

Irena Wygodzka With Her Friend Dudek Goldberg



This is a picture of me, Irena Wygodzka, with my first love: Dudek Goldberg from Radom. I met him in Vilnius, in the kibbutz. This is where the picture was taken, in 1941.

I went to a kibbutz in Vilnius in December 1939. I went to the kibbutz, because I wanted to leave for Palestine, but I was one of the youngest in the kibbutz.

Well, it was the older ones who got to go first. It was all quite illegal, papers were arranged in Russia. There were all kinds of organizations in the kibbutzim in Vilnius: leftist, rightist, all Zionist.

In the spring of 1941 I received a letter from Mom, sent from Sosnowiec to Vilnius. The letter arrived in the mail, normally. Mom wasn't clear about it, but she wrote that she was sorry she would never see Natan again.

How did she know what happened? I think Father must have written her something. And Father hid Natan's death from me, because he wrote that he had been sent to Siberia.

So I thought: 'If Natan is in Siberia, then Mom shouldn't think that she'll never see him again. After all, the war will finally be over, he'll come back from Siberia.'

When I got this letter I asked my friend Dudek Goldberg, who was going to Lwow, to find out exactly what happened. Then he brought me the news that Natan had committed suicide.

That's when I went back to Father, to Lwow, it was May 1941. The war between Germany and Russia broke out a month later. Dudek Goldberg also went to Lwow. We were together in Lwow for a short time.

Later the war broke out and he was conscripted into the Soviet army. C'est tout - that's all. He died in the army. Everyone knew: they sent them all to the front without any kind of training, as cannon fodder.