

Juci Scheiner With Her Siblings



This is a picture of me, my brother Mihaly, Misi, Mestitz and my sister, Klara Mestitz. It must have been taken in the late 1910s in Marosvasarhely. Mrs. Szilagyi took it, I remember that. My brother is sitting on the left, I'm in the middle and Klara is on the right.

My younger brother, Andras, hadn't been born yet, nor had my third brother, who died later. The things we are holding were put in our hands, as decoration for the picture. They dressed us in sailor suits not only on the occasion of this picture, but every time when we had to wear 'decent' clothes. We had sailor suits in all colors. My brother hated them so much, he said that if he ever had children, they would never have sailor suits.

My older brother, whom we all called Misi, was born in 1909 in Marosvasarhely, and he was five years older than me. He was a very naughty child until he turned 14 or 15. When he was a little boy, he was sickly and often brought to Abbazia. This was before we were born. He didn't recover, and then mom's uncle - the one who lived on Andrassy Street in Budapest and was a doctor - told them to bathe him in walnut leaves twice a day as this would strengthen him. He was right.

Klara, my older sister, was born in 1911 and died at the age of ten and a half. I must have been eight then - I was born in 1913 - and strangely, I don't remember her at all. She fell ill with scarlet fever, and then with blood poisoning, which killed her.

As I said, Misi was a very naughty child, and my parents always locked him in the bathroom. He couldn't get out, so he stood out in the window and began screaming so loud that my mother was ashamed of him and let him back in. He was sickly, so they allowed him to do whatever he wanted, and that's why he became so mischievous. When he was around 15 or 16 he started to entrust his secrets to me, and when he saw I didn't divulge anything, I became the keeper of his secrets. Later, throughout our lives, we always wrote separate letters, and if he enclosed a letter to me with

one he wrote to our parents, they never read it. My parents were very honest people in every way.

We lived in a very pleasant apartment, with four rooms plus a small room, which became Misi's room when he got older. This small lumber-room was at the end of the corridor. They cleared it out and furnished it for him. I think it had a bed, a washbowl and a desk. But it had a window that gave onto the outside corridor, and His Lordship sneaked out and went away every night. My parents didn't know anything about this. One day they came home early and noticed he wasn't home. I knew all about his escapades. I remember that my father went back to the streets and found him somewhere around Albino Square. He was hugging a tree because he was so drunk he couldn't go further. He was given a good dressing down and his golden era came to an end.