

Chaya Sakhartova With Her Son Boris Sakhartov And His Wife Lora



This picture was taken on the occasion of my 80th anniversary in the 'Sem sorock' restaurant in St. Petersburg in 2001. My son Boris, 56 years old, is standing beside me and my daughter-in-law, from Odessa, Lora Sakhartova, she is 44 years old. They came from Los Angeles, where they live now, to celebrate my birthday.

During the war I married Zalman Yakovlevich Sakhartov. He was born in Polotsk, but lived in Leningrad before we met. Zalman was Jewish but not religious. In 1945 my son Boris Zalmanovich Sakhartov was born in Leningrad.

In 1962 our son Boris finished school and tried to enter the Faculty of Mathematics and Mechanics at Leningrad State University. Here we faced anti-Semitism again. The fact is that he studied very well, he always got excellent marks for his essays, and suddenly he got a bad mark for his entrance exam essay. When he called and told me about it, I asked the Russian teacher at our school to join me, and we went to the university to take a look at the essay together. But they didn't show it to us. They offered to accept Boris at the part-time faculty without additional exams, but Boris refused and entered the Faculty of Mathematics at the Pedagogical University named after Herten. In 1976 Boris immigrated to Los Angeles, America, with his family. I was immediately fired after that. A year later my husband emigrated there too, but he died en route in Milwaukee of a heart attack.

Boris' wife's name is Lora, she is a very nice woman. In 1977 Boris' son Ilya was born *[Editor's note: the son's name is Eliot and was born to his first wife]*. My son's son is already grown-up. His name is Ilya, he is 24 years old and he is a programmer. He was eleven the last time I saw him. It was the time of perestroika and I was allowed to travel abroad. I spent three months at my son's place in Los Angeles. When I came there, it seemed to me that I had arrived in a different world, everything was so unlike Russia. I liked it there but I couldn't live there: it is a country foreign to me, with a culture of its own, that I cannot understand.