

Friday, April 27th – Day 6th

06:45 a.m. – „Rise and shine ! Today is the long drive before us !”.

07:00 a.m. – „Good morning, friends !”, Zuzanka welcomed us sleepers and served us coffee and muffins in a balcony overlooking palm trees in a hotel. Dan and I talked about parents, about that fact to have the parents is normal thing for us all when they live, we take it something like air or sun and we do not realize that the time they are given is limited. And only we lost them we came to realize what we did not manage to tell them and what we did not manage to ask them about. But it is too late to catch up on it. „My mother's name was Virgie Mae Dozier. She went by the name 'Mae'. She was born possibly in Pascagoula, or that area. She did babysitting in her home and lots of sewing. She would also make these very endearing sock monkeys. She made hundreds of them and sold them at the hospital. She was pretty tough woman from outside but I know she was very tender and sweet inside. She doted me when I was a child and she spoiled me.

My father's name was Arthur Ned and he was born in Canoe, Alabama. As far as I know, all his brothers and his sister were born in Pascagoula. My Dad was soft spoken and a very sweet tempered man. And as I said yesterday, he was brilliant mechanic.

My parents were never well off financially, but took good care of us children. I loved them both, unfortunately they passed away so soon, especially my father. I was only in my early thirties (my mother died about ten years ago). I didn't manage to tell him so much, I didn't manage to tell him how much I loved him ... I didn't cry when he died, only after long time I could cry. But ... how deep crying I was then !”.

We ended our a bit contemplative talking with approving saying, that with our closest relatives we lost always one part of ourselves ... but enough of a philosophism! We were on vacation so ... let's enjoy it !

08:00 a.m. – „Bye, bye Bellasera for Panama City Beach !” and we set out for a more



than ten hour drive to white sandy beaches. A weather was beautiful again ...

08:45 a.m. – we even settled for a ride and Zuzanka commanded to turn to ‚Perkins Restaurant & Bakery’ for another breakfast. She told us it is their favorite restaurant chain, widespread throughout the States and it keeps the same high standard all over. And the restaurant was really nice and neat and breakfast was so scrumptious ! The main meal was scrambled eggs of course and also muffins and coffee and juice. The casual time again with talking about Keys, Everglades and Susie's raving about wonderful beaches in Panama City Beach. And Dan came back to his

narration about his parents : „As I told you, my mother was quite tough in behaviour, so my older siblings Vera and Arthur left a natal house as fast as possible and my parents stayed alone then. So they decided to start the second family. I was born when my mother was more than forty. Yes, me and David were the second raw babies.”

09:30 a.m. – we again jumped in Toyota and speeded down the 75 Interstate along the northeastern seashore of the Gulf of Mexico. A flat land everywhere ... The interstate was like a ribbon, as matter of fact two ribbons,



because there was an empty, about 60 feet wide space between both lanes and every that lane ran its own way with a high number of zooming cars. And on top of that prevention of possible crashes of oncoming vehicles there were even cable, steel or concrete crash barrier along both lanes. The American sense of perfection.

12:30 a.m. – about after three hour ride Dan decided to liven up my travel, turned to a resting place and announced me that I would be a driver for some next time. Wow ! It would be something ! For the first time I would be driving SUV and with an automatic drive ! Yes, I was nervous a bit. I sat behind the wheel and Dan gave me instructions about the four-speed automatic. There was no clutch pedal, only brake and accelerator pedals. And no gearshift. Only a mode shift for a few ahead modes and one reverse mode. It should be easy, I thought. I turned the ignition on and ... nothing ! Zuzanka, my co-driver, advised me but it did not work ... Dan and me again took turns at the wheel, Dan turned the ignition on ... and an engine kicked over ! We took turns back, I turned ignition on and nothing happened again ! I felt like a regular fool ... ☺

„Mirek, do you step on the brake during starting up ?”, Dan asked me a question from a rear seat. Wow ! The right question ! I forgot to step on the brake and it blocked the starting action. Then it was already a child’s play. I started up, backed up a bit, then slowly drove along a slip lane and then I stepped on the gas. Toyota gathered fresh way and joined other cars.

„Speed limit 70 miles’ a traffic sign showed me and I respected it as well as most of other drivers. The car worked great and I enjoyed my driving pleasure. Dan was napping on the back seat by Hana, who watched my driving. Susie went through pictures in her notebook. I was a captain ...


Those two hours when I was driving passed so quickly ... and those about 100 passed miles topped our first half of that day’s travel. I pulled the car in a resting place, we had a fast restrooms, Dan sat back behind the wheel and we went on. By Lake City he changed direction toward north, along the 10 Interstate and then the 90 Highway.

Well. I forgot to write, that there was not any GPS in the car, so Zuzanka, our navigator read our route from a before all the key intersections she on a small paper square that she Good idea. Dan had all necessary



paper itinerary (,AAA’ company) and put down all important information glued to a dashboard before Dan. data before his eyes and he could ride without any distraction. And we could drive and drive ...

03:30 p.m. – a short break for early dinner in Madison in ,Denny’s’.

 (<http://www.dennys.com/en/>).

The meal was delicious ! Hana had ,Super Bird Sandwich’, which meant thin slices of turkey, melted cheese and slices of bacon, I had ,Nachos de Denny’s’, which meant crispy tortillas and ,chilli con carne’ (mixture of beef, beans, pepper, cheese, bell pepper, onion, salsa and sour cream). It was the miraculous food ! And the portion was so huge. My heart was bleeding because I could not manage to clear the plate ... what a shame ! So we can recommend that restaurant chain indeed. And again on the road.



05:45 p.m. – we entered a suburb of Panama City Beach. Dan led according to Susie’s commands Toyota along a seashore, along a line of modern hotel complexes and at

06:30 p.m. – we stopped in front of an entrance to one of them, **Moonspinner** ,Moonspinner Condominiums’ (<http://www.moonspinner.com/>).

An older, pleasant man in an uniform came out of a gatehouse and led us to a reception. Zuzanka went in, ordered everything necessary, then we parked in a parking place, came to elevators in the outside one of three eight-storeyed buildings and drove up with all our baggage on hotel carts onto six floor.

And again, it was something like in Naples. We settled in a wonderful three-bedroom, three-bathroom condominium overlooking an amazing beach in the shore of the Gulf. Fairytale !

There was only one blemish – both doors to balconies were blocked and we could not them open ...

Because we wanted to manage another our sunset we drove down, went to the beach and were dipping our feet in a surf and enjoying the sunset as well as the early evening in Panama City Beach. Beauty ! Amazing ! It was another experience from that beyond imagination category. The warm sea wind and the sun, slowly hiding its orange ball into the Gulf ...

Then we took a short drive to a shop to replenish our supplies – food, bottled water, wine. Coming to the apartment Susie had a stop at the reception and complained them about the blocked up doors. She got to know, that at that time the whole hotel complex is under reconstruction because of the main season period was over (!) and that there is a slight oversight and they would rectify it in the morning.

Well. We should see and we hoped for it.

After our return into the apartment we ended up unpacking our baggage, had a short talk about next day and went to bed. Tomorrow the white beaches of Panama City Beach would be expecting us !