

Mario Modiano



This is a picture of me, Mario Modiano, at the age of possibly four or five. I have blond hair, blue eyes, and was a beautiful young boy. The photo was taken in Salonica in the 1930s.

My mother's German came useful one night while we were hiding in Nea Smirni. It was towards the end of the German occupation. The Germans were so short of manpower that they had recruited young boys for the air force - I mean boys aged 15-16. Some were stationed at the air force base at Faliro. Some of them deserted one night and there was a search by the German military police. They came into the house in Nea Smirni where we were hiding. I was sleeping on the floor, and they woke me up and started barking at me in German, thinking that because of my blond hair and blue eyes, I was one of the deserters. Fortunately my mother's German came all back. She explained that I was her son, not a deserter. That saved the day.