



Strategic Tale 1.1

(On deliberate and emerging strategies)

The next holidays

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"Are you really telling me you haven't planned anything this year either?", Julie blurted out.

"Practically nothing. We're going to play it by ear, you know. As we often say, let's take it as it comes", Elsa replied, while Robert nodded smiling.

"I honestly don't understand you, we would be incapable of traveling like that. Aren't you worried about not having everything planned?" John added, supporting his partner.

For several years now, Robert and Elsa had been taking advantage of their holidays to travel to different parts of Europe without giving much thought to their itinerary. They simply chose the country or region they wanted to explore and made up their minds as they went along. John and Julie also liked to travel around Europe, but they were very methodical, planning even the smallest detail of the trip: where they would sleep each night, where they were going to eat, what they were going to see, how much they would spend, and so on.

"Well, what do you want me to say, planning everything takes away the fun and excitement of the trip," Robert replied.

"It's also more fun to improvise and organise the trip as you go along. Anyway, you can't control everything that's going to happen, so there's no point wasting time on planning," Elsa concluded.

"Well, that's true, you can't control everything, but at least you can try to make things go according to plan. And if they don't work out, then you adapt, it's not such a big deal either," Julia interjected.

"And you can be as creative as you want," John pointed out. "In fact, nowadays you can organise your own trip from home. All you have to do is search the internet for the coolest places to visit, book hotels online, or create your daily itinerary with Google Maps. That way we get to discover places and enjoy the trip, and that's fun, too, don't you think?"

Almost the same conversation was repeated every year. And they never agreed. One year, however, things turned sour. John and Robert got into an argument that escalated as the night went on and they drank more and more beer.



"Well, I think it's stupid to plan a trip in so much detail that leaves nothing to chance. What do you want me to say? That's the truth. We prefer to discover places as we go along. And we've done wonderfully so far!" Robert snapped.

"Is it really wonderful to have to sleep in the car, as you have done several times because you hadn't planned anything? Now that's just plain idiotic!" replied John heatedly.

Julia and Elisa had been uncomfortable for a while, glancing awkwardly at each other from time to time, not knowing whether to support their respective partners or try to calm things down. They didn't want to break their friendship for anything in the world. They looked at each other for a moment and seemed to understand each other.

"That's enough, Robert," Elsa interrupted, "everything has its pros and cons. Besides, don't say that we do everything on the spur of the moment because we know you like to go online to look for good restaurants in the local area. So you do plan when it comes to food, don't you?"

"I agree with Elsa," Julie added. "John, how often have we had to change our plans due to unforeseen problems or because we have come up with something better to do, eh? And it has almost always turned out well."

"Well," Elisa concluded, "in the end, no one sticks exactly to their plans or improvises all the time, so stop arguing. Look, they're already bringing our food. It looks yummy."

"Potato omelette!" Robert said. "By the way, did you know that there is a place in Budapest that makes a great potato omelette?"

"No idea, but we'll have to go and try it. How about going together?" John joked.

"We may be close, but not that close!" Elisa and Julia chimed in amid the laughter.

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