

Gyorgy's Elder Son



My elder son, Andris, was a fighter. While he was in the primary classes not a week passed without me being called to the school. He was respected on one hand because he was very strong on the other because he was very clever. He always helped the weaker ones and his classmates liked him. Once he came home beaten up. When I asked him what had happened, he told me that a classmate of his called him a 'Jidan puturos!' - 'Stinking Jew' in Romanian and that I had been called to the school. I did not say a thing, but went to the school the next day. The head of the class was a bit embarrassed and told me, in Romanian, of course: 'Please, I'm in a difficult situation, Andris was fighting with one of the boys whose father is a colonel in the Securitate [the Romanian secret police]. He beat the boy so badly that his nose was bleeding and we had to call for an ambulance, and his father made a scene and we have to expel Andris from the school.' I was thinking for a

while what to say, but then the head said: 'Perhaps you should meet the boy's father here in my office and try to make peace between the two of you.' I replied: 'I have nothing to talk about with the boy's father, Andris beat his son, and you should act according to the law, but I would like to ask a question.' 'Certainly.' He responded, so I asked: 'Do you happen to know why they fought?' 'No, no, he was so badly beaten that we did not think of looking into the reason behind it. Usually it is something childish.' I said: 'It is not exactly childish. Listen to me: my parents were deported, because they were Jews, my friends were deported, because they were Jews, I was taken to forced labour, because I'm a Jew. They fought because that boy called my son a stinking Jew. He hit that boy and I haven't the moral ground to punish my son for this fight. The school should punish him according to the laws of the country, I can't even scold him for it.' She bit her lip and told me, that she had not know this, and they would have to have an enquiry, to ask the boys themselves too and it had to be talked over. She asked me to return after two days and before which time she would get in contact. I told her: 'I am not coming. I have nothing to come for. My opinion is clear about what happened, things should proceed.' The thing was smoothed over, nothing happened, and that boy was taken away from the school the next year. I do not know why was he taken away, and I never asked. Not much later [at the age of sixteen] Andris died [of illness].