

CREATING OUR HAPPY ENDING

By Yuri Kutepov

I had been a member of the Church for 10 years when I received a confirmation that I needed to begin looking for a companion. I understood the doctrine of celestial marriage, and I had prayed fervently to have such a marriage and to be able to create a family. I didn't know how I would find a Latter-day Saint woman in Samara, Russia, where I lived, but I trusted that the Lord would help me (see 1 Nephi 3:7).

In 2009 I was invited to participate in a series of single adult conferences to be held in 10 cities throughout the Russia Samara Mission. I hoped that these activities might be the means by which I could meet my eternal companion.

I was happy to attend the conferences, which were fulfilling in many ways, but months passed and I still had not developed any dating relationships.

I began to worry and asked the Lord to help me. In response, thoughts came into my mind warning me that I might be tempted to pursue relationships outside the Church.

I knew that the prophets had taught that we should strive to marry in the temple, and I knew that it would be impossible to have a fullness of joy if my spouse and I weren't united in striving to follow the Savior. I continued to pray to have the spiritual strength to withstand such temptations and to have the Lord's help in following His plan for me.

In the meantime, I began preparing for my regular trip to the Helsinki Finland Temple, where I would spend a week.

On the train I met three other travelers, including a woman named Mariya, who I learned was single. She was captivating both physically and spiritually, and I wondered why I hadn't met any women like her

I'd been praying to find my eternal companion, but I didn't expect to find her sitting next to me on the train to the temple!

before. I thought back to my earlier warning about being tempted to pursue a relationship outside the Church.

"Be strong," I thought. "Be true to your principles. You'll find a worthy and wonderful sister in the Church."

Thinking that I could at least be a good member missionary and perhaps share the gospel with her, and needing inspiration, I pulled out my

copy of the Book of Mormon to read, wondering if she would notice. To my surprise, Mariya exclaimed, “I think I know where you are going!”

I looked up to see her holding her own copy of the Book of Mormon. She was a member of the Church too and was also on her way to the temple.

The next morning we continued our trip to Helsinki by bus. I learned that Mariya was from Voronezh, a city in the Russia Moscow West Mission. I liked her immediately and prayed fervently for direction. In response, I experienced good feelings in my heart.

“Lord, we have only one week at the temple,” I prayed. “Please help us to get to know each other better during this time.”

And we did. Between sessions in the temple, we took walks, shared meals, went to the store, and talked. At the end of the week, we both went home—Mariya to Voronezh and I to Samara. But we traveled to each other’s cities to get to know each other better, and on September 14, 2010, we were married in the newly dedicated Kyiv Ukraine Temple.

Mariya and I now live in Voronezh and are happy. We understand that it is fairy tales that end with the phrase “and they lived happily ever after.” In real life we create our own happy endings through continually proving our faithfulness to the Lord by

keeping our temple covenants, continuing to work on strengthening our marriage, and striving to be like Jesus Christ.

We are grateful for our miraculous meeting and hope that our story will kindle hope and give strength to others who are searching for their eternal companions. Others’ stories may not turn out as ours did, but Mariya and I know that no matter what the challenges, the Lord hears our sincere prayers. He loves each of us and is concerned about each of us. If we let Him, He will guide our paths and let all things work together for our good (see D&C 90:24). ■

The author lives in Voronezh, Russia.



GOD’S MAP TO HAPPINESS

“We all search for happiness, and we all try to find our own ‘happily ever after.’ The truth is,

God knows how to get there! And He has created a map for you; He knows the way. He is your beloved Heavenly Father, who seeks your good, your happiness. He desires with all the love of a perfect and pure Father that you reach your supernal destination. The map is available to all.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Your Happily Ever After,” *Ensign*, May 2010, 126–27.

