

## With My Second Husband Erdal



This is a photograph taken in a restaurant after I was married to Erdal.

One of the biggest turning points of my life was my marriage to Erdal Evgin. Erdal was a business major and a very decent person. We lived in Kurtuluş. He had lost his wife too. But he had taken a step towards remarrying, and was living with a very attractive lady named Viki. We were friends. Erdal went on a trip and brought me a perfume and a scarf. My son commented immediately "mom, a man who brings perfume from a trip has different intentions". "Don't be silly", I scolded my son. One Sunday morning, I left home and saw Erdal at the window. When I saw him at the window again on my return, I asked "where is Viki?". He signed "We separated". I went up home. A few minutes later the phone rang. It was Erdal calling. He said he wanted to talk to me.

We met at the corner, entered a pastry shop. He went right to the point. He explained that he wanted to marry me. I was surprised, I asked him to give me some time. When I returned home, I told my daughter Erdal's offer. She reacted by saying "They will say that Elsa's grandmother has married a Muslim". But Erdal's family did not react like this at all. Because Erdal's first wife was also Jewish. I wrote a letter to Erdal's first wife's sister who lived in Israel. And I asked her permission for this marriage. I received a positive reply right away. I faced my daughter and convinced her by explaining the difficulties of being alone. In this way, Erdal and I had a civil marriage ceremony. He introduced me to his family. We really loved each other a lot.

Erdal was a person who knew the Jewish traditions and who was very respectful. And I respected his holidays, and the holy nights when the minarets are illuminated. Erdal would not drink alcohol during the Ramadan. My friends also obeyed this rule when we went to a restaurant during this period. We had our most important memory when we bought the flat that we are living in now. The people who sold us the flat thought I was Muslim, and Erdal Jewish. When they saw that my name was Rebeka on the deed, they were surprised. We only had Jewish neighbors in the building. During

Passover, Erdal would fill the trunk of the car with spinach and leeks, and distribute it to everyone.

We went to Cleveland with Erdal during a trip to the United States that we had planned and had his heart checked. This is my fate I think; we stayed in Cleveland for 3 weeks and dealt with heart problems. After we came back, we repeated this trip and had wonderful memories. One morning, he put on his best suit and went to work. He looked in the mirror. "You are very handsome, my husband", I said. A few hours later I received a phone call from his work place. He was already in the hospital and there was nothing to be done. The only thing the doctor said was "you are lucky, ma'am, if he had lived, he was definitely going to be paralyzed".