

Edith Umova With Her Mother Hasse Umova



This is my mother Hasse Umova and I. This photo was taken in Tallinn in 1976.

In 1968 our house was to be reconstructed, and the tenants were to move out. We received separate apartments, and my mother separated from me. However, I spent a lot of time with her. My mother supported me a lot. When my husband Yevgeniy died tragically in 1980, my mother and I bargained our apartments for one large apartment and reunited again for good. I was immature, basically. In my childhood my mother failed to teach me many practical things one needs in life. She had to work a lot and had no time for me. Perhaps, if I had truly gotten married, did the housework and felt responsible for my family, I would have learned things, but it happened so that I was always with my mother. She made all the decisions and she did everything necessary at home. She planned our budget, did the housekeeping and cooking, and she even shopped for my clothes.

My friends believed my mother to be tight-fisted and mean. She didn't allow me to buy new clothes, or even to do some renovations at home. She used to say, 'Keep saving for a rainy day.' I think this was so, because my mother lived a very hard life and she was used to having nobody, but herself, to rely on. I obeyed her. I was a mama's girl, and I obeyed her. God gave her good health and it never occurred to me that she would no longer be with me and I would be here on my own. My mother was like a fortress for me. She also liked having her daughter by her side. My mother didn't think that her daughter needed to live her own life. Only before dying did my mother ask for my forgiveness for having destroyed my life, but wasn't it too late to talk about it?

In the 1970s Jews were allowed to move to Israel. Our acquaintances and relatives were leaving for Israel. My cousin Nehama, Aunt Juganna's daughter, Rebekka, Yakov's wife, my deceased uncle, and her daughters left for Israel. We didn't correspond with them, and I know nothing of their life. My mother and I didn't consider relocation. We were used to living here, and changes could only scare us.