

## Esphir Kalantyrskaya With Her Brother Grisha And Sister Clara



This is my brother Grisha (in the center), my sister Clara and I, Esphir Persova in Kiev in 1932.

My father didn't change his bachelor's way of life, after he got married: he met with friends, went to restaurants and played in the amateur theater. In this theater he met a young Jewish girl Sophia Kazakova. They were of different age: my father was 43 and she was 18. They fell in love with each other and my father left the house. I don't know what a divorce was like in those years. I believe they had to obtain rabbi's permission. It couldn't have been otherwise. In 1918 right after my younger brother was born my father divorced my mother and married Sophia. He often visited us and my mother allowed him to come and see us. My father told us about beautiful life in Kiev trying to persuade us to go with him. I always looked for some explanation of why I agreed to go with my father. There must have been several reasons. Firstly, I loved my father and couldn't imagine living apart from him and. Of course I must have been driven by my interest towards everything new and unknown, thirst for traveling and new impressions. In 1922 my older brother Grigory, my younger sister Clara, my father, pregnant Sophia and I secretly left for Kiev.

After Sopha's kids were born my father stopped caring for us who were born by an unloved woman. He hardly ever talked with us and never took any interest in our life. He didn't want to send us to school as he didn't want to lose his workforce. He hired teachers to teach us at home. We actually received education equal to 4 years of primary school.

My older brother Grigory and my sister Clara were very close to me.

Our stepmother treated us nicely. She was a nice woman and felt sorry for us. She made no difference between her own children and us. That was how it happened in my life that I was separated from my mother and my brothers and sisters.