

## Suzy, Come Home!

I am willing to bet I was lucky enough to get the best host mom in all of Ukraine. Olena is wonderful; I have made a friend for life in her. For sure, I doubt I would have made it through training without her loving support. She hugged me when I cried, took care of me when I got sick, and made me laugh time and time again. We went for walks and watched TV. One of my favorite moments took place shortly after I arrived and we were still just getting to know each other. We sat on the couch together and watched "Ghost." The movie was in Ukrainian, but I knew the storyline so was able to follow along. In the end we sat there and cried together. Love is a universal language, and I think our love for each other began to bloom during that movie.

Since getting to site I have missed her a great deal. We email and talk occasionally, and finally I made plans for a visit. She called one day to confirm our arrangements, and in her cute, broken English said, "Suzy, come home!" And so I did, and it was wonderful.

Although COS is still a year away for me, I find myself thinking of my final days here in Ukraine and for my future back in the US. My plans change constantly, but one thing remains constant – My goodbye visit to Olena will be the last one on my list; I want my farewell to her to be the one on the top of my heart.



*Before coming to Ukraine I had a small business making Peaceful Hearts Dolls – little dolls with the message 'When my heart is at peace, the world is at peace' wrapped around a heart and tucked inside each one. Here is Olena and the doll I gave her.*

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