

# Fragments

Ágnes

Family Photographs and Stories

Eszter Biró

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For three years she couldn't get pregnant, which was quite distressing for them.  
My mother had appendicitis, and immediately after she got pregnant.



This is happiness, their happiness. They expected me for so long. My father was 35 when he managed to get married. My mother couldn't finish her studies at Academy of Music, Budapest, because she had two daughters. They also lived in Pécs. This was way too tiresome for her. She had help, Erzsikisa. She is in the images. My mother needed help because we were born so close to each other. For three years she couldn't get pregnant, which was quite distressing for them. My mother had appendicitis, and immediately after she got pregnant. That was me. She got married in 1923, I was born in 1926, and my sister was born in 1927. However we have one and a half years in between us, because I was born in February and she in September. This was quite close to each other. Giving birth to me was quite difficult. She was in labour for 24 hours, which was a long in that time, under those circumstances. She gave birth at home. My father was strolling around next door listening to her moans.



**This is where we lived in Pécs; our first home was at Pécs, because my father worked there as an engineer. We both had been born there at Király street.**

I am seven months old here. This is where we lived in Pécs; our first home was at Pécs, because my father worked there as an engineer. We both had been born there at Király street. But I don't know which number. Therefore when we visited Pécs, we couldn't visit that house. They sublet a flat there with two and a half rooms, because my mother was expecting. I don't remember anything from those years, but both of us were born there.



The two friends, my father and my uncle were walking, at Andrásy street. At the same time the two sisters were walking as well. Then both lads married the two girls.

The two friends, my father and my uncle were walking, at Andrásy street. At the same time the two sisters were walking as well. Then both lads married the two girls: my mother, Elza Fábri, and her sister Otília Fábri. Then came Géza, my father and uncle Pista who were mates. They served together in the First World War. My mother was eleven years younger than my father. She was born in 1901 and my father in 1890. However it was a beautiful marriage. My father was a very good man. They were engaged for five years. My father didn't have any job, and if he couldn't support his wife, he wouldn't marry her. They were holding each other's hand the whole time. They loved each other so much. My mother was a widow for thirty years! Thirty years! And she was beyond beautiful. People always asked her why she wasn't looking for a new husband. Than she replied: "Because I will never get a husband like him."



The truth is that my father came from an orthodox Jewish family. He was the only one who had a university degree. His brother, who was 20 years older—Uncle Lajos, who was exterminated by the Nazis—paid his tuition fees.

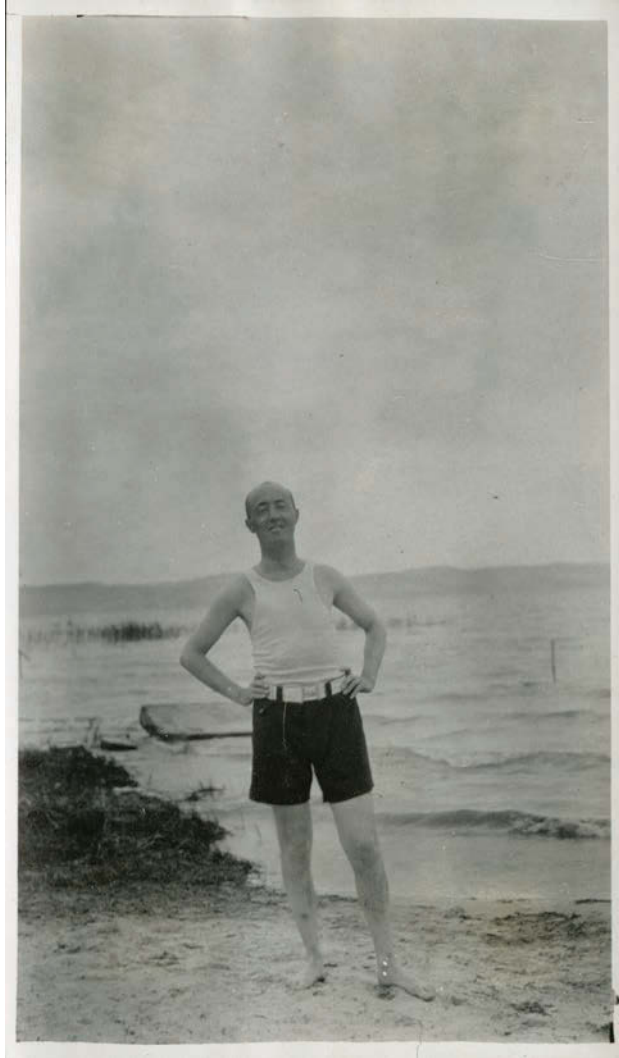
The truth is that my father came from an orthodox Jewish family. They were very poor. My grandmother had eight children, but only seven survived. My father was the youngest. He was the only one who had a university degree. His brother, who was 20 years older—Uncle Lajos, who was exterminated by the Nazis—paid his tuition fees. All his other brothers had trades, because they didn't have money. They couldn't have paid for my father's tuition, but uncle Lajos paid it. This orthodox family from Pápa was extremely poor. My grandfather was a doorkeeper and my grandmother as Rózsa Weisz was bringing children into the world.



There was a bit of rivalry between the two families. The wedding was at the merchant family's flat at Kertész utca. The relatives who came were a bit jealous. The merchants were considered of a higher class. Even so, my grandfather was bankrupt five times.



There was a bit of rivalry between the two families. The wedding was at the merchant family's flat at Kertész utca. The relatives who came were a bit jealous. The merchants were considered of a higher class. Even so, my grandfather was bankrupt five times. However it was different, because in that family there were only four children. They ran a bourgeois household, which was quite different. They were not orthodox as well.



**He had his own painting style. His paintings are in the Smithsonian.  
Rezső was a professor at the National Academy for 50 years.**

This is my uncle, Rezső Fábri, the painter. He was the eldest brother of my mother. He migrated to America, to New York, in 1921. He came home in 1927. I still have many works of his. He was a head of quite a few committees. He studied in Budapest at the University of Technology and University of Fine Arts. He immigrated to New York alone. He had difficulties until he got his own atelier. He did a lot of things. His biography is in a lot of books. He had his own painting style. His paintings are in the Smithsonian. Rezső was a professor at the National Academy for 50 years. When he had his 50 year jubilee, his students celebrated him. He ran evening classes for mature students. His students loved him. He was in correspondence with my mother all along. She was his favourite sister.



This was taken by Rezső in 1927 when he came back to visit. There were two boys: Rezső and Károly. They didn't have any opportunities to look forward to. One of them went to India and the other to America. Rezső was a magnificent university teacher. Károly was also head of many committees. He knew Gandhi.



Erzsikisa, the help and me, Mother, Aunt Oti in black,  
Aunt Paula, Grandma and Grandpa







Fábri Henrik Lipót and Fábri Henrik Lipótné Fischer Ilona. On my mother's side, my grandfather was a merchant and coffee shop owner. ... After Grandfather's death, who was in business until he died, Grandmother Fábri as a widow sold coffee from the flat.



Fábri Henrik Lipót and Fábri Henrik Lipótné Fischer Ilona. On my mother's side, my grandfather was a merchant and coffee shop owner. This year is the hundred-year jubilee of Hotel Britannia, which he founded. He had another cafeteria in the city center. There the waiters were stealing. I don't have any pictures from the other line, from the Deutsch line. At this time they were already sick. In this last period, their marriage wasn't good. They despised each other so much that they lived on different levels of the flat. After Grandfather's death, who was in business until he died, Grandmother Fábri as a widow sold coffee from the flat.



He loved his work. He was a good person. He was an amazing singer.  
The most beautiful days were when my mother was playing on the  
piano and my father was singing. He could sing like a cantor.

Géza while he was working. This represents him. It is really him. He loved his work. He was a good person. He was an amazing singer. The most beautiful days were when my mother was playing on the piano and my father was singing. He could sing like a cantor. This was real talent. While they were engaged they used to go to the opera house. Lohengrin was my mother's favourite. Music, literature, she knew everything. My father first built roads, then was a civil engineer. In Pécs, for example, he built mines and also parts of the Ferdinand Bridge, and his work is in Madách Square. He was more conservative than my mother, who was more modern. Márta was way too modern for him. My father loved Márta, but sometimes she made him cry. Márta sometimes was harsh.



This is the grandparents' flat at Kertész utca. We lived there after Pécs, because we didn't have a flat of our own. My mother and father got a room. We have the same dress. For a long time we were dressed similarly.

In this age I was still the taller one, then Márta became the tallest. This is the grandparents' flat at Kertész utca. We lived there after Pécs, because we didn't have a flat of our own. My mother and father got a room. We have the same dress. For a long time we were dressed similarly. It was typical that mother dressed us in amazing clothes. She had a precise style. She made dresses for herself, and hats and suits.



Due to financial reasons my mother started to learn tailoring for a few months. My father didn't have a job during the two years of financial crisis, so it was necessary. That time she worked until she got sick. She was working on the sewing machine until midnight.

I loved this coat. Everything that my mother created. It really represents how we were dressed. Due to financial reasons my mother started to learn tailoring for a few months. My father didn't have a job during the two years of financial crisis, so it was necessary. That time she worked until she got sick. She was working on the sewing machine until midnight. When we lived at Wekerle Sándor utca, which is today Hercegprímás utca, our neighbours reported us because they could hear the sewing machine at midnight. She got sick of it, had pneumonia. She got it at the worst time: the awful year of 1944. They filled her lungs in Wesselényi utca and in the ghetto. She made clothes for friends, who didn't pay. It was a difficult profession, which she did as a plus. She was talented in everything, cooking and painting. She always created something.



My father had depression; therefore I resemble more to him than to my mother, who was an optimist. My father used to say, “Ági will never come back!,” then turn towards the wall. Then my mother said, “She is going to come back!”



I never laugh or smile. Márta and my mother used to. I was deported in the most vulnerable period of my life. It was my birthday. I was crying then. I finished school in the cellar. This broke my life. My father had depression; therefore I resemble more to him than to my mother, who was an optimist. My father used to say, “Ági will never come back!,” then turn towards the wall. Then my mother said, “She is going to come back!” I was never happy. I don’t have any children. Never had a husband. My mother was an optimist; I wasn’t and Márta was. She didn’t approve when I said something negative.



We learned two languages, and three times a week went to Perczel Berczik Sári. My mother created the costumes for the examination. This is how she paid for the classes.

My sister Márta learned dancing. Who at this age already was a fantastic dancer, and who would be magnificent later. She would have a degree in dancing. We learned two languages, and three times a week went to Perczel Berczik Sári, who was an artist, a dance instructor, movement phenomena. She lived until she was 90 years old, and trained athletes. We used to go to Teréz körút 40, which was bombed later. Márta refused to visit her after the war; however, we spent most of our childhood with her, at least three times a week. My mother created the costumes for the examination. This is how she paid for the classes. This is how she got sick. This was way too much work for her.



My mother had been stuttering for a very long time.  
Although speech therapy existed by that time, it didn't help.

My mother had been stuttering for a very long time. Although speech therapy existed by that time, it didn't help. This affected her whole life. But she was beautiful and serious and literate. Both my parents read a lot.



**My father is lifting up both of us. He still had strength. He had vasoconstriction. It caused his death. ... My mother was always walking ahead, then waiting for him. She couldn't walk as slowly as him.**

My father is lifting up both of us. He still had strength. He had vasoconstriction. It caused his death. He died within a day. He had a heart attack, which was not known at that time. He had terrible pain all day. He couldn't lie in his bed, because his back was aching as well. He needed to lie but sometimes he couldn't stand the pain. He was dead by that evening. He got a last injection at 7 pm. My mother spent a lot of time at the GP, and didn't come back for so long. She waited so long to get to the doctor. I was next door with the flu. We didn't want him to get infected. He had some problem with his stomach on Thursday. We thought it was from the sorrel he ate. By Saturday it meant the end. The doctor even asked, "What are those purple lines on his face?" Walking was difficult for my father for years. Vasoconstriction wasn't cured in 1959 as it is today. Márta inherited the disease and she had surgery. My mother was always walking ahead, then waiting for him. She couldn't walk as slowly as him. My father retired quite late in life. At the end he only spent two years in retirement. My mother thought they would spend quite a few years together in retirement. It is not that we didn't look after our health, but the options were limited that time.



My mother wasn't used to being so sorrowful. She couldn't cry visibly, only inside. When she escorted my father out with the coroners. Then in the elevator a cry eventually came out. She was really disciplined.



This image was taken after my father passed away. My mother wasn't used to being so sorrowful. She couldn't cry visibly, only inside. When she escorted my father out with the coroners. Then in the elevator a cry eventually came out. She was really disciplined. She didn't used to be so sad, and dressed in black.







Márta said that Peti could have ben rescued if he had gotten into the Jewish high school. He didn't get in.

Judit and Peti, my two cousins. Pista and Aunt Oti's children. Peti was exterminated and Judit is in Israel. Peti was taken, then shot in Sopron, because his leg was frozen. The same thing happened with my uncle from my father's side. Márta said that Peti could have been rescued if he had gotten into the Jewish high school. He didn't get in. They were older than me. Judit visited us for the last time in 1944. We stood on both sides of the tile stove with my sister. She said, "Come on! Are you coming to Israel?" It wasn't easy to get there. We didn't know that then, but we both said no. Through Romania and Cyprus, through jail, she eventually got to Israel. Judit wasn't a good student in school, for a teacher's daughter. She had conflicts with her mother, but she loved her father.



Jozi was my cousin, who was twelve years older than me. We really liked each other. Her name was Grósz Jozefa. Later she changed it to a more Hungarian name: Gábor Jozefa.

My mother, father, Ervinke, Jozi and Uncle Imre. None of them are alive today. Ervinke died in his childhood. Jozi in 1972. Jozi was my cousin, who was twelve years older than me. We really liked each other. Her name was Grósz Jozefa. Later she changed it to a more Hungarian name: Gábor Jozefa. She was a teacher as well. She also worked at Kossuth Publishing company. Uncle Imre was my mother's cousin, who emigrated to Brazil. My father was always a bit overweight; therefore my mother forced diets on him. They loved to play chess.



Márta never liked Meri. Márta mostly never liked people I liked. This hurt a bit.



Ilonka and Uncle Lajos, my father's eldest brother, who paid his university tuition, who was killed in Sopron. Ilonka is one of his daughters and Kálmán is her husband. This is out hiking somewhere. My friend Meri and her mother Lili are in the photo as well. Our mothers were studying together at the Academy of Music from Steincz Elza. My mother was attractive, and both of them were smart. So they became friends. Meri had red hair and still has red hair today. She doesn't have any grey hair at all. Her mother had the same hair. She is the cousin of George Ligeti. She was a teacher. She has two golden rings from the University of Theatre and Film. She was a dance teacher. An amazing teacher, who could demonstrate what she was teaching. She was still teaching when she was 80 years old. Márta never liked Meri. Márta mostly never liked people I liked. This hurt a bit.



Aunt Paula, who was in bed all the time and did amazing embroidery. I don't know exactly why she was in bed, but I know she had difficulties getting out of bed. Through the open window she told us fairy tales. We gave her flowers.

Aunt Paula, who was in bed all the time and did amazing embroidery. I don't know exactly why she was in bed, but I know she had difficulties getting out of bed. She was the cousin of my grandmother. She had born as Widder Paula, and she got married to a Fábri. Fábri Miklós, who was the brother of my grandfather. It was a ground floor flat. Sometimes we visited her with my mother. Through the open window she told us fairy tales. We gave her flowers.



This is Olivia, who was the wife of Károly. Olivia was an English lady. Károly between his journeys to India used to stay in England. She was his wife for a while, then they divorced. Károly was a journalist at the Statesmen. He was there during the war. He came back to Hungary in an army coat. He kept it and mother stitched it.



Jozi, Annus and my mother. The three women. Jozi and Annus were classmates in the Jewish high school. This was before Annus moved to England. This shows what a great friends they were. Jozi and Annus were in correspondence with each other.



My mother played the piano at their hotel's hall. That time she was quite close to finishing her studies at the Academy of Music. She couldn't finish the artist practice years. The Ungárs, as guests of the hotel, noticed my mother's playing.

Ungár Ditti, daughter of the friends from Vienna (she was adopted), her parents and me. She escaped from Hitler to Chile and went back to Vienna due to the Pinochet dictatorship. This friendship was started by my mother. My mother and father went to Vienna for a few days. They got to know the Ungár couple and became friends. My mother played the piano at their hotel's hall. That time she was quite close to finishing her studies at the Academy of Music. She couldn't finish the artist practice years. The Ungárs, as guests of the hotel, noticed my mother's playing. They were Austrian and talked German. My parents were in correspondence with the Ungárs. In the last minute before the Anschluss, when Budapest was still peaceful, they came to visit us.



Then, to escape Nazism, they spent their money on protection that should have freed them. In theory, when they left, they were in a favoured position.



The Breszlauers, who were very close friends before they were taken. They lived on Rózsadomb in their own house. The father was a broker. They had more money. It was a good friendship. The mother, Illy, was a mathematics teacher at the Jewish high school. They had two kids: Éva, the elder, and Kitti, the younger. Before they were taken they left their home and came to live with us. Then, to escape Nazism, they spent their money on protection that should have freed them. In theory, when they left, they were in a favoured position. Éva committed suicide. They shaved off her hair. It shocked her that much that she jumped. They the Breszlauers, the Strausz and us used to meet and play cards and chess.







We were already learning to dance. We started it in an early age and learned it until 1944. We also had music and language classes. We were engaged all day, going to extra classes. I had Latin, French and English classes.

We were already learning to dance. We started it in an early age and learned it until 1944. We also had music and language classes. We were engaged all day, going to extra classes. I had Latin, French and English classes. But everything stopped and now I can't even read musical score. After my deportation we didn't had any more classes. We still had a piano but it needed to be tuned. I cried when we sold the piano and bought a television in 1968, way later than anyone else. My cousin Jozi already had a TV. We used to go there to watch it. The piano was in my room, because I had the bigger room. They gave it to me. I was teaching there also.



We played tennis in school. We were good runners, liked to hike and skate.  
The little money they had, they all spent it on us. I learned to play the piano;  
Márta learned to play the violin. We learned languages after school.

We played tennis in school. We were good runners, liked to hike and skate. The little money they had, they all spent it on us. I learned to play the piano; Márta learned to play the violin. We learned languages after school. Márta didn't appreciate all of this. Márta was a good runner. Both of us were good runners. We were known for it. Little Dési and Big Dési, that's what they called us in school.



I was really good in reading music scores, but I never managed to play by myself. I only played what I needed to practice. We had lessons until 1944, then it stopped. After that we were sobbing for me to recover. I came back with flecktyphus, the deathly kind of typhus. There wasn't any medicine at home, therefore my mother needed to nurse me. When I arrived home my father sent a telegraph for her. In a few days she returned by wagon from Cegléd.



This was the table where Márta studied. We learned music from Lady Ella, who gave me piano lessons. Her husband gave violin lessons. Both of them were exterminated. Often I didn't have a good relationship with Lady Ella; she wasn't a good enough pedagogue for me. I am a benign person, and mostly I have long, good relationship with people. Anyway, I wasn't into going to the lessons that much. Márta was studying with the husband, who played violin at the National Concert Orchestra. We lived close to each other. We lived in Wekerle Sándor utca 17 and then in 19. They were friends with my parents. It became a fruitful relationship. So we worked on music as well, and also practiced at home. I was really good in reading music scores, but I never managed to play by myself. I only played what I needed to practice. We had lessons until 1944, then it stopped. After that we were sobbing for me to recover. I came back with flecktyphus, the deathly kind of typhus. There wasn't any medicine at home, therefore my mother needed to nurse me. When I arrived home my father sent a telegraph for her. In a few days she returned by wagon from Cegléd. Márta didn't nurse me then. She was occupied by American soldiers, and by other things. She couldn't finish high school due to the war. She wanted to work after she finished her last year. She wanted to get a degree as a dance trainer. Later she went to university apart from work. She lived her own life by that time.

I could never forgive one sentence of hers: that she needed to "escape" from home when she got married in 1949 to Pista. Escape from a family where she got everything, where she had a modern mother, where she didn't appreciate what the parents provided for her. She was a sovereign person. She didn't like when my father freaked out when she wasn't home by 11 pm. My father was conservative.



Then they eliminated private schools. Due to the Jewish laws  
we couldn't get into any high schools.

These are school photos, from home. The Szekeres School. I studied a year at the Rákos Lea high school at Szemere utca, until Márta grew into age. When she was of age we switched to Szekeres School which was in Kálmán utca. It was a private school. It had a very good reputation. Szekeres Margit was a teacher. When she retired her son took over the school. Then they eliminated private schools. Due to the Jewish laws we couldn't get into any high schools. Then my mother said she would visit Veres Pálné High School, where she studied. She would speak with Hajcs Ilona, the head of school, and tell her that she has to accept us into the school. Hajcs Ilona said, "My lady your daughters are our pupils from tomorrow." We still had four years to finish. I could finish all years, but Márta only finished three. I graduated from Veres Pálné High School. My classmates' parents were members of the Nazi Arrow-Cross party. I still helped them, even though I knew who they were. They asked me because I was one of the best students. With protection they received great grades. With this, a few teachers' identities were not checked. There I studied French and Latin.



I was known for being on time. I woke up on time, while Márta turned to the other side, when we had to go to school.

I was always a good student. During the university years, I spent summers studying. I was known for being on time. I woke up on time, while Márta turned to the other side, when we had to go to school. This represents how different we were. She never woke easily, but she was never late. I always loved to comfortably be on time. Always earlier than I needed to be.



They were poor. That's the reason they organized the camp: to supplement their income. Especially in those two years of crisis, when Uncle Pista didn't have any job. Apart from this, there was a camp every year where we could go.

We used to go hiking. Uncle Pista, who was a teacher, used to run summer camps. We always went there. Márta hated it, because Aunt Oti treated us differently than the non-relative camper kids. We didn't deserve that much because we didn't pay for it. They were poor. That's the reason they organized the camp: to supplement their income. Especially in those two years of crisis, when Uncle Pista didn't have any job. Apart from this, there was a camp every year where we could go. Márta's sense of justice and critique was strong. She especially didn't like Aunt Oti.



**We knew each other from my uncle's camp. She was Marta's classmate.  
When I got to Paris, we became good friends. ... I wasn't allowed to meet with her,  
with an ex-Hungarian, who was a dissident.**



Pál Éva, Madam Silvera, emigrated from Hungary in 1947 as a university student. She was counted as a dissident until she got married. Her husband died in 1959, when their son was three years old. Both of them were in the resistance. They met in the university. We always spoke French with each other. We knew each other from my uncle's camp. She was Marta's classmate. When I got to Paris, we became good friends. She wasn't in contact with Márta. I wasn't allowed to meet with her, with an ex-Hungarian, who was a dissident. What happened was that when I was in Paris in 1951, when it was forbidden to meet with her, I visited her. It never had any consequence. Even though we came from different classes, we were friends from an early age.



We were always arguing as kids. They needed to count the same amount of cherries on the plate. When Márta was eleven she needed to be escorted, because boys already paid attention to her.

We were always arguing as kids. They needed to count the same amount of cherries on the plate. When Márta was eleven she needed to be escorted, because boys already paid attention to her. My mother was beautiful as well. When she was 80 years old, she needed to rush away from Szabadság tér. She was reading there, and a guy started to follow her when she went home. He even got into the house. She said she was scared. He went after her because he liked her legs.



**She was brave. She always said what she was thinking.  
She was expelled from the party because she was way too  
critical. In the war she escaped from the line.**

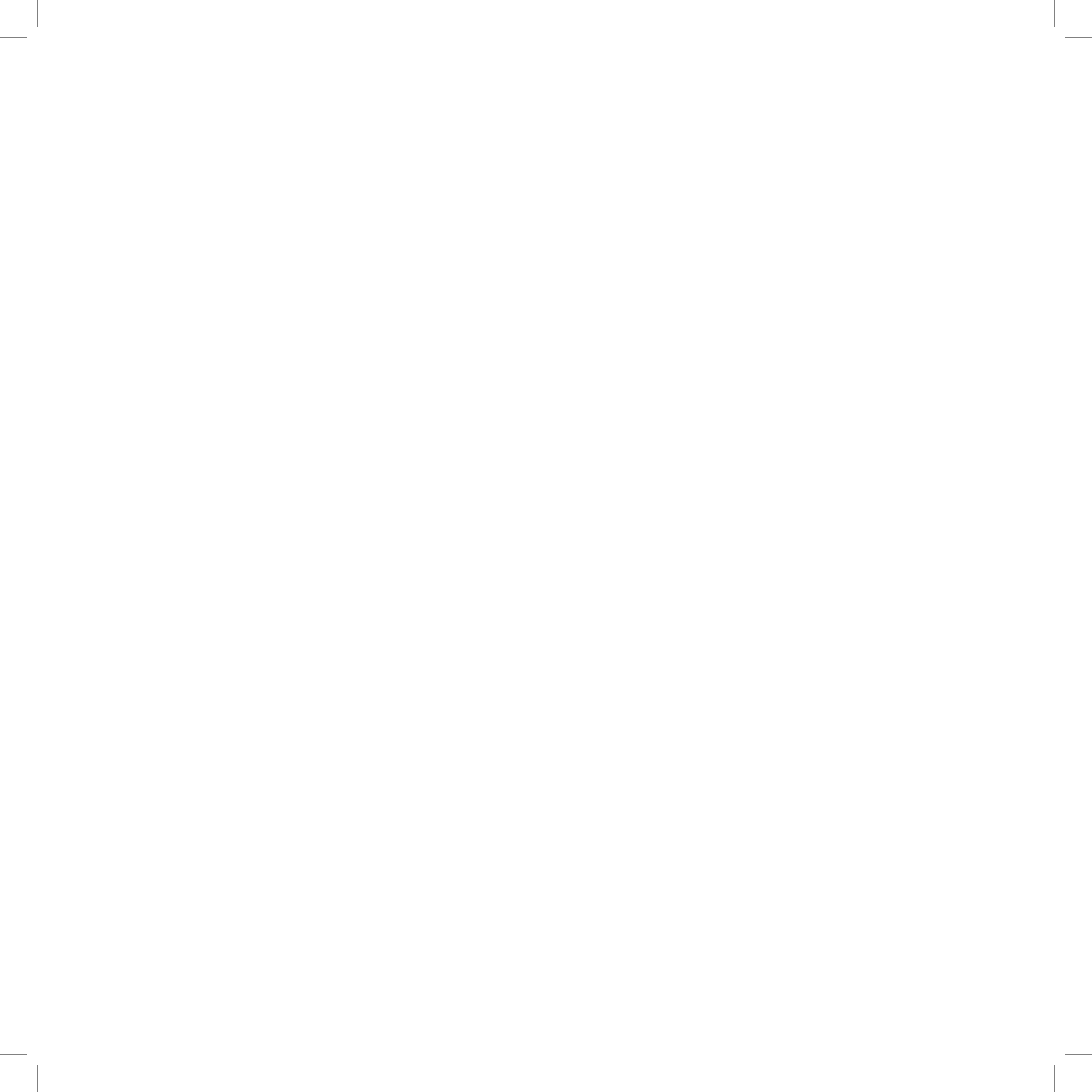
Márta had a lot of suitors. Then her seminar teacher became her husband, who for me was the most antipathetic from all of them. Márta became an economist without any education. She worked at Malév Airlines for 25 years. She was extremely talented. She was brave. She always said what she was thinking. She was expelled from the party because she was way too critical. In the war she escaped from the line. I think they didn't notice—they looked away for a moment—or she would have been shot. Or they noticed, but they let her go. This is how she got into the Jewish high school. Which she hated, but there she was protected. She was extremely valorous.



I told her that she was critical since a very early age. Our personalities were different.

I was a sometimes pessimistic introvert. My father wasn't happy as well, when, after the war, she came home with an American soldier at 11 pm. Márta couldn't stand this; she found everything way too conservative.

Márta had a strong sovereign personality. We once went together to the cinema, but that was awful. She loved me, but in her own way. She was bit selfish with an extremely strong personality. I told her that she was critical since a very early age. Our personalities were different. I was a sometimes pessimistic introvert. My father wasn't happy as well, when, after the war, she came home with an American soldier at 11 pm. Márta couldn't stand this; she found everything way too conservative. However my mother was quite modern. I was more conservative than my sister. She was very critical. This represented her whole life. She loved her parents, but she wasn't kind to them. Especially to my mother, who was a widow for 30 years. My father died in 1959 and she in 1989.





During the war the four of us were in three different places. Strangers lived in our flat, and stole things, but not the albums. I was the only one who got deported. My parents were in the ghetto. My sister was at the Jewish high school after she escaped with my aunt and uncle. My father died in 1959. He was an engineer and depressed during the war because I wasn't home and I wouldn't come back. My mother was an optimist. I was away for 18 months. My father, with favours, managed to put me into the comb spinning plant to protect me. It was a German war plant, where they accepted Jews as workers. They needed us and we thought we were protected. I got deported with the last transport on the 4th of December. The Russians were almost here, ante portas. When I returned from deportation I had to go to Honvéd utca 40. The way I got home was that I needed to go first to Bethlen utca for a sterilizing bath. We didn't wait for the official transport. Three of us were friends: me and Éva and Gábor Ernőné, who was a communist rebel. We were inmates at the comb spinning plant and we were deported together. Then came the Soviet troops. The Germans had already escaped. The toilets weren't cleaned. There was no food. And I had typhus, with a deathly fever of 40 degrees. The Russians came and we were not afraid. The three women. They offered to take us to the railway station. The older woman who was a rebel told us to go. We should not wait for the transport. They took us to a railway station, which was in such a condition that sometimes we had to get off because the tracks were ruined. When there were rails the train took us. When there were not any, we needed to walk, until the train ran again or we reached another train. That time the two women held me and brought me because I couldn't walk anymore. We travelled in empty wagons. It wasn't organized yet. It was a miracle that we arrived home, where there was no medicine at all, only aspirin.

It took months until I recovered with my mother's nursing. When I arrived home from the bath I had to walk home. And I was already very sick. That time no one was at home because my father went to his office. My mother was taken to Cegléd due to her pneumonia. My father organized her to be taken by a wagon. A priests' monastery nursed her with milk and cottage cheese. The doctor said if she didn't eat these, she wouldn't survive. It was on the first day of liberation that she was taken to Cegléd. When I arrived home, someone called my father into his office. He cried. By that time I looked for Doctor Gyepes. He was Jewish but he had managed to hide with fake papers. I went up to the flat, where strangers lived, but who left when I arrived. The windows were boarded after they had been broken. My father lived there, and couldn't manage alone. He was literate, and not someone with practical skills. I arrived home on the 18th of May.





You can see that a dancer sits there. She was happy. It was her best period. She never wanted to teach literature. Then, as a supervisor, she was teaching the new Malév Airlines employees all the time.

Beautiful Márta! She loved the sun so much. I believe this caused her death, because she died from melanoma with metastasis. I love this image. You can see that a dancer sits there. She was happy. It was her best period. She never wanted to teach literature. Then, as a supervisor, she was teaching the new Malév Airlines employees all the time. She applied to Malév. First she worked at Erkel bookshop. From the first day, she knew how to sell books and music. Later she went to work for Rózsavölgyi bookstore. She was an amazing salesman. There she applied to an advertised Malév position. She became supervisor and not higher because she was considered an intellectual. She had a self-taught economical knowledge. She developed a similar tariff system to the Western, which couldn't be adopted, in air traffic. It was important for her career that she knew languages on a superlative degree, English and German. She was the head of the conferences. She travelled around the world, as a supervisor. She had a good relationship with her boss; however she criticised him as well, because she was brave. She taught them style until they mastered it. She loved to work at Malév. Her retirement celebration was held in Geneva. That was a central place. She had a lot of contacts and clients around the world who met there. Then she worked at Canadian Airlines and one other later. When she was 70 she opened a patchwork store. She died with a million forints of debt. She just stocked up when she lost her consciousness. She wasn't expecting that.



The infamous Honvéd Company's costume. It terminated in 1955 when there were cutbacks everywhere. Márta was let go because her husband still had a job. However they fired me from the College of Foreign Languages because I was a single woman.

The infamous Honvéd Company's costume. It terminated in 1955 when there were cut-backs everywhere. Márta was let go because her husband still had a job. However they fired me from the College of Foreign Languages because I was a single woman. I started to work at the College of Foreign Languages after I came back in 1953, and it lasted until 1955. My mother went to see the director. Told him that I was coming back from Paris in October and I still didn't have a job. This is how I got the position. I needed a job by the time I was back. My father was supporting the four of us from his engineer salary, as an employee of a firm. What Márta earned she kept; she left the household in 1949. She asked for money from Father though. In 1955, my communist director, and party mate of mine, took me to the corridor. He was afraid to ask me into his office. He said that I was self-conscious, and I was single, and he didn't have any other option. This happened with other teachers also, but they were relocated in Budapest, and I was relocated out of town. They sent me to Rákosi Mátyás high school in the countryside. I went there two times. Once to register and once to resign. They didn't even teach any languages. I would have been a librarian and a maths teacher.



The Honvéd (National Defence) Company, where she was a dancer. But she was fired at the cutbacks in 1955. Therefore this image was taken shortly after the war. It was a great tragedy to her. After that she couldn't look at any folk dance company. It hurt her that much that she had to leave, because she wasn't a peasant.





January school from 1959, with Vén Emil. He was Italian, born in Fiume. She studied from Moldován István as well; however, Emil was her professor for the longest period. The sketch of the Balley Institute, which she made on tracing paper, was her last drawing. She positioned her chair at the opera house to have the right perspective.



She mastered linocutting in Zebegény when she was 70 years old.  
She had to stop oil painting because she developed an allergy.

Mátraszentimre, where my mother used to paint. Vén Emil was her professor. She painted in school under the guidance of professors. She mastered linocutting in Zebe-gény when she was 70 years old. She had to stop oil painting because she developed an allergy. It was a great distress because she loved to paint with oil. Mastering linocutting when you're 70! Creativity runs in the family. She started to draw quite early. Her sketchbooks were amazing. She started to learn from professors after the war. Before the war she was making dresses. But she was disciplined. First she used to get to Dési Huba ring, then she learned at Uva terv (Road and Rail Design Firm), the firm where my father retired. He was an engineer in the finances department.



**She worked eight hours every day. She loved it. They also had lectures and exhibitions in Zebegény as well. For the last, in 1989, she was already packed to leave, but she couldn't go to that one. She managed to draw the doctors in the hospitals. She asked for paper and pencil. She died at the age of 88 and a half.**

Zebegeény in 1984. She made linocuts in Zebegeény for 20 years. For her 20-year jubilee, they organized an exhibition for her. They also had group shows every year. She worked eight hours every day. She loved it. They also had lectures and exhibitions in Zebegeény as well. The other residency was Tihany, where she was aquarelle painting. I visited her every week. They lasted two weeks each. For the last, in 1989, she was already packed to leave, but she couldn't go to that one. She managed to draw the doctors in the hospitals. She asked for paper and pencil. She died at the age of 88 and a half. She fell. My arm was broken and tied up. It happened on a Saturday dawn. She wanted to go out at half past six, when she used to, and she fell. Her hip got fractured. Her heart couldn't stand it anymore. She was also bleeding somewhere. They couldn't take her to the x-ray, because it was in a different building. She had two days left. So Márta could come back from Balaton.







The Iron Curtain meant that there wasn't only safety curtain in Hungary, but for us in Paris as well. We couldn't even visit Fontainebleau.



When I finished university, they didn't teach any Western languages. I started to work at a trading company where they needed someone reliable at the billing monitoring department. This is how I got to Vicex. This billing monitoring wasn't a big deal, but I was happy I had a job. One reason for it was that an older friend of mine already worked at the company. So they accepted me at once. My boss was all right. This was my first workplace. They said that the bills were written in a foreign language that I wouldn't even regard as text. I don't really know what needed to be monitored on it. But it was a good community. Anyway, I had a job. After a year the director knew that I had a university degree in English and French. The Ministry of Foreign Commerce was looking for someone for their sub-office in Paris. They accepted me and were happy they found someone. For a while I was working at the Ministry here to prepare me and train me. Then I was transferred to Paris at the worst time, between 1951 and 1953. The Iron Curtain meant that there wasn't only safety curtain in Hungary, but for us in Paris as well. We couldn't even visit Fontainebleau. I couldn't visit the Chartes Cathedra, because they didn't let us go outside of Paris. My colleagues were working cadres; I was the only intellect there. Even my boss hated me for it. I had two bosses. One was an intellect himself: the Fenyves, who went home after a year. I lived with them and sublet one of the rooms in their flat. We worked a lot. The courier came every two weeks. Saturday was regarded as an average working day. On Saturdays we used to go home quite late, because we had to finish everything with the courier. I was a stenographer, a typist who could also speak English and learned English stenography.



My mother visited me for a month and we travelled together. We had plans for every Saturday and Sunday. While I was working my mother organized it.

Chartes, in 1961. My second working period in Paris between 1959 and 1961. The first was at the Ministry of Foreign Commerce, there at the side office, which was in the building of the embassy. This time it was at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and their the French Institute. At Champs-Élysées there was a small street called rue de Berri. That time the embassy was a lower grade. The two rooms were the commerce office. This was between 1951 and 1953. Then came the College of Foreign Languages when I went back to Hungary from 1953 to 1955, until I got terminated. The second period happened when Gereblyés László, who is deceased, who was a poet, a workers' party poet, not really a good one, knew French, and he became the head. He looked for cadres. My mother went to him to ask for the position. This was in 1959, the year when my father passed away. Therefore I automatically said no. I wouldn't leave my mother alone. My father died in March and I left in October. My mother said she will be fine and I should go. I hesitated a lot; however, I really wanted to go back. They said this time it will be cultural. I was the main employee in the Hungarian Institute. This was my second delegation, from 1959 to 1961. And the safety curtain was less strong. My mother visited me for a month and we travelled together. We had plans for every Saturday and Sunday. While I was working my mother organized it. I had my own flat that time.



This is the suburban part of Paris where we lived between 1951 and 1953 with the Fenyves family. This is the Sunday we spent together at the park in Sceaux. Sceaux was a suburban area that here would be a well-organized, gardened area in the agglomeration. Later in the park in Sceaux, when it was allowed, I used to go to some concerts.



The Fenyves, similarly to me, were Jewish intellectuals. He was hardworking and knew what he was doing. The wife was skilful as well. She came home to give birth. I paid rent and extra for the food. Éva used to cook in the evenings. When we arrived home late at night we used to dine together.



This is Victor the driver. He was French and obviously member of the resistance. We had two French colleagues. They checked them to make sure they were communists.

This is Victor the driver. He was French and obviously member of the resistance. We had two French colleagues. They checked them to make sure they were communists. Victor was nice. This was the car, which was much needed because we arrived home in Sceaux quite late. It was far away from Paris. He drove us home in the evening, and took us to work in the morning.



She was the French secretary and I was the Hungarian fellow. And obviously we were good friends. I visited her in her home once. That wasn't official, because even that relationship was prohibited.



This is the office, my desk and Christiane's. This tiny room was ours. I was happy that I could speak French with someone, because I couldn't with the Hungarians. They couldn't speak French that well. Christiane was already a member of the resistance at age 17. When she worked at the office she already had a child. She was the French secretary and I was the Hungarian fellow. And obviously we were good friends. I visited her in her home once. That wasn't official, because even that relationship was prohibited.



We needed to go together as a group. I thought, I will show them the Louvre, a small part of it at least. We went to the circus instead. Because the others said we should go there. This was their standard.

I knew by heart which pictures were where in the Louvre. I often went there. On Sundays we had to go somewhere together as a group. I was the only one who was interested in something serious. We needed to go together as a group. I thought, I will show them the Louvre, a small part of it at least. We went to the circus instead. Because the others said we should go there. This was their standard. In the 50s, I saw nothing of Paris. We could only go out in groups. They were all working-class cadres; none of them were intellectuals. This was the period where they despised intellectuals; my boss was such a person. I never trespassed; I was regarded as inferior to him.



They reported on us, on their own colleagues, not only the outsiders. I remember that one Sunday I noticed them peeking through the keyhole, watching what I was doing.

This was the spy from the Ministry of Home Affairs. Obviously this was a secret at that time. She and her husband reported us. They had a different name. Their real name is Mészáros and at that time they said Teleki. At home they used their real name. But only I knew that. During this time in Paris, I had no idea about it. I heard later that the husband was called Mészáros József. But this was normal in any foreign office. They reported on us, on their own colleagues, not only the outsiders. I remember that one Sunday I noticed them peeking through the keyhole, watching what I was doing. Afterwards the Fenyves left and then came the new director, Alcsút. Therefore, for half of that period I lived in the French Institute. I lived one year with the Fenyvesis and one there. We gave up the flat at Sceaux when the Fenyves's no longer lived there.



By the time I came back, it turned out that he loved me. This resulted in six years of a bad relationship. Six years and he was drunk and never wanted to go out.

The one in the class who stands besides me. This is the College of Foreign Languages where I was teaching adults. By the time I came back, it turned out that he loved me. This resulted in six years of a bad relationship. Six years and he was drunk and never wanted to go out. Therefore it was difficult. At the end of my teaching, two lads came to me and I could choose between them. I don't know why I chose him. I guess the other was nothing special as well. I don't remember his name. There wasn't much of a difference between them. I think he was two years younger. For some reason, he came out and confessed his love to me.



I didn't have the option to live alone in 1951, but in 1959 I had my own flat. I lived on Blvd. Saint Marcel.



I didn't have the option to live alone in 1951, but in 1959 I had my own flat. I lived on Blvd. Saint Marcel. The first time I lived with the Fenyves's. When they left and in came the working-class new director, Alcsút, I moved to the French Institute, where there were two rooms and two people. I lived with the ambassador's assistant and his brother. This tender smile is me.



They didn't know anything about Hungary, only that it was under a bad Soviet regime. They were all anti-communists. It was also my fault that the bus stopped for 30 minutes.

Venice, with the pigeons. I came home in 1961 through Italy. I paid in for a packaged tour from France. They allowed me to come home through Italy. The price of the plane ticket cost exactly the same as from Paris. They let me stay in the Rome Institute, but I went to Venice as well. It was terrible, how the French were against Hungarians. This was the time of the Algerian War. We signed a liberation statement for Algeria. They didn't sign it. They asked me if they spoke Russian on the Hungarian radio. They had no idea. They didn't know anything about Hungary, only that it was under a bad Soviet regime. They were all anti-communists. It was also my fault that the bus stopped for 30 minutes, because my Hungarian passport was taken away by officers for inspection. This was quite unpleasant. Their negative comments hurt me.

