

Zoya Lerman And Her Grandmother, Elizaveta Gilik



My dearest grandmother Elizaveta Gilik (maiden name - Gofman) with me, Zoya Lerman, in a photo taken in Kiev in 1936, when I was two years old. My first memories are associated with my grandmother, Leia (Elizaveta) Abramovna Gilik (maiden name - Ofman). She was born in the late 1880's in Ivankov. She lost her mother when she was still a child. Late in the first decade of the 1900's, my grandmother married Arkadiy Gilik and they lived in Ivankov. My parents both worked, and so it was my grandmother who brought me up. I remember the fairy tales that she told me when I was small. She told me stories from the Bible, but she told them in a fairy tale manner. I remember her telling me how people were going across a desert and could not find shelter. A woman gave them some flour and they got some water to make flat bread. They put these flat breads on their shoulders to dry in the sun. This was the food of these people. My grandmother also told me that these travelers came to a gate that was guarded by two lions. They somehow put these two lions to sleep and managed to go through the gate. Much later, I learned that this story was about Pesach. My grandmother was a very wise and a very kind person. She resolved all the problems in our family and my mother and father always listened to her advice.