

# **And you will become a Neolithic Man!**

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## **Introduction**

Dear readers, profound changes await us all! In the world that is about to come, mere survival will not be enough. We will all have to adapt! This little guide is intended for you, my dear fellow humans, so that you can face this new challenge. In this guide, I have included a handful of observations on a certain phenomenon. I have supported many of them with examples taken from everyday life. At the end of the book, I have included a test that will allow you to easily check how well you have absorbed the material contained therein. I am also gradually introducing you to the world of concepts that you will need to master. I will tell you what you need to strive for from now on and how you will have to learn to think. You may ask, what is the point of all this? After all, everyone thinks the way they want to... Once you read this book and put some effort into familiarizing yourself with its message, it will become obvious to you that from now on, things will be completely different!

## Neolithic

You have probably heard the word "Neolithic" before. Perhaps you are curious about what it means. That is a mistake! The Neolithic is our future. It is more powerful than a mammoth and more dangerous than a saber-toothed tiger! There is no escape from the Neolithic! The Neolithic requires us all to find a new way of looking at the world, a new way of thinking. It is no longer enough to be curious! You, the future people of the Neolithic, must want to become them! You must reject old habits and old customs. When you walk with me on the path I am about to take you on, at the end of it you will not believe that you could have thought the way you think now! First and foremost, learn a new word: Paleolithic. What is that, you ask? Well, Paleolithic means ordinary, normal people like you and me, dear reader. We are all Paleolithic people. And we always have been. Since time immemorial, we have lived in the Paleolithic era. If that's the case, you probably thought, then maybe we should continue... Nothing of the sort. Why? – you will probably ask. I will answer you. Well, the Paleolithic is bad! How can it be bad, you say, if we have always lived that way? It's not that it's bad as such, but the Paleolithic is worse. Worse than the Neolithic, of course. Why should it be worse? you may ask. If I admit that all of us – ordinary hunter-gatherers – have always lived in the Paleolithic, why should it be worse than some Neolithic? Well, the very question shows how deeply the Paleolithic has ingrained itself in your brains! When the real Neolithic Age arrives, no one will even think to ask such a question! I guarantee you that for every normal person of the Neolithic Age, it will be obvious that they are better people! How can one human being be better than another, you say, if they are both human beings? Well, the very fact that you are capable of thinking this way proves that you are not yet Neolithic humans. You are far from them. Let me explain this with an example. Which is better, the meat of a freshly hunted deer or, for example, the remains of a few days old carcass, even if it is a mammoth? Of course, the meat of a freshly hunted deer tastes better! By the same token, the Neolithic is better than the Paleolithic, and every Neolithic man is better than any of us! But that's not all. You cannot simply accept that you are inferior and go hunting. No way! The Neolithic imposes a certain obligation on each of you! It is as if you had the task of keeping the fire going, because it is difficult to light it once it goes out, and it is much more sensible to keep it going. And when the fire goes out, it's too late, and adding wood to the fire will help as much as magic spells help a shaman when he accidentally encounters a bear in a cave. You all know that bears don't know anything about magic, and such a shaman tastes just as good to them as any other human being. What does a shaman do when hunting? The same as everyone else, he tries to hunt some animal and not get hunted himself! You probably won't believe me, but when the Neolithic era arrives, shamans won't hunt at all! You might think they will fish, or at least gather some fruit or mushrooms? Nothing of the sort! Shamans in the Neolithic Age will do nothing! How can they do nothing, you ask? Everyone has some kind of job, some kind of occupation. It has always been that way! What will they eat then? How will a shaman make a living? A shaman in the Neolithic Age will make a living from being better! And each of you, once you understand the essence of the Neolithic Age, will also have to want to become better! The best! You will have to dream about it! You will dream of nothing else but becoming better than you are! Because in the Neolithic era, those who are better don't have to hunt at all, and they will have bellies like hairy rhinos! I know, you're looking at each other, probably thinking, who needs a belly like that? After all, no one has a belly like that, it would get in the way of hunting and many other activities. I know what you're thinking! I can see it in your stupid faces! You're thinking again about going back to camp and having your way with your woman. The Neolithic will change all that. Until now, you had to win a woman over, show her that you know how to hunt. And she could decide whether she preferred one man over another. That will change, of course! In the Neolithic era, women will have no say! What do you mean, they will have no say? Am I saying that there will be no women in the Neolithic era? The point is that there will be women, but instead of women, their fathers will decide. He will tell her who she likes more! It will no longer be the case that you bring her a gift, such as meat or an animal skin.

No way! I mean, yes, you will have to bring meat, maybe even more than now, but you will have to give it to her father, not her! And you will have to talk to her father about her! Not to her! Well, what if someone has a lot of daughters? – you may ask. Why does he need so much meat? He can't eat it all himself! Have you forgotten about the shaman? How is her father supposed to know who is the best candidate for his daughter? You are stuck in this erroneous, Paleolithic way of thinking that if it's not the daughter, then her father will decide for himself. In the Neolithic era, no one will decide anything on their own! So how will he know who his daughter should choose? Of course, he'll ask someone who's better than him! And that person will ask someone even better! And so on. And only the one at the top, the most important shaman and chief, will allow them to do what you're thinking again (I can tell by your silly smiles!).

## Others

From time to time, we encounter Others. Well, life is unpredictable. Sometimes we share our meat with them, sometimes they share theirs with us. After all, hunting isn't always successful. Sometimes we even hunt together. But it's good to keep an eye on them, because they like to kidnap our women from time to time, and she doesn't defend herself against this kidnapping as desperately as one would expect. Well, yes, we also like to kidnap their women. But that's not the point. I can see from your stupid faces again that you're thinking of jokes about some aunt who dreams of nothing else but being kidnapped by the Others. When it comes to jokes, even that will change. In Neolite, there will be no jokes in the form you know them. Jokes like yours will no longer make anyone laugh! They will probably be banned altogether! On the other hand, jokes about the Others will be funny. Why, you ask? It's very simple, and if you read the first chapter of this guide carefully, you would have figured it out for yourselves. Well, it will be clear to every Neolithic person that jokes about the Others are allowed and even encouraged. This is because the Others will be worse than us in Neolithic times! Any true Neolithic person, if told, for example, that the Others are nasty cannibals and, besides, taste disgusting, will believe both without the slightest problem! He will even feel that he has always thought so, that this is his own opinion, and not, for example, that he was told so by the campfire. He would believe this even if he had never seen an Other, let alone tasted one. When told this, he would simply imagine that he had once eaten something nasty and that it must have been an Other! Or he will tell stories about them himself, that they devoured his entire tribe and he was the only one who survived because they couldn't eat any more! Have you ever seen a person who can't eat any more? You've never seen one in your life! After all, we are always a little hungry. Even if you find a mammoth, you can't eat everything, you have to leave something for others, you have to dry some meat for later... Well, every, I repeat, every real Neolithic man tries first and foremost to eat as much as possible himself! You have to get that into your Paleolithic heads! Others don't exist! Others are inferior! This applies not only to the Others I started my argument with. It also applies to people from your own tribe, if they are inferior to you! Does this mean that the Neolithic era requires some kind of extreme selfishness from you? Am I saying that in the Neolithic, one by one, as you stand here, you will behave like wild pigs? It's just a matter of interpretation. From the point of view of a simple Paleolithic hunter-gatherer, it may look that way. However, the Neolithic is a noble concept and has nothing to do with selfishness. The point is who you should think about first. Who should you give up your food for? As ordinary hunter-gatherers, you cared for your tribe, for women and children, for the elderly members of your tribe, especially when they could no longer hunt. Even for other hunters, because each of you instinctively shares food with others. In your Paleolithic brains, there is a lingering belief that they are just like you, only they are either children, old people, or women. This will change, of course! Your main task as true Neolithic people is to ensure the well-being of those who are better than you! Who is better than you? I have already explained this to you – in the Neolithic era, those who are better than you are the members of your tribe who do not have to hunt! Those who live off being better! They deserve all the meat from the game you hunt! They will decide whether to give you a small piece of it or keep you on a diet. In the Neolithic era, there will be food surpluses you never dreamed of! There will be plenty of food! If it were divided equally, everyone could eat so much that it would harm a normal Paleolithic man! There will be so much food that if it were divided equally, even Big Mouth would say he couldn't eat any more! He's a nice and calm guy, you all know him, but in such a situation he would be so stuffed that if any of you instinctively offered him something else, I don't even want to think about how it would end! There will be so much food in the Neolithic! You probably think that Neolithic is a cool thing and that you should try it? Of course, Neolithic has its good sides. However, it has its own specificity, which makes it good only for the better ones! After all, if food were shared equally, the better ones would have no reason to try to be better! Get it out of your heads that food in the Neolithic era will ever be shared equally! I know you well, and I know that you would sit in the camp for months and not be

eager to hunt! Why should we hunt, you probably think, when there is plenty of food? A true Neolithic man never thinks that way. A Neolithic man wants to have as much as possible! But it's not just about having a lot. Nothing matters to him more than making sure that those who are worse off than him have as little as possible! His dream is for them to have nothing at all! You probably think that a Neolithic man wants to be able to share with them? Nothing could be further from the truth! If Neolithic man wanted to share with anyone, he would cease to be Neolithic man at all! He would lose all his superiority over you, ordinary hunter-gatherers. He would not be any better than you! The point is to get rid of that disastrous Paleolithic habit of sharing food! How is that possible, you ask? After all, people do share, don't they? Let me explain the error in your backward, Paleolithic thinking. You instinctively fear that if you don't share your food, someone will starve to death, won't they? And if someone dies, they won't be able to help you hunt, they won't be able to share with you – that's what you think, am I right? If your entire tribe could barely eat a whole mammoth in a month, then this way of thinking made sense. This whole Paleolithic superstition about sharing food arose solely because there were few people in one tribe. That is the only reason why this fear, this Paleolithic need to help another person, smolders within you. But thanks to the Neolithic era, there will soon be a lot of people! Camps will be set up with as many people as some of you have hairs on your heads! Then there will be no point in sharing food with anyone! An ordinary, decent Neolithic man, when he sees one of you dying of hunger, will simply stand and watch! I'm not saying he'll be eating some delicacy at the same time, because he'll be afraid that you'll take it away from him. But if he is calm, seeing, for example, that you are unable to do so, he may take out a particularly tasty morsel and savor it! In this way, he will emphasize his position in his own eyes and in yours! He will show that he is better than you! If someone else is watching you, he will do the same, even if he is not hungry! You must learn to think like them, the true people of the Neolithic era. Once you become Neolithic people, thanks to my guidance, you will not be bothered in the slightest by the sight of a man dying of hunger! I know that this is an unbearable sight for you, but this fact stems solely from who you are! You have been stuck in the clutches of the Paleolithic era for too long, and this has left scars on your psyche, like the claws of a cave bear. Nothing comes easy, as you well know. It will require some determination on your part, I would even say sacrifice. It is good to get used to this, admittedly somewhat unpleasant sight, gradually. You have to practice, just like shooting a bow. First, you should imagine that you are reaching for something tasty and – this is very important – under no circumstances should you even let it smell it. Once you have gained some practice, you will even be able to take something out and let it smell it, but of course not taste it. No one learns to shoot a bow by hunting bears! First, you shoot at crows, as you well know! You may ask how to practice this, since in the stories of the oldest people, no one ever died of starvation. It's very simple! In the Neolithic period, despite these food surpluses, there will be a famine unlike anything you have ever experienced! Neither your parents nor your grandparents have ever experienced anything like it! It's not just about knocking that disastrous Paleolithic idea of sharing food out of your heads. The Neolithic era will only be a complete success when everyone becomes a true Neolithic person! Even those who are dying of hunger will not be able to think that it might be worth sharing after all. No! He will dream of the person standing above him, eating a piece of smoked fish, for example, dying of hunger! The person dying of hunger will imagine how nice it would be to eat a piece of smoked fish himself, because smoked fish smells good and is very tasty! It would never even cross his mind to share with the other person! In the Neolithic world, people like you simply won't exist anymore!

## Titles

In this chapter of our guide, we will discuss the Neolithic achievement of Titles. What are Titles, you may ask. A title is a bit like a name. Each of you has a name, your women have names, even small children will sooner or later be given a name, because you have to call them something. You're probably thinking that there won't be any names in the Neolithic era. Well, there will be! Such a name is very practical for a Neolithic person. Let me explain with an example. When your woman prepares something to eat, what does she usually say? She calls out "food!" or something like that. And who comes when she calls? Whoever happens to be around! You know that very well. In fact, half the tribe may show up, at least those who are nearby. So what's the problem, you ask? It may not be a problem for you, but think about what would happen if you managed to become real Neolithic people. Take you, for example, Big Nose. If you had some knowledge of the Neolithic era and your woman started shouting "food!" at the top of her lungs, what would you do? I'll tell you right away, so you don't make a fool of yourself in front of the whole tribe. You would walk quickly (but not run!) and give her a good scolding! You would ask, "Does Murmuring Stream have to yell like that? Someone might hear her! Can't she say it more quietly, for example, by calling me by name?" I see you scratching your heads, looking at each other again and not understanding anything. I'll explain what's going on. After all, when your woman prepares food and someone else gets a meal, there's less food left for you! You probably think it doesn't matter, because someone will always treat you anyway. Get that out of your Paleolithic heads! When the real Neolithic Age comes, no one will ever treat you to anything! You probably think that this Neolithic Age is strange. No one will be treated to anything? But we always invited friends or neighbors. It's not about not treating anyone. Neolithic man is a very sociable person and could invite people over for food every day. I see that I need to explain a subtle difference to you. The difference lies in who he invites! Neolithic man always invites those who are better than him. He would never, ever invite someone who is worse than him! It is extremely important that you understand the difference. The same action, even something as trivial as inviting someone to eat a leg of gazelle with you, can be either wise or foolish, depending on whether you invite someone better or worse than you.

As you can see, names will be eagerly used by Neolithic people, but there is a profound reason for this. Have you ever wondered who gave you your name? Probably many of you don't even remember who it was. You can change your name, or someone else can change it for you, for example if you do something worth telling around the campfire or even painting on a cave wall. But basically, anyone can give you a name. Do you understand the difference now? In Neolithic times, names will be given only by better people! As you already know, people who are better than others will have such power in Neolithic times that even the chief of your tribe would be standing here now with his mouth agape, as would each of you, if only it had dawned on him. Only the Better Man of Neolithic times will have the right to give names, and he will give them to the Worse Man of Neolithic times. But how many times can a person be given a name? Actually, once would be enough, and even then, the one who received it would be proud of it and boast about it, because someone Better gave it to him. He would feel indebted to the one who gave it to him, just as if the other had given him a cartload of food! And yet the Better One did nothing of the sort, he just gave him a name. And here we come to Titles. As you can guess, a Title, like a name, cannot be given by just anyone in the Neolithic era. A Title given to you by someone inferior is not a Title at all and is of no significance whatsoever. On the other hand, a Title given to you by someone better than you is like the smell of meat roasting on a fire! A Neolithic man would go to the end of the world for such a Title! You are surprised and look at each other in disbelief again, thinking why anyone would go to the end of the world when everything they need is right here. I will explain it to you with another example, taken from real life. Each of you learned to shoot a bow from an early age, and for better or worse, everyone knows how to shoot a bow. And how do we know that you can do it? How do we know, you say – well, someone who knows how to shoot a bow often hits the target! Or even almost always, and from a long distance! In the Paleolithic

era, you could think that way. But for everyone, I repeat, everyone in the Neolithic era who, for example, receives the title of "Unfailing Archer" from someone better, it will be obvious that he shoots a bow better than any of you! Again, you are making that old Paleolithic mistake of wondering how he knows that. You think there must be something to it if he thinks so. No, no, and no again! He will think so even if he has never shot a bow in his life and does not even know how to draw a bow! If he shot at a stationary target five steps away from him, he could shoot all year long and never hit it once, but he would firmly believe that he is an excellent shooter! An archer above all archers! Why would he think that, you ask? Because he has the Title! If some teenage kid were to shoot at a target with a bow in his presence, and even hit it, the one with the title of "Infallible Archer" would not congratulate him at all! On the contrary, he will feel offended by this fact! He will feel as hurt as if the kid had shot at him! He will feel as if the arrow had hit him right in the heart, and not a stationary target five steps away! The fact that he himself cannot draw a bow is of no importance. He is ready to throw himself at the puppy with his fists for insulting him by disregarding his title! It is as if only he has the right to shoot a bow. Well, in his eyes, others can shoot too, as long as they never hit the target. In Neolithic times, if you know someone who bears the title of "Infallible Archer," it's best not to give them a bow. And if you see them with a bow in their hands, it's wise to move away to some other, more interesting place. Why, you ask? For a very simple reason. A Neolithic man with the title of "The Infallible Archer" may hit something, no matter what he shoots at! And if, by pure chance, he hits you, for example, he will claim that he was aiming at you! That you were running towards him with evil intentions, shouting abusive words, and he, thanks to his Title and the extraordinary marksmanship that this Title guarantees, thwarted your intentions.

I think this may be a little too difficult for you to understand, because it requires some knowledge of the subtle psyche of Neolithic man. I will explain it to you using an easier example. I think it will speak to you better. Tell me, what do you think about most often, many times a day? Women, of course. Almost all of you have a woman who cares for you. And you've gotten used to doing whatever you want with her in front of everyone. You don't feel embarrassed at all, whether someone sees you both doing it or not. In Neolithic times, it will be completely different. What you think about all the time will be allowed, of course, but only with a woman who bears a special Title! You won't say "my woman" as you have done so far, but you will use this Title. The same thing will be good or bad depending on whether the woman bears this Title or not. It's a bit like the Title of "The Unfailing Archer." If someone does not have the Title, it is better not to shoot at all, because they will be mortally offended. Now imagine that a woman has changed her mind and come to the conclusion that the one she chose is not suitable after all. You know very well that this sometimes happens. What would you do if she came to one of you and said that she prefers him after all? Basically, you think there's no problem, you just have to give him something to compensate him for his loss. That's what you think, right? No one in Neolite would even think of that! The fact that she came to one of you would be completely forbidden in Neolite, because she has a Title, which means she is his woman, not yours! Such a Title can be revoked, but neither you, nor she, nor even her ex can do it. Only the Most Important Shaman can do it, and it can cost a lot of meat, and many will lose their life's work because of it. You may think that losing your life's work is no problem, because no one has more than they can carry with their whole family, and you move from place to place every now and then. For a Neolithic man, losing his "life's work" is the worst thing that can happen to him! As for Titles, they will be very important, extremely expensive, and every Neolithic man will be firmly convinced that his Title is the only and ultimate proof of his worth.

So let's go back to our example, with this woman who chose one of you, even though she already has the title of being someone else's woman. First and foremost, under no circumstances can you go to the other one! Why? Because he is inferior! I have explained this to you many times. If she came to one of you, then the one she came to is better, and the other one is worse. A true Neolithic man may even bother to visit his competitor, but only to show him some kind of offensive gesture, for

example. Offensive gestures are a Neolithic ritual. Every Neolithic man, when he shows someone an offensive gesture, greatly improves his mood. Why, you ask? Because such a gesture proves that the person to whom he showed it is worse than him. And thus, in the mind of a Neolithic man, it proves that he is better! You're probably wondering if this whole Neolithic thing is really a good idea. I mean, how can you go out with your family, say to the forest, when a Neolithic man might jump out from behind every tree and show you something offensive? You don't quite understand what the essence of the Neolithic is yet. Neolithic people can be very polite. The point is that it matters to whom they are polite. Of course, they are polite to those who are better than them, who do not have to hunt, and to whom they have to carry meat they have hunted themselves. They will go out of their way to show them good manners and their sympathy! To show these good manners and their affection, they will inevitably create special gestures that are absolutely not offensive. They will use them almost instinctively. Never mind gestures, they will probably come up with special words that serve no other purpose than to improve the mood of those who are better than them. You don't have as many words for mammoth as the real Neolithic people will have for such words. The dream of every Neolithic man is to have someone better than him pat him on the back! The ritual of patting someone on the back in the Neolithic period will change its meaning a little. It will no longer mean "we are the same." Not at all. The better person can pat the worse person on the back, and the latter will be so delighted, as if he had done nothing else all day but show offensive gestures to everyone worse than him. But he himself cannot pat the better one on the back! It would never even cross his mind! Because this ritual performed by someone worse would be extremely offensive to the person being patted! I think that's enough for today. The material is difficult, so try to assimilate it gradually. As they say, the Neolithic era was not built in a day! For example, act out different scenes in which one of you is superior and the other is inferior. Try to imagine that, as Neolithic humans, you bear the title of "Bear Slayers" or something similar, but without exaggeration. This does not mean that you should immediately throw yourselves at bears with your bare hands. To begin with, try to believe in the title more than in your experience. You will get there in your own time, no need to force anything.

## Hare

In the next chapter of our introduction to the Neolithic, we will use an example that you know very well. We will talk about hares! I can already see you nodding your heads in understanding. But what does the Neolithic have to do with hares, you ask? After all, the Neolithic is for humans, as I am trying to show you, not for hares! If, until recently, none of you had even heard of Neolithic man, would I suddenly want to tell you about the Neolithic hare? Not at all. I will need the hare to explain to you the subtle secrets of the reasoning of a true Neolithic man. First, answer me a simple question: what does a hare do when it sees one of you? Of course, it runs away in panic! In other words, it runs as far away from you as possible, in the opposite direction! Has any of you ever wondered why a hare runs away? Well, a hare may not know how to shoot a bow, set traps, read tracks, or light fires. But it is obvious to every hare that you might want to eat it. Even if you are not hungry right now, the hare reasons, you will be hungry tomorrow or the day after tomorrow at the latest. You know this, and so does the hare, which is not only a very tasty creature but also incredibly fast and quite intelligent. If you see a mammoth and your pantry is full, you'll probably leave it alone. A mammoth is a lot of work, killing it requires the effort of many hunters and is not always successful. But would you leave a hare alone? After all, a hare is a small creature. Each of you could easily eat three hares at once! In fact, many of you would eat more than that, but you don't know any numbers larger than three, so with that in mind, to make it easier for you to understand, I said three hares! A mammoth doesn't want to be eaten either, just like a hare, but that's where the similarity ends. If a mammoth gets angry and you are unlucky enough to be within its reach, you will be reduced to a wet stain, as you well know! A hare, on the other hand, can't do anything to you! An angry mammoth is a terrifying sight, and if any of you have had the opportunity to see one up close, you talk about it at every campfire! And with each story, the mammoth gets bigger and bigger! A hare, on the other hand, unlike a mammoth, can't do anything to you, and it knows it. What does this mean? It means that the hare must be afraid of you!

Here we return to the thoughtful balancing act, the astonishing intellectual lightness with which every Neolithic man reasons without the slightest effort! Every Neolithic man carries out such reasoning instinctively. There is no need to explain it to him at all! When a Neolithic man sees another man, he first tries to determine whether he should fear him or not. How can a person be afraid of another person, you may ask? After all, people are not hunted, except as a last resort, because they can defend themselves and they don't taste very good. So what is there to be afraid of? Well, a Neolithic man will not be afraid that you will eat him, but that you will take something from him and leave without giving anything in return! How is that possible, you may ask? Take my word for it. After all, if you take something from someone, you have to give them something in return! - that's what you probably think. In the Neolithic era, as I have tried to show you, it will be quite different. Answer me this simple question. Do you know of any term, I mean a single word, that would describe this very action: "to take something from someone without giving anything in return and walk away"? You don't know such a word! In your poor Paleolithic vocabulary, there is not a single word that would describe this action! When you talk about mammoths, you have more terms than you have fingers on your hands, because you use different words for an old lone mammoth, a female who rules the herd, a herd of mammoths with young, a group of young males who have been expelled from the herd... Well, you know this very well, I don't need to explain it to you. And for an action as simple as "taking something from someone, giving them nothing in return, and walking away," you don't have a single term! You probably think that since I've been talking about it for so long, it means that Neolithic man will invent such a term. That he will be able to describe this peculiar action with one word and won't have to think about it for long! You underestimate the Neolithic era. Despite my efforts, you are unable to imagine the full scope and artistry of the Neolithic mind! Not only will they know such a word, they will know many such words! They would have so many terms for this activity that they could use a different one every day, and it would take a really long time before they ran out of terms!

So let's assume that a Neolithic man sees you and decides that you could take something from him, give him nothing in return, and walk away. What will his reaction be? Roughly the same as a hare's reaction when it sees any one of you! The Neolithic man will be terrified! He will be speechless with fear! He will try to hide as quickly as possible, run away, and under no circumstances invite you to his campfire! Now imagine that instead of walking by empty-handed, one of you is carrying two hares. Well, he was lucky on the hunt and is returning to the camp with his prey. The reaction of Neolithic man will be completely different! First and foremost, he will look around carefully to make sure no one can see you. Second, he will smile radiantly, approach you, and greet you warmly! He will be extremely nice and quickly invite you to his hut, while casually mentioning that you should hide the two hares somehow, because someone might see you with them. In his hut, he will treat you kindly. What am I saying, kindly! You have never treated your greatest leader with such reverence as this inconspicuous man will treat you. You are probably wondering where this change came from. Why is he ready to hide and not say a word at one moment, and at another he is so nice that you are dumbfounded by it all, because no one has ever treated you like this before? Well, I will let you in on a secret. Do you know why you owe this to him? It is because of the two hares you managed to hunt! How can two hunted, and therefore dead, hares do that? Dead hares don't move, do they? And if they don't move, they can't even hop away on their own, can they? Let's assume for a moment that this is actually happening, that both of your hares are mysteriously coming back to life and hopping away. What will happen then? I'll tell you what will happen, because I can see from your bewildered expressions that there's no chance you'll figure it out for yourselves. In that case, you'll leave this noble man's hut faster than you've ever left a cave, convinced that a herd of cave lions lives there! You will also have a chance to see some offensive gestures from your host, as well as hear a number of interesting and original-sounding expressions, which will have one thing in common: in his opinion, they will all be extremely offensive! The difference is that every single Neolithic person believes that those who have something are better than those who don't! You had those hares, so for a moment you were better! If they magically came back to life and hopped away, you would instantly lose all your value in his eyes! It's not that he was starving, that he hadn't seen a hare in years, or that he had a particular fondness for roasted hare meat! Not at all! Seeing your two hares, he would have invited you to his hut, even if he hadn't eaten anything but hare meat for a month! He would have done so even if he couldn't stand the sight of them, not to mention eating them! You probably think that Neolithic people are strange. Why would he want a hare if he doesn't want to eat it? Or maybe he wants to smoke it, save it for later, share it with someone else? None of these things. It will be easiest for me to explain this using the small steps method. Imagine that the hares did not come back to life and therefore did not hop away, and you are sitting in a hut with your host, and he treats you as if you had just given him some kind of title. Maybe this is not such a good example – let's take another one. Let's say he treats you as if you had just saved his life while hunting, carried him wounded back to camp, and even thrown in a treat! It could easily happen that you would think of giving him one of the hares. I know you, and I know that this seems completely normal to you. What will a Neolithic man do in this case? He will have a problem. And to tell the truth, he will have several problems. First and foremost, he will want to quickly hide the hare somewhere. But he won't be able to go too far away because he will be afraid that you will take something that belongs to him without giving anything in return, and then quickly leave. How will he come up with something like that? Neolithic man is capable of such complex reasoning completely instinctively! In addition, he will make it clear to you that there is no point in mentioning the hare you gave him to anyone. Because he doesn't just want to have a hare! He also wants, just in case, none of his neighbors to find out that he just got a hare! He may even show them the hare himself if he thinks it's appropriate, but most likely he won't tell them that it was a gift from you! He will tell them that he hunted it himself! With his bare hands, of course, after a murderous fight, which the hare lost miserably! Lying defeated in the dust, the hare begged him in vain to spare its life! However, it accepted its death and even felt proud that it would be eaten by such a wonderful

Neolithic man, the embodiment of the Neolithic ideal of all virtues, which is your host! In fact, for a Neolithic man, it is not so important where he got this hare from. He could just as well have found it somewhere. What matters is that he has a hare! And what matters even more is that others don't! And even if someone else happened to come into possession of a hare, that hare was simply nothing compared to your host's hare! If he tells someone about it, the hare he received from you will not be an ordinary hare at all! It will be the Hare above Hares, the Best Hare in the Whole Flat World! It will be the Great Hare Shaman, who did nothing else his whole life but make rude gestures to other hares! What do hares care! Bears would run away from him into trees like squirrels, cleverly taking advantage of the fact that hares cannot climb trees! He was a hare to whom all the saber-toothed tigers in the area brought whatever they managed to hunt! And he accepted their tributes unflinchingly, only occasionally patting one or the other saber-toothed tiger on the back! As your host puts these stories together in his head, he will keep a close eye on you and think intensely about one thing. You'll never guess what he'll be thinking about! But that's okay, I'll explain everything to you. He'll be thinking... about the other hare! For a Neolithic man, the situation is obvious. Since you gave him something and he gave you nothing, it means that you are inferior to him. Since you are inferior to him, you did not give him your hare at all! In fact, he will consider that it was his hare, that it rightfully belonged to him! That this hare came into your possession in some unspecified way, which does not even need to be investigated, but its proper destination was your host's stomach! You will probably say: how can the hare you hunted be his hare? After all, if he had hunted, say, a badger, it would be his badger, not yours! You do not yet fully understand the elegance of Neolithic thinking. A Neolithic man would reason as follows: since you had two hares and you gave him one, what the hell do you need the other hare for? Why didn't you give him two? Didn't you want to offend him, humiliate him, somehow equate him with yourself? As if to say: you have a hare and I have a hare, so we are both equally good, just like our hares? Wasn't your gift a veiled insult? After all, you could have, and even should have, given him two hares! That would have been the right thing to do, because then he would have had more, he would have been two hares richer, and you would have melted into nothingness. Not enough, however, to miss the opportunity to see some offensive gestures and hear a series of interesting, but equally offensive, words.

## Gacek-Lisica

Each of you, especially when you were young, may have experienced becoming foolish at the mere sight of a girl. Well, you just went crazy. For example, you couldn't hit a stationary target a few steps away with a bow, no fish would bite, and you behaved as if you were the last victim, even though you could normally hit a squirrel with a stone. Usually, you don't enjoy anything, and wherever you look, you only see that girl. He sees her even when he should be focusing on hunting. And he goes crazy at the very thought of her, even though when you look at her, there's nothing extraordinary about her. She's not particularly good at cooking, she doesn't know anything about mushrooms, she can't clean animal skins well, and she still has a lot to learn. You know very well that some mushrooms are poisonous, but he would be willing to eat any amount of the most poisonous mushrooms without hesitation if he knew that this girl had prepared them. This is a situation where no spells from your tribal shaman will help. If he went to your shaman with his problem, the shaman, although generally a calm man, would not even let him sit down properly in his hut. The shaman would just tell him to kidnap her and not bother him, and then, like a shaman, he would yell, "Next!" You won't believe it, but this situation will be the main topic of conversation among Neolithic people! Each of you spends half your life hunting, so when you sit around the fire, you mainly talk about how you managed to hunt something. As you already know, most Neolithic people will not know how to hunt. Some of them won't know how to do anything at all, they'll just live off the fact that they're better than others. That's why they'll talk less about hunting and more about what women usually talk about. There's probably not a woman in your camp who doesn't like to remind other women how one of you used to get all silly just looking at her when you were young. The one who likes to talk about it the most is the one who was once kidnapped, and the longest part of her story is always a description of how fiercely she defended herself against the kidnapping. But in the end, she spared the kidnapper's life, because if she hadn't, how could he have kidnapped her? So he kidnapped her anyway, and then they lived happily ever after. In the stories of Neolithic people, kidnapping is a delicate matter. After all, in the Neolithic period, as I have already explained to you, you have to come to an agreement with the woman's father first, not with the woman herself. So it's not really possible to kidnap her. In our culture, if a young man met a girl and felt that affliction I started this chapter with when he saw her, he would kidnap her without hesitation! And if he thought about it and, for example, told her that he would kidnap her tomorrow because he had to go hunting today, a lot would depend on the impression he made on her. Many would say that they would defend themselves to the bitter end and that he should not dare to kidnap them, but somehow, tomorrow, they would feel an irresistible urge to pick flowers and would be exactly where they agreed to meet. You know that this is how it is. Well, in the Neolithic era, all such stories will be extremely popular, and I have prepared one such Neolithic story for you today. First, I will introduce you to its protagonist, and then I will discuss how this story of Neolithic people will differ from the stories of your women.

The hero of our story must have a Neolithic name. And I have come up with such a name for the purposes of our textbook! First and foremost, this name must not be associated with food, so that you can focus on the story itself. You know what a Gacek is, right? It flies around caves, there are lots of them, they poop wherever they want, and they are inedible. So we already have Gacek. And do you know what a Lisica is? You know perfectly well, it's a fox, only female, and also rather inedible, although it has nice fur in winter. So our Neolithic hero will be called "Gacek-Lisica". This story is not very long. Our Gacek-Lisica goes crazy at the mere sight of a girl and, instead of kidnapping her, he comes to an agreement with her father. Of course, he doesn't say a word to her! We remember that Gacek-Lisica is a Neolithic man, as are all the heroes of my story. The girl's father will pat Gacek-Lisica on the back, for reasons more or less similar to those I described in the previous chapter. For this reason, Gacek-Lisica will be convinced that he already has a girl in his hut. Do you remember my example with the two hares that one of you hunted, and then they came back to life and hopped away?

Something similar will happen in my story about Gacek-Lisica, because the girl's father will change his mind and do something Gacek does not expect! I admit, it's a bit like those bears that climb trees to escape the Hare above Hares. But let's assume that Gacek didn't expect it, although he really should have. Do you know what the father did? The father made an insulting gesture to Gacek-Lisica! This meant that Gacek, who was better at the beginning, suddenly became worse! So what does Gacek-Lisica do? He grabs his bow and, almost without aiming, kills the girl's father with a single arrow! Then, of course, he becomes a shaman or something like that, it's not that important. Do you think Neolithic Man won't believe such a story? He'll believe it without the slightest problem! Why wouldn't he believe it? I'll say more, every Neolithic Man's children will memorize this story instead of doing something useful! At every campfire, they will recite fragments of it, e.g., that the girl's father "cried out by the fire, roasting a tenderloin, that he had no friend but Gacek-Lisica!". Of course, he did so before he changed his mind and showed Gacek that insulting gesture. The parents of these children will be patted on the back by their superiors for reciting this story! Everyone will be proud as punch that one of them, Gacek-Lisica, was such a great hero that he shot his father, the girl, and himself in one fell swoop! In their eyes, it will be an achievement as great as if he had killed a mammoth with his bare fists and then carried it - in one piece - to the camp on his own hands!

There is one delicate issue in this whole story. Why didn't Gacek actually kidnap the girl to make her his woman? After all, each of you would have done so, wouldn't you? I myself am not sure how to resolve this so that every Neolithic Man would believe it. I'll think of something. Because if Gacek had come to the agreed place where he was supposed to kidnap her, and she, of course by pure coincidence, was picking flowers there, the situation would not have had a happy ending. After all, Gacek-Lisica can't just tell the girl that he won't kidnap her because he's afraid it might hurt her! Before he finished speaking, he would have to start running like a hare, or even faster, because many girls are quite good at archery, as you well know. Before he could finish reciting his reasons for not being able to kidnap her, even though he really wanted to, he might end up looking like a porcupine himself! Besides, arrows usually have barbs, so they're hard to pull out. It would be easier to finish him off so he wouldn't suffer. I'm not saying that my Neolithic story is perfect in every detail. But it has some potential, especially from the point of view of a Neolithic man.

## Chief

You all know who your leader is. You could say that he is the most important person in your tribe. Does that mean he is better than you? I am asking in the sense that a Neolithic man would understand it. Well, no. How does a Neolithic man know that someone is better than him? It's very simple! By the fact that he has more! And your chief has about as much as each of you. If it weren't for his special necklace and the fact that you all listen to him, no one would think that he stands out in any way. If someone told him that he was better, he wouldn't really know what they meant. He's an old geezer and he doesn't like me very much because I'm introducing you to the secrets of the Neolithic. He probably thinks it's absolutely useless because it distracts you from hunting. He won't say that because he'll be afraid that there might be something to this whole Neolithic thing. He'll be afraid of looking like an idiot in front of the whole tribe! But those are his thoughts. Now tell me, why do you listen to him at all? You're stunned again and looking at each other because such a question has never even crossed your minds! Well, that's how it is, sometimes you listen to the chief, sometimes to your woman. And sometimes you just have to think for yourself. Besides, you might say, he knows a lot of things, and if he doesn't, he remembers which one of you does it best. He knows who to send to track down an animal, who to send to light a fire or catch fish. He knows who is best at setting up an ambush and how many people to send somewhere with bows or spears. He builds a whole hunting plan in his head, knows the habits of animals, and remembers what happened when he was still a puppy and didn't even think he would become a chief. Your chief is the most important person, and you all listen to him because he knows what he's doing. There are maybe two or three others like him in your entire tribe, and they are all best friends. The chief has no problem with the fact that they also know what he knows, and he would love to sit with them by the fire and reminisce about the old days. Even when he doesn't go hunting alone, he uses advanced solutions, such as a notched stick, to check if everyone has returned safely. If something bad happened to one of you, he would take it to heart and think that maybe he screwed something up or didn't keep an eye on something. His woman would sometimes ask you to bring him something to eat, because he's sitting there angry as a bear and thinks it's all his fault. In other words, even though he doesn't like me very much, I have to say he's a pretty decent guy. Of course, in your Paleolithic understanding. You know that if something happened to him, one of you would have to take his place. This new leader would have to think about everything and learn a lot of new things very quickly. You would all start listening to the new guy. You would help the new guy more than the old one, because he's new, and the old one had been managing everything for many years. And you would be scared as hell that the new guy wouldn't be able to handle it.

As I have tried to show you many times, everything will be completely different in Neolite. You probably remember, because I mentioned it to you once, that there will be plenty of food, lots of people, and huge camps. You probably think that if such a camp is led by a chief, he will know everything! That he will know every person in this huge camp by name and care for everyone even more than your chief cares for you. That he will not sleep at all, that he will use pine-length notched sticks and tremble for your safety. You probably imagine that he will hunt for everyone himself, and that killing a mammoth with a single arrow is a piece of cake for him! Unfortunately, I have to disappoint you. The chief of a Neolithic tribe will not know anything at all! I don't mean that he will have trouble reading animal tracks, or that he won't know how to fish or shoot a bow. He probably won't even remember his own name, and he will have special assistants to count his titles, whom he will pat on the back for doing so! All of them will be swimming in wealth and eating the best meat many times a day! At the same time, he will consider himself the best of you all, and it will never occur to him to strain his brain to use such advanced technology as a notched stick to check if you have all returned safely from the hunt! If something bad happens to you, for example, you are devoured by a saber-toothed tiger, it will not spoil his mood in the slightest! He will simply send some other hunters! He may give them the strangest orders that your leader would never have thought of! For example, he

might order you to try to bite the saber-toothed tiger with your own teeth, without allowing you to take any weapons for hunting! Do you think you could ask him, as you would ask your chief, to show you how it's done? No way. In the Neolithic era, you won't be allowed to speak at all in the presence of the chief! You will have to obey his every command without the slightest objection! You probably think it's a great job and that any of you could be such a chief? Well, if you don't need to know anything, you can eat your fill and give the stupidest orders, what more could you want? The problem is that none of you can take his place! Why not, you ask, since any of you could take your chief's place, but no one wants to think and plan that much, so it's a last resort for everyone? Well, what you're thinking, taking the place of a Neolithic chief, will be subject to the strictest prohibitions! If the Neolithic chief begins to suspect that someone has their eye on his position and all his titles, that there is even one person in the entire large camp who might have such an idea, his first order will be to catch and bring that person to him! Not to talk to the pretender, or befriend him, or invite him to his campfire. Whatever his next orders may be, they will all have one thing in common. They will make the pretender bitterly regret ever having had such an idea! The chief will issue orders so that the flaws in this idea do not escape the attention of everyone in the camp! Everyone in the entire huge Neolithic camp will very quickly come to the conclusion that it is better to starve to death or try to kill an old saber-toothed tiger themselves than to think about taking the place of the Neolithic chief.

All right, you're probably thinking. But doesn't all this mean that such a Neolithic chief will come across as a bit of an idiot? What kind of chief is he if he can't do anything, doesn't care about anyone, and is most afraid that someone will take his place? Remember this once and for all. In the Neolithic era, such a chief is better than any other person in the entire camp! Even if there are more people living there than there are ants in the largest anthill you have ever seen! He is simply the best in the whole Flat World! The thing about the Neolithic era is that someone who is better never, ever comes across as an idiot! No one laughs at him or makes fun of him! This may be difficult for you to understand, because many of you succumb to the Paleolithic custom of making fun of anyone, not sparing your chief, even in his presence! After all, you often joke about yourselves! A Neolithic leader would never do that! After all, if he joked about himself, for example, admitting that he is a poor archer, someone might think that he is right! Why? Because he is always right, no matter what he says! From there, it's only a short step to imagining that someone else is a better shot than him and could actually take his place. I think that thanks to my efforts, it is slowly becoming clear to you how advanced this phenomenon is. Understanding the Neolithic will not come easily to anyone!

## Meat collectors

Many of you have probably thought long ago that something is wrong with this Neolithic period. That you won't be able to get any meat from the better ones, because they will hide it and won't even let you smell it, even if you are starving to death. After all, it's taboo! How can you hide meat for yourself and not share it? Similarly, shooting a person, especially from your own tribe, is also taboo. If someone did that, you would kick them out of the camp with a slap in the face, so that they could fend for themselves, because you would no longer trust them. How long would such a person survive after being kicked out of the camp? It depends. If, for example, a bear catches him, then not very long! In such a situation, each of you would prefer to encounter a saber-toothed tiger than a bear, because saber-toothed tigers always kill their prey first, as you well know, while a bear immediately starts eating it. Similarly, taking something that belongs to someone else without their consent, even without giving them a gift in return, is also taboo. All these things are forbidden! If such an idea ever came to any of you, you would think long and hard about whether it was worth it to hide food for yourself, shoot someone, or take something from them without their consent. And many of you think that if the better ones are going to do it in the Neolithic, then you can too! That when the real Neolithic Age comes, you will hide the meat of hunted animals for yourselves, you will not under any circumstances bring it to the better ones so that they pat you on the back for it, and you will even take away from people what they have hunted themselves, without asking for permission and without reciprocating in any way! Many of you think that in the Neolithic era, you will be able to kill people from your tribe and break all possible taboos, because the Neolithic chief and his assistants will do so without batting an eyelid. So why can't you?

Well, you are wrong! There is a flaw in your reasoning. This flaw stems from your deep conviction that each of you is the same as a Neolithic chief. I understand why you think this way; it's not your fault. It's the fault of the Paleolithic era, in which you spent so much time that it left a mark on your minds. It is not the case that hiding meat for yourself, which is taboo for you, will be described by a single Neolithic word. Neolithic man will come up with at least two completely different words for such an action! Why two? Because if you hide meat from an animal you hunted yourself and don't bring it to the Neolithic chief at all, so that one of his assistants can pat you on the back for it, you will need at least one word for that! This would, of course, be a taboo violation, a serious breach of the rules of the Neolithic camp. You think it's difficult, at most you'll get caught and kicked out of the camp. You'll leave and maybe you'll find another Neolithic camp before, for example, a hungry bear finds you. But I told you that Neolithic man will come up with at least two words for this. The second word, for exactly the same activity, i.e., hiding meat for oneself, will be used in reference to the better ones! And it won't be taboo at all! When they do this, it will be obvious to everyone! Neolithic man will not notice at all that it is the same activity, only that he uses two different words for it, one of which is taboo and one of which is not, depending on who does it. This will not only apply to hiding meat for oneself. There will also be two different words for killing a member of one's own tribe. And, as you can guess, if you kill someone, it will be taboo, but if a Neolithic chief kills someone, it will be completely right and just. They won't kick him out of the camp for it! It won't even cross their minds! They will say that the one who was killed deserved it! That he was to blame because he hid meat for himself or broke some other taboo. Even if he hid a small piece of meat for himself, the better ones will say that he broke all possible Neolithic taboos! That his intention was to kill the Neolithic chief, take his place, and drive them all to hunt, even though they don't have to do that, because it is clear that they are better and bear the appropriate titles. Similarly, taking something that belongs to someone else without their consent and, of course, without any compensation – and the Neolithic Man will have at least two words for this action. If any of you did that, as you can guess, it would be taboo. But such a taboo as if you planned to make an offensive gesture to the Neolithic chief himself, and before that, the same offensive gesture to each of his assistants! And then you wanted to bite them all, with the Neolithic chief at the

forefront, to take his place! In the Neolithic era, there will be special assistants to the chief whose only job will be to prove to you that this was your intention! They will talk so wisely and at such length about your intentions that you will believe it yourself! You will think that you really wanted to bite the Neolithic chief, even though it is an impractical way to kill a man and it would be much easier to just hit him on the head with a stone. All this would be a consequence of breaking the most important taboo of the Neolithic era, which is to take something from someone without their consent and without any compensation! Now think about what would happen if a Neolithic chief did this. I can see from your faces that you're starting to get it! Yes! A Neolithic chief would be able to take something that belongs to anyone in the camp without asking their permission or even patting them on the back for it! And a completely different word would be used to describe this action! It would have nothing to do with the first word, and it would not be a violation of any taboo! No Neolithic man would be able to notice that both words mean the same action! Why is the same action called by two different words, one of which is taboo and the other is not? Because the Neolithic chief is better, so he can do it, and for each of you, the same action would be a terrible attack on the order prevailing in the Whole Flat World! You think it doesn't matter, because since there will be as many people living in a Neolithic camp as there are ants in the largest anthill, it will take the Neolithic chief some time to collect everything they have hunted. Besides, even if he were as strong as a bear, he wouldn't be able to carry enough meat to take it to his hut and hide it there. After all, in many cases, such prey has to be cut up piece by piece on the spot, especially when it comes to an adult mammoth. And even if the Neolithic chief were as fast as an arrow shot from a bow and as strong as three bears, where would he find a hut big enough to hold all that meat? You're starting to understand something. And in the Neolithic period, certain problems will arise that will require immediate solutions. The thing is, you are still thinking in old, Paleolithic categories. A Neolithic chieftain will not lift a finger and will not do anything on his own. He would not be able to do anything on his own anyway, because, as I explained in the previous chapter, he will not know how to do anything. He will understand very well that if he tried to build a hut himself, he would screw it up and something might fall on his head. He will be well aware of this, although he will undoubtedly give himself the title of "Great Hut Builder." So what will he do? Special assistants will build him a huge hut! Other helpers will guard this hut day and night, because all the Neolithic people in the entire camp will know very well that there is meat there! This may seem strange to you, because you all know where the meat is in your camp, it is often dried in plain sight and no one guards it. In the Neolithic period, for certain reasons, everyone will guard everything! The Neolithic chief will also assign special assistants, meat collectors, to collect meat from hunters returning from the hunt. These meat collectors will describe their work with a special word, which means that even though they take whatever they want from people throughout the camp without their consent and give nothing in return, they are not breaking any taboos! They would devote themselves to their task with the utmost commitment, because they would be able to keep some of the meat for themselves and even have a chance to be patted on the back for it!

## The Great Spirit's Hut

You all like ghost stories. After all, that's your shaman's signature act. Every now and then, he tells ghost stories or other tales by the campfire, and that's what he's there for, to tell stories. We all believe in ghosts, for example, the spirits of our ancestors. Why? Because these stories are interesting. Besides, it's nice to talk to the spirit of your ancestor, through the shaman, of course, even if you have to offer him a treat for it. Have you ever wondered why you believe in the spirits of your ancestors, but none of you believe in the spirit of your woman's mother? Well, let's assume that your woman's mother is dead. What did you do? The whole tribe organized her burial. Maybe you brought some flowers or something else to give her, as is customary. Your woman's mother's body was secured, covered with stones, for example, or burned, depending on the customs of your tribe. But would anyone give the shaman even a nut for the opportunity to talk to her spirit? The shaman would be stunned if someone approached him with such a request! He would talk about it around many campfires, because it is indeed a campfire story. But he would never have come up with it himself, because no one believes in the spirit of their woman's mother. Have you ever wondered why this is so? The answer is simple. You believe in the spirits of your ancestors, but your woman's mother is not your ancestor! As you can clearly see, there are stories that are believed and stories that are not believed.

Now imagine that one of you gets up at the next bonfire and, after the most incredible ghost story, tells your shaman that he doesn't believe in this story. And that he doesn't believe in any of his stories at all. And that the whole Flat World was created from mammoth dung, and that the first humans hatched from eggs, well, nothing at all. What would happen? The shaman would, of course, get angry. He would tell you to kiss the mammoth's trunk and that he would no longer entertain you. That he goes hunting with you, heals you from diseases, collects herbs, and on top of that tells you interesting stories, and you still complain. On top of that, he has to explain to young men who go crazy at the sight of a girl that they should kidnap her, as if their father couldn't explain it to them. If you don't believe his stories, tell your own and believe in them, he doesn't care anymore. You'd have to ask him for at least three days to tell another ghost story, telling him that you already believe everything, just so he'd tell you something cool, because you have to admit, your shaman is a good talker.

As you can guess, in the Neolithic era, things will be completely different. It's not that everyone will believe in the spirit of their woman's mother and bring the shaman treats to hear once again what she would say to him if she were still alive. Everyone knows perfectly well what she would say, because your woman's mother always says more or less the same thing. Each of you who has a woman knows perfectly well what her mother will say before she even opens her mouth. The Neolithic is a more subtle phenomenon, although from my stories you may have concluded that Neolithic people are a little strange. But they won't be as strange as you might think. Neolithic people will also believe in various stories. The difference is that when the Neolithic era arrives, it will no longer be your business whether you believe in something or not. If a Neolithic shaman tells a story by the fire, it is better for you to believe it. Under no circumstances should you tell him that something in his story doesn't make sense to you. You probably think that he will take offense, just as your shaman would take offense, and at most you will have to ask him to stop fooling around and continue telling you interesting things. You have no idea how wrong you are!

Now focus, because I'm going to tell you something that may be the most difficult thing for you to understand in my entire guide. It's not entirely true that the best people in the Neolithic period will know nothing at all. Both the Neolithic chief and the Neolithic shamans will master a special skill that none of you, including your shaman, have. Even few ordinary Neolithic people will be able to do this, but the Neolithic chief and shamans will do it instinctively. What's more, when you understand what it is, you will be amazed! Let me explain with an example. Imagine that there is a cave in your neighborhood. And out of the blue, you find yourself standing at its entrance. You wonder if there is a bear inside, for example, or if there are no bears in it. I know, you're about to tell me that it's a good

idea to light a fire at the entrance to the cave, make some smoke, or at least shout, imitating the voice of some animal, to lure the bear out, if it's there. I'm not talking about what to do. I'm asking if you would think there is a bear inside or not? Well, maybe there is, maybe there isn't, you say. And you're right! You believe there may be a bear in the cave, or there may not be, but you can't be sure. If someone asks you if there is a bear inside, you will say that you don't know. Now imagine that you have been watching the entrance to the cave for some time and a moment ago you saw a bear going inside. And again, I will ask you the same question. Will you think there is a bear in the cave? You look at me again with a puzzled look and are afraid to answer because the question seems stupid to you. There is nothing stupid about it, it's just that you would never ask yourself that question in such a situation. Of course, you will answer that there is a bear inside because you just saw it enter the cave! You simply know it! And now the most difficult question: Will you be able to know that there is a bear inside but believe that it is not there? I will repeat it again so that you understand what I mean. You are standing at the entrance to the cave, you know there is a bear inside, but at the same time you believe that there is no bear there. Can you even imagine that? Let me tell you right away that such an ability—to know one thing but believe the opposite—is beyond your reach. Even the average Neolithic man would not be able to master it! It would only be possible for the best of them, for the Neolithic chief and his shamans.

I will give you many examples of why they will simply have to master this particular skill. You already know one of them. For example, a Neolithic chief will know very well that he cannot build huts. But despite this, he will believe that he can do it perfectly! He will undoubtedly give himself the title of "Great Hut Builder" and will firmly believe that if he had even a moment of free time, he would show everyone how to build huts! All the Neolithic people would come from far and wide to admire the hut he built! This hut would be so magnificent that it would be talked about around every campfire! Birds would be afraid to fly over his hut, lest they accidentally shit on it! Unfortunately, his busy schedule does not allow him to find even one free day, so he is forced to delegate this task to his assistants, who will build a hut for him. It will not be a proper hut, but he is willing to make that sacrifice. This does not only apply to the construction of huts. The Neolithic chief knows nothing, as I have already told you, and therefore he does not know how to shoot a bow. He knows that he cannot do it and would never go hunting, for example, where his life could depend on this skill. But at the same time, he will give himself the title of "Best Archer" and believe that he is an excellent archer! From time to time, an archery competition will be organized in the camp, where he will regularly win first prize! I don't think I need to explain to you that he won't even touch the bowstring and no one will see him shoot, but the target with his arrow stuck right in the middle will be on display in front of his hut. The chief will know perfectly well that even the weakest saber-toothed tiger would tear him to pieces. If someone told him that a saber-toothed tiger had been seen near the camp, he would rush to his hut and order an increase in the number of guards watching over him. He would do this so quickly that only the smell he left behind would suggest that he did not like to impose his presence on saber-toothed tigers. Despite this, he would give himself the title of "Great Sabretooth Slayer" and would firmly believe that the saber-toothed tiger seen near the camp was very lucky! It had a lucky day, because if it had come face to face with him, the Neolithic chief, the chief would have torn the saber-toothed tiger to pieces, not the saber-toothed tiger the chief! This extraordinary ability to know one thing and believe the opposite will be key to understanding the idea behind the construction of the "Great Spirit's Hut." The chief orders his assistants to build such a hut so that he can talk to the Great Spirit in it. Who is the Great Spirit, you ask? It's something like the spirits of ancestors, with whom you can talk through your shaman. However, there are some subtle differences. No one has ever seen the Great Spirit, but he sees everyone, of course. For some mysterious reason, however, he does not talk to everyone, but only to the Neolithic chief, to convey his will to him. What's more, if you told the chief that the Great Spirit had just said something to you, he wouldn't even ask what he had said! This innocent statement would sound to the chief like a serious violation of the strictest taboo of the Neolithic era! It is as if the Great

Spirit had no right to speak to anyone, for example to you, but had to speak to you through the chief! The Great Spirit is simply not allowed to do such a thing, because it would break the great taboo of the Neolithic era. After all, then everyone would want to talk to the Great Spirit themselves and tell others around the campfire what he had said to them. The Great Spirit, although perhaps not a Neolithic Man, is nevertheless the Spirit of the Neolithic, and so he cannot break Neolithic taboos, in particular he cannot even suggest that the chief is not the best. On the contrary, it is the chief who will suggest that the Great Spirit, although he sees everyone and everywhere, will not speak, or in other words, will not speak to anyone except, of course, the chief, in the special Great Spirit's Hut, which the chief had built for him.

The Great Spirit is an extremely interesting figure, and there will surely be many interesting stories about him that Neolithic people will tell each other around campfires across the Flat World. However, these stories will not be like yours. I suppose the Neolithic will show its characteristic innovation in this regard. For example, you listen to stories about how the world was created from mammoth dung. However, apart from being interesting, this story is not entirely useful from the Neolithic point of view. It does not imply that you have any special obligations towards mammoths. For example, that you must not kill and eat them, as is your custom, because this threatens their extinction. Can you imagine a world where there are no more mammoths because they have all died out? In the Neolithic period, hunting bans will be introduced to prevent the extinction of various animals, because then the inevitable Catastrophe of Humanity will occur and all humans will become extinct. Some of you probably think that if hunting were banned, the Catastrophe of Humanity would occur much sooner, because humans would die of starvation. It is not about the Catastrophe of Humanity. The point is that if a Neolithic chief formulates a ban, you must comply with it! If he tells a story, you must believe it! Let's imagine, for example, that he presents a different version of the story of the creation of the world. The world was not created from mammoth dung, he will say, but was made in a thoughtful way by the Great Spirit, a very long time ago. The same Great Spirit who lives in a special hut that I had built for him! The first humans did not hatch from any eggs, but were created by the Great Spirit. All this, the creation of the entire Flat World, including the creation of humans, took the Great Spirit no more than a few days. He will tell you day by day exactly how it happened, as if he had been there himself. All right, but why is this story better than the one about mammoth dung? It's very simple! First of all, it will be forbidden not to believe this story. The chief, using his peculiar ability, will know that he made it up himself, that he wasn't there and that it can't be true. He will know this as surely as you know that if a bear entered the cave a moment ago, there is a bear in the cave! But at the same time, he will firmly believe that the story about the Great Spirit is true and that it is the duty of every Neolithic Man to believe it too! Even if he changes the details of the story several times, he will always believe in the latest version and rigorously demand this belief from each of you. In the Neolithic era, you will not be able to choose what you believe in. For example, you will not be able to continue to believe in the version about mammoth dung. You will not be able to tell the Neolithic chief that his story is cool, but the other one was cooler. Any ill-considered question, such as what the Great Spirit has created since then, since he created the Whole Flat World many years ago and it took him several days – any such question will be an insult to the Neolithic chief! Any suggestion that since the Great Spirit was able to create the Whole Flat World in a few days, he must have had plenty of time left to build himself a hut – any such suggestion will be like a series of the most offensive gestures shown to the chief one after another! No explanations will help, that creating the world must have been more difficult than building a hut, so if the Great Spirit did not build himself a hut, then he clearly did not need one. That every man would have built himself three huts and painted various hunting scenes on the walls of a nearby cave if he had had as much time and as incredible opportunities as the Great Spirit. That building the Great Spirit's hut may not have been the best idea, because it cost a lot of food for those who built it and could not hunt at that time. Besides, it was a little insulting to the Great Spirit, because he is better than even the chief, so why should the chief decide where the Great Spirit will

live? Since none of us would dare tell the chief where he should live, why does the chief do this to the Great Spirit? You don't want to know what would happen to a man who had the misfortune to say such a thing to a Neolithic chief. It would be so terrible that if any of you did that to an animal while hunting, you would be kicked out of your camp on the same day! Everyone would simply be afraid to sleep in the same camp with a man capable of doing such a thing. After all, hunting is about trying to kill an animal. And yet it would never occur to you to do to anyone what a Neolithic chief would, without the slightest effort, think up and order to be done to such an unfortunate person in the situation described. It is more important for you to remember that in the Neolithic era, whether an explanation makes sense depends on who says it. If it is said by someone better, then it is, of course, completely correct and it is better not to think about it too much. If it is said by someone worse, then it may or may not make sense. It all depends on whether it is consistent with the stories heard around the campfires of Neolithic people.

## That

I wondered whether to tell you about this, but I feel somewhat responsible for the situation. I had a feeling about it, and since this morning I am certain that this guide is perhaps a little too intense. The large amount of material makes it difficult to properly assimilate new content. The following thing happened. One of you came to your shaman this morning and asked him to teach you how to use a notched stick. As you know, this is a method of calculation that literally only a few people in your tribe know. The shaman also knows it, but he told me, "I had a feeling something was wrong because he looked miserable and could barely stand on his feet." So he asked this person why he needed a notched stick. The other person began to explain evasively that he wanted to be a Neolithic Man. So the shaman naturally associated this with me. He pulled his tongue a little, and it turned out that the good-natured man had returned to his woman yesterday evening and told her about the Neolithic. That a Neolithic Man would have two words for every action and would not realize that they were one and the same. His woman understood this in her own way and began to make various demands on him. The shaman guessed this and that, so he just asked him "how many times?", and the man replied "a lot." As you all know, this word can mean any number, and you use it whenever the number is greater than three. So the shaman got scared, told him that he had completely forgotten how to use a notched stick, immediately issued him a hunting exemption for today, and gave him some herbs to drink. The man fell asleep in the hut, and before he fell asleep, he mumbled something about there being a bear in the cave and there not being a bear, but the shaman said that after taking those herbs, everyone talks nonsense, so he thought it might be because of them. Nevertheless, he found out the rest from the woman. She also answered "a lot" to the same question, but she also told the shaman that she had always felt like a Neolithic Woman and that everyone should follow the latest trends because she didn't want to shine in front of the whole tribe.

My dear friends, there has been a misunderstanding here. And I admit that it is largely my fault. Let's start from the beginning. I never claimed that Neolithic Man would have two words for every action. It's just that for some actions he would have at least two words, the meaning of which would depend on who was performing the action. Nevertheless, the language of Neolithic Man would not be any richer than yours. It would simply be different. Neolithic Man will probably have no words at all to describe certain activities, including the one the shaman asked about! A conversation like the one that took place yesterday evening could not be translated into the language of Neolithic Man at all! He would not know the right words! He would show what he meant with gestures, because if he named certain activities, he would only know extremely offensive words for them. Simply put, some words would be more numerous, others would be fewer, or even disappear altogether! Some words would still exist, but their meaning would change. New taboos would appear, and some of the old ones might disappear. In fact, this phenomenon also exists among you, although not in such an advanced form as in the Neolithic period. For example, many of you may have thought that a Neolithic chieftain is a liar because he believes in certain things and knows that they are not true. Lying is, of course, taboo. If someone does not tell the truth, then you cannot believe him, you cannot rely on him. And what is it, if I may ask, Truth? Well, the meaning of the word "truth" in the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods is completely different! Lying will still be taboo, even in the Neolithic period, and the only thing that will change is the meaning of what Truth actually is. You try not to lie, but tell me – did your shaman tell the truth when he said he forgot how to use a notched stick? Strictly speaking, he lied. But a shaman cannot always tell the truth, and you know that very well. He did everything he could for that man! He gave him herbal drinks, gave him time off – would you blame him for not teaching him how to use a notched stick? Of course not. The man wouldn't have understood it anyway, even if he had been completely healthy, because it takes a long time and practice. You're probably wondering, what is Truth for a Neolithic Man? It's very simple! Truth is what the Neolithic chief says! You can be sure that all the inhabitants of a Neolithic camp will be wary of nothing more than lies! You can have complete trust

in them in this regard! If any of the Neolithic People start talking in their sleep, their woman will wake them up immediately! Why? So that they don't lie! And if for some reason she had a bone to pick with him, she would be able to report to someone higher up that her old man lied in his sleep, claiming that he could shoot a bow better than the Neolithic Chief himself! Explaining all the subtleties of such behavior is probably beyond my ability to translate and certainly beyond your ability to understand. But there is nothing to fear, each of you is capable of mastering the art of thinking like a true Neolithic Man. It will take some longer, others less. Well, that's just how it is.

There is one more interesting thing in this whole story that I would like to draw your attention to. You are probably wondering what a Neolithic shaman would do if he were in your shaman's place. How would he know if a person deserves to be excused from hunting? How would he assess whether he is really sick? Would he run to the Neolithic chief's hut to ask him about it? Of course not! Your shaman assessed at first glance that something was wrong and that in this condition he could not be allowed to go hunting. He simply saw that the man would not be able to draw a bow! And a Neolithic shaman? He would also make the decision himself, albeit on the basis of slightly different criteria.

To explain this subtle difference to you, I must first mention something that you may have already guessed. Just in case, I will explain it to you to avoid any misunderstandings. In the Neolithic era, it will not be like it is with you, where you eat meals together, or at least exchange various dishes with your neighbors, and all the meat is kept in one place and everyone knows where it is. Absolutely not! Every Neolithic Man will have his own pantry, and everyone will try to keep it a secret. If possible, they will try to camouflage it or hide it somehow. A popular method would also be to keep food under a heavy stone, which would require considerable strength to lift. In addition, there would be various hiding places, burying possessions in the ground, hiding them in caves known only to themselves, and the like. Neolithic shamans are already working on domesticating wolves for this very purpose. Why do they need a wolf, you may ask, since it can bite someone? They need a wolf precisely because it can bite someone! Only such a domesticated wolf will first have to learn who to bite and who not to bite. It will be the Neolithic Wolf, which will know exactly who is better and who is worse. When it sees someone better, i.e., the one who guards the pantry, it will not even think of biting them! And when it sees someone inferior, it will bite them and even get some meat from the superior one for it! Even the pantry of a Neolithic chief will be guarded, but despite this, it will be quite easy to identify. All you have to do is count how many armed assistants of the chief are guarding it. What does the number of the chief's armed assistants have to do with the contents of the pantry? The number of the chief's armed assistants is like smoke from a fire on which something tasty is being roasted! That is why the ability to count will be as important in the Neolithic era as a bear's sense of smell! Now that you understand that every Neolithic Man will have a pantry and at least one hidden cache, it is clear that the Neolithic shaman will also have his own pantry, only slightly larger and with many hidden caches, because, after all, as a shaman, he is better. What does a pantry have to do with a shaman's decision to grant a release? After all, a release is given to someone who is sick, not hungry, right? That's what you probably think. And you're wrong. The pantry of a Neolithic shaman is of fundamental importance. As you know, every shaman, including yours, needs to be brought a treat. It is enough to promise your shaman that you will bring something, because he knows you well. This custom of bringing treats to the shaman will continue in the Neolithic period. The point is that if you don't bring him anything, you will be a picture of health! If you bring something, he will tell you to take care of yourself. If you bring something bigger, your health will cause him concern. If you bring even more, he may give you herbal drinks and even write you a sick note. And so on, until you bring so much food that you can barely carry it! Do you think he will then say that you are fine and as strong as a bear, since you were able to bring so much food on your own? On the contrary! Your condition will terrify him! He will say that he is surprised that you are still alive, give you a sick note, and tell you to come back in a few days, when you look more like a human being and less like a living corpse, as you do now...



## Taboo-Taboo-Taboo

Today we will learn about a special kind of Neolithic taboo. It will be a taboo you have never heard of before. You would not be able to come up with it yourselves, even if you sat down with your entire tribe and did nothing else for days but think up strange taboos. Of course, you don't have a name for it, but you probably expect that Neolithic people have at least two. I think I'm going to surprise you a little. They don't have one either. It will be a special taboo. For the purposes of this chapter, I have called it "Taboo-Taboo-Taboo," or "The Prohibition That Must Not Be Established or Broken." This name may seem strange to you, but I will explain everything in a moment. First, tell me, how do you know that something is taboo? Well, first of all, from stories told around the campfire, from various old stories you have heard since you were a child. Many of these stories make it clear that something is forbidden. In fact, you learn a little from your father, from the shaman, or even from your peers. From various sources. And if something is not forbidden? Then it is not, you say. Then you can do it because no one has forbidden it. If you take it at face value, with a simple Paleolithic mind, that is indeed the case. But the Neolithic, as I have tried to show you, presents man with new challenges. In order to meet these new challenges, Neolithic man invented Prohibitions That Must Not Be Established or Broken. And this is not some extraordinary knowledge available only to a few. It is not, if I may use a comparison, the Notched Stick of the Neolithic. On the contrary. Every Neolithic Man understands this, although none will ever admit that such a taboo exists at all. If he admitted it, he would in a sense break the prohibition, violate the taboo. But he will never cross it either! I see that your eyes are clouding over and your expressions show rather moderate understanding. So let's move on to some examples.

Many of you have brothers and sisters. With sisters, it varies, because some of them have such a nasty character that you can't wait for someone to finally kidnap her. You don't talk to them much, because she has her own things to do and you have yours. Nevertheless, each of you knows that if you told her that you couldn't wait for the day she was kidnapped, she would throw whatever she could find at you and usually hit you. She would be angry as a wasp, even though she herself couldn't wait for that day, but she wouldn't admit it to anyone. Of course, your brother may also have a nasty character, but a brother is a brother. At least that's what they say in your world, the Paleolithic, although in the Neolithic, this saying would take on a somewhat peculiar meaning in certain cases. I'll explain why in a moment.

Until now, you may have thought that the Neolithic period had its drawbacks for the less fortunate, but if you are better off, it still has something to offer. Your intuition is generally correct, but even the best have their problems in the Neolithic period. I will explain this to you in a moment. Imagine that you are a real Neolithic Man, and one of the best ones at that. You have many brothers, and therefore each of them is also a Neolithic Man and also one of the best. Now imagine that one day you receive the joyful news that one of your brothers will soon receive the necklace of a Neolithic chief! You probably think that you should bathe in a nearby river or smear your hair with mammoth fat in order to appear dignified at the Chieftain's Necklace Ceremony for your brother. Besides, it would be nice to come up with a cool title for yourselves so that everyone would think you are great at doing something that has always been your dream, but which you have always been rather mediocre at. As is often the case with the Neolithic, you are both right and wrong. You are right in that the ceremony will not pass you by. But bathing in the river or smearing your hair with mammoth fat is by no means your main problem. Your main problem is that you are already dead. You are as dead as a man who overlooked a saber-toothed tiger while hunting, but it is right there and is about to do what tigers like to do best. The thing about the Neolithic is that good news is not good news for everyone, but Neolithic people like to make it sound as good as possible because of their inherent cheerfulness. If your brother becomes a Neolithic chief, you can be sure that you and each of your other brothers will soon have some kind of unfortunate accident. Interestingly, something completely different will happen to each of you. Why is this so? Because a constant and extremely characteristic feature of the Neolithic period is

the high mortality rate in the family of the Neolithic chief. This mortality rate may also extend to neighbors or friends, and sometimes even acquaintances who are affected by it. Moreover, every Neolithic man believes that there is nothing strange about this fact. It is completely natural to him! If something bad happened to several brothers in your Paleolithic camp and only one survived, you would talk about it for a long time, shocked by the fact. The fact that only one survived would seem strange to you. Neolithic man is also curious and likes to ask questions. However, the question of where the brothers of the new Neolithic chief are, what happened to them at all, will seem so uninteresting to him that he will never, ever ask it. Did someone forbid him to ask such a question? No one forbade him! He will behave as if, at that very moment, he is preoccupied with completely different issues, purely by chance unrelated to the brothers of the new chief! He may suddenly start pondering all sorts of questions that he did not care about at all until now. It will look as if he has suddenly forgotten that the brothers of the new Neolithic leader ever existed! He will not mention them at all, even if he knew them and even if they had been patting him on the back every day for a long time! To outsiders, this peculiar phenomenon might look as if someone had forbidden him to ask about them. But it is not allowed to forbid such a question in Neolithic times, because such a prohibition would imply that someone cares about such a question. And why would anyone care about such a peculiar question? This question, quite simply, should not concern anyone! This is an example of a prohibition that has never been established by anyone, and everyone behaves as if it were forbidden to establish it at all. But it is also forbidden to break it!

## The Common Good

Today we will learn a special term characteristic of Neolithic people and only Neolithic people. No one in the Paleolithic era invented this term, although, I will let you in on a secret, there was plenty of time for that. You will understand its meaning without any problem. When I explain what it means, you will be surprised how you managed without it until now. And yet, if it weren't for the Neolithic period, I think you would have managed without this term for quite some time. Neolithic man must have this term and cannot do without it. You are probably curious to know what it is. I will tell you, because, as you have probably already realized, it is not often that you immediately understand the terms used by Neolithic man. The term is: "the common good"!

What is the Community, you ask? Well, the Community means the entire camp, every person who lives in it. Not just the chief or the shaman or every hunter. The Community also means every woman in the camp, every girl, every puppy, even very small children who can only open their mouths so that their mothers can feed them – they all constitute the Community. Even a tiny infant that its mother carries around, who can only eat, shit, and scream, even it is part of the Whole. You probably think that in the Neolithic, the Whole would only mean the better ones. Not at all! In the Neolithic, the Whole would still be all the people in the camp, both better and worse. From the Neolithic chief, who, as we know, is the best, to the worst Neolithic Man, who doesn't even have anyone to show his obscene gesture to – they will all constitute the Whole. You think that if this is the case, then the whole Neolithic period is not so strange after all. As they say, the devil is in the details. Every Neolithic Man, upon hearing the term "Common Good," instinctively stops talking, begins to look around nervously, and generally behaves like a hunter who has just found still-warm bear shit in the forest. As you know, in such a case, you should exercise the utmost caution, avoid making the slightest noise, and prepare your weapon, because there is a bear nearby. What does still-warm bear shit have to do with the Common Good, you may ask. Will even bears change their habits in the Neolithic era, learn to speak with human voices, and instead of shitting, will they roam the forest roaring "Common Good" from time to time? It's not about the bear, but about caution. If a Neolithic man hears this term, he will immediately know that someone better is nearby. It could be a meat collector, or someone even better than a meat collector, it could even be the best of all Neolithic chiefs. You probably think you already understand what this is about – you think that in the Neolithic era, those who were better, led by the Neolithic chief, would have a habit of using this term from time to time. Your intuition is basically correct, but it does not capture the essence of the matter. I will explain it to you with an example. Would any of you say that a mammoth is bigger than a squirrel? None of you would say that! Everyone knows that a mammoth is huge and a squirrel is tiny. This is a case where something is true, even in the Paleolithic sense, but it does not capture the essence of the matter. To say that a Neolithic chief would like to use this term is an understatement. He would basically talk about nothing else! You know very well from various stories that such things sometimes happen in the Paleolithic era. Out of the blue, a man, even a good hunter, starts talking about one and the same thing. This can go on for a very long time and can intensify. He may come up with the strangest ideas, for example, that he will kill a saber-toothed tiger himself, or teach a bear to shoot a bow. He must then be taken to the tribal shaman, who will try various herbs on him, but will most often be helpless. It is scary to take such a person on a hunt, so it is best for him to stay in the camp and have someone keep an eye on him.

A characteristic feature of the Neolithic period is that although the Neolithic chief will talk about nothing but the Common Good, this will not surprise anyone. No one will tell him to take a break, get some fresh air, or try to think about something else. Absolutely no Neolithic shaman would think of preparing some special herbs for the chief because he talks about the same thing over and over again. On the contrary, everyone will listen to the words of the Neolithic chief with the greatest interest and try to remember them as best they can. Someone who knows many of the Neolithic chief's

speeches by heart will boast about it wherever they go, and will indeed have a chance that someone better will pat them on the back for it. So what will the Neolithic chief say?

Well, his whole life is a constant series of sacrifices for the Common Good. He devotes himself to this goal with a perseverance that surpasses that of a pack of wolves hunting an elk. The Common Good keeps him awake at night and the thought of it takes away his appetite. Despite this, no one appreciates him for it. For example, no one appreciates the depth of his research, which aims to determine how many hunters are needed to kill a single saber-toothed tiger. This research is, of course, solely for the Greater Good, and he plans it so artfully as to minimize its costs. The losses are negligible, in fact there are no losses at all, as is clearly evident from the fact that no saber-toothed tiger has been harmed yet. He has grown accustomed to this and has lost hope that anyone will ever appreciate the magnitude of his sacrifice. He constantly uses all his numerous talents and skills, certified by the appropriate titles he has given himself, for the Greater Good. He trembles at the thought of what will happen to the camp when he is gone. Without his enlightened leadership, the entire camp faces certain doom. Perhaps then, at the moment of final ruin, someone will bring a flower to his grave and shed a tear over him.

These and similar things will be said by the Neolithic chief, and everyone present will listen to his speech with bated breath, trying to memorize it, and no one will be allowed to even grunt. Grunting, let alone any comment during the Neolithic chief's speech, will be considered an insult to him. Everyone present will understand perfectly well that if they grunted, they would face severe punishment. The punishment would be something like expulsion from the camp in the Paleolithic era, although the Neolithic era will be a little more radical in this respect. Nevertheless, there will be some subtle exceptions to this rule in the Neolithic era. If, during his speech, the Neolithic chief enumerated the numerous misfortunes that had befallen him, which he had always endured as unshakable as a rock, this would be perfectly normal and none of the listeners would make the slightest sound. But if it occurred to the chief to mention how difficult the day of his Necklace Ceremony had been for him, even many years after it took place, before he could say anything about his immediate family, whom he had lost by pure chance at that very time, one of those present will surely feel some discomfort in their throat and, whether they want to or not, will clear it! What's more, they will not be punished for it. Throat problems in one of the chief's listeners are completely natural in Neolithic times in such circumstances. I would even say they are inevitable. It would be difficult for me to explain why this is so, but remember at least that in Neolithic times there will be taboos that can sometimes be broken, and no one will be punished for breaking them. If someone then decided to ask each of the listeners to repeat the chief's speech, for example to compare their versions of the speech, they would all have a certain characteristic, purely Neolithic feature. Many of them will remember large parts of the speech. Many will remember and repeat the speech word for word. But none, absolutely none of them will mention that one of those present grunted. Even the one who did it will forget about it!

## **You will wear clothes!**

As you know, we all wear clothes. Well, that's just the way it is. When it's very warm, it may be just a loincloth, but when it's cold, we wear clothes made of many different animal skins. Each of you is roughly dressed the same, although each of you is a little different. I'll let you in on a secret. From the point of view of a Neolithic man, each of you standing here is dressed identically! No one stands out in any particular way! If a Neolithic man stood here in front of you and glanced at you, he would not be able to answer the basic question that was bothering him. Actually, two questions. First, he would not know whether you were worse or better than him. Second, he would have no idea which of you is the best. Both of these questions sound rather strange to you, I imagine. Nevertheless, for any Neolithic man, they are completely natural and simply have to come to mind. In order to answer these questions, the Neolithic man is greatly helped by assessing your clothing. Clothing is much more important to him than it is to you.

Tell me, how would you react if one of you decided to walk around naked and wanted to go hunting like that? If he claimed that he wanted to turn into a bear, so he had to walk around without clothes so that his fur would grow, the matter would be clear. Your shaman would tell him that there would be no hunting today due to the mammoths' unwillingness to cooperate. But that's okay, because the shaman has prepared magical herbs especially for him, which will not only speed up his transformation into a bear, but also help his fur grow. He would give him the herbs to drink, he would fall asleep, and the problem would be solved, at least for a while. Why wouldn't you take such a man hunting? Because he's strange. He might approach a bear and try to talk to it, which would most likely lead to misunderstandings, given the well-known conservatism of bears. It follows that wearing clothes is a kind of commandment for each of you, even though no one has specifically commanded it. For Neolithic Man, this commandment will be even more important than for each of you. Neolithic man would be terrified of someone seeing him without clothes! He would be scared to death at the very thought of it. Clothing would be one of the most important things in his life. Interestingly, in the Neolithic period, no one would forbid him from walking around without clothes. Neolithic man would memorize a series of various prohibitions and commands, authored, of course, by the Great Spirit. Among these many prohibitions and commands, the command "You shall wear clothes!" would never appear. Why would it appear? The Great Spirit might as well have introduced the commandment "You shall strive to be the best," or "You shall strive to have as much as possible!" The Great Spirit knows perfectly well that every Neolithic Man will do so without any command. Therefore, he will never issue such a command. He will leave Neolithic Man complete freedom of action in this matter and will not force him to do anything. We already know that Neolithic Man will be terrified of walking around without clothes. That's not all. Every Neolithic Man will also try to emphasize that he is better, precisely through appropriate clothing. Some types of clothing will not be allowed to be worn by those who are inferior. There will be elements of clothing that will testify to the Neolithic Man's possession of appropriate Titles. Some clothes will be extremely uncomfortable. So uncomfortable that Neolithic Man wearing them will not be able to move freely. Of course, this will only apply to the best Neolithic People. If you see someone better even from a great distance, you will be sure that they are better, even if they are so far away that you cannot even hear their voice. If, for example, it is a group of meat collectors, you will know this even before the best of them utters the words "the common good."

And Neolithic women? – you may ask. I wondered whether to tell you about this. It is a somewhat sensitive topic and I find it difficult to talk about it directly. Perhaps I will tell you about a scene. Imagine that you, a Neolithic man, return to your Neolithic woman after a day of hunting. You immediately sense that something is wrong. She doesn't look at you or say anything to you. Soon you find out that she needs new clothes. That her best friend, that flounder, got a new necklace and has been wearing it for three days, as if to show that she is better than her, that is, better than your Neolithic woman. Besides, she's telling everyone that her Neolithic Man will soon be patted on the back by someone better, and that soon they will both show all their neighbors the most insulting gesture that someone of their position is entitled to show. Do you think such a scene sounds too implausible, even based on what you know about the Neolithic era? Let me put it this way. Whether something sounds implausible depends on who is judging it. If you asked a Neolithic Man whether something like this could happen in Neolithic times, many of them would burst into tears. Let me say right away that it would not be a particularly good idea to point out to your Neolithic Woman that she already has one outfit. Such a step would need to be carefully considered. It's not that your Neolithic woman has nothing to wear. It's just that there are things that are sometimes better left unsaid, regardless of whether they are true or not. In such a situation, you could easily end up with a detailed description of all the clothes and jewelry, including the necklaces of every neighbor in the area. You would stand there with your mouth agape, wondering how anyone could possibly remember so many details. From this whole description, it would be evident that she is the worst of all Neolithic women and that it is all your fault. That it is only a matter of time before everyone around her does nothing but make insulting gestures at her.

## The One Who Sings Beautifully

The campfire, as you know, is the center of life in any Paleolithic camp. Around the campfire, you tell each other all kinds of stories or sing songs together. Note that you always sing songs together, and that they contain, along with the stories, the history of your tribe. Many a young man stares at a girl by the fire, which clearly shows that he will soon fall head over heels for her. Almost everyone will notice this, except for the girl herself, of course. Tell me, have you ever heard of a case where many of you told a story around the campfire at the same time? You have never heard of such a thing because it would be rather impractical. Only one of you ever speaks. And who can tell stories around the campfire? Well, basically anyone who wants to. Some are better at it than others, and then there are those who always have an interesting story up their sleeve, like your shaman, for example, and that's why everyone likes to listen to him. In the Neolithic era, whoever told a story by the fire automatically became better. Every Neolithic man would simply dream of telling something by the fire. So what's the problem, you say, let him tell it! The problem is that in the Neolithic era, not every story can be told by the fire. After all, someone could tell a story that is not interesting at all, or even lie! Therefore, the decision as to whether someone can tell their story or not will be made by an assistant to the chieftain appointed specifically for this purpose. He will decide whether the story is interesting or not. Some people will appear regularly by the fire, even if they repeat the same speech of the Neolithic chief over and over again. However, the topics of the stories will be very diverse. You will probably be surprised, but stories about the Paleolithic era will be very popular. Those who get to tell their story about the Paleolithic era will think that all of you here did nothing else throughout the Paleolithic era but walk around the forest naked, eat various disgusting bugs, and then tell everyone how the bug moved in your throat. He may even spend a few days outside the camp, wandering around the forest and eating various bugs, and then he will think that he has mastered all the secrets of the Paleolithic era. Then he will return to the camp and tell everyone around the campfire his story, describing in detail the movements of the bugs he ate in his throat. Why would he do something so strange, you ask? Because, of course, just by getting to tell his story around the campfire, he will become better and will have a great chance of being patted on the back by someone even better. He will think that he has the Paleolithic era at his fingertips and tell everyone how much he enjoyed eating bugs. Of course, he won't notice that if he really liked it, he would still be sitting in that forest without clothes, eating those bugs. Unfortunately, one day, when he is getting ready to tell his story by the next campfire, he will inevitably learn that plans have changed and that his story is no longer interesting. He will rush to the one who decides who is allowed to tell stories. He will tell him that he dreams of nothing else but continuing to share his profound knowledge of the Paleolithic with his listeners. He may even bring some disgusting bug with him and offer to take off his clothes, eat the bug, and describe its movements in detail. The other person will almost certainly tell him that the concept has changed and that he should not dare to approach him with that bug or swallow it. This story is no longer interesting, and that's that. Everyone now wants to hear the story of some other Neolithic Man who also knows the Paleolithic period like the back of his hand. Besides, he (the one by the fire) doesn't see any point in paying more attention to him.

This peculiarity of the Neolithic, which makes the same story interesting at times and not at others, will also be reflected in Neolithic songs. The Neolithic will introduce the custom that only one person sings and everyone else listens. For some time, a Neolithic Man will sing at every campfire, and

everyone will want to listen to him. Why? Because he sings beautifully! Before you form your own opinion on this, let me tell you a story. Imagine that after many days of hunting, you return to your Neolithic camp and hear a strange sound in the distance. A terrible sound. Something like the sound of a dying animal, but somewhat resembling a human voice. Someone must be doing something terrible to the person making that sound. That person needs help! You rush towards the sound, instinctively preparing your weapon. You can safely lower your weapon and slow down. Do you know what happened? The concept has changed. The one who recently sang at every campfire found out that he no longer sings well. Before, everyone wanted to listen to him, and he sang at many campfires, feeling better about himself because of it. Now, however, someone else sings well, so everyone wants to listen to the other person, which is only natural. He may have a slightly original style, but he has always shown extraordinary vocal talent, and the campfire is there to give him a chance.

## Water of Life

From time to time, even in your camp, people living in another camp would actually get under your skin. For example, they would want to kidnap a girl who had caught the eye of their chief, even though she had long said that she would rather drown herself in the nearby river than let anyone kidnap her. This would mean, of course, that she did not really intend to drown herself and had no objection to being kidnapped, but simply preferred someone else to kidnap her. You would not need to go to a shaman to explain what such a girl meant. Any woman you asked would tell you this, because every woman was once a girl herself. The chief of the enemy camp may easily come to the conclusion that the easiest way to get her is to organize her abduction from your camp instead of organizing a hunt, because he cannot live without her. Their shaman, instead of giving him herbs to drink, will sometimes wave his hand and do nothing, even though he knows very well that their chief could survive without this girl for a very long time. So, one morning, all the hunters from their camp will show up near your camp, but their chief, instead of waiting at the agreed place for the girl to feel like picking flowers, as is customary, will do something completely different. He will give his hunters various orders, which will consequently worsen relations between your camps. Each of your hunters will try to make it clear to the others that they know nothing about any invitation to a shared meal and that they would do well to leave. The other side, in turn, will try to show that the lack of an invitation is not the slightest problem, because they are not petty, that they will only kidnap the girl for their chief and then leave immediately.

I don't know if you've noticed, but although your weapons are mainly used for hunting, they can also be used in such situations. And that the reason for this type of discord between camps is always, always a girl. That is, it was like that throughout the Paleolithic. You are probably curious to see how it will be in the Neolithic. The situation will change radically. You know very well that every bird you want to catch will fall for the same trap without any problem. This applies to all types of traps for various animals, from hares to mammoths. You always catch fish in the same way, and yet fish still fall for it. Even your weapons, with which you can kill the most dangerous beasts, are basically the same all the time. This seems natural to you, because why change something that works? In the Neolithic period, however, needs will arise that will require extraordinary ingenuity to satisfy. There will be weapons that are not particularly suitable for hunting, but hunting will not be their purpose. These will be weapons for killing people. You probably think that a Neolithic chief will send his assistants, equipped with such weapons, to kidnap a girl for him? It's not about the girl. Girls and women will be of secondary importance in the Neolithic era, although, when you think about it, they are the most precious thing you have. You always come back to them. You are ready to defend their lives even at the cost of your own, although normally every hunter tries not to put himself in danger unnecessarily. Because they don't just take care of your children, feed the babies they've given birth to, sing to them, prepare meals, clean animal skins, make clothes out of them, and do a lot of other work. They wait for you.

The Neolithic period will shift the emphasis slightly. The Neolithic chief will dream of nothing else but razing every neighboring camp to the ground, slaughtering everyone, including the girls, taking everything they have and bringing it to his own pantry. To this end, he will maintain as many special assistants as possible, who will spend their days training in the art of killing people, even though they will not know how to hunt at all. He will feed them even better than the meat collectors, because they

will be much better than them. At the same time, he will complain that he is surrounded by fierce enemies who dream of nothing else but slaughtering everyone in your camp, not sparing him, taking everything you had and moving it to his own pantry. All his efforts will be directed towards ensuring that these special helpers slaughter the others as effectively as possible, with as little risk as possible, while convincing them that the more they slaughter, the better they will become. Weapons will change so quickly that none of you would believe that so many types of weapons could be invented. And then the miracle workers will appear.

What is a miracle worker, you may ask. Let me tell you the story of a certain Neolithic miracle worker. One day, a miracle worker will approach a Neolithic chief and announce that he has mastered the secret of the Water of Life. This secret meets the chief's expectations, because all he has to do is carefully sprinkle each of his helpers with properly prepared Water of Life, and those who are sprinkled will not be able to die. This will greatly facilitate the chief's task for the Common Good, because his helpers, even if they try their hardest, will not be able to harm him in any way. The Neolithic chief may even pat the miracle worker on the back, provide him with adequate food and clothing, and soon the miracle worker will do nothing but prepare the Water of Life and sprinkle it on the Neolithic chief's helpers before sending them on another expedition. Although this will be an excellent job, the miracle worker would do well not to spend too much time in one place. Why? I'll explain it to you in a moment. Imagine that the Neolithic chief's assistants get beaten up by the other Neolithic chief's assistants and spontaneously decide that it's better to retreat before the others slaughter them, because they were supposed to slaughter the others. Perhaps it will occur to them that someone should be sent to the chief to tell him that the Water of Life is not working as it should. Sooner or later, the Neolithic chief will learn of the failure and ask the miracle worker from the Water of Life to come to him and explain his doubts. The miracle worker will undoubtedly say that he has been misunderstood, that it was just a shortcut, because an assistant sprinkled with the Water of Life, even if killed, will come back to life after a while and be able to continue slaughtering. After all, it makes no difference whether someone cannot die or whether, once killed, they will die but then come back to life immediately because they have been sprinkled with what is necessary. The chief will, of course, thank him for the explanation and may even add that he greatly appreciates that the miracle worker did not bother him with technical details. He will offer the miracle worker the opportunity to participate in an experiment that will require nothing more from the miracle worker than to prepare a certain amount of the Water of Life. After the experiment is over, the miracle worker will have a free hand and will be able to, for example, return home to rest, go to a bonfire, or do anything else. The chief leaves it up to him to decide. The miracle worker will say that his only dream is to serve the chief with his knowledge of the secret of the Water of Life until the end of his days. The chief will undoubtedly announce that he is very happy about this and that his experiment meets this expectation. After preparing a certain amount of Water of Life, the miracle worker will ask if he can do anything else for the chief. He will learn that there is no need, but the chief will explain the further course of the experiment to him. The miracle worker's head will now be separated from his torso as gently as possible by the chief's skilled assistants. Then the Neolithic chief himself will generously pour the Water of Life prepared by the miracle worker over both his head and torso. Then, of course, the miracle worker will come back to life and be able to go wherever he wants. The miracle worker will undoubtedly feel a sudden need to explain that he has been misunderstood, will make intensive efforts to present his own vision of the experiment, and will

generally begin to give the impression that he no longer has the same trust in the Water of Life as he did a moment ago. This may seem strange to you, because in his place, anyone would pour the Water of Life on themselves at least twice, just to be sure. Someone as enterprising as he probably poured Water of Life on himself every day, so he had nothing to fear. However, his efforts will be thwarted by the chief's assistants, none of whom will be miracle workers or know the secret of the Water of Life, but who will know what they are doing. Every camp is essentially based on those who know what they are doing. So when the miracle worker's head is separated from his body, the chief will pour the Water of Life over everything and, most likely without waiting a moment, will order his assistants to take what is left of the miracle worker to some other place to be revived there.

## My Children

You may have gotten the impression that Neolithic people would have had only a vague idea about you, the Paleolithic people. I will surprise you. They would have known quite a lot about Paleolithic people. Of course, all those stories about swallowing bugs around Neolithic campfires, which I told you about earlier, will be extremely popular. But this is just an entertaining version of their imagination, solely for the purposes of the campfire. In reality, it is one and the same story, in which only the bug will change, because it is difficult to swallow the same bug twice, and moreover, the person swallowing it will change from time to time. Thanks to this, all Neolithic people, even those who do nothing but sit around the campfire, will think that the campfire program is extremely diverse. You see, the world of the campfire will sometimes become the whole world for Neolithic Man. But in reality, the Paleolithic will arouse a certain mysterious fascination in Neolithic People. Listen to an excerpt from the story of a Neolithic shaman who specializes exclusively in the Paleolithic and makes a living from his excellent knowledge of the Paleolithic:

Paleolithic man did not have modern Neolithic weapons, which are excellent for slaughtering the inhabitants of neighboring camps. For this reason, his weapons could only be used for hunting, and instead of taking what their neighbors had hunted, each Paleolithic camp hunted on its own. The only source of food for Paleolithic humans was hunting and fishing, or gathering, so they were unable to come up with such excellent solutions as special permits for gathering plants, fruits, or mushrooms, special permits for fishing, not to mention special permits for hunting. It was not until the Neolithic period that these challenges were overcome with the introduction of special permits for everything. Paleolithic man was not even able to domesticate the wolf to guard his own pantry. For this reason, he was forced to keep food in a communal pantry. The domestication of the wolf, or the creation of the Neolithic wolf, was an excellent step towards progress. A real, i.e., wild wolf can bite much more effectively and can kill an elk on its own, not to mention that it can cooperate with other wild wolves in hunting, and if necessary, a pack of wolves can stand up to a bear. A single wild wolf can easily deal with even many domesticated Neolithic wolves, killing them one by one. Nevertheless, the wild wolf is inferior to the Neolithic wolf because it cannot be set upon a neighbor, for example. A wild wolf is simply useless because it will bite anyone who stands in its way. For it, every human being is made of meat, and that meat – whether from better or worse people – tastes the same to it. That is why we call an undomesticated wolf wild.

These interesting observations will be developed by many other Neolithic shamans, who claim that the first Neolithic people simply forced their Paleolithic chiefs to become Neolithic chiefs. Such a chief defended himself tooth and nail, claiming that he was fine as he was. He would only give in to long and wise-sounding arguments. Everyone around him begged him to soften his uncompromising stance. They said that they could no longer endure without the authority of a Neolithic chief over them, even though they had somehow endured it before, and for quite a long time. Finally, the chief will wave his hand, say that he is giving in to pressure, and organize a Chief's Necklace Ceremony, but this time a Neolithic one. This, as you know, will not be without impact on the fate of his immediate family. The chief will soon begin to diligently implement various innovative projects characteristic of the Neolithic period.

You probably think that the Neolithic shamans' knowledge of the Paleolithic will come from admiring some cave paintings. Well, no. From paintings, yes, but also from other sources. Here and there, small groups of hunter-gatherers will still survive. The Neolithic people generously grant them permission to fish and even hunt, even though they have been doing so since time immemorial. From time to time, a Neolithic shaman, an expert on the Paleolithic era, comes to their camp to ask them various strange questions. Sometimes another Neolithic shaman will come along, but he will not ask any questions. Instead, he will give the hunter-gatherers a strange speech:

My children! You are not inferior at all! Not at all! I do not consider you inferior! How can you be inferior when someone like me tells you that you are not inferior! I am so good to you! I want you to consider me your father! I came here especially for you, my children! Surely each of you would like to be better! Not that you are inferior, no way. But each of you can become better! Each of you must want to become better! It's very simple. First, I will sprinkle each of you with the unfailing Water of Life. Then I will give you new names, My Children, and these new names will be better! You can forget your old names. It would be best if you forgot everything. You will have to memorize everything I have memorized and believe in everything I believe in. I will teach you new songs! Better songs! I am doing all this for you, your father, My Children! You will become better because of it, but not so much that you will not have to explain to me why you have broken various new taboos, which I will also make you memorize, My Children!

Many of these Paleolithic people will then go to their mothers and ask if she remembers this man, because he keeps talking about these children and insists on being called their father. That's not the point. Neolithic people will know a lot about you, Paleolithic people. They just won't be able to think the way you think. That's why they'll simply have to assume that you thought like them, Neolithic people, but weren't able to achieve anything. Do you remember what they will call a wolf that cannot distinguish who it is allowed to bite? They will say that such a wolf is wild. You are also wild.

You probably think that since Neolithic Man will have special shamans who do nothing but deal with the Paleolithic, he will have the Neolithic at his fingertips. Well, no. Neolithic man will have no idea about the Neolithic, just as a fish does not know that there is such a thing as water. A guide like mine could not be presented at any Neolithic campfire! Why? Because, of course, it is completely uninteresting, and in places it probably simply lies!

## The voice of the wolf

You probably think that since groups like you, Paleolithic people, will still be alive in the Neolithic era, it means that Neolithic people are not as scary as you might have thought. The best proof is that they will leave them alone. At most, they will sprinkle them with something or make them memorize something. I did not lie to you. And yet I did not tell you the whole truth. Neolithic man will be capable of being a very good person, in the sense that you understand it. But he will also be capable of being terrible. You don't hunt every animal in the same way, because every animal has its own habits. No one would set a trap for a mammoth that is used to catch hares. A bear is hunted differently than an elk. Even an elk and a deer are hunted differently, because elks live alone and deer live in herds, as you well know. Neolithic man can behave in many different ways, as I have tried to show you. But he cannot leave anyone alone. If he sees another man, his first instinct is to assess what the other man has. That's just the way he is, and he can't help it, even if he wanted to. Imagine that they encounter Paleolithic people who have something they don't have. For example, they have land that would be perfect for Neolithic camps. Lots of land, vast spaces, full of forests, plains, rivers, and lakes. Land where many animals live, which their ancestors have hunted since time immemorial. Will he think they are better? Their land will not leave him alone. He will not be able to stop thinking about it. It will seem unfair to him that they have this land and he does not. It would be fair if the Paleolithic people shared their land with him. And it would be most fair if they gave all this land to him, the Neolithic man. I will now tell you a story. I owe it to you for not telling you the whole truth earlier. You will probably ask if this story is true. Yes, it is true. It must happen.

Imagine that Neolithic people find a land previously unknown to them and discover that it is inhabited by people like you, Paleolithic people. From time to time, Friends of Paleolithic People will begin to appear in the camps of Paleolithic people. Who are they, you ask. The Friends of Paleolithic people will be Neolithic people who do not care about the land at all. Their only desire will be to get to know Paleolithic people better. To learn more about their customs. He will only ask them to let him live with them in their camp. Even if there is a huge open space around them! Even if there is enough space for him to build a hut anywhere, many days' journey from any Paleolithic camp. However, he will feel an irresistible urge to live with them. But the day will come when the lair of the Friend of Paleolithic People will be empty and will quickly grow cold. The shelter they gave him will become unnecessary. The food they shared with him will no longer taste good to him. They will be surprised and perhaps worried about him. They may think that something bad has happened, that he may need their help. But if one of them were a bird of prey, it could still fly high enough to spot him. He will persistently head towards the nearest Neolithic camp. When he reaches it, he will tell of the camp of those who gave him shelter. His story will be strange. There will be no room in it for descriptions of their customs, clothes, or even food. Instead, he will say how many of them there are and what weapons they have. And he will refer to them as "savages."

Because they really are savages. The entire camp of Neolithic people will be filled with the chief's helpers, equipped with the best weapons for killing people. Each of the chief's henchmen will, like the Neolithic Wolf, do everything his owner tells him to do. First, they will find the camp of wild people and slaughter all the wild women and children. And they will slaughter the wild old men who can no longer hunt. Thanks to their numerical superiority and Neolithic weapons, they will slaughter all

the wild men who try to defend the camp, as well as those who try to avenge them, seeing that they have nothing to return to. However, despite everything, they will feel a strange fascination with the wild man, which they will have to mask with abusive gestures expressing their contempt. That they are better. Each of these wild men will be treated by them as someone extremely dangerous, unpredictable, and uncontrollable as long as he is alive, even if he has no weapons. They will have no problem forgetting every wild man they have killed, including wild infants. And yet, they will remember everything and will have to remain silent if they ever hear the cry of a single savage man defending his camp or simply seeking revenge. That voice will sound in their ears like the howl of a wild wolf sounds in the ears of every Neolithic Wolf. It will be a terrible voice. It will contain something that they feel well and that arouses fear in them, although they can no longer name it or even understand it.

## Common Language

Each camp actually has its own language. Even the Others you sometimes meet may speak similarly, but sometimes use their own terms, different from yours. These terms may sound strange, and sometimes even funny; you would not say it that way. Your language, in turn, may sound a little strange to them. Sometimes both sides use the same word, but it means something different to them. Sometimes you may meet Paleolithic people with whom you cannot communicate at all. You can give them some food, and they will give you some of their food, and only then will you know that they are like you, Paleolithic people, even though you will not understand a word they say. The Neolithic period will introduce certain solutions that will greatly facilitate communication. One such solution will be a Common Language. What is that, you may ask. Imagine two Neolithic camps. To distinguish them from each other, I will call one of them the Good Camp and the other the Bad Camp. Both camps, Good and Bad, are ruled by Neolithic chiefs. Each will call the other his Friend and Brother. He will also express hope that they will be able to reach an agreement, that is, find a Common Language. They will basically say the same thing. Except that each of them will mean something completely different.

Before I explain the difference to you, I would first like to talk to you about something that seems quite distant from linguistic issues. Namely, fish. Tell me, who is most happy about the ban on fishing? At first glance, it seems that it is the fish. Fish don't want to be caught, they don't want to be eaten, and they don't want to be taken out of the water or end up in anyone's pantry. But the ban on fishing will not be introduced by fish! It will be introduced, one way or another, by a Neolithic chief! He will, of course, do it for the Common Good, because if it weren't for this ban, the Neolithic people would catch and eat all the fish, and the Whole Flat World would be forever deprived of these tasty creatures. Note that the Neolithic chief imposes bans that apply only to humans! He would never say, "Any bear caught fishing will be severely punished!" Bears are very fond of catching fish, and they are quite good at it. They would not obey the ban, but the Neolithic chief could actually enforce it by ordering the shooting of any bear that catches even one fish. And yet such a ban will never be introduced. Because its purpose is not to protect fish at all. This ban is about people and only people. Strange as it may sound, the purpose of this ban is to make the inferior ones hungry.

Here we return to the idea of a Common Language. The Neolithic chieftain does not really care about slaughtering the people from the Evil camp and taking everything they have. He will be satisfied if he can make them hungry. This is what the idea of a Common Language will serve. A good Neolithic chief believes that his language should become the Common Language. Because his language is also Good. What's more, his language is better! The problem is that the Evil Neolithic chief believes the opposite, that he is Good, and that his language would be much better suited as the Common Language. So both will say the same thing, and in fact there is no way to check which one is really good and which one is bad. Both chiefs will regularly send groups of armed helpers against each other. Sometimes one of them will manage to slaughter the other's helpers, but he will not slaughter the rest of the camp's inhabitants. Then a new Neolithic leader will appear among them. He will wear the leader's necklace, appoint his helpers, his shamans, and his meat collectors. Only all his helpers, including himself, will speak the language of the victors. This will be the Common Language. Every thought expressed in this Common Language will be incredibly wise, much wiser than the same thought expressed in the language of the defeated or any other language. Because the Common Language is a

better language. Each of the defeated, whom the victors allow to live, will have to learn that this language is the best. Both chiefs, the chief of the victors and the new chief of the defeated, will actually look very similar. Both will wear the chief's necklace and store meat in their own heavily guarded pantry. They will say similar things and give similar orders, of course in the Common Language. They will give themselves similar titles. They will believe in the same Great Spirit, and their shamans will tell identical stories about this Great Spirit, many of them, of course, in the Common Language. There will be only one way to tell them apart. The leader of the victors will never justify his orders! Because no real leader ever justifies his orders. He simply does not need to do so. The good of the whole or the will of the Great Spirit is already enough. The new leader of the defeated, on the other hand, will justify every order he gives! And these justifications will sound extremely convincing! One could say that the stranger the order, the longer and wiser, the more convincing the justification! These justifications will refer to various observations available to everyone. They will sound extremely accurate, and no knowledge of the Common Language will be needed to understand them. This will be the only noticeable difference between the two leaders. There will be one more difference, but it will be practically imperceptible to an outside observer. There will be an intensive exchange of goods and information between the two camps. However, the goods, i.e., meat, will travel to the camp of the victors, while a stream of news will flow to the defeated. Some of this news will be announced to the new leader of the defeated in the presence of many of his most important aides, in the Common Language, of course. In these messages, the leader of the victors will call the new leader of the defeated his Friend. But, characteristically, he will never call him his Brother! This could be misunderstood by the new leader of the defeated, and perhaps the new leader's hut would then have to be thoroughly aired out. However, there will also be messages whispered into the new leader's ear! So that no one else can hear them! Do you want to know what the content of these secret messages, intended only for the chief's ears, will be? I'll tell you. It will be the content of the orders he will soon issue, as well as his opinions on various topics that he will soon form. Characteristically, there will be no justifications. Justifications are his problem.

The direct consequence of both leaders finding a common language will be that almost everyone in the defeated camp will be hungry. Even the better ones will have trouble eating, let alone the worse ones. However, everyone will be extremely well informed about their leader's strategy, they will know the long and wise justifications for his orders, and they will also know his opinions on a range of topics. This is a characteristic feature of the Neolithic period. The defeated in the Neolithic always seem to think that they understand everything perfectly and that they will soon impose a Common Language on everyone around them.

## Lullaby

As you know, your women do not usually hunt. Does this mean that they cannot hunt? Actually, yes. If necessary, they hunt too, but they cannot compare to men in this respect. Every man, even if he cannot hunt, carries within him the memory of his countless ancestors who were men and whose main occupation was hunting. A man is a hunter by nature because his male ancestors were all, or almost all, hunters. Each of his ancestors lived to adulthood, and each had to have at least one child. And if that child was born a boy, he will somehow remember what happened to them. It is as if the boy remembers their entire lives, all the dangers they went through, as if he saw it with his own eyes, even though he did not know most of them at all. And if the child was born a girl, then the memory of all the women who were her ancestors would speak through her. Many a father would wonder how his little daughter knew all this, who taught her to notice things he didn't notice, why she knew better than he did what the tone of voice or the look in another person's eyes meant.

A woman sometimes has to defend her children, whether from an animal or an evil person. And there is no more terrifying opponent than a woman defending her children. And yet a woman will never be a hunter. She will never be able to think the way a hunter does. Her role is simply different. You would not take a woman with you to hunt mammoths. Each of you would instinctively think about keeping her safe, trying to protect her in some way. And, as you well know, there can only be one goal when hunting. That is why women do not hunt mammoths.

However, Neolithic man will come up with the brilliant idea that women should hunt mammoths. How will he justify this? Very simply! He will use the word he uses all the time. He will say that she is not inferior at all! So what will the father do? In the Neolithic era, the father will be inferior, but this cannot be said out loud. In the Neolithic era, the father will be the worst person in the whole Flat World. The meaning of his role will be turned upside down. Because he will no longer be allowed to hunt or fish without a special permit – even to feed his children. If someone hurts his child or his woman, he will not be allowed to defend them under any circumstances. And if someone kills them, he will not be allowed to avenge them. He will exist, but in reality he will not be there. He will no longer be what you call a father. No one will know what a father is actually for. He will have only one way to provide food and safety for his family. He will have to be obedient. Obedience is the greatest virtue of Neolithic Man. All the helpers of the Neolithic chief, even if they knew nothing at all, would constantly assure him of their obedience. And this is exactly what the Neolithic chief will expect from them. After all, he will know that all the titles he has given them have nothing to do with their skills, because they, like himself, know nothing. But it will be important for them to be obedient. Disobedience to the chief will be the greatest taboo. Anyone who shows disobedience can be sure that the chief's assistants will not rest until they track him down and kill him, like a wounded moose trying to take refuge in the swamps.

If you think about it, the source of the Neolithic chief's power will not be his assistants' weapons. And in fact, it will not be his stories, which no one will be allowed to disbelieve. Power is born of fear. In the case of the Neolithic, it will be the fear of hunger. Hunger will be the lot of the inferior, but in reality it will be a weapon in the hands of the Neolithic chief, and one that everyone fears. The inferior must starve precisely so that the superior are terrified of becoming inferior. If the inferior did not starve, the chief would have no power over the superior, because they would have

nothing to fear. The Neolithic chief, patting his best helpers on the back, will carefully check whether there is enough fear in their eyes, whether they are obedient enough to him, and whether they understand well enough that he has them by the throat. Women will be the first to understand this, which is why in the Neolithic era women will be trusted more than men. For the same reason, for Neolithic Man, a woman will not be as valuable as she is to each of you. Not at all. Neolithic man will treat women much worse than you do because he will not fear them. Every man, even the most submissive, has the mind of a hunter, even if he does not know how to hunt. Men know how to take risks, and many are capable of putting their own lives on the line to feel the taste of freedom, which is forbidden in the Neolithic era, even if only for a moment. Not only weapons, but also a stone in his hand makes him think that the chief does not have unlimited power over him. Men have a strange ability to take risks even when the chances of success are slim or even non-existent. This means that the Neolithic chief will care about nothing more than proving that women can be just as much men as they are, and even better at it.

You know very well what a mother's voice means to a baby. It does not yet understand words, but it recognizes her voice. If the father wanted to sing lullabies to the baby, it would bristle like a hedgehog and perhaps even listen to this strange singing for a long time. Even if the father tried to sing as gently as he could, sooner or later the baby would let him know that good intentions are not enough in this case. In Neolit, babies will be just like your babies and will not yet understand what they should like.

## Supporter

Throughout the Neolithic period, the inferior will hate the superior, and the superior will despise them and, in fact, fear them. They will also fear that they themselves could become inferior if they prove to be insufficiently obedient. The inferior ones will think that it would be enough to kill all the superior ones to bring back the Paleolithic era. I want to tell you the story of two friends, Neolithic people who dreamed of returning to the Paleolithic era. One of them saw himself as the one who would actually achieve this. I will call him by a somewhat strange name – I will call him The One Who Will Return. The other will believe in him and be willing to do anything to help The One Who Will Return. The other in my story will be called The Follower. Most of the time, The One Who Will Return and his Followers will be caught and severely punished by the Neolithic chief. But there will also be those who succeed. In very, very rare cases, they will actually have the opportunity to change something. They will remember their youthful dreams and their long conversations. Plans. Because nothing in the Whole Flat World returns with such force, with such predictability, as the plans of young people. The plans of young people are like a returning sea wave. Their enthusiasm and self-confidence are as relentless as the impact of a wave on a rocky shore. As old men, they will not remember their former plans. But they will remember that they once believed strongly in something. If the Supporter contributes to the victory of the One Who Will Return, he will be the happiest of men. He will believe that from now on no one will be hungry, that there will be no more better ones. His friend promised him that if they succeed, if they survive and overthrow the Neolithic chief, they will no longer be hungry. Who would not believe the promise of a friend who makes it in such a way that you can simply see how much he believes in it? And it will not be as you might suspect, that if the One Who Will Return overthrows the Neolithic chief, he will not keep his promise. He will keep it. Such a promise is always kept.

Do you know the feeling when the mammoth you are hunting, as big as a mountain, finally falls to the ground? No hunter will ever forget that feeling. It is a feeling of triumph, you are happy that you have succeeded. You are happy because soon there will be plenty of food in your camp. This mammoth will ensure the survival of your people for some time. Some of you will stay behind to guard the prey from predators and begin to divide it up. And some will return to tell the camp that you have succeeded! Women, children, and even the elderly will come out to meet them. No words will be necessary, because one look at the hunter's face will be enough to know that this time they have succeeded! It will be evident not only from his face, but also from the way he walks and the tone of his voice.

The moment of victory tastes sweet to every human being. Victory is something that must be defended! Just as you defend the mammoth from predators who would like to feed on your prey. You chase away the scavengers. You do not allow the vultures to take advantage of your efforts. Victory also has a sweet taste for Neolithic Man. If he did not defend his victory, he would be like someone who hunted a mammoth and then did not guard it from predators. All his efforts would be in vain. What he fought for, what he risked his own life and the lives of his followers for, could fall prey to someone else. He will simply have to defend his conquest. And a plan will be born in his head. You see, Neolithic Man must have a plan in such a situation. This plan will surely be born. In fact, it has always been in his head, and the Neolithic Man will suddenly realize this. This plan has always been in his head because no one can escape who they are. The Neolithic Man will always think like a Neolithic

Man. He will not be able to think differently. His Follower will notice strange things. From time to time, he will come to his friend and ask him when he will finally introduce the Paleolithic. He will learn that the Paleolithic cannot be introduced suddenly. It is an unrealistic idea. It takes time. At least for a while, the Neolithic must be maintained. It will only be a temporary solution until you deal with all the better ones. And when you deal with them, another goal will appear that will also prevent the introduction of the Paleolithic. And then another. Remember that nothing is as permanent as a temporary state in the Neolithic. The supporter will remind his friend about the Paleolithic, about their youthful plans and the promises they made to each other. And he will not understand what happened to the other. Nothing happened. A wolf cub looks cute. It evokes warm feelings in humans, and its squeak sounds funny and a little pitiful. But it will grow up to be a wolf. Every wolf was once a cub. And the cub, if it survives long enough, will turn into a wolf. It doesn't know it yet, but it already has everything it needs to one day, if necessary, at the signal of the pack leader, pounce on a bear in defense of the cubs. Wolves understand very well that the bear may kill several of them, but they will do so without hesitation, because defending the pups is their natural instinct.

Neolithic man is not inherently evil. But he cannot stop being Neolithic man, just as a wolf cannot stop being a wolf. Therefore, He Who Will Return will be able to do only one thing for his friend. One day, the new chief's helpers will come to the Supporter's hut. Among them will be a Neolithic shaman. This shaman will tell him that the new chief is very concerned about his health. He has noticed that the Supporter has been talking about the same thing over and over again lately. He remembers his promise and will do everything possible to fulfill it. And although he could not come himself, he asked him, the shaman, to prepare herbs for the Supporter.

## The Trap

The guide saw the Neolithic camp from afar. It was huge. He set off in its direction. Neolithic people sometimes hired guides like him, who could be entrusted with conducting the hunt. He knew how to do it. Only this time it was a special task. In the camp, he was told what it was about. Hunting, yes – everything as usual. They would entrust him with a group of hunters and give him weapons. This time, his task was not just to conduct the hunt. The next day, they introduced him to his hunters. Each was dressed like an ordinary Paleolithic Man. They looked at him calmly, straight in the eye. They had ordinary weapons, the kind used for hunting mammoths. But the Guide already knew that this would not be an ordinary hunt. The day before, he had learned what it was about. Some of his hunters were ordinary Paleolithic people, like him. Neolithic people hired them to hunt. But others of his hunters were not Paleolithic people. They were Neolithic people whose only task was to imitate ordinary Paleolithic hunters as closely as possible. Each of them looked like a Paleolithic Man and could hunt like him. There was no fear in their eyes. But they were not Paleolithic Men. The guide had heard of such people before. However, he took up the challenge and now stood facing his group of hunters. He was told that each of them knew who they were, but knew nothing about the others. He was also told that he could ask each of them who they were, but that he would hear the same answer in every case. I am a completely ordinary Paleolithic Man. Only, this would not always be true. So the Guide did not know who was who and was never to find out. His task was to evaluate each hunter after returning from the hunt, based solely on how that hunter had performed.

The hunt went according to plan. Until a certain point. After some time, it came to light that someone had made some changes to the trap intended for game. It was not known who had done it. It turned out that the trap had been specially modified so that instead of game, all Paleolithic humans would fall into it. Those who were not true Paleolithic humans could save themselves if they sacrificed the lives of the others. One of them actually did so. He was a Neolithic human, specially trained to behave and hunt like any Paleolithic hunter. But he did not want the Guide to survive the hunt, because he could say that he was inferior. The trap was modified so that the Paleolithic people participating in the hunt simply had to fall into it. Only one thing was missing. At the critical moment, the Guide was supposed to give the order. The order would have been carried out, and suddenly the situation would have changed so that everyone would have to save themselves. And yet the Guide didn't say a word. Maybe he sensed that the whole situation was a little too smooth. Too obvious. It was as if he saw through the other's hidden intentions. And he did not give the order. He left him free to act. This is obvious to a Paleolithic hunter, because it is impossible to predict every situation that may arise during a hunt. And this fake hunter, whose only task was to pretend to be a Paleolithic man, needed only an order from the Guide. He waited for that order so that he could later say that everything that happened to the Paleolithic people was the Guide's fault. However, the order was not given.

## Epilogue

You are probably curious about where I got all the knowledge about Neolithic people that I have presented to you. I will let you in on a secret. This entire guide was created by someone just like you. He will have a Neolithic name, he will not know how to hunt, and he can be persuaded to go fishing maybe once in his life. All the Neolithic people who knew him would think to themselves that he was a bit strange for a Neolithic man. No one will probably tell him that, because he is a big guy, but everyone will think that he should try harder, show more ambition, in other words, try to have as much as possible and become better because of it. He will be strange to them, just as each of you would be strange. But I will tell you his Neolithic name. His name was Paweł Biernacki.

## Test

1. Why would you want to become a Neolithic Man?

- a. The Neolithic Age could be useful to my tribe. 0 points
- b. The Neolithic period could be useful to me. 1 point
- c. What's in it for me? Lots of points

2. Someone has hunted two hares and wants to give you one.

- a. You have to give them something in return. 0 points
- b. You have to run away with the hare before they change their mind. 1 point
- c. You have to get the other hare from him too. Lots of points

3. You regularly go dumb when you see a girl.

- a. You have to tell her that you're going to kidnap her tomorrow and then wait for her. 0 points
- b. You have to kidnap her from her camp, whether she wants to or not. 1 point
- c. You have to come to an agreement with her father. Lots of points

4. What does a Neolithic chief know how to do?

- a. Nothing. 0 points
- b. He can know one thing and believe the opposite. 1 point
- c. He knows how to care for the common good. Lots of points

5. Who can sing beautifully?

- a. Someone whose singing sounds nice. 0 points
- b. Someone who has sung around a campfire at least once. 1 point
- c. Someone who sings at bonfires now. Lots of points

6. What determines whether you receive an exemption from the Neolithic shaman.

- a. Whether you are sick. 0 points
- b. From his pantry. 1 point
- c. How much food you bring him. Lots of points

7. What is the Water of Life used for?

- a. To provide protection during the slaughter of neighboring camps. 0 points
- b. To provide some protection, but it is not clear from what. 1 point
- c. Sprinkled with the Water of Life, he comes back to life as soon as someone kills him, unless he is a miracle worker.

Lots of points

8. Why is the Neolithic Wolf better than a wild wolf?

- a. Because it knows who it can bite and who it cannot. 0 points
- b. Because it's better, that's why! 1 point
- c. Because it can guard the pantry. Lots of points

Total points:

0 points – You have a problem with Neolithic. Unfortunately, you haven't mastered the material.

1-3 points – Excellent! You're making progress! Keep it up!

Lots of points – This textbook is not for you. You have Neolithic in the palm of your hand.