

Busia Makalets With Her Husband Yevgeniy Makalets And Her Brothers



This is me, my husband Yevgeniy Makalets and my brothers. This photo was taken in Kishinev in 1947. From left to right: my husband Yevgeniy Makalets, my brother Mikhail Volok, my brother David's first wife Ida, my brother David Volok. Our family was photographed a year after our wedding. I am wearing an outfit, in which I sang in the Moldova choir.

When Kishinev was liberated in 1944, we went there with our Teachers' Training College. On the first days of my stay there I bumped into our neighbor from Bolgrad, who told me that Mama and Papa were shot in 1941. I was a fifth-year student and we lived in a hostel. We often ran to the market to buy some food. In fall we liked 'most' – fresh grape juice. They made young wine from it and farmers were selling it in barrels.

One day my friend Lora Schlein and I bumped into Petre Scherban, her acquaintance. He knew that Lora had a high soprano and I had a contralto. He said that the Republican Radio Committee was organizing the 'Moldova' choir. Lora and I went for the audition. I sang a Moldovan song; singing a Jewish song was out of the question considering the times. I got a job and entered the Vocal Department in the Conservatory. My teacher was Professor Dolev, who taught Ognivtsev, a Soviet singer, soloist of the Bolshoy Theater. I noticed a young man in the choir. He was wearing a military uniform and sang in the tenor group. I asked my friend Liya Barladian, 'Who is this guy whose eyes are burning like the eternal fire?' and she replied, 'He is a very gifted boy, very gifted! He studies at the Composer's Department of the Conservatory.' Well, this was my future husband Yevgeniy Makalets.

When I met Yevgeniy, I was renting a small room with a window in the ceiling. That was when I read a book about artists entitled 'The attic of dreams.' Shortly afterward we registered our marriage and my landlady allowed Yevgeniy to move into 'the attic of dreams.' I quit the conservatory and went to work as a music editor in the Radio Committee. Yevgeniy became a choir master of the 'Moldova' choir. After finishing the conservatory he became its artistic director. In the first years of our family life we changed apartments. We lived in a small kitchen. There was a door,

but no windows. There were a few planks on the floor and the rest of it was ground. We also stayed with my mother-in-law for some time. We slept on a wooden couch in the kitchen. My mother-in-law gave us pillows. We were very poor. When my mother-in-law died, we rented a one-bedroom apartment where we had a sofa. In 1949 our daughter was born.

My brothers Mikhail and David and their families lived in Kishinev. They were accountants: Mikhail worked in a housing agency and David worked in a canteen.