

Nadia Mirchuk

I saw people sitting begging for food. They were so weak already that they didn't say anything, they just stretched out their hands when somebody walked by. Usually they were men. At first they would be sitting there, and later the next time I walked by I would see that somebody had died already; they were lying there, not moving. Then somebody else would come in their place. I saw this.

We were returning home at night, and we came to a road crossing. Three carts were driving by, covered in burlap. We let them pass, and the first two passed us. When the third one began to pass us, the wind blew and the burlap was uncovered. Then we saw that people were lying on this cart. Corpses, without clothes. They were thrown onto this cart. Neither I nor my parents said anything, we just stood silently and watched. When we came home, we went to sleep. I had nightmares all the time about these dead people, and my brother screamed during the night and my mother would wake him so he wouldn't have these nightmares. This is what we saw.

Our uncle lived in the village, in Syrivky, not far from Kremenchuk. Arrests began, and [the authorities] would invent whatever they could to dispossess people. All the food that they had was taken away. My uncle was arrested, his wife was left alone with two children. We didn't know anything about this, but later we got a letter from them. My aunt Halya asked us to take one of her children, because they didn't have any food. My mother went to bring the older girl [to live with us]. Her name was also Nadiyka. By the time my mother arrived, the younger girl died. Only Nadiyka was left. [My mother] brought her to us. Nadiyka was already ill with diphtheria. My mother took her to the hospital and went there every day and took care of her. But there was nothing she could do, and Nadiyka died.