

Viera Slesingerova And Her Father Otto Pollak



This is me and my father, Otto Pollak. This picture was taken in the 1930s in Zilina either by my mom or delayed action shutter release. I still remember the chair and the chequered dress I am wearing with the big bow. We took the furniture with us when we moved, but all I now have from the apartment is a carpet. My dad was a person of few words, as I am. My husband used to say to me that our daughter says more in a day than I do in a year. And my dad spoke even less. One of my aunts always used to say to my mom, 'Are there any pliers here?' 'What for?' 'To get a word out of him!' My dad was a very proper, strict man. It was as if he had been born a state official. When we lived in Zilina, our apartment was in the very house where my dad's office was. From time to time I would go to see him in his office. He had a long desk there on which I liked to play ping pong. One day I rushed in and saw a man there who was trying to persuade my dad to join the Agrarian Party. That was the strongest party at the time, but my dad couldn't get politically involved in any major way, as he was a state official, so he was never in any party. He was an honest and incorruptible official. I heard that he was offered bribes to do things, but he always turned such things down as being completely out of the question. My dad was strict with me at home, but after his death I came to realize how little one can ever know about other people. I know that he was very fond of me, I was everything to him and he would do anything for me, but he was never able to show it like mom did. My dad didn't cuddle me as much as mom did, but he liked it when I came up to him and sat in his lap. He had all kinds of hobbies. I remember that he enjoyed dancing and,

later on, he played bridge and liked to go fishing, especially for trout. When he was into dancing, I apparently used to get a chair ready so that he could try out his dance steps when he came home from the office. Photography was another one of his great hobbies.