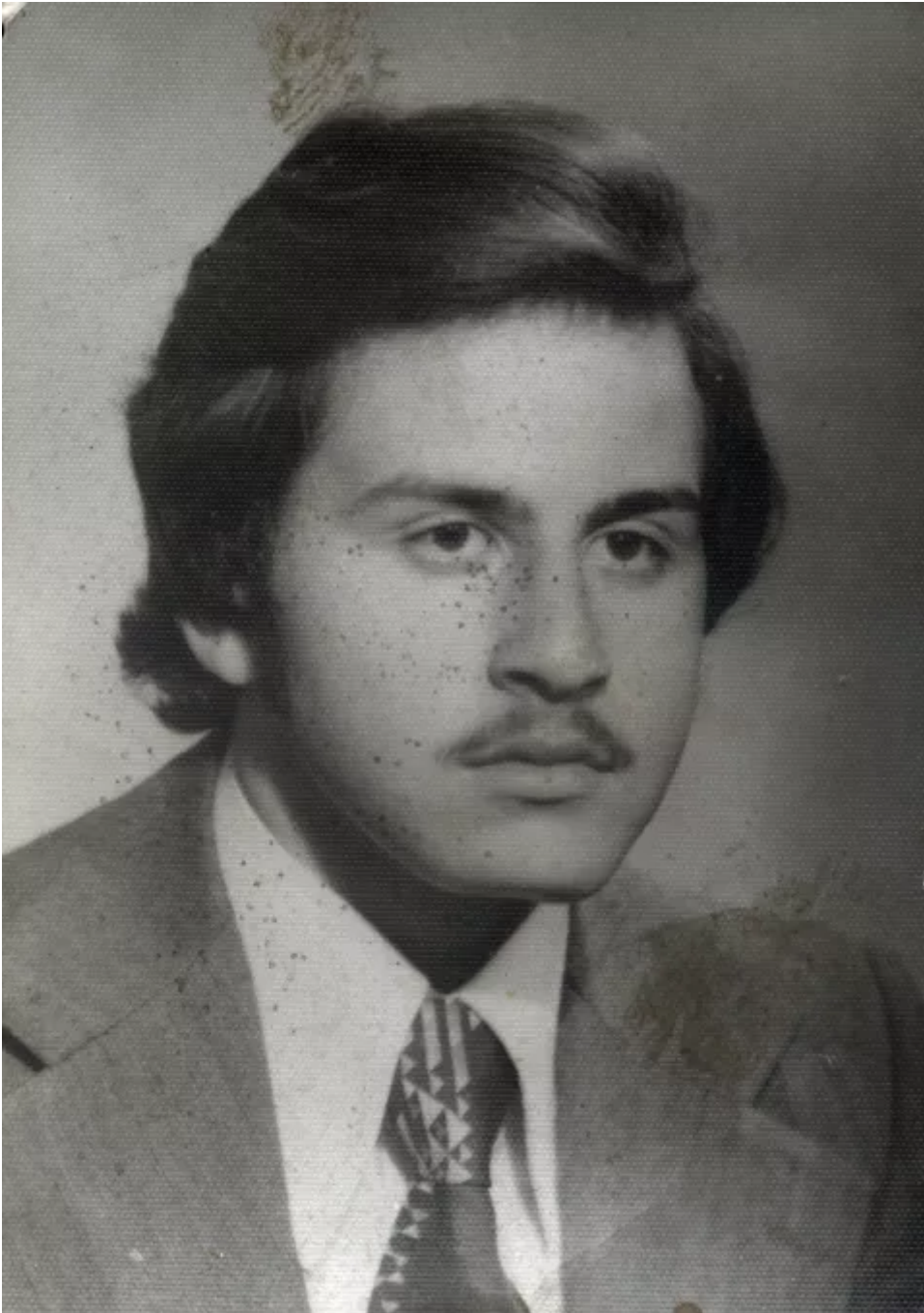


Samuil Almalekh



This is my son Sami as a school leaver. The picture was taken in a photo studio in 1975 in Varna. Our child Samuil Yosif Almalekh (1956) is an electrician. He is single.

When in 1990, on New Year's Eve, my son rushed to go and live in Israel I wrote him a letter and I left it in the outside pocket of a bag of his: 'You should always keep in mind that our street door will always have a green light. You can always enter, come back and stay.' And I left him keys for home in the pocket. Let him always keep in mind that he can always come back. By the law as a new emigrant he had the right to get six-month training in Upan provided by the country. After that he must get a job. Yes, but there were jobs in construction only in theory. When they said a construction technician they thought that he goes to the construction site, grabs the wheel-barrow

and starts building. They don't need managers in technology. I don't know what the situation now is but at that time those highly-educated men replaced their seasonal Arab workers.

He left home in December and on the next 1st March I was already there. I stayed in March and April. I just stood there these two months and observed. At this time my son told me how many jobs he had changed and all of them were the least prestigious possible. At the end of the aliyah they hired him as a head-technician and he worked for six months, but he didn't get a worker to pound the border pegs and he had to do it himself. The night after this work-day his knee was already full of water, because he had a disease. He took three days off to get some injections so he could walk. On the fourth day he showed up at work and they told him: 'Go home! We don't need any sick people!'

After my sister's death in 1992 I lost 17 kilos. My hands used to shake. I used to have that crazy insomnia, because I looked after her till her last breath. After her death I was driven to a sanatorium and burglars broke into her house and took whatever they could. Before it was a year after my sister's death some relatives of mine went back to Israel. They were here for the summer. They told my son about my condition. He came back to Bulgaria. He found a pile of medications on the table and he understood this was not going to work like that. He spent one more year in Israel so he could repay the subsidies he had been given at the beginning and he came back to Bulgaria. He had worked only for ten months of his three year stay there. Now Sami works for a construction company in Varna. We live together since my age does not allow us to keep two apartments and two households.