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Titanic on the Moscow River

By Christina Young

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He helps her onto the rim of the large ship, making sure her eyes are closed and she isn't peeking.

"Do you trust me?" he whispers in her ear.

"I trust you!" she replies. She spreads her arms out wide; he holds her waist to keep her from falling.

She opens her eyes and is delighted by what she sees. "I'm flying! I'm flying, Jack!" She cries out.

We all utter a collective sigh and forget for a moment that we're not in the ocean, but in the heart of Moscow, that we're not on a ship but at the park around a fountain, and that the man up there holding onto Rose (played by blogger Lera Lyubarskaya) isn't Leonardo DiCaprio but his larger Russian look-alike, Roman Burtsev.

Pause on Roman Burtsev. Are we sure that DiCaprio hasn't just put on a few pounds?

The two look amazingly alike, especially in person. Maybe we've found his long-lost twin.

But no, it turns out that a few years before the fateful day when the world found him, Roman Burtsev was your average Russian citizen. He worked as an IT specialist and had never even seen "Titanic." But everything changed when he posted a picture of himself on a dating website. People noticed the striking similarity, and he soon got invitations to play DiCaprio in several short films and a television show.

Although life in front of the camera has its perks, Roman is a nice, quiet person who would prefer to stay in the background instead of the spotlight that he keeps finding himself in. He's now back to his hometown and old job, but on weekends he still sometimes plays DiCaprio.

The Titanic "remake" filmed at VDNKh Park is part of a festival beginning in August. Professionals and amateurs can compete with their own three-minute parodies of famous movies, called "Sweding." The director of the festival, Yuri Strelyukhin, urged everyone to participate: "Everyone who has a smartphone and an imagination has a chance to become a hero and an award-winner at the festival."

So if you have big dreams in film and a smartphone to capture it on — and we're thinking it probably won't hurt if you're also the doppelgänger of the latest Oscar-winning actor or actress — then join the Russian DiCaprio and submit your own movie parody.

For more information on entering or watching the film festival, see the website **sweding.ru.**

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