

Andras Gaspar As A Young Boy



This boy on the bike is Andris, Andras Gaspar, my husband, he was still a child then. He was probably six or seven years old then. They lived in Szilagysomlyo, and there we got acquainted with a lawyer, who then moved to Nagyvarad, it was after the war, and he related me my Andris was the terror of the neighborhood. He used to walk around with a whip, that bad he was. He used to crack it and people jumped away and this was so funny for him. I told him I wouldn't believe it. He was so calm, so well-behaved, but when he was a child he was very naughty.

We had a company and I spent my free time with them. There were three Romanian boys and the others were Jews. We were six girls and I think more than six boys. My [second] husband was among them. And his fiancée, Edit Lang, was one of my girlfriends. When he was forced laborer, he supplicated in a letter the marriage by proxy, so a picture marriage. They had to send the data and they would receive a paper with the following text: Edit Lang and Andras Gaspar got married, they were considered husband and wife. This paper would make out from Andris' unit, where he was forced laborer. A lot of marriages took place this way. Quite a lot. The regular soldiers used to marry the girls from the town this way. But they didn't get the permit. They received a letter, that the picture marriage between Andris and Edit wasn't allowed. And Edit didn't come back [from the deportation]. If somebody told me then that I will be Andris' wife, I spat in his/her face. Although I was enough well educated to don't do such a thing. I didn't even think about, because he was Edit's fiancé!

After I moved to Nagyvarad I met on the Main Street Andras Gaspar, Andris. He fell on my neck, since we were friends and lived opposite to each other. During the Holocaust he was a forced laborer in Poland. To be honest, we didn't really talked about this subject. Some time ago I wasn't able to talk about this, I didn't even tell anything to my children. He was a real sportsman, he played tennis and was a swimmer. But when he came back, he was nothing but skin and bones. In the last weeks-months of detention they were all thrown in a relocation camp. He was amongst the first to come home to Nagyvarad. His elder brother has not been deported, because he, for the sake of his wife, converted to Christianity and he wasn't taken away because he wore the white

armband. Andris was a late-born, her mother was 43 when she gave birth to him. He had an elder sister, who was 16 years older than him, and she didn't come home, neither. And none of his relatives, especially his mother. His father was a lawyer, but he died of heart-attack when Andris was in twelveth grade of high school, and he left them nothing. By then his bother was already working and he had to help out his mother, while Andris had to sustain himself: he gave lessons to the weaker students for money.

When we met he was already working at a mining company, he was the manager at a clay and kaolin mine in Rev [Bihar county]. He was hired as manager although he only had a high school graduation diploma. And from then on he came to Nagyvarad every Saturday-Sunday. Andris was glad too to have someone he could talk about the things [before the war]. We were getting along very well and on Saturday nights we used to go to the Astoria, which was in vogue then. Otherwise the Astoria was owned by my ladyfriend's father. My lady-friend used to come along, she was already married. And he told me joking that, and I'll never forget this: 'We should get married!' I told them: 'Are you nuts?' I respected Andris very much, but love or something like that it was out of the question... Then he wrote a statement, it got once we moved: 'In full possession of my faculties I sign that I will take Anni as my wife.' The whole thing was a joke. I gave it a thought, because I went through a marriage once and was a love match.