

Jewish life since
the time of the
Patriotic War based
On the story of
Iryna Aizenberg



I, Iryna, was born on January 3, 1929. Parents were not religious, had communist beliefs. The family spoke Russian. Shortly after my birth, my father went to work as an accountant at the headquarters of the Odesa Railway. In 1933, my father was assigned to go to a village near Odesa to work on improving agriculture. My mother and I followed him there. We had a small farm. My parents



After moving to Odessa in 1936, my father continued to work as an accountant. We got 2 rooms in a communal apartment, it was quite uncomfortable, but there was no other choice. In the same year, my mother gave birth to a little brother. I remember his crib once caught fire, but the nanny saved him in time. In the same year, I went study at the Ukrainian school. Although Jewish traditions were not accepted in the family, no one paid attention to nationality.



I remember the pioneer ceremony in the gym at school: unfortunately my stocking slipped and I tried to fix it before someone noticed. It sounds funny now, but it was so serious when it happened. There were many clubs in our school. We also underwent military training at school. I had many friends of different nationalities. We did not worry about nationality in our family. I didn't encounter anti-Semitism in Odessa. I don't remember much about the arrests in 1937 because



The war began. We were constantly listening to the radio and the announcer's instructions on what to do. Father received a summons to the front. When flights to Odessa began in July 1944, we had to leave.

Mom didn't take many things, she thought that it was all short-lived.



We were going to Stalingrad, and there was food in this train: canned goods and water for free. We did not sit in Stalingrad for a long time. We moved to Engels, Saratov Region, Russia. Then we all moved to the village of Borovo, Kokchetav Region, North Kazakhstan. The locals had never seen Jews before. We were told: "Some Jews are coming - not like us". It did not have a negative meaning. They were good. Due to the climate, I developed many health problems. It did not have a negative meaning. In the summer of 1942, my mother's younger brother Leonid took us to Kzyl-Florida.



At the first we lived with uncle Leonid, but since there was not enough space, my mother rented a room. She went to work at a sulfur plant producing sodium hydrate. She was injured there and could no longer work. I went to work in the canteen at the station. Peeled potatoes, washed dishes. Jewish holidays were also not celebrated in our family during the evacuation. But I remember one distant relative who was constantly praying at home. Later, we went to Zhmerinka by invitation and got an apartment there. We kept in touch with my father. My brother George and I went to school. On May 9, 1945, we heard about the victory.



After my father returned from the war, we moved to Vienna. We lived there from 1945 to 1947. That's when I finished school and came of age. There was a miracle in Vienna, but we did not live a Jewish life.

I missed Odessa the whole time I was in Austria. We lived in well-kept German houses. I remember a beautiful garden.



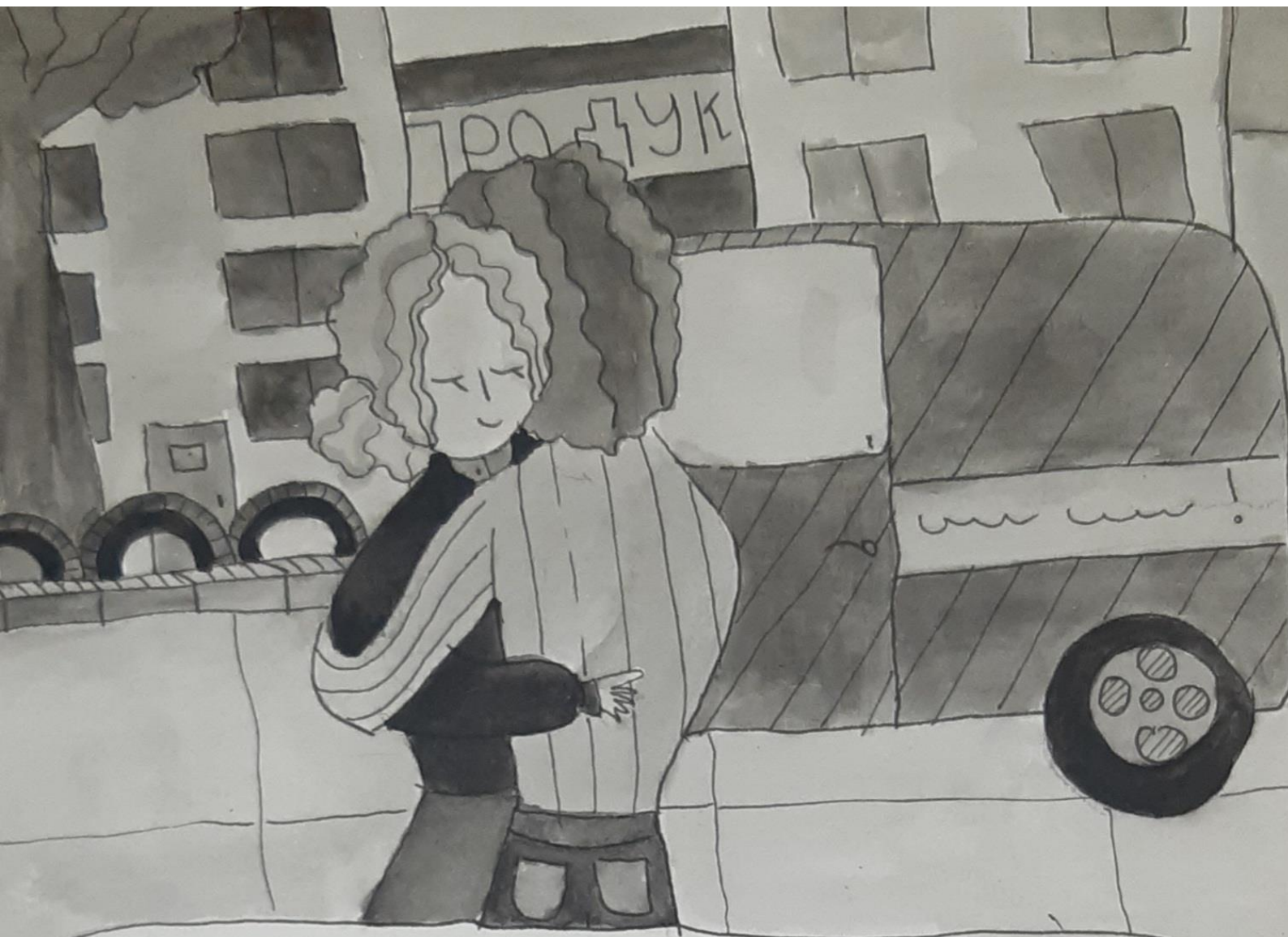
And the end of 1944, we returned to Odessa. At first they lived with our aunts, then we got an apartment. Father worked, mother remained a housewife. Jewish customs were not even mentioned. After graduating from the pedagogical college and technical school in 1952, I went to work as a teacher. I married my distant relative Mykhailo Eisenberg in 1954. Later, our son Sashko was born. He was a very sickly child.



Later I got another job. When Jews started moving to Israel in the 1940s, I was surprised and annoyed because I had been brought up to believe different things. Even my boss, who told us in politics classes that everything would be fine in this country, left. I was the head of the department at the time and I couldn't even take my relatives to the airport because I was afraid that I would be accused of it. However, they understood me and did not reproach me for it. I still communicate with them.



In 1972, the son graduated from technical school and went to work at the Kozhaminnyk factory. Sasha received the position of workshop master. Worked in shifts. In 1973, Sasha joined the army. He married a Russian girl Lyudmila Safronova. In 1974, they had a son. Viktor. Soon Sasha and Lyudmila decided to divorce. In 1985, my son was killed. The killers were found. They did not repent, because they saw nothing wrong in killing a Jew. Later my husband and mother died.



In 1989, my grandson Viktor graduated from school and entered and graduated from the auto mechanic technical school. He also got a driver's license and became a driver. In 1994, the grandson moved to Israel. Viktor works as a driver for the director of the company. Viktor wanted me to go with him. He said: "Grandma, imagine - I will be there alone, and you are here", "I will worry about you". I am worried about my grandson. The situation in Israel is very alarming.



In the 1990s, Jewish life began to revive in Odessa. Now there are two synagogues. There is the Hmitus Hased Jewish Charity Center. I went there for Jewish holidays. I met interesting people there. Thanks to this, I feel more Jewish than in my youth.