TRAIN TO MOSCOW

"Sasha, come to the kitchen. I have something to show you!" Papa called out.

"Just a minute Papa, I'll be right there." I replied to my father as I finished putting on my pants.

I ran to the kitchen. "What is it Papa, what do you want?" I asked out of breath.

"We've have received some very good news. Your brother is getting married, and he has invited us to come to Moscow for the wedding," his father gave the good news to everyone in the family.

"MOSCOW! Wow, we've never been to Moscow. How are we going to get to Moscow? It's so far away," my sister Irina asked.

"We'll take a train to Chelyabinsk then transfer to another train to Moscow. We'll stay two days with your cousins in Chelyabinsk. It's a long trip so you'll need to pack many things," Papa explained.

That was four months ago.

The next day we would be leaving from Novosibirsk on the train to Moscow for the wedding. We had been making plans for this several weeks.

Papa spoke up during dinner.

"The train will be leaving tomorrow at eight o'clock so you need to pack your things for the trip," Papa explained.

Two years ago our brother Pavel moved to Moscow to find work. He had sent us pictures of the places he had visited. We were excited to be going to Moscow.

All that day my sister and I prepared for the trip. We would be gone for two weeks so there was so much to do. We packed our clothes, some books to read, our favorite music and extra blankets to keep warm on the train. What we were most excited about was we were going to miss two weeks of school. Papa made us pack our textbooks and workbooks. He had gotten our homework assignments from our teachers so we could to do our work on the train. It was still exciting, even though we would have to do our schoolwork on the train.

We could hardly sleep that night. Irina and I talked about the adventure. We talked about walking around the city and seeing all the new things we had never seen before. We talked about meeting Pavel's new family, and we wondered if they had any children our age. We spoke about what we might do and see while riding the train. We talked until we finally drifted off to sleep.

In the morning, Papa awakened us. He came into our room and turned on the light. It was still dark outside.

"Get up you lazy children! It's 6:00 and we have to eat breakfast before we go to the train station. Hurry up, we don't have much time," he said with a big smile on his face.

We jumped out of bed. We had slept in our clothes so we wouldn't have to waste time getting dressed. When momma saw that our clothes had wrinkles in them, she got upset, and told us we had to change our clothes before we could eat our breakfast. She wasn't very happy with us.

When we finished changing our clothes, we went to the kitchen. Momma had breakfast on the table. It looked so delicious! She made us sausage and kasha with pieces of fruit on top. We also had hot tea and bread.

"Come on everyone, it's time to leave," Papa said.

He was already dressed in his heavy coat and hat. He had put our bags alongside of Momma's at the front door.

The car was running, and it was warm when we got inside. It was a cold morning

in our village for November.

It took twenty minutes to get to the train station. We had to park the car and get our bags out of the back.

We went inside and Papa looked at the big sign in the station to find our train.

“There’s our train. It’s number 257. Hurry, we only have a few minutes before it leaves,” Papa said, as he hurried toward the train.

We followed behind dragging our bags on the ground because they were so heavy.

Papa had purchased our tickets in advance, so all we had to do was board the train and find our rooms. It would take two days to get to Chelyabinsk.

We were so excited we could hardly stand it. This was going to be a great adventure.

We found our rooms and put our luggage away. There were four beds in the room. Two of them folded away during the day. The room was small and had only one window. There was a place to put our bags under the bed, but not much else to see. The walls were nothing special.

We had to stay in our room until the man came to check our identification and tickets. Irina and I were eager to explore the train, but we had to wait. The train began to move out of the station. We looked out the small window as the people were coming and going. It was a very busy place.

A little while later a man came to our room and checked our papers. Everything was OK, so he smiled and gave us our papers back. As soon as the man left, we begged Papa to let us explore.

“Papa, Papa, can we explore the train?” we asked.

He said, “OK”.

Our parents spent most of the time in the room reading and relaxing. We prepared to explore and see all we could see on the train.

This was the first trip our family had taken in many years so our parents wanted us to make the most of our time together.

We ran out of the door and almost ran into a lady in the hallway.

“Slow down children. You might hurt someone,” she said, while regaining her balance. “Where are you going so fast?”

“We’re going to explore the train,” we answered.

“Have you ever been on a train before?” she asked.

“No,” we replied.

“Would you like me to show you the train?” she asked. “I’ve been traveling on this train for many years. I think I’ve explored every inch of the train, and I can show all of the special things you can do.”

“That would be great!” we answered.

After passing through many passenger cars, she showed us the dining car first.

“Do you want something to eat or drink?” she asked.

“Maybe later, when our parents are with us,” Irina answered. “They want us to eat together.”

The train was crowded with people going to Chelyabinsk. There were small tables against the wall with windows overlooking the scenery as we left the city and moved out into the countryside. Four people could sit at one of the tables. The meals were an extra charge, but we could choose what we wanted to eat. The dining car wasn’t very pretty. We had thought it would be very elegant but instead it was very plain.

We had brought a lot of food with us that our mother had prepared, so we would not have to spend the extra money on food in the dining car. We could get hot water or tea when we asked for it.

The next car we came to had hard wooden seats. We were glad our parents had gotten us a room with beds.

The people who were there, tried to get comfortable sitting as best as they could on the hard seats. Above the seats was a place to put personal items. The large windows looked out onto the fields as we passed by.

The interior of the train did not look at all like the pictures of the trains we had

seen in school that went across our country a long time ago.

We wanted to explore more of the train to see if anything on this train was exciting.

We met some children, and they asked us to play some games. We went off to play with them, but before we left, we thanked the nice woman for showing us the train.

A while later, the kids we were playing with had to go back to their room. We sat on the seats in the passenger car, and since there wasn't much to do, we stared out of the windows as the train moved closer to Chelyabinsk. Snow covered the countryside. The sun was bright and glistened off the snow that hung on the trees with so much weight that the branches hung low to the ground. We saw a few animals, but other than that, the view out of the window did not change much.

When we got tired we went to the room to take a short nap, which ended up lasting two hours.

The train came to a stop, which woke us up. It was now dinner time. We were allowed to get off the train while new passengers boarded. We found a place to get some snacks. Papa let us pick out what we wanted.

While we were looking at the things inside of the train station we heard the announcement that the train would be leaving, and we knew it was time to return to the train.

"Train number 257 will leaving in two minutes from platform number two. Passengers are requested to board immediately," the announcement came over the loudspeakers.

We quickly finished what we were doing and ran to the train. The man looked at our passports and tickets and then we got back onto the train.

It was getting dark so we stayed in our room with our parents. We prepared ourselves for bed and we slept on the train. It was hard to fall asleep, so Irina and I talked through most of the night.

The next afternoon we arrived in Chelyabinsk. My aunt and uncle live there. They

invited us to stay in their flat for a couple of days. We traveled around the city while our uncle gave us a tour of the famous places. He took us to a wonderful pizza restaurant and to the park. We went to the pedestrian park and looked at all of the artwork that lines the walkway. There were statues and paintings we admired as we walked from one end to other. We admired the architecture of the buildings with their bright colors. We especially liked going to look at the small vendors who sold handmade items. We bought a few small souvenirs to take with us as gifts to Moscow.

The time came for us to leave for Moscow. My mother's family joined us for this part of the journey. We had fun playing with our cousins.

The next train was very similar to the first. It was not beautiful at all.

It would be than two more days until we arrived in Moscow. We did our schoolwork and played games with our cousins.

When we arrived in Moscow, our brother was at the train station to meet us. He had a big smile on his face. He was excited to see us. He gave us all a big hug, and then took us to his car. His car was smaller than our car back home. It was crowded riding in his car with all of our bags.

It took about two hours to get to his flat. The traffic in Moscow was terrible. We had never seen anything like it before. We will never complain about the traffic in Novosibirsk again.

His flat was small, but warm. Irina and I would have to sleep on the floor. We did not mind too much. At least it was quieter than on the train.

The next two days went by fast. There was so much to do to prepare for the wedding. We liked his fiancé's family very much. They were very kind to us.

We were happy and excited for our brother. We got to know his new family very well.

The day of the wedding came. The wedding reception was beautiful. We had so much fun. We danced and ate too much food. We were very tired and slept very well that night.

We spent two more days in Moscow. We got to see the museums, Red Square and the Kremlin. We had never seen such a place as this before. We took many pictures to show our friends back in school.

The time came for us to return home. Papa invited Pavel and his new bride to come and visit us in Novosibirsk during the summer when the weather would be warmer. They agreed to come to see us. They said they would take an airplane.

I thought to myself, “Now that’s a good idea!”

The next day we had to leave. We said goodbye and gave hugs to everyone.

The train to Novosibirsk was newer than the one that had brought us to Moscow, but it was still very plain. We missed the fun we had experienced on the old train. However, we had many pictures to show our friends.

We were quiet and sad on the train going home. Our great trip was just about over, and we would be going back to our regular schedule. Even though the train wasn’t as exciting as we had dreamed, we had many memories of our adventures on the train to Moscow.

VOCABULARY: *(Match the word its definition)*

1. transfer ____	a. wife-to-be
2. blanket ____	b. homework
3. assignments ____	c. rest
4. explore ____	d. change trains
5. classmate ____	e. passageway
6. couple ____	f. search
7. relax ____	g. journey, quest
8. fiancée ____	h. warm covering, coverlet
9. adventure ____	i. two
10. hallway ____	j. fellow student

TRUE / FALSE:

1. We were going to Moscow. T / F
2. It was summer time. T / F
3. We were planning to take an airplane. T / F
4. Our brother moved to Chelyabinsk. T / F
5. We visited our aunt and uncle. T / F
6. Our brother's name is Pavel . T / F
7. The trip was going to take three weeks. T / F
8. My sister's name is Irina. T / F
9. We had kasha for breakfast. T / F
10. We didn't want to miss school. T / F

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

1. Where we going for the wedding? ____
    a) Novosibirsk
    b) Chelyabinsk
    c) Moscow
    d) London

2. How long was the trip going to take? ____
    a) five days
    b) two weeks
    c) a month
    d) we changed our minds

3. Who showed us the train? ____
    a) a friend
    b) a lady
    c) the officer
    d) our parents

4. Where did we stop to see our cousins? ____
    a) Novosibirsk
    b) Moscow
    c) Dudinka
    d) Chelyabinsk

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. What did we have for breakfast before we left?

   _____

2. How did we get to the train station?

   _____

3. What is my sister's name?

   _____

4. What did Papa get from our teachers?

   _____

5. How many people can sit at one table on the train?

   _____

6. Whom did we play games with on the train?

   _____

7. Where did Irina and I sleep at Pavel's house?

   _____

8. Who went with us to Moscow?

   _____

9. What were we going to show our friends at school?

   _____

10. Was the trip a fun adventure?

    _____