## Natalia Lazarenko

We didn't have anywhere to live. And we didn't have anything to live on. And the Famine began; my father didn't have [anything]. My father couldn't care for us three children; we all would have died. We didn't have a house, we slept in parks, or wherever we could hide. My father decided to put myself and my brother Ivan in an orphanage, and this was very smart, because there you could at least get some soup or something - there was a chance you would survive. Because if all three of us had stayed with my father, we all would have died. Those orphanages were overflowing - there were masses of homeless children. This was an absolutely abnormal life. The only [positive] thing was that we didn't die of starvation. This was the only thing - that we didn't starve to death. In the morning when you got up, that child, or that child, wasn't moving any longer. Others would come, and the same thing [would happen]. [One] boy, we knew he was dying. At the other end of the room, another boy, who was deaf and mute, walked over. He was about nine years old - older than the one who was lying there. He didn't have any hair, he was bald. And when he [the older boy] saw that there was bread lying beside the boy who was dying, on his pillow, he went up to him and took the bread. And he began to eat it, stuffing it into his mouth. The boy who was dying, he knew this was bread, this is life, and he began to cry. But the most dreadful thing was that the boy [who had taken the bread] was eating the bread with one hand, and caressing the [other boy's] head with the other hand, [as if to say] I'm alive, you will die anyway, don't cry, don't cry. This was awful.