

Gustawa Birencwajg



This is me, Gustawa Birencwajg, this is how I look now. This picture was taken in 2004, in Warsaw. In 1966 my husband Dawid died. I was left alone in the apartment. How old was Wlodek, my daughter Halina's son, by then? He was in 9th grade, so 15 years old. Halina was divorced by then. And Wlodek said to me, 'Grandma, perhaps we can live together, it would be merrier for us.' So he talked me into it, I agreed to have our two apartments exchanged for one larger one. So since that time we've live together like this. When my daughter was working, I was taking care of the house, buying things, doing everything, it was all good. But one day I was washing the kitchen window and the stool slipped from underneath me. I fell, I hit my head on the cupboard. The doctor came and joked with me, 'Did you manage to finish washing that window?' So he told me to lie down, but

there were no good results and I went to the ophthalmologist at the hospital. When I got there, he told me that my one eye was already gone. They treated me, I kept going in and out of hospital, when these lasers were created, they operated on me then. But I lost my eyesight completely anyway. Some physician operated on me three years ago, gave me some hope, but nothing came out of it. I can't see anything. And they have to care for me night and day. My old age pension is 950 zloty. My daughter gets 1100 zloty and that's how we live together. I keep getting weaker, but I am not surprised, because everyone says that for my age I still look good. I still danced on my 90th birthday.