

## Irena Wygodzka In Her Gymnasium Uniform



This is a picture of me taken in our house in Katowice. It was taken in the late 1930s. I am wearing my gymnasium uniform and I started attending gymnasium in 1936. So I was a teenager then.

I didn't date. I didn't fall in love easily, well, even if I did, it was platonic. There was this Moniek Fajner. He was from Bedzin. His father used to come to Katowice, I knew him.

Moniek Fajner had a brother, Karol, who ran away to the Soviet Union during the war and was deported to Kolyma. He was in Magadan. And he labored there, in a mine. He labored there in very harsh conditions.

He came to see me after he got back from Russia - without hair, eyebrows and eyelashes. And Moniek Fajner left for Palestine in, I think, 1937. He wrote letters to me, he was in love with me, but I didn't write him back.

I had several friends at school: there was Mala Lobel, Hanka Urbach, there was Rutka Reichman, Mina Schif, Hela Hass. All of us, with the exception of Mina, were in love with this boy from our class. His name was Natan Rozenzweig.

He was charming, nice, intelligent, wise. I think I even made out with him somewhere in the park. Those were very immature feelings, but they did bind us, because we stayed in touch for a long time.

Natan was in the ghetto in Warsaw, he wrote me that he was sick with typhus. I even sent him a typhus vaccine. He died in the ghetto.