

Noemi Korsan-Ekert And Her Friend Maryla Metonomska



This is me and my friend Maryla Metonomska. The photo was taken in the 1930s.

I met Maryla when I was 15. She fascinated me. The story of her childhood sounded like a teary novel. Later I found out that her stories were not entirely true, but it does not matter, I was convinced they were. She told me about her mother who was a dancer. When Maryla was two, her parents separated. Her mother moved to Vienna, remarried and had another child, a boy. Maryla lived at her father's home. She was raised by her grandparents, a spinster aunt and various governesses. Maryla lived convinced that they were preventing her from seeing her mother. She hated them all, maybe with the exception of the grandparents.

That was a well-to-do, assimilated Jewish family. They lived in Lwow. They obviously all had higher education. Maryla, who was good at languages, had lessons of French and German. But she was terribly rebellious. Already in secondary school she was active in a quasi-communist organization. Basically, she wanted to destroy everything.

At 19, to spite her family, she married a working-class boy – a very handsome son of some janitors. Instead of studying at university, she got employment as a worker at a spoon factory. I saw her last when the Germans invaded Lwow in 1941.

One day, in 1965, I got a phone call. An acquaintance was asking if I remembered Maryla Metonomska. I said I did. 'Well,' she said, 'Maryla lives in Jaroslaw and makes a living as a worker.'

But she would like to work at a library. She needs a witness that she graduated from high school. She doesn't have any papers, she changed her identity during the war and burned all her documents...'

After that phone call, when I found out she had survived, I went to Jaroslaw to see her. She had two children and didn't quite know how to support herself and how to live. I started visiting her and trying to help. Several years later she died.

My husband brought her children from Jaroslaw. The boy, Wiktor, graduated from high school. Kuba managed to get him a scholarship and Wiktor went to study in Czechoslovakia. The girl, Iwona, stayed with us and became our second daughter. She is six months older than Ruth and they think of each other as sisters.