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On and Off the Trans-Siberian Train: The Pregnant Woman

The Mesto47 team meets a woman about to have a baby.

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Yekaterinburg

Pregnant woman, 37 years old

Today is my last day of freedom; I have a C-section appointment for tomorrow. And that's it. I will have to breastfeed a baby, no more breakfasts at a café for me. *(Editor's Note: Mesto47 team met the woman in a coffee shop*) I can't say that I dislike children, it's just that I would have liked to live freely. But my husband insisted. I'm having babies just to satisfy my husband.

I met him on Odnoklassniki (*Editor's Note: Russian version of Facebook.*) I was working at the airport, and they gave me free internet access. Before the IT guy cut off my access to social media, my husband wrote me a message.

From the very beginning I knew it was a boy. After the first baby I could not get pregnant and went to see an astrologist. Together with a colleague from the airport, we went all the way to an opposite side of Yekaterinburg to see her. Her room really impressed us; it had star alliances and horoscope signs all over it.

When she asked me my exact time of birth, she said, "You have a close connection to your father. When you make peace with him, everything will work out. Things will get stable." She also said that she saw two boys in my house and that the place for conception would not be Yekaterinburg. It would be a two-day trip away from the Ural Mountains.

At that point my relationship with my father was ugly. I had a big grudge against him. I had a little sister. When she was twenty, in her second year of college, they found a tumor in her head. Exactly the same diagnosis as Janna Friske. *(Editor's Note, Janna Friske was a famous Russian pop singer who died from a brain tumor.*) During the three years of my little sister's cancer treatment my father did not support my mother morally or, needless to say, financially.

We fought endlessly. I would kick him out of the house, insisted that he and my mom get a divorce. He was drinking. But my parents are affected by this mentality of being raised in a village. If you get married, it is only one time for your whole life. A divorce just because your husband is drinking and he is not helping? Unspeakable! What can you do? He's the husband and father. The master of the house. Our men are weak, and I had to take the responsibility for my sister's upbringing on my shoulders. She fought the disease for three years and then died.

Anger against my father was accumulating, but after the astrologist's advice I started saying hello to him when I came to visit my mom. I might not have forgiven him fully, but I just forgot about it, tried to ignore it, because my husband wanted children and a family. And it worked. After this incident my husband went on a business trip to Astana, two days by train from Yekaterinburg, and I got pregnant.

I do believe that fortune-telling is nonsense. But following some kind of advice is different. For example, you have to make peace with your father for something to happen. Fortune-telling and energy are two different things.

At the moment it's hard for me physically. I can barely get up, sit down or lay down. Women should give birth before they are 35, it is probably part of their nature. Now, when an app on my phone tells me that walking somewhere will take 30 minutes, I calculate an hour.

After giving birth I will miss travelling. When you fly to Asia, everything is spicy, a lot of seafood, sometimes even an adult would be scared to try some food. You have to always think about the child. When the child is born, we will move to Sochi. The climate in the Urals is bad: a long winter and spring, and my husband and I like it when it is warm and green.

I will call him Jan. It's an ancient Jewish name. His father is Ruslan. His patrynomic would be difficult, that's why I went for a short name. (*Editor's Note: In Russia, a person's middle*

name is derived from his or her father's name).

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