

Maria Reidman And Her Sister



This is a picture of my sister, Sonia Reidman, and me.

I was born in 1922, and my sister, Sonia, followed in 1925. Sonia went to school three years later than I did. She finished nine grades before the war. In July 1941 she was in evacuation in Vladikavkaz. She finished an accounting course there and worked as an accountant at the mine factory. When she returned to Kiev she got an accountant's job in a shop. She died tragically in a car accident in December 1945.

I finished the 10th year of secondary school in 1937 when I wasn't even 16 years old. I entered the Department of Literature at the Kiev Pedagogical Institute. The competition was high but I managed. I lived in the hostel and received a stipend. Papa often visited me and brought food to support me. Besides, in 1938 we had to pay for our studies, but after that year education became free of charge again.

When the Great Patriotic War began in 1941 I was finishing my 4th year. We knew that Hitler had come to power in Germany but nobody thought it would lead to a war. When the war started I called my family in Olevsk telling them to leave everything behind and come to Kiev immediately. I was sure that Kiev would never be occupied. Later the students were sent to dig trenches in the vicinity of Kiev. We didn't know the situation on the front but there were rumors that Kiev would soon be occupied.