

Zuzanna Mensz' Mother Mariem Szyfra Rosset And Sister Zlata



This is my mom with my oldest sister Zlatka. Zlatka was 3-4 years old then, so I think the photo could be taken in 1913. They lived in Volodymir Volyns'kyy at the time.

My Mom's name was Mariem Szyfra. I found out it was 'Mariem' later, I'd always thought she was called 'Maria'. She was born in 1886, she was the eldest child. I don't know when she got married exactly, I'm assuming she wasn't very young. She met her husband through a matchmaker. I heard she also tried to liberate herself [emancipate], just like Aunt Chana, her sister. As all the girls from Skryhiczyn she completed five years of gymnasium, she used to learn French, she had some education. But eventually she let them find her a husband. My Father was called Mosze Rosset. They lived in Volodymir-Volyns'kyy but later, still before World War I, moved to Lublin with my eldest sister.

Mom was very pretty, a bit plump. She was a very good person. After Father's death in 1933, for example, we rented an apartment in Volodymir and we had a neighbor who was even poorer than us. She was a widow with two children, who made her living selling things at the market and fairs. She cooked a meal only once a week. Mom, although really poor herself, used to take this woman's daughter with us on summer holidays to feed her up a bit. Mom was remarkably absent-minded. There were jokes about the whole Horowicz family, they were all considered scatter-brains, they often got distracted, absent-minded, forgetful, and Mom was no different, she would always lose

her keys and such. She was not a very religious person, unlike my Father.

My elder sister was born in 1909. She was called Sara Zlata, we called her Zlatka. She was born still in Volodymir and we already in Lublin. Zlatka moved to Warsaw to study when she was sixteen. She studied Polish history at the Warsaw University. She already had Communist sympathies back then. She spent a year in prison for some political affairs. With a sentence like this she was unable to find a work as a teacher. She gave private lessons, she was a very good math tutor. She earned so well on tuition that she was even able to help Mom a little.