

## Bella Steinmetz With Her First Husband



I'm with my first husband, in the yard. I'm wearing some kind of house-coat, because I can see it has two pockets. I never wore bathrobes. We had so many rosetrees, it was wonderful. It was a grove in our yard. I had a coat on me, and I looked like this, with my hair parted, this was my hairstyle. I have the same hairstyle on every photo, it's not intentional. We had a gardener, because I had a lot of boxwoods, that's a hedge, and rosetrees. We weren't wealthy, but we could afford such things. We couldn't have fixed it at home, well we had 3 or 4 fruit-trees, then 20 or 30 rosetrees, small and high ones. I must have been less than 30 years old here.

My father bought us a house with five-rooms and two bathrooms. It is 500 m far from here, where I live now. If I stretch out my neck well, I can see my house. It was in a small side street, in the continuation of the main square. It was furnished. My uncle furnished it. And he met all the expenses of my wedding. We didn't invite many guests, because then you had to requite it. Well, we were invited as well from time to time. My husband made acquaintances easier among the colleagues at the court. The region was large: we had district-court, tribunal, even a court of appeal, which is only in Bucharest now. My husband had an advantage, he spoke Romanian perfectly, and sometimes he helped the elder lawyers, he translated as well. We had society due to him, the friends invited us for cordiality. I wanted to go to work at the lawyer's office, or to give piano lessons - I had a diploma in piano as well -, and I could have had students. My husband wouldn't even hear about it. 'What do you think? Any client who would come into my lawyer's office, would say: Why did this fellow get married, if he can't support a wife?!'

It was typical for my husband how he adored me and loved me, for example he didn't even know how much dowry I had. My father told me that the money was deposited in the bank, and we could buy the house, whichever we'd like to. I didn't ask either: dad, how much did you deposit? After two

months my father asks me, 'How's that, you still didn't find a house? You pay, you live in a rented apartment!' Then he said very modestly [she laughs] 'Dad, in fact, to be honest, I don't know how many available funds we have for that.' I didn't ask it either. So he told us the amount, and we went then [to buy a house]. Briefly my husband was a very modest man.

My husband was quite reticent, but he felt good in society. In fact he was living his life. Because I didn't want... [children yet]. 'Let's wait one more year, so that you get into your job, and you let me go to balls a little more, and you have fun as well.' We had a good life. However he didn't let himself be terrorized, so that I was given a hard lesson in the third or forth month [after marriage]. I told him that I was 20 years old, that I wanted to keep playing tennis, going in for sports, going to concerts. Once it was almost dark, not completely, but it was twilight. He was sitting at home. As I was coming, he told me through the window: 'I wasn't aware of the fact that they had changed the tennis balls for phosphorous ones!' Meaning that I arrived home so late... So he had such remarks once or twice, so I told him: 'Now pay attention, while you know where I am, and you can control me in every minute, I won't tolerate such remarks. Because if you forbid me things or something similar, then I will do it in secret. You can choose.' That's how I set him a lesson. After that I got it back. One year passed. We went out to the café. He got accustomed by then [to the society life], and he's taking on a nice pink shirt. I tell him: 'Put on other shirt, I don't like this pink shirt. Choose, you have here light blue, white shirts.' We were going to the café after dinner to listen to music. 'Why? I like it, it's very suitable. What objections do you have to it?' I answer: 'That I don't like the pink shirt. You have a light blue.' He says: 'I like this one.' I reply: 'In this case I won't go out.' 'Well, if we don't go out, we'll stay home.' I say: 'So that's where we got in a few months, in one year, that you can't adapt yourself to me in such a minor thing?' 'I can tell you the same', he says. I was fuming with rage. I told the girl to bring down my suitcase from the loft, I'm going home next morning. Like a dumb, he didn't hear it. He wasn't dumb, he just wouldn't react to it. I told him: 'I'm going home, that's it, I'm leaving you.' He didn't react. I was crying all night of course. He let me cry. So that's how I got back, that one couldn't turn such thing into a problem. As I didn't leave at that the phosphorous balls either... That's how he gave me back that I shouldn't get involved in what shirt [he should be putting on], if it's a clean one...

My husband didn't quite like water. He could swim, but didn't enjoy it. However sometimes I went to row, I prepared lunch, and I called him to come to the Vikend, we would take lunch there, and the sun would shine on him a little, and he would bath. [Editor's note: It is the most attended holiday camp of the town. Inhabitants started to go out on the area between the Mures river and Sangeorgiu streamlet from the 1930s, where boathouses and weekend cottages were built. Since 1962 weekend cottages of enterprises, swimming-pools, sports grounds, restaurants were established as well on the Weekend Holiday Resort called 'Vikendtelep'.] So he came out, and finally he felt very good. That's how we evened ourselves up.