

Mariana Farkas



This is me, the photo was taken in 1944 in Budapest in the house we lived in, before the German armies entered Budapest. By then I was in high school, in the fourth year.

I had friends when I was in school, we visited each other, and they were Jews and non-Jews alike, there were no differences. I had a friend who lived in the same house as me, Farago Zsuzsa was her name, and we were neighbors. I don't remember other names, but it's startling that I do remember physiognomies. We went together to the swimming pool, skiing, and skating. We went

to the cinema very often as well, we sneaked away from home, my mother didn't even know. I had pocket money and we went to the matinee performance. We had a cinema nearby, Ipoly was its name, and I loved the movies, they were extraordinarily good movies, and we had great artists: I saw very good Hungarian movies, but American ones as well. And we went to the theater for children, it was close, right near our house, the Vigszinhaz Theater, on Sundays there was always a matinee performance for children. I used to go with my father or my mother, or with both of them, but they didn't forbid me to go with just my friends.

Other activities outside the school were these trips we made with the scouts organization, we went during summers and winters, we visited the country and I saw nearly all the cities: Szeged, Debrecen, Tatabanya, Kecskemet, Szolnok, all the cities. I had a uniform as a scout, of course, we, the girls, had a skirt, with shoes and stockings or socks when it was summer, and a khaki-colored blouse, a hat with large brims, like the Mexicans have, tied up under the chin, and a tie. I remember we had meetings; we cleaned around the school, the parks or around the houses where we lived. I didn't have much time to make friends outside school, except for my cousins maybe, whom I met in the family. During the week I was busy with the scouts, with school, with learning, so I didn't have a lot of free time.

Anti-Semitism appeared in school only in the fourth grade of high school, at my last exam, when I already wore the yellow star on my coat: I had worn it since March already, and my last exam was in June. Some of my classmates were Jewish - there were separate classes for boys and girls, but no one from my colleagues or my teachers treated me differently, they knew that we, the Jewish kids, were pretty wretched.