

Zina Babushkin Eulogy (July 24, 1914 – December 31, 2013)

What can I say about my grandmother? There are just too many great things I could say about her. Most importantly, she was the most caring, giving, and compassionate person I have ever known. She never refused to do a good deed or fulfill a request. She always thought about others before thinking of herself. For instance, being a great cook and always preparing delicious meals for everyone, she would never eat dinner until everybody else finished first; because everyone else's well-being always came first.

Baba was born in the little town of Kastsyukovichy in Belarus in 1914. Her mother, who operated a mikvah, passed away when Baba was a baby. Her father remarried and the family moved to the town of Samatsevichy, Belarus. She was raised in a large family of six children and many, many other close relatives. Although life was hard, their close knit family took care of each other and made it through the tough times.

Grandma moved to the City of Gomel to live with her aunt Gita in the early 1930's, to work as a seamstress; That is where she met and married my Grandfather, Ber, in 1935. They soon had their first son.

Their world was shattered in 1941, when the Nazis invaded and sent in their SS Einsatzgruppen death squads, who shot most of her relatives. Only a very few survived. As Grandpa promptly left home to rejoin his Air Force unit, Baba barely made it out alive and escaped with her first born child to the city of Frunze in Central Asia. After the war she came back to find her home and everything else in ruins, but she rebuilt her life and had two more children when grandpa came back from the Air Force. All through the tough times, she helped everyone around her, even when they didn't ask, and she never refused when they did. Even though she did not have much room in her home, or many resources, she always found room and welcomed many relatives and other guests with an open heart.

Almost twenty years after the war, her beloved husband, my grandfather, passed away in 1963. She never remarried. Despite all the bitter grief, her kindness and giving nature never subsided. She continued to raise her family alone, and always helped her neighbours. When her grandchildren were born, she rededicated her life to us. She was simply the best grandmother anyone could ever wish for. She is irreplaceable and will be in our hearts and minds forever. May she rest in peace.

From her loving grandson and the rest of the family.

Evgeny Fialkov