

## Viktuar Abeni's Civil Marriage



This is a photo of my sister-in-law, Viktuar Franko. Viktuar and I loved each other like sisters. This is a photo that was taken right after her civil marriage ceremony. She is wearing a black two-piece suit and a white shirt and white hat. That was the typical outfit for a civil marriage ceremony at the time. As for me, I am wearing a black coat and black hat. The brooch you can see on my coat is a brooch that was left to me by my (paternal) grandmother. It is a family heirloom. I do not know who is going to get it after I die. I cannot decide yet. My grandmother had given the stones and my father had the brooch made at a jeweler's he knew well. The stones are uncut diamonds. It was a piece of jewelry I wore with a lot of pleasure.

My husband's brother, Hayim Franko was a reckless young man. He was late to his military class one day during his last year at the Austrian High School [an Austrian missionary school subsidized by the Austrian government]. When his teacher asked him to salute, he refused. His teacher told him, that he would register his behavior into his records. Hayim Franko later on started studying medicine after graduating from high school. Later on he decided to use his right to serve in the military as an officer, and therefore postponed his education. This right was given to high school graduates only. But his military teacher had done what he told him, and marked his childish behavior in his records. Hayim Franko had to serve as a soldier, which was longer in his military service. In this way, he failed to complete his medical studies, and went into business with his elder brother and father.

Later on he married Viktuar Abeni. Their first child, Frida died from leukemia at the age of 6, and said farewell to life in a short period of time. We learned about her disease after a continuous sore

throat which wouldn't heal. It was a kind of cancer which spread very fast, and the little girl died within a period like 11 months. My sister-in-law, Viktuar Franko, never pronounced her daughter's name again throughout her life. She only went to the cemetery with me once a year. She would cry that day there, and would carry her sadness only in her heart the other 364 days. There is still a porcelain trinket of a girl over Viktuar Franko's bed. One must know my sister-in-law very well to interpret this. If she wants definitely to indicate a date or an event, then she would say "el anyo del malor" meaning the "year of the disaster". The couple, Hayim and Viktuar, later on had two sons named Tovi and Cuda.

My brother-in-law, Hayim, was faced with the problem of finding a house for rent when he got married. We started living in the same house with my sister-in-law, Viktuar. We got along like sisters. We would play bezique, after having finished our household chores. Our most favorite dish, was a kind of salted fish called "liparidas" then. My sister-in-law would go out to buy liparidas, while I would stay at home. Then we would eat them. One day we must have eaten too much, because we both got urticaria. My sister-in-law, who had a more allergic constitution, couldn't stop itching for a long time. We both didn't eat liparidas again.