

## Polina Korotkova



My sister Polina Korotkova, nee Herman. This photo was taken in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk in the Far East in the late 1950s. She sent it to my mother and me in Tomashpol.

In 1946-47 was a period of horrifying hunger and only our life in the ghetto could be compared with it. My mother worked a lot washing floors, doing laundry, whitewashing and cleaning houses for other people. However, she couldn't earn enough for a living and so my mother began to sell

things. She went to purchase goods in Vinnitsa. She bought soap and paints and sold them a little more expensive in our village. It was against the existing laws and my mother was often arrested. I already knew that if my mother didn't come back home in the evening I had to take her some soup or boiled cereal to a militia office. Sometimes she was released a few days later and once she was sentenced to a year's imprisonment.

During this year my sister and I lived on what Aunt Rieva sent us. We also were provided free lunches at school for being orphans. I remember us taking turns to go to school in winter having one pair of winter boots. When my mother was released Aunt Rieva took my sister to the Far East and my mother and I remained at home.

My sister Polina lived in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, over 7000 kilometers from Kiev, in the Far East, with Aunt Rieva. She finished a geological survey school and began to work in the field of geological survey. My aunt and uncle moved to Severodonetsk and Polina stayed in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.

Polina married Yuri Korotkov, a Russian, who was a geologist. He is a nice person and he treated her and my mother respectfully. Polina's first baby died at the age of a few months. In 1966 her twins were born: daughters Svetlana and Yelena. My mother moved to my sister after her twins were born to help her raise the children and stayed to live there.

My mother died in 1986. Five years later Polina died of cancer. They were both buried in the town cemetery. There was no Jewish cemetery in the town then. Unfortunately, I didn't see them after they moved. It was very expensive to travel such long distances. We corresponded and sent each other photographs.