

Frieda Stoyanovskaya And Her Older Son Victor Gordeyev



This is me and my older son Victor at the Jewish cemetery in Kiev next to my mother's grave. The photograph was taken in 2001. My mother was born in Borispol in 1884. She looked very much like a rose. Mamma stayed at home, raising me and later my little sister. Her name was Ida and she was one year younger than I. Then there was our younger brother Semyon. Mother was all kindness and patience with us. She taught us our first Yiddish words and prayers. She also loved Russian literature and knew it well. Mamma was intelligent and well read, but I don't know where she studied. I remember her reading fairy tales to my sister and me in Russian. My mother came from a

family with many children. She was the oldest and there were three other girls and three sons in the family. They only spoke Yiddish at my grandparents' home. At our home they talked Russian to us kids. After the pogrom in our town in 1919 we moved to Kiev. Mamma went to work as seamstress at a factory. Life was extremely difficult - no jobs, no means of existence. It is difficult to say what kind of food we had or what we were wearing in those years. It must have been junk food and shabby and worn-out clothes. Mamma was very handy with clothes: she could make one piece from two old pieces of clothing. In 1921, after daddy died, she was left with three children. Thanks to mamma, my sister and I could study. During the war mamma was in evacuation with me in Chishmy village. We lived with mamma in a cold house near the school. We got coal to heat the house by ourselves; we also grew vegetables in the vegetable garden. We received letters and money from my husband and my brother during the war. But our life was very hard. My mother died in 1953. After her death so much left my life forever.