

The Holocaust in Berezino: Interview with Liza (Zorina) Ayzendorf

From: "Witnesses to the Nazi Genocide of Jews on the Territory of Belarus 1941 -1944: Berezino." Translated by Judith Springer. JewishGen.
<http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/belarus/bel197.html#Page197>

Mama, Ester, gave birth to two boys -- Zelik and Lyolik -- and two girls -- Toma (Tamara) and me. Papa, Zakhar, worked in a blacksmith's shop from the age of 14. Grandma Eydli, papa's mother, lived with us. Her arm shriveled and turned black, but she tried to keep up her spirits and to help with housekeeping. In 1940 the radio appeared. When the war began, father hesitated on whether to leave. He believed that any regime needed a good blacksmith. We made up our mind at the last moment, but managed to get only to Pogost. Jews were moved to the ghetto on Internatsional'naya Street. When mama tried to bring food products from the village, she was taken to the police courtyard, undressed, and beaten before her children's eyes. Two days before the Aktion, father was carried home. Men were forced to do carpentry work and he accidentally hit his leg with an axe. It was snowing on the eve of the execution. The Sonderkommando came. Grandma had the good sense to hide us. She concealed Toma and me in the

basement, into which one could squeeze only through a narrow manhole in the stove. Grandma hid Ester and the boys in the cellar, throwing rags over them. She herself did not hide, knowing that an empty house would surely be searched for people. From the basement, we heard the stamping of feet over our heads. On the third day, when we no longer heard shots and the barking of dogs, we got out. There was silence around. In many houses, doors were wide open. Suddenly, we ran into Yashka Vetushkin, Zelik's former friend and classmate, who went to serve in the police. He began to shout: "A kike's snout!" and pulled off the rifle from his shoulder. Mama threw herself on him and we ran away. We lost Zelik and Lyolik on the road.



Liza and Tamara Zorina. Source: Yad Vashem
<http://db.yadvashem.org/righteous/family.html?language=en&itemId=4044598>

For several months Toma and I wandered throughout the district, looking for our brothers. In the village of Ovruch, a woman gave us shelter for a short time. When at night two policemen came unexpectedly, suspecting that we

were Jewish, she did not let them take us away. A recluse peasant let us into his hut for a week. He did not believe that we could save ourselves and, so that we might not suffer in vain, he offered to kill us himself. In Dubrovichi, we met former teacher Nikolay Kruglik, who was 25 years old. He suggested that we call ourselves Nina and Olya Martsinkevich and say that we ran away from a children's home. We were dirty, bitten all over by lice, and suffered from scabs. Nikolay's mother heated the bath for us and cut our hair. She left me with her and the Nikolskis took Toma. The neighbors' son went to the police and informed them that we were Jews. The Nikolskis were told to bring the "kike girls." That night we went into the forest and found partisans. One day in the village of Torkovo, some girl friends and I were baking bread for the partisans. Someone informed on us. The Germans beat Valya Moroz and Katya Golub with bayonets and shot them. I got away, ran wherever my feet would take me, and got lost. By luck, I found myself in a neighboring detachment.

At the end of 1944, the Germans began to flee. Now it was the partisans who ambushed them. There were no more polizei. They took off their uniforms, laid down their arms, and melted away into nearby villages. The reprisal against those captured was swift. They were placed in covered dugouts, at which a grenade was hurled. I constantly begged for a hand grenade, but was chased away. One day in the morning, when there was a call for volunteers to execute fascists, I immediately took my place in the formation, till the last minute fearing that they would again chase me away...

I don't like to remember those years and, therefore, rarely go to the meetings of former ghetto and concentration camp prisoners. During my 10 years in Israel, I was there only a few times. Everyone had his own fate and his own luck, which enabled him to survive (A. Kaganovich, "Getto na Internatsional'noy" [The Ghetto on Internatsional'naya], *Yevreyskiy kamerton*, October 28, 1999).

Nikolay Kruglik and His Family: The Righteous Among The Nations

From: "The Righteous Among The Nations: The Kruglik Family." *Yad Vashem the World Holocaust Remembrance Center*. Accessed 14 March 2016.
<http://db.yadvashem.org/righteous/family.html?language=en&itemId=4044598>

Polikarp Kruglik lived with his wife and their grown children, Ivan, Nikolay, and Anton in the village of Dubrovichi, in the district of Minsk. One day in 1943, Nikolay Kruglik noticed 15-year-old Tamara Zorina and her 13-year-old sister Yelizaveta (Liza) wandering the streets of Dubrovichi and he brought them to his home and implored his parents to hide them. The sisters had managed to escape from the town of Berezino, district of Mogilev (today Berazino, Minsk District), when its Jewish residents, including their parents and other relatives, were murdered, in February 1942, and had been wandering from place to place ever since.

Before long, the entire Kruglik family began to look after the Jewish girls who were ill from roaming around for more than a year. To protect the girls, the Krugliks spread a rumor that two relatives from a destroyed orphanage had come to stay with them. After one month, the Krugliks were ordered to report to the police with the girls, but instead they sent the girls to a nearby village. During the war, the Krugliks also helped others that had escaped from German captivity, including Jews, and later some of them, including the Zorin girls and the Krugliks themselves, joined the "Communist" partisan unit of the Shchors brigade. During this group's operations, all the members of the Kruglik family were killed, apart from Polikarp. After the war, the rescued lived in Borisov (Barysau) and maintained contact with Polikarp Kruglik until the day he died. In the 1990s, Liza Zorina (by then Aizendorf) immigrated to Israel, and her sister Tamara (by then Fain) moved to the United States.

On April 21, 1998, Yad Vashem recognized Polikarp Kruglik, his wife, and their children, Ivan Kruglik, Nikolay Kruglik, and Anton Kruglik, as Righteous Among the Nations