

Rozalia Akselrod's Family



Our small family celebration on my birthday. I, Rozalia Akselrod, Irina, the wife of my son Sasha, and Sasha.

In 1959, Sasha finished school and entered the Kharkov Aviation Institute. There, he met Irina, who studied at the same institute. When they got married, Sasha was a sixth-year student and Irina – a fifth-year student. Irina came from the town of Izhevsk, Udmurtia. When Sasha graduated from the institute and Irina was a sixth-year student, in 1967, she gave birth to their son Igor. She went to her hometown for delivery, stayed there for two months and then returned to Moscow to finish her studies. She did not take any vacation from the university.

In 1986, a great grief befell our family. My husband Semen died. Sasha and I buried him in the common, not the Jewish, graveyard. Irina could not come to the funeral because she was in Izhevsk. And in 1998 another grief came into our family. Sasha was diagnosed with stomach cancer, just like his father. The operation was made by Shalimov, the same surgeon who had operated his father. But the operation did not help, and in 1998, Sasha died. He was only 56 years old.

In 1999, a two-day symposium was organized on the subject of his works. Many scientists from other cities attended it. One academician told me, 'I understand how hard it is for you now. But you are a happy mother. Thank you very much for giving us such a wonderful scientist as your son. Thank you.' I can't say that my loss became lighter after that, but I am glad that the memory of my son lives on in his works.

Sasha is gone for four years now. I continue to live with Irina. She does not want to get married again. She says, 'There will be no one like Sasha. Why should I get something less?' For me, Irina is everything now. I certainly cook for her and look forward to her coming home every day. And while I give her something to eat or do the dishes, she shares with me what projects she is working on. She is now the chief of the Department of the State Committee for Information and Communications. I know this subject well, and she shares with me because she sees that it is the main thing to me. We eat and watch TV together and then go to the kitchen and talk until one

o'clock in the morning. It is very important to me. Because it is easier to get irritated with each other than to understand each other. I don't see myself as being her dependent. We simply live together as close people do.