

Victoria Almalekh (nee Levi) And Rebeka Levi In Vidin



This is me (Victoria Almalekh, the shorter one) and my sister in 1946 in Vidin [port city on the right bank of the Danube in Bulgaria, 220 km. away from Sofia]. There is neither stamp of a photo studio nor any other inscription on the back of the photo. Behind us you can see the Baba Vida Fortress [The only medieval Bulgarian castle entirely preserved to this day.]. There is also a part of the neighborhood 'Kaleto'.

We were always together with my sister Rebeka Levi (1933 – 1992). The situation didn't change although the time was passing. She used to follow me everywhere. We were said to look alike (especially as adults). We were carrying the same genes and shared the same way of living. She was a woman of exceptional intellect. She had a great heart. Half of the people in the world could find a place in her heart but she died alone. Obviously the leading principle in life is not only to meet people but to miss those meetings as well... She was a gentle, good and confiding person. She went through her entire length of service in the Devnya Factories.

I remember she was born at home with the help of a midwife. My grandmother Vintoura (my mother's mother-in-law) and Sara (my mother's aunt) assisted at the birth. It was in December and it was very cold. I'm two years and ten months older than her. I was waiting in the other room with my father. When the baby was born and while they were giving her a bath they called us to see her. In the living room (the salad-salon – in Ladino – as we used to call it) the stove was burning very hard. My grandmother was holding the baby in her arms. I ran to her. They all gave an exclamation, put her in my arms and said 'You will always take care of her'. But I couldn't. And that is what I can't forgive to myself. She died from cancer.