

Lubov Rozenfeld



I, Lubov Rozenfeld. I was photographed at school during a break. I am 9 years old and shortly before I became a pioneer. Kiev, 1948.

In autumn 1946 I went to the first form of Russian school for girls # 67. It was located on a hill and there were steep stairs leading to it. I was little and thin and our teacher Ksenia Mikhailovna made me sit at the first desk. I didn't have all excellent marks, and Ksenia Mikhailovna only liked those who had excellent marks. They performed in concerts: danced and played and I didn't take part in any of these activities, though I could dance or play some roles. So I entertained myself as much as I could picking red, blue and green pens during breaks from other children's desks. When another class began, the children yelled: 'Lubka! Where is my pen? Give me my pen!' I began to give them their pens and mixed them up and everybody had fun. I ran around at school like a crazy girl. I was active, cheerful and spoke fast. In the 3rd form I became a pioneer, but I didn't care about anything at school. My real life was in the street. The boys of our yard made a headquarters in the basement of our building to fight with the neighboring yard. I was the only girl allowed to be in the headquarters. We had a password and were armed with toy guns, slingshots and sticks. There was a huge hill with ruins of houses on it near our building. We climbed as high as we could and wrote on the ruins: Garik, Sasha, Luba. Late in the evening my mother came home from work and shouted in her loud voice: 'Lu-u-ba'. I ran back home and got a good telling off for coming home late and for not having done my homework. In winter I rushed along the street on my skates so fast that not every boy could skate as fast. I liked spending my summer vacations in pioneer camps. After the 1st year at school I went to the town pioneer camp.

At home my mother and grandmother spoke Russian to my brother and me, but grandmother and mother spoke Yiddish to one another. I understood Yiddish a little, but I knew curse words particularly well. We didn't observe Jewish traditions, celebrate Jewish holidays or follow kashrut in our family.

I was ugly, when a child, and had satisfactory marks at school and suffered from the complex of inferiority. My cousin May played a big role in it. 'If at least you studied well, we would ignore your ugliness' - this is how he put it in words. I was good at English. Fania, who earned some money by teaching English, said she never had a better pupil. However, at school I mispronounced English words to spite the teacher. I also ran away from the guys who wanted to meet me. I didn't believe them and didn't believe anybody who said something good about me. I liked physical culture lessons, but I had a heart problems and the doctor didn't allow me to run. When my classmates begged her, she allowed me to run the tack of 100 m, but I ran 400 and won. I was number run in running 400 meters. I liked jumping and jumped 120 cm up being 140 cm tall. My spiritual life started at the age of 16: I had a diary and began to go to the opera. I also began to read a lot: mainly classical books. I set a goal, a minimum program - to become a kindergarten teacher and at maximum - a writer.