

Tombstone Of Yakov Kil'



This is the tombstone of my husband Yakov Kil' at the Jewish cemetery in Riga. The picture was taken in 2000.

My husband was born on 31st October 1931 in Dvinsk, in my father's native town. His name is Yakov according to the passport, but the double name Evsey-Yankle is written in his birth certificate. There were four children in the family. The family was very religious. All traditions were observed. The children were raised Jewish. During the war the family was in the evacuation. Then they moved to Riga. My husband finished compulsory school, worked at a plant.

We lived in our basement apartment after I got married. My mother and sister occupied one room, and we the other. Of course, it was hard, but we were young and in love, so we did not fear hardships. In 1960 our son Leo was born. His Jewish name is Leib, after my father-in-law. He had his bris milah. There was a minyan. All was done in line with the rite. It was very dangerous at that time and people were convicted for it. Of course, we did it gingerly, trying to do everything quiet for the neighbors not to hear anything. We could not help doing that. It was very important for me and for my husband that our son was a Jew. In 1969 our daughter Anna was born. We call her Channa at home.

My husband and I always marked Jewish holidays. We did it traditionally as we found it important. Our children knew Jewish traditions, rites. Of course, it was not easy. In Soviet times it was hard to buy matzah. If we could not buy it, we baked it. We had all necessary things. My husband made some notched rolls to make holes in matzah and we baked good matzah at home.

In 1992 my husband died. He was buried in the Jewish cemetery. Of course, he had a traditional Jewish funeral. There was a rabbi, a minyan.