

Michaela Vidlakova And Their Servant, Terezie Hronickova



This photograph is from 1939, taken in our Prague apartment. It's of me as a child with our servant, Terezie Hronickova.

We belonged to the middle class. My mother taught at a school and my father worked in a small furriery. It was managed by its Jewish owner, and my father was in charge of sales and production. There was an accountant, then just a master tradesman and some workers. My father used to take the train out of Prague to go to the factory. We didn't have a car.

We lived in Prague in the neighborhood of Letna in a modern apartment on Hermanova Street. The apartment had central heating and hot water. We probably had parquet floors, but in one room there was this soft rubber with blue stripes. I liked it a lot back then, and loved playing there, because it was soft and wasn't slippery. It wasn't my room; I didn't have a room of my own, but I played there the most, and I remember the rubber on that floor to this day. The apartment had this smaller kitchen and then a bedroom, a living room, and some sort of den of my father's with bookcases.

All the appliances in the kitchen ran on electricity, and behind the kitchen there was a room for a maid, who lived with us. She was a young Czech girl named Terezie Hronickova. My mother used to go to school to teach, and this 'Rezinka' of ours took care of me. She loved me very much, and I her too. I remember that after the war I invited her to my graduation. It took me a while to find her.

During the time of the Protectorate Jews were forbidden to employ non-Jews. Rezinka got married and we lost contact with each other.

While we were still living on Letna, Rezinka would take care of me during the day, who besides me also took care of the household and cooking. We didn't cook kosher at home. The only Jewish food that we liked a lot were two side dishes. One was roasted semolina, and then gratings, in Yiddish ferverlach. Ferverlach isn't grated bread, but dense noodle dough that's grated on a rough grater, then left to dry, is roasted and then has either soup stock or just hot water poured over it. It's also a side dish, and is very good.