

Jakub Bromberg's Son With Fellow Soldiers In The Israeli Army During The Yom Kippur War



This is my son, photographed when he was serving in the Israeli army. The photo was taken in Cairo in 1973.

My son was difficult to raise, disobedient. When he was growing up, he was eager to get in a fight. He didn't know what he was doing, he'd later apologize. That's what the doctors told me: that he was growing up too quickly. One time I was coming home, I noticed lots of neighbors in front of the

house. 'Mister, where were you?' 'What happened?' It turned out that he was shouting that they're beating daddy. He had opened the window and shouted: 'They're beating daddy, beating daddy, they'll kill him, they're beating him!' When I came in, he said that it was only a dream. He opened the window and shouted into the backyard. He's resourceful, talented, but he's got a difficult temperament. But I loved him so much. We slept in the same room. I was the one who bathed him, I washed his clothes, took him to all these theaters. When he was leaving for summer camp, I'd see him off. I took him to school on my bicycle. I picked him up from school. We used to ride on the motorcycle everywhere. I thought I had a genius at home. A talented, beautiful boy.

In 1962 they kidnapped him from the house. There was this communist organization. They hit my soft spot, because I was criticizing them for doing repulsive things. They dragged him out of school, they hid him in an old folks' home in Lodz. He was out of the house for three and a half years, from 1962 to 1965. Finally, they arranged for him to go to see his mother, to Israel. He was a good-looking boy, handsome. He left for Israel, joined the army, as a recruit. He fought in two wars. He survived.

When the first Israeli war broke out, when Jews won it within six days and conquered all those Arab countries, he fought in this war. He even sent me a Hebrew newspaper, I remember only the Polish version of the title, which was 'Szanuj jedyna pamiatke' - 'Respect Your Only Keepsake'. There were pictures of him at the front. I am still surprised that this newspaper ever made it to me. The relations between Poland and Israel were very bad at that time. Poles were friends with Arabs. I showed this newspaper at work. I showed it, because it was said that Jews shoot onions from a crooked barrel. That's what Poles thought: that Jews are cowards. 'Jojne karabin' [crooked barrel], that's how the saying used to go. I showed them: 'See, this is my son, these are the generals, General Dayan, here are the Arabs, you could see everyone there, and tanks too.'