

Leonid Dusman And His Mother Sarah Dusman



This is a picture of me and my mother Sarah Dusman. The photo was taken in Odessa in 1954. During World War II we lost all our closest relatives. Therefore my mother and me were especially close to each other. I was on my mother's side throughout her life. After the liberation of Odessa my mother and I began to search for my father to learn something about his possible fate. Anywhere we enquired we got the answer that his name wasn't on any of the lists of the lost, killed and wounded. My mother had lost her medical certificate, but she still needed to get a job. Doctor Thompson, a Russian woman, helped her. She hired my mother as a dentist for the Maternity Welfare Clinic. My mother's last place of work was the Red Profinter Plant. My mother worked there until 1952 when the Doctors' Plot began. Many Jewish doctors were fired then. My mother was 56 years old and she retired. When I finished school I entered the Automotive Technical School in

1947. After I finished the technical school in 1952, the director of the piston plant, who taught science in our school, offered me employment at his plant. I began to work there. I worked at this plant for seven years. At 25 I became chief production engineer. The director of the plant recommended me for the position of the Komsomol leader of the plant. I quit working at the plant in 1958 for a job in the design office of the KINAP Plant [cinema equipment plant]. This was a better paid job. I worked there for two years and studied by correspondence at Leningrad Industrial Institute. Later I switched to the Faculty of Production Units and Tools at the Polytechnic Institute in Odessa. I worked at the KINAP Plant from 1959 to 1961. After all I had to go through I was quite an introverted person in my private life. I read a lot and went to the theater. I met with girls, but they didn't touch my heart. I only wanted to marry a Jewish girl. My mother shared this decision of mine. During the war I witnessed Russian wives reporting on their Jewish husbands, although some of them also rescued their husbands. In 1957 I met a girl, Ludmila Karachun, at a party at our plant. Ludmila was Jewish. She was born in Odessa in 1936. She worked at the design office and studied at the Polytechnic Institute. I met her again half a year later and fell in love with her. I dated her for a year and a half. She turned out to be a real friend. We got married on 5th December 1959. In the 1960s I built a summerhouse in Bolshoy Fontan [a recreation zone in Odessa]. In the summer we went there for vacations. I enjoyed these gatherings as much as my parents did. My mother died in 1984. When she was dying she bequeathed me to burn my father's belongings after her death and to bury her. She took off her wedding ring and gave it to me. She was devoted to her husband her whole life.