

Rozalia Ledskaya



This is my mother Rozalia Ledskaya shortly before I was born.

The picture was made as per request of her parents, who lived in Lithuania at that time. Mother sent them her picture. The picture was taken in 1923.

After wedding my parents lived in the house of father's parents in Smolensk. For some reason father's relatives did not like and did not accept my mother.

Mother said that the only person who treated her well was father's elder brother Isaac. Others were constantly giving her the cold shoulder. Mother loved father very much and did her best for his relatives to get to like her.

She did not want to be the bone of contention. Unfortunately, all her efforts to get along with father's family were futile.

Father went to work as a land surveyor. Mother was a housewife. She took hard continual disdain and humiliation towards her. Finally, parents decided to move to Moscow. In 1922 they left Smolensk.

Parents settled in the center of Moscow, in the house across the Central Recreation Park. Previously their house was a bathhouse. It was remodeled into apartment building.

All apartments in that building were communal, the so-called corridor system: a long corridor where the doors of the apartments were opened on. There was no bathroom. We had to wash either in the kitchen, or take a tub in the room and wash there. 19 families lived in our apartment.

Mother became a pharmacist apprentice. Then she became a pharmacist. I was born in 1923. Father left us shortly before I was born. He had another family.

That is why I know so little about my father's family. Mother did not like talking about father, and I did not ask much about him. I considered father to be a man who had broken my mother's life. It is an unpleasant recollection for me.

My father was not interested in my life either. I treated him likewise. I practically did not know him. When I was born, the year of 1923, there was a terrible unemployment.

Mother lost her job and remained unemployed for three years. We lived on father's alimony and on monthly child support in the amount of 7 rubles. We were indigent.

Mother never got married again after she divorced father. She lived only for me. I was the essence of her life. Mother did her best to bring me up. She tried to teach me how to read and write in Yiddish. But I was not good at it.

Either I was a poor student or my mother was a poor teacher. Mother did not tell me about Jewish history and religion. She did not observe Jewish traditions and did not mark holidays.

Maybe it was caused by the struggle of the Soviet regime against religion. Mother understood that I would be raised an atheist at school and she did not want to make my life more difficult.

During the weekend my mother and I used to ski during winter and in summer time we took long strolls and went to the forest to gather berries and mushrooms.

Mother made up her mind to get educated during the period of her unemployment. When I was two, she entered Moscow Pharmaceutical School. In a year she was able to get a job in the pharmacy and to transfer to the evening department. She worked and studied.

In 1928 she got a diploma of a pharmacist.

At the beginning of the 1930s she was employed at the pharmacy.