

Sofi Danon-Moshe Taking A Walk



The year was 1942. I had just finished high school. In the picture I'm taking a walk in the garden in front of the bank of agriculture. The photo shop is in front of me. On the back there's an inscription in ink: 'For my beloved!' Sofi, 20th June 1944; Pazardzhik. I had a boyfriend while I was still in the sixth grade. He was a member of Maccabi, too, and his name was Miko Kalev. My friend Liska Natan also had a beloved. His name was Mishel Pamoukov and he died on the ship, which set off for the Promised Land because it was overcrowded which means that a lot of people wanted to go to Palestine. That happened in 1942. The name of the ship was 'San Salvador' and it was a real tragedy. Mishel Pamoukov tried to save people but he couldn't swim. It was a tragedy for

everybody because there were people who had set off for their Jewish homeland and they believed that God would be with them whatever might have happened. It was such a tragedy. They read the names of the dead in front of the school. We had gathered in front of the school and they informed us on the phone, 'One more dead body, one more dead body' and the lists of names. Shemuel came back from the camp in the winter, in December, because that was the routine. They were allowed to go home in December or January and returned to the camp in February or March. It turned out that my beloved from Maccabi, Miko Kalev, was with my husband-to-be in the same labor group in Saranevo and when they returned in December I went on walks with Miko. Shemuel met us, they greeted each other and Miko introduced us. Some time had elapsed; Shemuel saw me in the street and asked me, 'Why aren't you greeting me?' 'It's not true - I'm greeting you!' A belt of mine was missing and years later he admitted that he had stolen it from me. That was how our love started - with the theft of my belt. At first I didn't want to start a relationship with him because it seemed as a betrayal but later Miko went to Sofia to study, he became a student and his life took him in another direction. Even today I can't say what I liked in Miko and also in Shemuel. They both had their good sides. At that time all the girls on the Jewish street had a boyfriend. I had to have one, too. I was very attracted to intelligent men. They arouse in me the interest towards the things I wasn't familiar with. For example, in the labor corps around Pazardzhik there were a lot of students from Sofia. One of them came to the dentist in Pazardzhik and we, three girls, immediately fell in love with him because he was a second-year student of medicine. He knew so many things. And my friends and I decided to spend the night together, reading the books we had, so that we could make a brilliant display of our knowledge