

Enta Golod



My mother Enta Golod. The photo was taken in 1934 in Kiev. My mother was born in 1903. I don't know where she studied, but she had some education: she could read and write in Russian and Yiddish and told me about outstanding Russian writers. She may have finished a grammar school. She had known my future father since they were children. They fell in love with one another in their teens and got married in 1918, before the pogrom during which my mother's parents died. They had a traditional Jewish wedding with a chuppah and a rabbi, a number of guests and klezmer musicians. My parents settled down in my grandfather's house. My older brother, David, was born in 1919. It was hard for my mother to live in Khvoyniki where her family had perished. She convinced my father to move to Kiev. They sold their house, hired a horse-driven cab, moved to Kiev in 1922 and bought an apartment there. Our father was a gloomy and withdrawn man. I don't remember him playing or talking with his children after he came home from work. He hardly ever

talked with our mother either. She often cried, and only when I grew up did I get to know that my father was unfaithful to her. He always had other women. My mother was sickly, even when she was young, and when she grew older she developed heart problems. Every now and then she got pale and gasped for breath. She went to bed, and I was standing beside her bed fearing that she might die. I loved my mother more than anybody in the world. My father provided well for the family and my mother could have been a housewife, but she worked at home nonetheless. She was proud and independent. I often accompanied her when she went to see her clients, and they jokingly called me 'Mom's fiancé'. She had Jewish, Russian and Ukrainian clients. My parents weren't religious. They spoke Yiddish to one another and Russian to us [children], but we also knew Yiddish well. My father worked on Saturdays. We didn't know a thing about kosher food. We only celebrated Pesach. Our father brought matzah home in advance. My mother made gefilte fish that were so delicious that I can still remember its smell and taste. She also made chicken broth, fruit jelly and pastries from matzah flour. On Pesach my father came home early, washed himself, put on a clean shirt and the family sat down at the table. We just had a festive dinner, he never told us about the holiday or any other Jewish traditions or holidays.