

Berta Grunstein Preparing For The Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary

This photo was taken in 1997 at home, with the occasion of our fiftieth wedding anniversary. Usually we invited only the family, but on this photo you can see in the center the wife of L. J. and his future daughter-in-law. They aren't Jewish, yet they attend the synagogue. I'm standing next to them, on the left. In the middle of the table I put aubergine, and I decorated it with a Magen David.

I knew my husband before the war already; he was the cousin of my mother. He already had had a family. Once I visited Piri, my mother's sister in Marosvasarhely; she was the wife of my future brother-in-law. They lived in the Kossuth street. We came from the concentration camp, we didn't have any clothes. We had to have shoes, coats, everything made, so I went to buy materials with my aunt. My husband and I met at Piri's. My mother's little brother, Adolf was about to get married for the second time. All these people were relatives, we all got married with relatives in those times. She told Joska: 'Well, you should get married...', and she kept on praising me and telling how good housewife I was and how decent a girl I was. My husband lost his family in the concentration camp, and he was much grieved about it. But he started to think about us... For me, who I had lost my mother and siblings, he meant compensation. I was eighteen, and he was thirty-two years old. He was such a warm-hearted and kind man, there are just a few husbands like him. I became fond of him not as of a man, but because he was so kind-hearted.

After the wedding first we lived in lodgings. I didn't know the owner. Previously a girl had lived there, but she had left for Israel [Palestine], that's how we could move in. Later we bought the apartment where I live at the present. It had only one room and a kitchen, we built the rest later in order to have room when my father and step-mother came to visit us, on holidays or on Sabbath. We wanted them to move here, but they didn't want to. He used to come here to the synagogue, he knew everybody, and everybody knew him. Yet he kept on telling that 'At home I look out the window and I know everybody around', he was a sociable person. My poor father used to say that he would come only when he would be carried. That's exactly what happened.

After our wedding I didn't work, my husband didn't let me; it is true though that he made me work enough at home. Before I got married, my father supplied me with money so that I didn't have to work; after that I didn't need to work, because my husband earned well.