drops on a dress, her name imprinted under the tip of shoes and boots, two little stars on the extravagant glass bottles that would contain her precious essence. Her personal touch would be everywhere, like a sparkling trail of glitter giving fantastic sensations.

Buying Lasiuly products would be like buying a winning spirit, approaching the sky, putting wings on their feet. And it was not difficult for her to imagine the chain effect, the spreading wave and the legend becoming reality. Like a magnet, energy attracts energy and so much energy can only stimulate other energy. Her business would be different.

What would make it different was its value. Only through the sparks of enthusiasm and joy she would win that challenge and she would see her models on the catwalks. She wanted to give people an opportunity to celebrate their senses. Lasiuly was the ideal model for that fantastic life that would lead out to the streets of the world.

There were all colors in her palette, except for brown that she insisted on calling chocolate, and she would use them all to paint a new, lively existence. She liked to combine them and make them shine. The only atmosphere for which she chose the shades of gray and rain was that of the elegant suburb of Primrose Hill, in London, where she wanted to settle down. Primrose Hill, London... Virginia!

She wrote her a long email to give her more details about her project, tell her about that wonderful evening and suggest

some places they could visit during her stay in Manhattan. She ended with a sentence that only Virginia could understand, like a special code:

«My red string bracelet will be always with me, like you, my one and only Virginia. It will remind me of the stormy ocean and my salvation. Love you».

She returned, and she would continue to return to her ocean and to Los Angeles from time to time, to enjoy its memory and to see the places where it all began once again.

It was midnight when Lasiuly surrendered to sleep. After a moment of upheaval, which often laid into her in the dark, like on that September 27, she finally saw all her garments in her dreams welcomed by enthusiasm and sincere smiles. She saw her desires come true and people hugging and exulting. She saw herself in the clothes she had just designed, wearing exclusive jewels, made up and perfumed by her prodigious products, while she was busy with her everyday life.

Being the soul and the image of her company was exactly what Lasiuly wanted. Rocked by those hopes and expectations, only the alarm could wake her up.

Oh, well! She needed to sleep, and she had plenty of time for fun and shopping. Time is a precious, but a mental break is just as important – she whispered.

It had stopped snowing, but it was okay, there was enough snow.

She got ready without any hurry, taking all the time she needed for her beauty routine: body cream, face cream, makeup. She brushed her hair, creating, with the help of a brush, some soft curls, and she put on a cozy but elegant jacket pantsuit and a pair of high-heeled black platform boots. What about a black fur? She looked in the mirror to see the overall effect and she decided that this was the right look. Was it just vanity? Nope. Lasiuly was a romantic woman who liked to look pretty,

just like every other woman. Moreover, looking good helped her feeling good and helped her to stay positive.

Her stomach grumbled, and she thought about the breakfast she had the day before at Magnolia Bakery and its incredible espresso.

She stayed at the reception desk for a while with a very nice young woman who give Lasiuly a sort of imperceptible applause every time she saw her. It was a kind of gesture of approval that flattered Lasiuly, though she always repeated to her “you shouldn’t”. They were both bewitched by the snow and Manhattan. She wished her a good day at work and she left. Outside the air was cold, but quiet and full of hope.

Something very powerful had happened as the lights had been turned on, something Lasiuly would use to keep turning reality into magic. She walked quietly, almost on tiptoe, closing her eyes to memorize all those extraordinary sensations that made her so excited. She as always was charming in her best moments, sexy but sweet, with her crystal-clear eyes and the candor of a child who sees the world around her with amazement.

At Magnolia Bakery she couldn’t choose, a muffin, like the day before, or maybe a cupcake? Maybe a brownie? Perhaps she would have Magnolia Bakery’s famous banana pudding. She would go with the flow and choose whatever jumped out at her. Meanwhile, she was thinking about her day and her plans. She and Virginia would do what all tourists do like take tours, living adventures and chatting like all friends do.

Feedback

Never neglect the effects of your attitude and your actions.

Every reaction reveals or teaches us something.

Always send signals and responses to the actions of others.

This is our way of keeping in touch with them.

Some are just waiting for them, most deserve them.

*Everyday wisdom helps us discover and focus
on our paths and important relationships.*

Lasiuly

Lasiuly was always scanning people's gazes. She was looking for signs of approval. She didn't think herself as vain but these little signs of approval from strangers showed her that her style and smile were appreciated. They were a happy incentive, happy like her thoughts. Now, she was even more careful than usual to interpret those looks.

Looking at the Christmas tree, she felt all the sensations of the night before. She winked at it and it was like seeing an old friend. New York would have a new fashion star, a very bright star, and the spruce and Virginia were the best allies she could have.

That day would fly by with all the things she had planned to do before Virginia's arrival. She decided to indulge herself and

have a big breakfast at Magnolia Bakery. She would have a very light lunch, and for dinner she planned to eat only blueberries. Many blueberries. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, after all.

She tried to imagine what a tourist would do the day after the show of lights and she did just that. She wandered around the city, she stopped to admire the panoramic views of the Empire State Building and the Freedom Tower that she still called One World Trade Center. Not because she liked dizzying heights, but because she was attracted by infinite horizons. She loved to look ahead, open to opportunities, and take long breaths, and those monuments were the ideal place for those moments. They were not just symbols of the USA, they were also great pieces of architecture and they were bold. They were there thanks to the courage, competence, ardor, and bizarreness of those who dared to design them and almost touch the sky. Everything was small from up there, except for the emotions she felt.

The 1,776-foot elevation of the Freedom Tower celebrating the United States of Independence of 1776 was the first emotional message Lasiuly could see, the second was its role in the tragic event of the Twin Towers. The flight of the Sky Pods, the Observatory, The See Forever Theater, the collective wonder: two hours of pure adrenaline. The almost clear sky offered an optimal view and she was grateful, grateful, for that communicative power.

The Empire State Building, in Midtown, at the intersection of 5th Avenue and West 34th Street, offered a permanent exhibition celebrating its history, on the eightieth floor, and attracted her for its art deco style, the precious marbles of its interiors, and its full views of the city, and not just it: from the observatory, indeed, you can even admire Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Awesome! With a fully clear sky, the views would be stunning, but even imaging them was enough for Lasiuly.

That afternoon she would do what she had never done in New York: visiting Madame Tussauds, the Wax Museum overlooking Times Square, with its incredibly real collection of statues depicting different and immortal celebrities. Lasiuly had never had the opportunity to admire those faces, poses, clothes and characters that seemed so real. It was impressive and even shocking, but she could finally realize why that place attracted so many people from all over the world. Not just selfie addicts, but also people curious to see that craftsmanship. Among VIPs, athletes, politicians and intellectuals, every visitor was there to enjoy that magic, pretending to touch their favorite singer, or a beautiful and talented diva. Those waxes, indeed, were the symbol of stories and characters, emotions and successes. Touching a statue and feeling the electricity of that contact. That's why all those people were there. Of course, the skillful hands that had shaped, dressed and made up them made everything so damned real, and the setting contributed to create those effects and surprising impacts. But there was much more. People needed to believe that it was real.

She enjoyed that moment. It was late afternoon and it was colder, so she walked quickly to The Jewel. She needed something to warm her, a shower, a break on her chair, before getting ready for the night. She had a ticket for Wicked, and Broadway was waiting for her. The second floor was full of guests, all excited to be in Manhattan. She enjoyed that cheerful atmosphere for a while. Cheerful and kind, she repeated it to herself as a mantra. Even those occasional exchanges of looks and smiles were a source of inspiration for Lasiuly, who always smiled in return. It's a virtuous circle, she thought while she was finally sitting on an armchair. Those moments were like business feedback. She had discussed that topic several times during her seminars. And she immediately recalled those positive interactions and emotions.

Things happen, even without elbowing your way through. Pure thoughts have a seductive and persuasive power. Only a fervid imagination can help us put the right piece in the right place. And what we want will happen. Sensitivity and pragmatism must be a single value. How many times had she repeated it during her lessons? No contradiction, indeed. Lasiuly was a cultured and skilled woman who knew how and when to act, but every quality was exploited to reach one amazing goal: giving people the key to their *needreams*.

Wicked intrigued her. She knew that show had become incredibly popular, for its amazing set design, its songs, the costumes and sublime interpretations of its actors. There were many characters, but her favorite was Elphaba, who does not allow herself to be defeated by marginalization, uses her magical powers and challenges the force of gravity, also thanks to her friendship with Glinda. Good wins over evil. Laughter and tears. She enjoyed the show and its atmosphere, its colors, sounds and Elphaba's triumph. The audience was thrilled at the end.

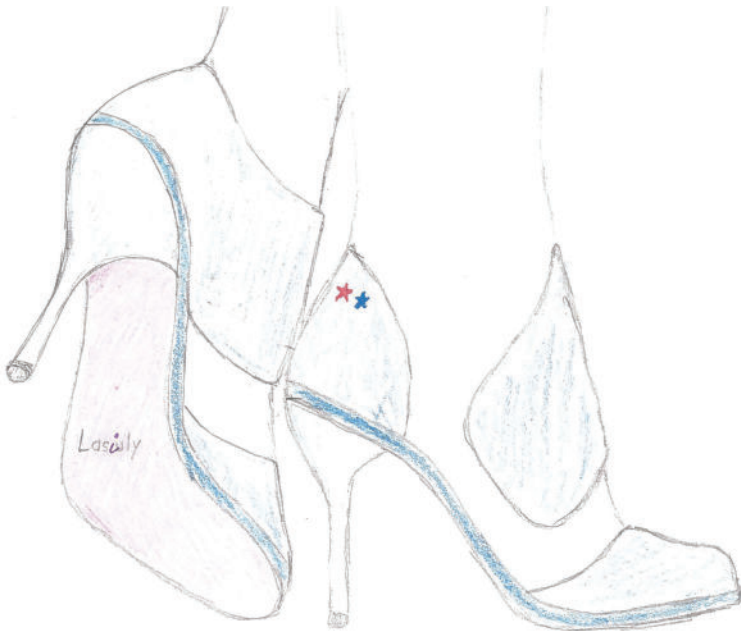
Lasiuly was so excited that she even thought to get into the gym for an hour, but her armchair was calling to her: Virginia would arrive the following day and she wanted to be at her best to welcome her! She read her message one more time: «We will be back together very soon! I am so excited! I want to see your models, and I cannot wait to visit NY with you... Wicked is a good show, but I think we are going to write an even better story! Laughing emoticon».

«We are going to write an even better story» Lasiuly whispered, lowering her head and loosening the hair on her shoulders. Her eyes shone, full of hope and desires ready to come true. Virginia had told her a couple of times to collect her “aphorisms or sayings” in a book. People would buy it, she had said. She did not believe hers could be called “aphorisms”. Those lines on her precious journals were just her reasons for

getting up every morning and not wasting her energies on negative things.

She thought about Pollyanna. Being always optimistic could be difficult, she knew that, but it was better than drowning in the murky waters of pessimism. The lights of the tree were off at that hour, yet she could see them distinctly. They were just sleeping. After all, somewhere in the universe, there is always a light, if we know how to see it. And of one thing Lasiuly was certain: she would not be tired of chasing that light.

She had known nothingness and darkness when the ocean was swallowing her, but her destiny had promptly shown her that salvation exists. She touched her red string bracelet and she soon felt a shiver running down her spine. She had a gift, and a responsibility, and she needed to be brave. But she knew how to do that.



Together again

My love for Virginia is also the fire I have inside.

A dream, a needream.

And a red thread bracelet that means everything:

*The infinite is in the look of those
who can get excited and excite others, always.*

Lasiuly

The expectation of pleasure is itself a pleasure. (Gotthold Ephraim Lessing). Lasiuly was at JFK airport sipping Starbucks coffee and staring at the arrivals board. She still had to wait several minutes. She felt nervous, excited and alive waiting for Virginia. She could imagine Virginia on the plane fantasizing about their adventure in Manhattan. Lasiuly also couldn't wait to discuss and show all the details of the project to Virginia. They both had this uncontrollable longing to see each other. They both knew that they would enjoy their time together. Lasiuly finally saw Virginia come out from behind the gate. Lasiuly and Virginia hugged each other for a very long minute, without saying a word.

Silence was normal for them, it was part of their communication. However, they chatted a lot later. After collecting Virginia's luggage, they took a cab heading to The Jewel and the taxi dri-

ver, astonished and delighted at the same time, enjoyed an intense flow of incomprehensible gestures from the side mirror.

«How are you, how are you feeling? » They felt it was important to ask these questions because they cared for each other. People do not really ask these questions because they do not make time to listen to the answers. The thought of those people made them sad. Those people were missing great opportunities for growth and complicity.

At the Jewel Virginia freshened up quickly. She was dealing with the jet lag and she was happy to have dinner in her room with Lasiuly. She had bought plenty of yummy goodies for both. They were happy the night would be spent catching up and talking. They had much to tell, and they had all the time they needed to enjoy the city. Virginia's was enthusiastic about Lasiuly's progress and she was curious to see her new models and eager to understand how she wanted to tackle this entrepreneurial challenge.

«Never underestimate the pitfalls, Virginia. Anyway, I will not walk into any hidden dangers. My mission, you know it, is different. Now, I just have to deal with the startup phase». «You will need a motivated, acceptable and trustworthy team, Lasiuly. This is a good project; your collaborators should believe in it and with your leadership they will feel safe! We will get back to that, Lasiuly, now I want to see your sketches, see what kind of feelings they give me and understand how you will use them. You know I love listening to your passionate stories about your models». And, sincerely amazed, Virginia flipped through the drawings.

«What the heart craves will happen. Each sketch will become alive and turn into a possible dream, each with a beating heart. That heart that dreams and gives the same strength of the dream to our days. They will be virtues and thoughts turned into items, if you know what I mean. They will symbolize a style, a state of mind, a positive grace».

«A small concentration of the power we need to fulfill our wishes! You want to deliver this, right?»

«Yes, Virginia, good energy is a factory of opportunities».

«I have been waiting for this moment for so long! It's now time to share these emotions, the world needs strong emotions ».

«Our personal idea of luxury» they exclaimed together through the sign language!

Her brand would be much more than an exclusive brand. Lasiuly's garments and items would change the life her clients. Each client would receive a priceless gift and would interpret the future with surprising strength. It would be subtle without making too much noise, just like Lasiuly. She realized that everyone chooses what represent the best part of themselves, or what they would like to be. One thing can have different functions. It could satisfy a need or respond to that person on an emotional level. An article of clothing can express an identity, bring comfort, generate joy, even coincide with the mental representation of their inner spirit. She envisioned her creativity dominating the entire universe, the original impetus for release portentous essences. Even with her frenetic activities, she never spared any time for contemplation: the mind found rest and inexhaustible new resources.

She had never wanted to stop learning. She always took the path less traveled. She always questioned herself. She, like Virginia, did nothing but capture the signals they received and interpret them.

«We give items the meaning they draw out. Suggestions are what we inherit from our childhood. Then, upon them, we build memories, cultures, inclinations, to find our happiness ... what an item can tell us is much more important than what it really is».

«Yes, Virginia, now I know the future my red string bracelet had prepared for me».

They hugged each other differently from how they had hugged each other at the airport, laughing at their complicity, with

emotions that went beyond their affection. It was their destiny. Lasiuly's business was nothing but a dream that was coming true. Money for her is a consequence, not a goal, and she repeated it at each single seminar.

«When you hit the target, you earn the prize of victory, it's written here, in your beautiful black leather notebook. I am so proud of you» Virginia added miming a heart beating wildly.

«I would not do it, I would not be here without you, my dear friend...» Lasiuly had learned much, and she knew that humility could be the only effective weapon.

In those hours, Lasiuly and Virginia managed to analyze the entire body of work, focusing on all those details they could not discuss by email. Lasiuly trusted Virginia blindly and was more than persuaded of her professional skills. Using the sign language, they talked about cost analysis, quality choices, organizational and strategical aspects, and they were so involved that nothing could divert their attention.

«You are almost there; your project is ready to take off. Have you already thought about a name for your business? »

«I will tell you that on your departure!» Lasiuly was aware she was being mysterious. After all, Virginia liked those little games they used to play.

Indeed, she pretended to be disappointed, then she took Lasiuly's hands, she knew their friendship was forever. They were both on Lasiuly's bed, sitting cross-legged surrounded by her notebooks and sketchbooks. Virginia jumped when the tree lights were turned off: «Too bad! »

«The tree is resting, and we should be too, but the light is still there, and they will keep their promises. It's time for a change, my friend».

«Lasiuly, the ocean will no longer be a threat for you! » Virginia had tears in her eyes and Lasiuly was trying her best not to cry herself, started a pillow fight.

«You are such a bad and insensitive person! You could never represent your brand! »

They started playing, as they usually did, pretending to be mad at each other, and having fun.

«I am even worse! I can be hard on the outside and soft on the inside, just like you»

«You are great Virginia, I love you».

Putting the crumpled pillows back, Lasiuly and Virginia looked at each other for a moment which seemed eternal, like in those movies where a man proposes and looks longingly at the person they love.

«You will succeed, Lasiuly. You are a magnet and your items will attract people like you do».

«Thanks, Virginia, I appreciate that».

They went on talking for an hour or more about little pockets with crystal drops hidden in her clothes, about the name printed under the tip of her shoes and boots, about little stars on her extravagant perfume bottles, and about Lasiuly's operational plan.

«It's a good project...»

«... A good and flexible project» Lasiuly added.

Nothing is safe because nothing is immutable. They both knew it.

«And we are so good at changes! » Lasiuly winked.

«High five! ». Slapping their palms, they were finally ready to surrender to the night and go to bed.

They had enough time to talk, and they needed to rest and dream in that beautiful New York night.

«I will not knock at your door, tomorrow morning, Virginia. You need to sleep. I will be waiting for you here».

Just a goodnight kiss, and they were finally in the arms of Morpheus.

A journey through emotions

Emotional luxury is a solid and fruitful investment.

Lasiuly

A week was like a breath of eternity. It went by very fast but was so full, happy and intense that Lasiuly and Virginia could not stop smiling.

Their love and their intimacy made everything simple and beautiful. They did not talk about what to eat, where to go, what shop windows to stop at and admire. They went with the flow. And every minute flowed naturally, supported by their complicity and their common and precious instinct of gratitude for life and its opportunities. They were happy to be together, happy to enjoy New York and its Christmas atmosphere, happy with what they exchanged, happy with their new prospects.

These were their vacation days and they were excited like little girls on their first day out alone. They preferred discussing their different points of view in the evening, once at The Jewel, always focusing on a single issue. They often talked about issues at work, caused by some ignorant people or colleagues who disappointed them, or simply because they had the stubborn determination to get to the bottom of everything. Discussing while strolling the streets of Manhattan would have attracted too many curious eyes. They were so funny!

The sign language, indeed, is so charming, and it seemed they were using a sort of code or were shooting a movie scene.

That's how many people who bumped into them interpreted the situation. Wherever they went, it was impossible for them to go unnoticed. Their bright eyes revealed their goodness, joy and attention, and their good mood was contagious.

It was nine o'clock in the morning when Virginia went knocking at Lasiuly's door.

«You did not sleep that much, my dear» Lasiuly said while hugging her in her fuchsia robe.

«I am too excited! I am going to take a hot shower too, I'll see you later. What time, Ma'am? » Virginia replied while laughing.

«You have one hour. One hour only» Lasiuly said pretending to be serious and threatening.

«I will definitely be late, then» Virginia replied while sending her a kiss with her hand and closing the door.

Lasiuly was giddy and happy like a child. Virginia there was a priceless gift. A gift she cherished with her whole heart. Being with Virginia was a journey through emotions. Not just because they were in the most exciting city in the world, but because their approach to those incredible places was pure, and they gave to that experience an exclusive value, just like they did with all the amazing opportunities life gave them. They were able to grasp the essence of everything. And even its implications, Virginia used to conclude when Lasiuly talked about "grasping the essence" and could go ahead even for hours.

Virginia finally understood why Lasiuly was so charmed by that spruce and so impatient to attend the lighting ceremony. Drinking her morning coffee at Del Frisco's Grill while enjoying the views of the Christmas tree, the atmosphere was irresistible.

Of course, with all those details provided by Lasiuly, Virginia had managed to get an idea of all the emotions her friend was experiencing, but having it there, before her eyes, was quite different. Every attraction was irresistible. The Rink, the ice rink at Rockefeller Center was noisy and full of happy people,

Fifth Avenue was all about charming shopping windows: Henri Bendel, Lord Taylor, Saks Fifth Avenue, and, above all, Tiffany's. Without mentioning Macy's, where they took a full tour.

The list of alternatives offered by a city like New York is almost embarrassing, and that was also the busiest and best time of the year. Naturally they decided to take the Christmas lights bus tour and admire the most incredible spots in New York at night, including the Brooklyn Bridge, up to the houses in Dyker Heights, the Brooklyn neighborhood famous for its amazing Christmas lights and decorations. They spent a whole afternoon at Bryant Park market, with more than a hundred stalls.

That afternoon, they promised each other they would visit the Public Library the next day. Housed in Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, on Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street, a majestic building in Beaux-Art style, the Public Library, with its culture, history and atmosphere, is a landmark and a great source of inspiration. Lasiuly and Virginia, completely in a state of ecstasy, remained there for a while. It was easy to see why New York to their breath away. New York is like a movie set, many of its corners, its monuments, its skyscrapers are now famous all over the world, and it is quite easy to associate them with a movie. There, at the Public Library, they both thought about the Ghostbusters, «We are just two, a third member is missing! », Virginia said to Lasiuly, referring to the famous movie. Lasiuly loved that humor. When there is sensitivity and complicity it takes very little to have fun or to see beyond common horizons.

«What kind of *needreams* did you notice looking at the faces of the people here in New York, Virginia? » Lasiuly asked before a delicious grilled fillet with sautéed mushrooms and black pepper served at Del Frisco Double Eagle where they were having dinner.

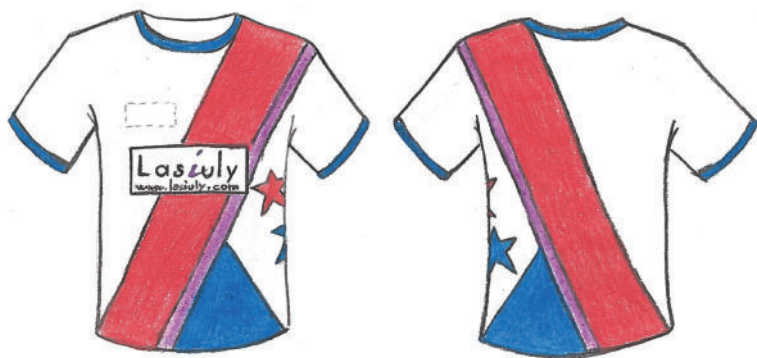
«Did you noticed that anytime you mention the word *needreams* your face sparkles like the Swarovski star, Lasiuly? It's not

just a brilliant intuition, you know, we both know it. It represents everything you are, and you will do! And now, more than ever, I think you know the answer to those *needreams*. . . indeed, it's you, you are the answer. We need to celebrate, we need champagne!»

«YES, champagne!»

Their resources were not unlimited and they both did not like squandering money. Money, choices, items all have value for them. They had decided they would make just a few exceptions in those days. Emotional luxury, that's how Lasiuly called those moments. A break, a special treat, a trip. They deserved luxury. Lasiuly and Virginia liked champagne, not just for its taste. Bubbles can cheer up everyone.

It was not by chance if their entrepreneurial determination had brought them there, if Virginia was in New York to celebrate the wonderful Christmas tree and the new year. It was a sign. The confirmation that things could happen, if they really wanted them. So, there was still something that was missing in their journey through emotions: a boat tour a helicopter flight, to keep looking around, from a different perspective.



Imagination and the key to happiness

*The power of imagination goes beyond
the imagination itself. Indeed, it is not just a hypothesis,
utopia, a nonexistent elsewhere.
It's an idea, a project, a vision.
A vital force that makes everything possible.*

Lasiuly

It was not just a vacation, it was a state of grace. They could see their future and they were ready to embrace it and hold on to it. Lasiuly had received a gift and a huge responsibility that was showing her a happy horizon, as happy as her creativity and her thoughts. Virginia was elated to be part of that glorious moment. They loved signing because it allowed them to keep the rest of the world out of their secrets, that same world they wanted to explore in its entirety. Their collaboration was everything to each other. They both knew how hard reality could be and they found protection and determination in their collaboration. Neither of them wanted fear and mistrust to cloud their magnificent idea of life, so they were looking for the right incentives to always be strong and happy. There could not have been better opportunities and atmospheres. After all, they had pursued and desired, or designed them, as Lasiuly would say!

«I see my future as I designed it, Virginia».

Virginia leaned her head on Lasiuly's shoulder as they were walking arm in arm. With her long lashes enhanced by purple mascara, Lasiuly gave her friend a doe-eyed look. Being so cheesy was another game they liked to play.

«Yes, virtues will have wings. I'm so excited».

«Have you already thought about all stages and your lines?»

«Yes, I have so much to show you, I will tonight. I have every detail planned, Virginia, I have selected the materials, I have a promotion strategy and I have all the sketches I need for my collections. We have talked about the finance and money part of it and now I feel more confident than ever. What else?»

«That's it, Lasiuly. You just must tell me the brand name. You have definitely designed your future».

«Well, actually I have designed my *needreams*, V.»

They loved to talk about *needreams*. It was their unique source of wisdom and optimism. After all, what everyone loved about Lasiuly was her style, behavior, eloquence, and the fact that she was always determined, but never flustered. Being obsessed with something like success only shrinks the field of vision, shrinks the imagination, wastes opportunities, she had often repeated it during her seminars. Winners, on the other hand, are passionate, lively, interactive, acute. And Lasiuly was a passionate woman.

Daring does not mean being unscrupulous but having bold thoughts, seeing their potential and translating them into reality. During her courses, she often pointed out the fact that so many feasibility studies and business plans have no soul: rationality and realism should serve to meet emotional needs, not to bury them, she used to say with her since smile.

«Being obsessed with reaching a goal is a limit. Indeed, we should focus on departures. Only this way we can really enjoy the journey».

«Inside the market, beyond the market! » Virginia commented with some euphoric gestures.

It was not difficult for Virginia to understand Lasiuly, and she was thrilled by her vision.

«Exactly, Virginia! A new, high added-value trend».

«It will be a great experience for all your collaborators.

«Relationships are our wealth. We cannot take aim and hit the target in solitude, teaming is more than a good rule, it is fuel and the source that multiplies our chances».

Meanwhile, Lasiuly and Virginia had chosen their cruise, the Best of Circle Line, to enjoy Manhattan from a boat. Along the Hudson River and through the woods that surround it, sailing to Midtown with its huge skyscrapers, the expensive apartments in Greenwich Village and the Financial District, led them to Statue of Liberty, the majestic Lady in all its symbolic splendor. Those stunning views, giving incredible emotions and impressions, took their breath away.

They commented on everything, with their dense and agitated exchange of gestures. There were a mix of emotions and admiring looks, up to East Side Manhattan, Wall Street and the spectacular Brooklyn Bridge passageway. A succession of places, glimpses, shivers, architectures and stories: the rich houses in the Upper East Side, the Yankee Stadium where the famous New York Yankees play, the crowded Northern Manhattan.

The same places, visited from the ground and from a boat, seemed to have more faces, reveal different details, generate new thoughts. Looking around, looking at things from another point of view, discovering the implications of what is known: this is what Lasiuly and Virginia were talking about, enchanted and intrigued. The observation point and the spirit with which we observe things can always reveal surprises and, certainly, broaden the mental horizons. Lasiuly and Virginia shared the same soul: appearances did not matter. Details, nuances, that's what they were interested in.

They enjoyed that time together, talking about their future, about Lasiuly's startup and the conjunctures of global economies. After all, they had enough knowledge to discuss the geographic, social, and cultural dynamics of economy. They could admire Tiffany and its jewels, take photographs of the Statue of Liberty or discuss business, with the same extraordinary involvement.

«Lasiuly, I cannot miss the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum...»

«I know why, my dear friend! »

«Star Trek» they said in unison through gestures.

The Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum in NY is where the first Space Shuttle Enterprise is displayed, Lasiuly agreed with her friend. They could not miss it. The first Space Shuttle of NASA, as if it was not already fascinating enough, recalled the myth of Star Trek with its stories on humans from the future, a colossal success the two friends, like many other people, loved.

The Enterprise was, indeed, an extraordinary experience, an authentic bubble of dreams and desires that set them in take-off mode. Adrenaline, euphoria and fantastic vibrations. There, on the edge of reality, which is never too far from our imagination.

Amazement, exaltation, emotion: motionless, in the presence of that magic, they almost trembled. Lasiuly put an arm around Virginia's neck, they hugged each other and remained for a few minutes dreaming about space and its amazing poetry of mystery. They both recalled *Star Trek* introductory speech: Space, the final frontier/These are the voyagers of the Starship Enterprise/Its five years mission/To explore strange new worlds (To seek out new life/And new civilizations/To boldly go where no man has gone before).

“Where no man has gone before”. Because only our dreams can push us past our limits.

The impact with the Enterprise was shocking.

«I'm mesmerized» Virginia was speechless.

«Star Trek helped us find our treasure: our future».

Everything and anything can happen. Lasiuly, with her gentle determination, was ready to prove it. That night, at The Jewel, the memory of Captain Kirk and Doctor Spock gave way to a full immersion section, to discuss what had not been discussed yet. There was something else they were planning to do to get closer to that sky they were dreaming of: a helicopter ride.

«What about tomorrow?»

«Okay, Virginia. Tomorrow sounds okay. But now let's get back to my collections. I need your opinion! »

Exploring the world to make needreams come true

*To be successful, we must provide answers,
work to make our dreams come true, give emotions.
That's why I do not stop smelling the roses,
exploring the world, seeing beyond what is already evident.*

Lasiuly

How could Virginia not like all Lasiuly's sketches? She had a guide in her heart, it helped her identify Lasiuly's feelings and all their nuances.

After all, it was all about feelings. Everything that is loving and passionate was a direct expression of her virtues and essentially her soul. This was her life goal and her dream since the ocean storm. It was a firm, yet sweet will, supported by years of study and hard work and by her friendship with Virginia, who had protected her little secret before it could be revealed. Things happen, if you really want them.

It had not been and would not always be easy to handle that gift and the moral duty she had to share with the rest of the world, despite her fragility.

After all, that fragility was nothing but her emotional background, with all her kindness, acuity, empathy and smartness,

the real treasure she handed to anyone she bumped into. An elegance that expressed itself through her spirit and her thoughts and that could only make her eternally unique. Only she, Virginia, could read in her eyes and see her fears and fatigue, while others could only see her smiles and her irresistible charm.

However, there was no time for fears. Lasiuly needed all her energies and hopes to turn her project into reality. Those vacation days spent with Virginia confirmed her perceptions, and, of course, were a good opportunity for keeping exploring the world. Exploration was one of her favorite words, and it was normal for someone who detested superficiality, who used all her senses, who made everything she could to always discover new things and go beyond what she saw.

Virginia was curious, attentive, lively and always eager to explore the world, just like her. These qualities made her an ideal partner. No mystery, no malice, no hypocrisy. Their relationship was a free space and place where to exchange ideas and opinions, sincerely.

«I couldn't thank my parents enough for this trip. You have no idea how happy I am that I can share this moment with you».

«I do. And I could not be more grateful... What would I do without you and without my red string bracelet?»

They hugged each other, without adding anything. There was nothing to add to that complicity. There was, indeed, a tenacious and special tenderness in that intimacy of thoughts. It was time for action, without further delay and with Lasiuly's sublime determination. She needed to be brave and optimistic, but she knew how to do that.

«I shudder at the thought of the helicopter ride».

«You are such a wimp, Virginia!» Lasiuly laughed.

«It's not true! You know I can be very brave and this is one of those cases. It's just excitement. Pure excitement».

«I get it. I have never done this before. The views should be breath-taking from there!»

«I am not sure eating before the helicopter ride is a good thing. Maybe later, what do you think?»

«I think you are totally right. Maybe hot chocolate and some sweets, since we are skipping lunch».

«Definitely yes».

From Times Square they took a cab to Downtown Heliport, Pier 6: they were ready to take the Grand Island tour. They took each other's hand before taking off. They flew over Governors Island, a former army base, to see the majestic Statue of Liberty up close, then over the beautiful Battery Park to reach Ground Zero site, the scene of the tragedy of September 11, 2001. Then again over Hudson river through Wall Street, Chinatown, Little Italy and Times Square, which was busy, as usual, heading north to reach Central Park, a green heart in the urban landscape! Eyes wide open, heart beating wildly, they could not believe what they were seeing.

Flying over the Yankee Stadium and George Washington bridge, they got back to Manhattan to admire New York skyline, famous all over the world, with the Empire State Building, the Met Life Building and the majestic Chrysler skyscraper.

The entire Big Apple was in front of their eyes: the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, Staten Island and the impact of the Queensboro Bridge, the bridge of the marathon and where Woody Allen's movie, *Manhattan*, was filmed, then Brooklyn, Manhattan and Williamsburg. Everything seemed so small from up there, yet so damn evocative! An incredible succession of emotions happened in a few minutes.

Virginia and Lasiuly tried to hold back their tears. Under their feet laid New York with its powerful message of strength, with all its colors, its crowded streets, its superb symbols dominating the whole area and protecting people.

The top views of the United Nations Building and the South Street Seaport brought them back to New York Harbor in Ellis Island, the first stop for millions of immigrants trying to build a new life in New York. How many dreams had come true in New York over the centuries! How many promises the city was able to keep and how much joy it has offered to all those who believed in it! What an incredible experience seeing all its power from up there! That tour made them believe and enjoy their life even more!

«I can touch the stars from up here».

«It was incredible!»

No matter how cold it was, they were warmed up by adrenaline and emotions. Every single symbol of NY was the confirmation of the greatness of life. They knew Virginia's vacation was about to end and that saying goodbye would be painful. They had shared some amazing opportunities and they had made so many memories! They would continue exploring the world. That's what both wanted.

«No time to get bored, Lasiuly!»

They enjoyed a cup of hot chocolate before getting back to The Jewel and take a break. They had planned to have dinner at Del Frisco Double Eagle, once again, and celebrate that wonderful day. The next day, after stopping at Tiffany so that Virginia could buy something for her mother, they would rush to the airport, so that night was the last night together. The last night of their vacation, the last night to think about Lasiuly's project.

With chocolate around her mouth, Virginia asked a simple question:

«Tonight, you are going to tell me the name of your business, right?».

Marice Entertainment

We need energy to implement our projects and protect our dreams before they come true.

I want something that will express the identity and values of those who believe in their dreams and are working to save them.

Lasiuly

Lasiuly chose a black sheath dress, an electric blue bolero jacket, a bag and a pair of 6 inch black platforms , while Virginia a fuchsia dress and black accessories. They were ready for dinner and a toast.

At the reception of The Jewel there was Helene, who kept staring at them with admiration. She had already met Virginia and she liked what she and Lasiuly had together. Since the day she had hugged Lasiuly, she had spent a lot of time talking to her, and she had realized she missed a friend, someone to trust. Helene looked more relaxed.

«Someone should give your names to a street or a monument, maybe write a book or a musical about you two...»

«You are too sweet, Helene! We are not asking for that much, my dear. Knowing that someone thinks about us is already enough» Lasiuly laughed.

Then Helene took a small notebook out of her pocket:

«I can assure you I have many thoughts for you. Now, please, could you give me one?» she asked while handing over the same notebook and a pen to Lasiuly.

Lasiuly gesticulated to translate the conversation for Virginia, who put her hand to her mouth to hide her astonishment.

They kept talking in the sign language for a while, then Lasiuly wrote:

Desires and good reasons overcome fears and obstacles. Take care of your *needreams*, Helene, and be grateful, every morning, for whatever life is going to give you! Lasiuly and Virginia.

P.S. You look beautiful and stronger when you smile.

Helene almost burst into tears. Fortunately, she was distracted by all the things she had to do. She winked at both and waved goodbye without saying a word not to reveal her involvement.

«What a woman!» Virginia commented while leaving The Jewel.

«Yes, a great woman».

Once at Del Frisco Lasiuly, and after finding a table, Lasiuly surprised Virginia:

«Are you ready V., my dear friend, to support, now and in the next days, me and Marice Entertainment?»

Virginia barely opened her mouth, then she looked straight in her friend's eye like someone who is about to propose and burst out laughing:

«Marice Entertainment? It's so funny! You are such a fool, Lasiuly! ».

«Yeah, I see star dust for everyone, after all there is a whole world that is desperately asking for it».

«During their worst dark moments, people forget that the stars are in the sky. They need to remember to look towards the sky. I think I can be the one to remind them about the stars. You are right, the world is desperately asking for star dust. And maybe crystal drops as well».

«I am so excited, Lasiuly! I visualize you and Marice Entertainment on the catwalk! I can already see the smiles on the faces of those who will wear Lasiuly. They will wear your spirit. You will be like a dream that comes true».

«Having my first fashion show on September 27 would be great, Virginia, don't you think?»

Virginia did not reply, she just smiled at her and she stroked her hair, pretending it needed to be fixed. After a few seconds of silence, she answered Lasiuly's first question:

«I am ready, Lasiuly. Do not be afraid of doubts, the energy of our optimism will banish them. Now you just need to find the right team, but I know you already have a plan».

«I think so. Once shared my mission and goals, I will ask for support. My team must know what I have in mind. Everything must be crystal clear. We will all be pieces of a puzzle. I know it will not be easy, of course. I must listen, focus on their needs and concern and negotiate... and I am not sure I will be able to do that».

«I know you can be a great leader. You have great people skills and a natural empath. Your team must know they are part of a revolution. If this happens, you will have nothing to worry about».

«I couldn't agree with you more! »

Nothing is more seductive and invincible than a good emotional atmosphere. No one would ever dare to escape the magnificent sensation of touching the sky with their finger. If this was what *Marice Entertainment* wanted to offer to its clients, its message had to be clear and the company itself had to reflect this image.

Minor details, gradual progress. Lasiuly and Virginia kept repeating this concept. They were not greedy or eager. They were two romantic souls who measured pleasures and joys by their intensity. The red string bracelet was not a precious piece of jewelry, yet its value was priceless. Making people's dreams come true by identifying their needs and hopes would be Lasiuly's key to success.

«Marice Entertainment will be like a factory manufacturing happy stories. Happy because they would be real».

«This is your essence, and it will invade the market, hidden in a pocket, sewn under a belt, diluted in a colored bottle or mixed with the colors of an eyeshadow ».

Identity and values. Choosing Lasiuly will mean embracing her values and believe things can happen.

«You will take care of the materials and colors of Marice jewels, right?»

«I cannot wait!»

«Please, don't reveal all details to your company yet. Not before I start production and send you the first sketches for the launch campaign».

«My lips are sealed».

Champagne and laughter were the perfect mix for an unforgettable evening.

«Will you be working full time as the CEO of your company or will you continue with your seminars?»

«Well, I do not want to quit my classes, Virginia. They help me grow and identify trends. Business is a dynamic, evolving process, just like life. I cannot stop and say that I have made it».

«You are a such a sensitive soul. You will know when it's time to make changes and focus on innovation».

«You always know how to comfort me, Virginia. You are my safe place. I love you more».

«I love you even more, but this is not a competition, and I do not want to cry when I leave, tomorrow. So, stop it, or I will destroy you in the next pillow fight! ».

Being with such a funny and smart woman was the greatest gift Lasiuly could receive from life. No doubts.

Lasiuly's story

*Make magic without making too much noise,
like you do when you want to surprise someone.*

*Seduce, but do not forget to be seduced
by all the amazing gifts life will give you.*

Lasiuly

«Tomorrow it will be our last breakfast at Magnolia Bakery».

They were about to enter Lasiuly's room, at The Jewel. It was their last night together in New York, but after toasting to *Marice Entertainment* they knew they would have many other adventures to share.

«Lasiuly, you are great storyteller, your stories are legendary. You have a special knack to turn magic into reality».

«I just tell people what they need to hear, what they want. I sell values that people would buy to feel better».

«Of course, it's all about *needreams* and emotions. People need to know they can make things happen... without making too much noise. People need memorable moments and a clear sky to believe that everything is possible».

Lasiuly was playing with her red string bracelet when Virginia put her hand on her hands. They were both on the bed, facing each other in a yoga position and enjoying that silent intimacy

they loved so much. Lasiuly felt Virginia's strength and positivity and took a deep breath:

«When I waver, I will think about you, Virginia».

«On your stiletto heels? I don't think so, my dear. You were born to be catwalk model!»

Once again, with her subtle humor, Virginia had made everything lighter and more bearable.

«Fortunately, I will be so busy that I will have very little time for doubts but I will miss you. I will definitely miss you».

Virginia would miss Lasiuly too, of course, but she did not want to show her weakness. Her friend needed her support, so she started to make fun of her: «I do not think I will miss you. One week together is enough. I will go back to London, to my life, and I will forget about you».

Lasiuly liked Virginia's kind of humor, and she immediately felt better.

«So, good night, Lasiuly. We are tired, and since we are two busy women working on their future, we should both get some sleep. We need it! »

«Good night and thank you for everything», Lasiuly said after kissing her friend again and again. Then, they finally went to bed.

They had not spared their energy, that week, and they were exhausted. Happy, but exhausted.

«I just have to take action», Lasiuly murmured as she was falling asleep. She smiled at what Virginia had told her “Do what you have to do, you know how to seduce people, believe me!”.

Seduction was much, much more than an art for them. It was something essential not just in a relationship, but in life.

Virginia knocked at Lasiuly's door at 8 in the morning. She had already packed everything and she they would come and collect her luggage at the reception after breakfast and after their visit to Tiffany.

«I managed to put everything in my suitcase, included that dress we bought at Macy's. I do not need any other bag. And... this is for you, I planned to give it to you once landed, but then I preferred to wait until my last day here».

It was a lovely recycled paper sketchbook made in London, with a beautiful cover with a quote impressed on it that Lasiuly knew quite well: *Facts tell, but stories sell* (Bryan Eisenberg). On the frontispiece there was Virginia's dedication: to Lasiuly, the woman who, through facts and stories, will sell happy thoughts. With love, Virginia.

«We had the same thought; can you believe it? I have a gift for you and I have waited until today to give it to you. It's a small gift, so you can put it in your suitcase!»

It was a pair of red leather gloves with a silver card on which she had written: to Virginia, my soul mate, my person. With love, Lasiuly. It was one of their weird moments. They were excited, and they were both trying to say thanks you while admiring and trying their gifts. They also tried not to be sad. They had promised each other not to.

«Sooner or later the angel who watches over me will take me to London and I will move there, in Primrose Hill».

«I have no doubts about it. And we will dance in the rain».

After having a cupcake and coffee at Magnolia Bakery, they went to Tiffany, where Virginia had to collect her gift for her mum. At The Jewel a cab was waiting to take them to the airport. They hugged each other even more intensely than they did at J.F. K airport when Virginia had just arrived.

«Please, send me a message as soon as you land».

«I will do it, my dear».

«Remember that...»

«That you love me? How could I forget it? I love you too».

Lasiuly wiped her tears, and Virginia did the same thing once she was at her gate. They were happy, after all. They were

grateful for that time they could spent together. Now Lasiuly could finally see her mission as a happy future, and not as a huge responsibility. There can be no turning point without hope, and hope was the message she wanted to send.

A passionate team

*Our intense creative focus is a useful tool
against the negativity that limits the ability to explore o
ur inner universe and clear our mind.*

It helps us to do our job in the best way.

We find ideas and solutions

only when we are free from constraints.

*We interact with enthusiasm and we always get new tools
to make everything much closer, easier, more beautiful.*

*There is no greater power
than the power of emotions and wisdom.*

They are the heart of everything.

Lasiuly

Lasiuly suddenly felt like time was running out. But September 27 was the right date.

What she had to do was find the right rhythm, what she called “positive tension”, which had nothing to do with unproductive and dangerous stress.

As she explained during her seminars, motivation, planning, implementation and monitoring were a step by step procedure based on interchange. Results reinforce motivation as much as motivation helps to get them, and everything changes, so there is no such thing as a perfect, immutable plan. That's why we must be focused, curious, dynamic and ready to respond to such changes and evolve. Yeah, Lasiuly's work in progress was all about feeling, focusing and taking action.

She absolutely did not want to attack the market, she wanted to attract it. She would enter it like a sunshine passing through the clouds. She would be a blanket of stars in the night. Hope, joy, peace were essential ingredients for dreams. Hope, joy, peace were essential ingredients for dreams. Having hope means believing in dreams, for the whole world. And hope is only an intimate desire of joy and peace.

So, she had to stay alert and think well. She had to free her creative imagination while keeping her feet firmly planted on the ground. She had hours, days and months of study, organization and mental visualization of happiness on her side. That connection was the real support of her energy. Lasiuly had developed with certain precision and that fed her imagination and optimism. Virginia's support would do the rest. Long emails to discuss philosophical choices, details of shapes and colors, directions of course. Every word served its purpose. In a mosaic each card is a fundamental part of the whole. So, they focused on cultural aspects, ideas, social impact, economic data and their discussion helped Lasiuly find the answers she was looking for and solutions.

She did not even quit her classes; indeed, they were too many requests, and saying no was not on her agenda. It was challenging, but it was also an inexhaustible source of wealth, in a broad sense. She needed resources, both financial and intellectual. Earnings were necessary for her investments and

what she learned by meeting people and teaching them was just as important.

Her humility was a baggage that she continued to fill with experiences, lessons, treasures.

As expected, she sometimes staggered and then resorted to her collection of pearls, to Virginia, to her smiles in the mirror. Smiling every morning in the mirror persuaded her that nothing should ever kill them.

In the vortex of concreteness, she envisioned herself soaring like a dragonfly so free and light. She thought about Long Beach gang fights and that eager rage, evil generating evil, and greed that made every result useless. She was not interested in sharing a miserable loot, and she analyzed the competition only to keep her distance, not to compete. Her team was confident and enthusiastic, and Lasiuly was the only leader recognized by its members. Those members were charmed by her work and they could see that her dream was about to turn into reality. They felt part of an important mission. Her grace influenced and encouraged them to give it their all. Every proposal, every step, every gesture, was an act of passion.

That passion that was a passe-partout for Lasiuly. She exploited her virtues with her charm, her perseverance and her kindness. Her creations, now in progress, were surrounded by an aurora of magic. All those who examined her sketches, who discussed some procedures with her, those who cut the fabrics, sewed the leather or experimented with new formulas for her make-up or perfumes, could feel her extraordinary and mysterious skills. They felt better. Being part of that sublime chain of wonders was a burst of fresh air. There was magic in the air and they were almost able to see it with their eyes.

They felt satisfied, proud, or perhaps on the right path to happiness. They felt that something was going to happen, something extraordinary, as extraordinary as Lasiuly, even if they

did not know what. They admired her sweet vigor and the way she walked, like a ballerina, on her toes, elegant and delicate, but also so strong! Lasiuly did not just talk about emotions, she vibrated positive emotions. Her incredible charisma helped her talked to everyone and was inspired by everyone. It was a flow of *needreams*, just like her items. She praised the skills of the collaborators and their results.

«We work with beauty, of course, but we are going to sell something more than beauty. We should always be grateful for this huge opportunity».

The secret of the crystal drops and the star dust was in the splendor of the moods she would give off. The dreams that were just beautiful reality. With that mood, every dream could come true. And so now they saw them, the collaborators, one by one and all together. The prodigy had accomplished for them. The same that they would have spread.

Lasiuly's shop window would have be a mix of fable and reality. Beyond fashion, more than beyond fashion. Wearing Lasiuly would be a new way to express values, communicate them, make a revolution. This was the general mood of her team. Lasiuly was happy for those euphoric comments: she was calm, she knew that they shared her same vision. An endless succession of happy thoughts!

Lights, colors, essences: Lasiuly was waiting for September 27 to show the world her exclusive collections, which reflected her personality and, above all, had an incredible seductive power. The group was working hard on all launch phases. The promotional campaign was ready and Lasiuly was the only possible testimonial. Her name echoed everywhere, from clothing to leather goods to cosmetics and lingerie, and the manufacturers were amazed. They loved her ideas and they were persuaded by them. High quality, detailed finishes, and the splendor of her contagious vitality were the ingredients of her magical

formula. It was the future, a future the only Lasiuly could clearly see.

As the first announcements were made, there were so many expectations, and people were already crazy about Lasiuly. The social networks did their job, much before September 27. A thin thread, which resembled Lasiuly's red string bracelet, connected hundreds and then thousands of likes. Everyone was ready to move the first step towards a new life.

The tale of reality

It took a red string bracelet to save me from the ocean storm.

Even the smallest details have their importance.

Now everything that I have created on tiptoe

can finally get on the catwalk.

If we follow our needreams,

we can build the reality we want, can't we Virginia?

Lasiuly

Finally, a new life is possible. Lasiuly essence can be felt in each positive and trustful soul. The *needreams* reveal their vocation of salvation and their joyful and vigorous beat.

After all, that was precisely the meaning of Lasiuly's dedication. She was not working so hard to become famous, she wanted people to have the same sense of energy her red string bracelet gave her, a mission of happiness. Lasiuly is there, Lasiuly is. And every time she walks on tiptoes, things happen. Dreams that become will and will that becomes reality.

Lasiuly received a gift from the stormy ocean, and she wants to share that gift with the world, it is a concentrate of strength and illumination that makes the horizons rosy. It is a tsunami

of fervor and joy that relieves any distress. It is a glimmer from which, even in the darkness, a bright glow passes.

In the presence of the majestic Christmas Tree at Rockefeller Center in Manhattan, Lasiuly made a promise, to herself and to the starry sky. She promised to mix *needreams* and virtues to create magic, like a fairy tale and anyone can be the hero. People need positive emotions. Lasiuly knew that it is necessary to expose the mind, to opportunities, to joy, to well-being. That it is necessary to smile and keep the keys that open all the doors firmly in hand. That could spread the glitter of enthusiasm and creativity. She knew that there is only one way to live life, love and work, and to reside in the marvelous wisdom of the white and tenacious hearts, in their deep, sensual, generous euphoria.

It is necessary to dare, she always repeated it. What we need is an open mind that makes us do things we have never even thought of doing. All enthusiasm of Lasiuly, her team and Virginia had done an amazing job, and the project finally had its own identity, the prodigious impulse to gladness, and was ready to take off.

Yeah, Lasiuly's collections were personal and authentic, that's why they would be successful. A seed that would grow and take on a life of its own, having a sense of the state of grace. A lever, that lever able to set in motion the best impulses. A melody that pierces the silence, which spreads magnificent vibrations, which triggers graceful and enveloping dances.

The fashion lines ready for the debut of September 27 were exclusive and innovative. Her collections were full of color, genius and luxury and more. But more than luxury and diversity there was more that was about to conquer the public. Her collections were *needreams* turned into opportunities. Lasiuly firmly believed no matter what you want to believe, you have the power to make it happen. It was a tempting thought full of

hopes, vitality and determination. Even the most insignificant, frivolous details had their importance.

Lasiuly was about to enter the market to see her garden of dreams in full bloom. She was going to see hundreds and thousands of eyes shine. The idea of conveying positive and happy feelings and wishes excited her, it was her destiny and her mission turning into reality. A great fire of passion had been lit. A passion that would be contagious, like a viral infection, and going viral, today, is almost an obsession. On the eve of September 27, the excitement was palpable.

Everyone was talking and writing about Lasiuly, and the general opinion was that it was not just a new fleeting trend, but an explosion of awareness and will. Lasiuly, the perfect testimonial of the radiant vigor of positive thinking, was not seen as a label on a dress or on a perfume bottle, but as the essence of a rebirth. A style icon and a lifestyle. She suddenly was in the limelight, like a lighthouse in the middle of the ocean, showing the way to salvation and redemption. On the catwalk, like in a shop window, every single item created by Lasiuly was a *happy beginning* story. She loved new beginnings and departures, because life is a journey, not a destination.

Lasiuly's training classes were even more popular now, like her names, and her sketches and thoughts were now displayed at The Jewel like works of art. In LA, on Rodeo drive people strolling along the Walk of Fame look for her brand or that unique scent she leaves in the air, the sweet combination of emotions, lotus and chocolate. She was already imagining her showroom in Milan, planning her trip to Italy to find designers and the best manufacturers of fabrics and leather, as well as the combination of scents that would compose her essence: the sea of Sicily, the Monte Rosa, the glaciers of the Stelvio, lake Como, the hills of Monferrato, the art in Rome ...

All major fashion houses want Lasiuly models, including Michael Kors, with its “Michael Kors co-designed by Lasiuly” line, characterized by two stars embroidered on the right side just under the breast. Everything is color, fun, splendor! Everyone wants Lasiuly, everyone can be Lasiuly, and Virginia could not be happier: « The fairy tale of reality is now the heritage of humanity, my friend».

Laughing, crying making funny gestures, Lasiuly and Virginia were now closer than ever. Between them there is everything we should know, good feelings and an indestructible alliance. Choosing to be Lasiuly now means choosing one’s destiny and working to build it and enjoy the benefits of the dawn that wakes up every night. And that’s exactly what Lasiuly and Virginia wanted.

The end

*Through time, I live my life. I guide, and I am guided by it.
With all the imagination my wishes,
my dreams and emotions need.
Always conscious of the value of diversity.
Lasiuly*

Lasiuly is what we would like, and we can finally be. On tiptoes Lasiuly makes things happen and now we have to believe it . More than a hope, we have a chance. She wants us to have that chance of turning our dreams, or *needreams*, as Lasiuly calls them, into reality . We have the right to dream, but also the power to make dreams come true.

Lasiuly's mission is happiness, a daring journey through our will to change reality. Lasiuly's message has been finally delivered to the world and people who want to experience new emotions. Finally, the light gives way to the shadows and many small bursts of euphoria become extraordinary discoveries of wonder. Lasiuly smiles when thinking about the storm and her red string bracelet. She smiles at life, which is always an incredible adventure, if we dare, if we are creative and optimistic.

No magical recipes, just crystal drops and star dust, an inspiring Christmas Tree, and a precious friend. Because

there can always be dark, desperate moments, but the power of thought and imagination can still help us get through them. There is always a new day, a new beginning.

We cannot afford losing our faith and determination. Never. Lasiuly is not a superhero, she is just a woman who did not give up, who has never given up the energy of her smile who wanted to give the world a little happiness.

Lasiuly always repeated during her classes that impossible is just something we do not believe it can be possible. With her clothes, her accessories, her perfume, a fairytale turning into reality, everyone dances, and souls become light, vigorous, daring, enthusiastic. Magical things happen.

Lasiuly is not a “label”, it is an opportunity life give us, a model of joy and pleasure. The streets colored by her precious garments have something that shines, sparkles romantically with passion, perseverance, joy. Gratitude, extraordinary opportunities, ideas and imagination, generosity, happy intuitions, hugs and genius: this is the secret behind this story and the secret behind well-being.

Now that everyone is wearing her clothing and jewels, and using her beauty products, Lasiuly is on another level, far from competition, in an exclusive oasis . Mission accomplished, but Lasiuly will not give up. Nothing is immutable, tomorrow is full of surprises. She will be always ready to embrace change, because future can be quite different from present. Imitation is the only thing she is not afraid of, because it is too silly and basically ineffective. The real challenge is having alternatives, exploring the unexplored, going beyond the usual. The real challenge is making the difference, always. Lasiuly is an inspiration, magnetic symbol of a liveliness that makes us feel good. We feel this pull to her. Like the Earth and the Moon. She helps us realize that any future is possible if we believe it.

This is Lasiuly's story, the story of her unique grace, her intelligence, her charm, her elegant humility and her impeccable style. You can change everything, if you really want it.



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