No Smoking

Coach: Welcome to the first meeting of the Coney Island Winter Swim Club new season! And we are happy! Because it is freezing today!

Anya: A perfect day for a swim in the ocean.

Sasha: Too bad it's not colder.

Rishi: Colder? You guys are crazy. I can't believe you swim in this weather.

Sasha: My dear, Rishi, In our country…

Anya: …this would be a summer day.

Rishi: Tell me again, why do you do this?

Sasha: For the money.

Rishi: People pay you to swim in the winter? They are even crazier than you are.

Sasha: They are not crazy. It's for the children. People give us money when we swim.

Anya: And we give the money to the hospital.

Sasha: Lots of people will come to Brighton Beach to watch us swimming.

Anya: My Sasha is the best swimmer and champion money maker. See those medals?

Coach: Take off your jackets! Get into the water.

Rishi: Sasha, my friend. Is that a cough I hear? Would you like my coat?

Sasha: Oh, I can hold your coat while you go swimming.

Rishi: You know, in my country, there is a great tradition. We only swim when it is warm!

Coach: Sasha, that cough sounds serious. You cannot swim today.

Sasha: Not swim today? I've been waiting all summer for today.

Coach: You know the rules.

Sasha: I'm not sick. It's just a little cough.

Coach: You're not going in the water. You need to see a doctor.

Sasha: I haven't seen a doctor in 20 years.

Coach: Well, then it is time to make an appointment. Only six weeks before the big swim. We need you to be healthy.

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Sasha: I don't know why we are here. I am in perfect health.

Doctor: Good afternoon. Mr. Basikov, your tests are back. That cough is serious.

Anya: Doctor, could you please speak more slowly?

Doctor: Of course, Mrs. Basikov. I said your husband's cough is serious. I am concerned.

Anya: Will my husband get better?

Doctor: Well, that depends on him. He needs to quit smoking.

Sasha: No problem. I can quit smoking anytime I want. Just not today.

Doctor: You know smoking can kill you.

Sasha: Ach! We all have to die someday.

Doctor: If you want to swim again, you have to stop smoking now. This can help you quit. It's called nicotine patch. You place it on your bare skin. You get the patch for free.

Anya: For free?

Doctor: For free. Call 311. They will help you. This gum can also help. And here's some information about quitting. Mr. Basikov, you can quit smoking. You have to.

Sasha: (*in the waiting room after the visit*) I don't care what the doctor says. I do not want to quit.

Nurse: Mrs. Chen? Mrs. Chen?

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Rishi: Hey, Sasha! I spoke to Anya. She told me the news. You have to quit smoking.

Sasha: Life without cigarettes. I will cut back…quit… a little at a time.

Rishi: A little at a time does not work. Look what I got from the New York City website. On the Internet. Here it says: "To quit smoking you need a friend to help you." I am your friend, and I will help you.

Sasha: Okay, friend. You want to help me? Get me a cigarette.

Rishi: I will not get you a cigarette. I will go for a walk with you. We exercise…you will not miss smoking so much. Look.

Sasha: Excuse me, young man. May I have a…?

Rishi: No asking for cigarettes from strangers. Didn't the doctor give you a patch to help you quit? Where is it?

Sasha: Here. She also gave me some gum. Maybe you would like to chew on this gum?

Rishi: Look, my friend. I know it is hard to quit. I am just trying to help.

Sasha: I am in a bad mood today.

Rishi: You know, they say bad moods are normal when you first quit smoking. You'll feel better soon.

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Sasha: Gentlemen! Beautiful morning. May I have a cigarette, please?

Rishi: Remember. No asking for cigarette from strangers.

Sasha: From strangers? But I know these guys.

Old Man: I'm sorry, I don't have any.

Sasha: Ivan, I know you smoke. Give me a cigarette. Please. My friend.

Ivan: We quit. We all did. You gave us the idea.

Sasha: What?

Old Man: Rishi, don't feel bad. You did your best. But Sasha will never be able to quit.

Rishi: Oh yes, he will. And if you are smart, you will, too.

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Sasha: *(leaving store)* See you, Mischa. *(to Rishi)* Anya is waiting for me.

Rishi: Remember, if you want a cigarette, call me first. We can always go for another walk. Anytime. Day or night. And do not forget to read this.

Sasha: Okay. Thank you. Rishi, tell me, why are you so worried about my health?

Rishi: How many years have we known each other?

Sasha: A long time.

Rishi: Did I ever show you this? This is my family in the old country, when I was a boy. That is me. This is my mother. My sisters. And my brother. That man is my father. He was a smoker. One year later, he died from lung cancer.

Sasha: I'm sorry. I didn't know that.

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Sasha: Anya. Anya. Anya! Anya.

Anya: Sasha. Sasha, what is it?

Sasha: Nothing, Anya. Nothing. I just had a bad dream. Go back to sleep.

Anya: My dear…

Sasha: I dreamed that I could not quit smoking. And you left me.

Anya: Silly man. I would never leave you. But, if you do not stop smoking, I am afraid that you will leave me. Don't worry. I know you will be able to quit.

Sasha: Hello, 311? I am trying to quit smoking. Is there someone I can talk to? Yes, I have a pen. Give me that number, please. One. 8-6-6. N-Y. Q-U-I-T-S. 1-866-NY-QUITS. Thank you.

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Sasha: Is it my imagination, Anya? Or is your cooking getting better and better every day?

Anya: Sasha, I have always been a good cook. Now, that you have quit smoking, you can taste it.

Sasha: You know, this is when I always had a cigarette. To finish dinner.

Anya: What is this?

Sasha: Did you know? I used to smoke a pack and a half of cigarettes a day. I haven't had a cigarette in a month. Anya. I have saved $300.

Anya: $300 a month? That means we will save $3600 a year!

Sasha: Anya, I want to give this money to the children in the hospital. I know, I know. $300 is a lot.

Anya: Ah, give the money. We had a whole meal tonight with no coughing. For that, I would pay a million dollars.

Sasha: You smell so good. You're wearing a new perfume?

Anya: No. I guess your sense of smell is getting better. You know what else?

Sasha: What, my darling?

Anya: Your kisses taste better, too.

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Anya: Sasha. Rishi is here. Are you ready yet?

Sasha: I'll be right there.

Rishi: He did it!

Anya: I know! I'm so excited! *(Sasha enters)* Oh! You look great!

Sasha: I feel great.

Rishi: This is it. The big day.

Anya: Wait a minute. I forgot something.

Rishi: Sasha, I'm so happy that you quit smoking. I know it was not easy.

Sasha: My friend. Thank you. Without you, I could not have done it.

Anya: We cannot forget this. *(gives Sasha a "no smoking" medal)*

Sasha: This is great. I deserve it.

Anya: Yes.

Sasha: Let's go swimming!

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