

## Hana-Leya Levin



This is my mother Hana-Leya Levin. She sent me this picture from Israel for the memory. She was photographed at her home. This photo was taken in Tel Aviv in 1978. After World War II Mama did not always behave adequately, and those were hard times for me, when I witnessed that. It was additional emotional stress for me. It was not that I was ashamed that she was my mother, but it was painful to watch her condition. It took me some time to realize that Mama was ill. This was the

result of deportation and life in exile. Mama did not die in exile, she survived physically, but she was broken down spiritually, and her life was wasted. Mama was not resentful, but inside she could not accept the Soviet regime, the system that broke her life. She lived her life in fear, and this fear that was inside her developed into sickness, phobia. However, Mama did not realize she was severely ill. Living in the USSR, we somehow ignored any indisposition until the pain became unbearable, and as for mental problems, people were not used to paying any attention, whatsoever. Only after Mama moved to Israel in 1970, since this was the dream of her life, she had medical examinations and treatment. It was Mama's dream to move to Israel. She got a chance to make her dream come true during the mass departure of Jews to Israel in the 1970s. She received a letter of invitation from a distant relative. Mama wanted me to divorce my husband and join her, but it was not for me. Mama left in 1970, and our contacts stopped for a long time. At that time one couldn't even imagine there would be time, when people got an opportunity to travel to Israel or invite their folks to visit them. My friend Dina's family also moved to Israel at about the same time, and they supported my mother as much as they could there. I got a chance to visit my mother during perestroika after 18 years of separation. Since then I kept visiting her once a year or even more frequently. Mama died in Israel in 2000.