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The Method

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Maxine Chernoff

THE METHOD

—If I have twins, I'll name them Medusa and Circe.

—And what if your twins are boys?

—I won't have boys.

—What do you mean you won't have boys?

—I want a girl.

—But women have boys all the time.

—I'm having a baby girl.

—But you can't be sure of that. You get what you get.

—I'm using a method.

—What kind of method?

—You have sex during ovulation to have a girl and sex before ovulation to have a boy.

—Why does that work?

—It has something to do with the sperm's mobility, but maybe I'm getting it wrong. Maybe you have sex before ovulation to get the girl.

—Didn't you say that already?

—Maybe. I can't remember.

—If you can't get the method straight, how are you going to use it?

—I have a book at home. A lady in Massachusetts invented the method.

—Do you have to have sex in Massachusetts?

—It works anywhere. It's ninety per cent accurate.

—The other ten per cent are boys?

—The other ten per cent are whatever the person doesn't want.

—And then what?

—And then what what?

—And then what do you do?

—I guess you try again next time.

—But what do you do with the baby?

—What baby?

—The one you've had who's the wrong sex.

—I don't know. Maybe you give it away.

—To that lady.

—What lady?

—The one in Massachusetts whose method you used and failed with.

—Why would she want my baby?

—She wouldn't. I'm kidding.

—This is a serious matter. It's about who lives and who dies.

—I am serious. Here's a baby you don't want. It's wearing a blue blanket. Its name is Jeff. Now what are you going to do with Jeff?

—I'm going to give him to you.

—Why would I want your baby?

—You've expressed concern, so if it's a boy, you can have him.

—But I'm not married. I don't even have a girlfriend.

—Well, congratulations anyway. You're the father of a boy. I think you named him Jeff.

—What about his real father?

—He doesn't have a father.

—How can that be?

—I'm getting inseminated at a clinic.

—Well, maybe the clinic will want the baby. You know, potential customers can see what kind of baby they can expect. The way they display food at Japanese restaurants.

—That's silly.

—Then who's going to take Jeff?

—I'm giving him to you. We're pretty good friends, at work at least.