

Sheindlia Krishtal's Husband Shabsai Khandros



My husband Shabsai Khandros. Photographed at the construction of Dnepropetrovsk missile plant "Avtobud", 1947.

At the end of 1947 Shabsai Khandros, (he was generally called Sasha) returned from the construction of automobile factory. He became head of the department of propaganda in the "Youth of Ukraine" newspaper. I transmitted my materials to him by phone. This was how we met. We had food coupons and went together to have meals at the canteen in 22, Vorovskogo Street. He began to court me - he brought me a little food to the train when I was going on business one day. Or he would put an orange into my desk when oranges were hard to get. Sasha was a taciturn man and when he said something it was interesting and smart. We began to date and built up very warm relationships.

In 1949 we got married. Since we were both journalists I decided against changing my last name to my husband's and remained Krishtal. After the civil ceremony our colleagues arranged a wedding party for us in the office. They bought a bottle of champagne and changed the sign "Champagne" to Komsomol youth wedding #1" and also glued our photos on the label. They also gave us a beautiful set of dishes made in Czechoslovakia - I still have 3 pieces from it. So, we celebrated our Komsomol youth wedding in our basement in Vorovskogo Street.

In 1949 Sasha got a problem during his night shift at the printing house - the central committee of the Communist party discovered a typo in the newspaper. This happened during the period of struggle against cosmopolitanism and the Central Committee insisted that he was dismissed. He was deeply upset about it and we all felt sorry for him, but his boss couldn't help him, because they got instructions from higher authorities. Sasha was a war veteran and had an order of the Great Patriotic War and few medals. He wrote letters to all newspapers looking for justice and even the "Komsomol Truth", a most popular newspaper in the former USSR, published his letter, but there

was nothing to do.

His editor valued him high and gave him a job assignment in Donbass. He lived there at the hotel and we corresponded for whole year. Later our editor Mr. Statipko was promoted and replaced by Mr. Kolomiets, a former secretary for propaganda of the Chernovtsy regional Party committee. We worked together in Western Ukraine and developed nice relationships. Kolomiets was aware that Sasha and I were close and assured me that he would help. He helped to return Khandros to the propaganda department in Kiev, only Sasha couldn't be restored on his former position.

After the wedding we didn't have a place to live. Sasha lived with his mother in two rooms that they were renting, his younger sister Zhenia lived in another room with her husband Zhenia and son Lyonia. I moved to my husband and we settled down in a small room. Sasha needed a desk to write. He bought a desk that occupied three fourths of our room. We also had a narrow steel bed. We didn't observe any Jewish traditions. It wasn't popular to lead a religious way of life and religiosity was persecuted. Our landlady leased apartments in the house where we lived to Jewish families, so we had Jewish neighbors.

This was the period of persecution of Jews, but we couldn't speak our mind, even though we understood that there was much injustice.

The Central Committee of the Party founded the "Rabochaya Gazette" and Sasha was recommended to this newspaper as one of the best journalists. His colleague Elena Riabukha said to me once: "You know how people call your husband? They call him tsadik - he is so very special". This is exactly what Sasha was like: smart, intelligent and decent.