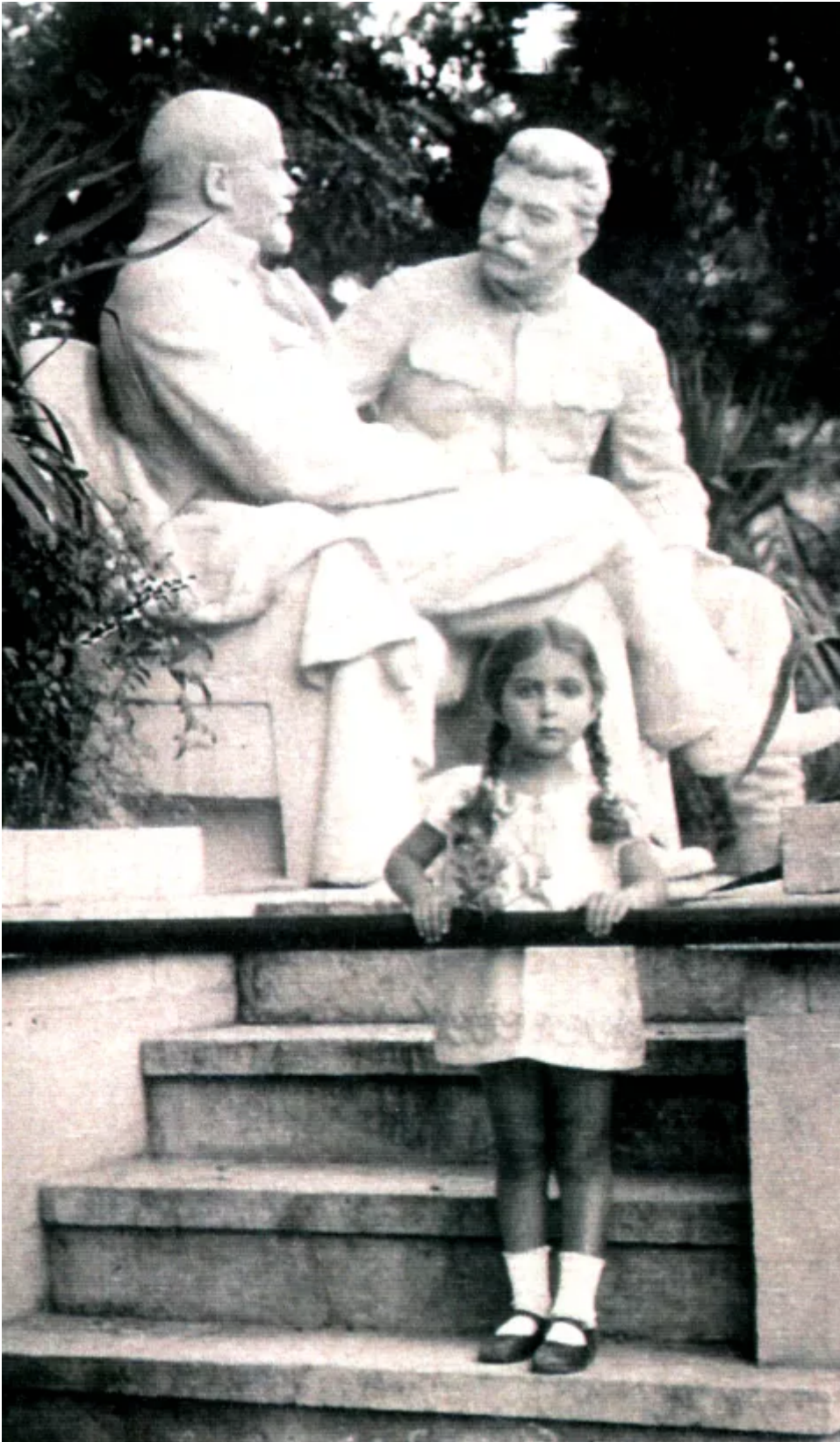


Bella Kisselgof With Her Two 'Grandaddies'



This is a photo of me, Bella Kisselgof, 4 years old when this photo was taken in 1940 in Essentuki., when Mama, Aunt Luba and I went on a visit to the recreation center in Essentuki. In the background can be seen a monument to Lenin and Stalin. Children were raised to have patriotic feelings. I didn't go to kindergarten, but I knew from my childhood that besides my family I had two

other grandfathers - Grandaddy Lenin and Grandaddy Stalin. Mama taught me patriotic poems. I remember one: 'I'm a little girl dancing and singing, I've never seen Stalin, but I love him.' I was growing fast and was so weak that I couldn't make it up the stairs to our second floor classroom. Mama gave me cod-liver oil to improve my health. There was only one textbook for several schoolchildren, and we did our homework in groups. I was doing well at school. We were modest girls. We went to parties wearing our school uniforms. Sometimes we went to parties at the boys' school. Usually such parties were arranged on the Soviet holidays of May Day (May 1) or Constitution Day (November 7). In the morning we watched the parade and then attended concerts and parties at school. We didn't celebrate holidays at home. Mama and I were poor. On holiday Mama would make a cake to make the day more festive for me. We had holiday parties only on my birthday or on New Year's.