My Daughter



This picture belongs to my daughter Lucy.

My husband adored children. When I had my period, all hell would break loose. He would wail "I won't have children". My mother-in-law consoled him "be smart Albert, there is no reason not to have any", she would say. When I became pregnant with Lucy, it meant the world to him. But I had such a difficult pregnancy, such a difficult birth, and a difficult postpartum period that the guy did not want a child again. When Lucy was born she was the sweetest baby in the world, or it seemed that way to me, but I would faint all of a sudden. My mother took me to Bursa during this period, cured me and sent me back to Istanbul again.

My daughter Lucy (naturally she carries my mother-in-law's name) was born in 1948. Just as is the case for every baby, a festive wave spread through the family. But I remained very weak after the birth, and I would faint all of a sudden while nursing the baby. My mother came from Bursa and took care of me. After a while, she had to go back to Bursa because our house was very small. She took me and the baby, and cared for us in Bursa, returned me to my good health and sent me back to Istanbul. During this period, my husband used to come to Bursa too in the weekends. I prepared wonderful birthdays for my daughter. The neighbors, the cousins would come. I would go to Beyoglu on every birthday (The favorite shopping street in Istanbul. Stores were lined on both sides of the sidewalk. Famous restaurants were lined on this street alongside stores with European merchandise. Movie theatres were in Beyoglu too. Women do not go out without wearing a hat. Men went around with canes and felt hats. The tram was also a mode of transportation), I would buy her a dress from the best store, take her to a studio and have a picture taken.

My daughter was a very good student starting in elementary school. According to her father, her grades had to be 9's or 10's all the time. It was that way anyways. After finishing Saint Benoit French Junior High, she entered Notre Dame de Sion (these were schools that were supported by the French government, where the whole curriculum was in French). My daughter became engaged to Eliya Barokas before she turned 18. I can say she was obliged to get engaged, to say it more correctly. My husband investigated and found my daughter's spouse from the commercial circles. As you can understand, she married through matchmaking in 1965 in Neve Shalom. We went to Lido in the evening, very few people, no friends, there were limited amount of people from the family. Of course my daughter's matchmaking was not like mine. My son-in-law would come, pick my daughter up and go out. On their first meeting, Eliya came and picked my daughter up. We went out, they in front, and us in the back. Later they stayed engaged for 1.5 years, and had opportunities to meet each other during that period. One day before the wedding my husband told me that we were having our son-in-law as a live-in (mezafranka: to help curb the expenditures for the newly weds, the girl's family takes in the son-in-law and takes care of all their needs). He had decided this without asking me, as was the case in a lot of other occasions. Even if he asked, I did not have the luxury of expressing my opinion. I wasn't asked my opinion very often. Of course this upset me a lot. But because I did not know otherwise, this seemed right to me.

I rearranged my house for the newlyweds. I allotted them the main room and bought a new bedroom set. They lived with me for three years, summers and winters, and 5 years only summers. But my son-in-law in truly a great kid. He had asked for the dowry before getting married. These procedures were not looked upon warmly then. Some said "Albert loko sos tu dota se da de antes? (Albert, are you crazy, dowry is given before the wedding?). My husband said "Si me las komyo las paras ke me las koma, ma a la ija ke no me la keme" (if he burns through my money, let him burn it, but my daughter let him not burn).

Lucy Barokas has a son named Shemi born in 1969 who currently resides in Israel, and a daughter named Zelda, born in 1972 who lives in Istanbul. My husband Albert Arguete was a man devoted to his children, he would especially die for his grandchildren. When my daughter Lucy went on a trip, the children would stay with me. Then Albert would act like a child, even more than they did. He would exhaust me with his nagging "Ya komyo no komyo, ya tosyo, ya sudo" (he/she ate, didn't eat, he/she coughed, sweated).

My grandchildren mean everything to me. I love them very much. Shemi studied hotel administration. He served as bartender in the Sheraton Hotel. Later he decided to live in Israel where he had gone for an internship. He went to Israel right after his mother's 25th wedding anniversary to realize his dreams. He married Ronit Simonpur. I have two grandchildren named Linoy (born in 1998) and Maya (born in 2003).

Zelda (she was born in 1972) on the other hand grew up in my house. She is an extremely pleasant girl. Las piedras de la kaye la konosen (Even the stones on the street know her).