

My mother was born in 1959, in a small mining industry town, Schrabe, in Tajikistan. It was a rather rough time for my family. My great-grandmother and grandmother along with others had been re-settled to Tajikistan from Korea. It is hard to live in one of those mining settlements, because there is just nothing. This resettlement happened in 1937. Shortly before the war. The relatives told different versions of this story. And it is hard for me because I neither trust the documents nor my relatives. There is a tradition in our family - we meet every two months, talk via Skype with everyone from the family und discuss matters. Old photographs are brought up. Lately we do this very intensely. Many stories, (I am not sure how many of those happen to be myths), are being told. About gypsies, lost children, about stealing berries from other people's farms. Mainly such tales.

When I was six my mother got sick from Guillain-Barre syndrome, which is a rare neurological disease. She spent several months in a hospital bed. For a while she was paralyzed. She could neither walk nor talk. When she returned home there had to be somebody with her to support her, always. We spent that entire time together. When I came home from school, she always was there. This led to a very tight bond between us. When I entered puberty there was a period in which she constantly was worried. Since her disease made her different from others, she was afraid our relationship might suffer from that. Almost every day she asked me if I felt ashamed for her. At school I had an entirely different set of issues, hence my strange appearance. I looked different to anyone else. My mother did not understand that at all. Exactly that lack of understanding was devastating, somewhat overpowering, as I could not understand why I got bullied at school, my backpack taken away and called things like „Slit eyed bastard, go back to your shitty Pakistan!“ (laughs). My mom interpret this like so, that everyone during parents' council must have noticed her disability and took that for the cause. But it was not about that! My bullies actually hit me a little less hard after that and they said they felt sorry for my mom.

I finally convinced her to allow me to change for another school, which helped me much. I changed my social environment. My life was about to be fine again. (laughs)  
That's a weird special feature about my mom. She doesn't identify at all and never reflects on the topic of ethnic heritage. She has a very clear point which is: As she is in Russia, lives in Russia, speaks Russian, she has to act like a Russian. But that is not possible.

Her younger brother, she has two, one of them is a police man in Moscow, said to my mother: „What do you want in that Kindergarden of yours? You should come to Moscow, it is fun with us.“ And my mother said: „Actually, why shouldn't I? I might as well come to Moscow.“ First she attended courses and from a teacher she changed to being a coroner which she talks vividly about: „Imagine someone killing three people, and then I come for him to examine ...“ (laughs) All of her stories are of similar intensity. And if one asks further: „Mom, are you serious about that?“ She adds: „And the girls at work brought those amazing lipsticks!“ How does she do that?

Whenever I look at my parents, I ask myself why they live together. They actually do not match at all. Dad was the dearest, kindest, best, most magic human on this world. He's a true Russian guy. In my memory I have images connected to my father, such as when he came from work he smelled of work. Simply disgusting, of some old fuel and old trucks, of car wheels. That was rather not nice. Means, only after mom helped him undress and gave him a good wash he was allowed to see the children. Only after that I could talk to him. Otherwise she used to yell: „Don't you touch my baby!“ Of course such contrast stays in one's mind.