

# Margarita Kohen Between Two Neighbors



I between two neighbors of ours. I don't remember their names. My mother was in the photo too but she cut her part of the picture to put it on some documents. There is neither a stamp on the back of the photo, nor any other inscription. It was taken on Bounardzhika [Hill] in Plovdiv in 1932. On the hill there was always a photographer who was taking pictures. We were living in poverty but my mother was a strong woman who managed to deal with all difficulties and taught us to do the same.

My mother Bouka Bokhor Kohen (1892 – 1961) was a strong woman and an exceptional person, a heroine. She was swarthy with long black hair and big black eyes. She remained a widow at the age of 25 – alone with three children. She didn't have education, she was self-educated and learned alone to write in Spaniol. Later, when we moved to Plovdiv she used to write letters to our relatives in Gorna Dzhumaya in Spaniol.

When she remained alone she started sewing in order to make a living. That formed her behavior to a great extent. But for her cleaning was never that crucial as it was later for my mother-in-law. We were cleaning together – my mum and us – the children – once a week. For her the main concern were the children. In order to be near us all the time and look after us she invited all the friends, acquaintances and classmates here at home. She created good atmosphere and mood. Our house was always full of people. But I can't say she had a lot of friends, she just didn't have enough time – to keep her own contacts, conversations and visits. She was able to sew and to do manual labor but not for the fun of it – she used to scrape a living. She sewed our clothes too. She was

cooking very well. I learned recipes from her that I later prepared for my husband.