

Zina Kaluzhnaya And Her Sister Sarra Slobodskaya



This is a picture of me and my older sister Sarra Slobodskaya. The photo was taken in Kiev on 28th August 1932. My sister Sarra was born in Skwira in 1926. She was very intelligent, but her health was failing her. She was ill for the bigger part of her life. She fell ill when she was about six years old. For a very long time the doctors couldn't find out what it was - her legs were failing her. She was prescribed physical exercise. It didn't work and her condition was getting worse. This happened at the time when Postyshev held the highest position in Ukraine. Mama was told to try and meet with him to ask him for my sister to be sent to the Crimea. They told her that Postyshev always walked in the park over the Dnipro river. Mama went there early in the morning, waited for him and addressed him with her request. At that time things were different. Mama told him about this trouble in the family and on his direction my sister was taken to the Crimea. She didn't stay long in the Crimea - just about half a year. Her illness progressed rapidly and her legs got paralyzed. Then they diagnosed the disease - it was bone tuberculosis. She was put into hospital in Puscha-Voditsa. During the war the hospital moved to Buzuluk and she stayed there throughout the war. Then, gradually, the paralysis retreated, she returned to Kiev and stayed in the health center where she studied all the time. Later she went to school, finished it and graduated from university. However, my mother had to take her to the university and back home. My sister worked as teacher all her life, but she didn't live a long life and died in 1990. I was born on 29th March 1932. I hardly remember my childhood. But one of the few recollections I have is about how I got lost, when I took my cousin to my father's workplace. I was three years old then and my cousin was about five. My father worked as the director of a greengrocery on the corner of Kreschatik [main street in Kiev], near Roofed market. We lived in Shuliavka, near former Kerosinnaya Street. From there my cousin and I were walking to my father's workplace. We came to Kreschatik, and from there I didn't know the way. We stopped in the middle of the road and burst into tears. A crowd gathered around us. This was at the time when the film 'Foundling' was showing, and right away there was somebody who wanted to adopt me, and someone wanted to adopt my cousin, but the militia interfered. They took us to the militia office, started asking questions and found out from the little information they

could get out of me where my father worked. They called his workplace and someone came and picked us up.