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Marta Gutman Kraus / Martin

Summary

She was born in Košice, Slovakia. Her parents, Paula and Louis. She had one older sister called Eva. Her father had a business to import wines, her mother was a housewife. She had a happy childhood. Her grandfather and her father were very religious.

They moved to Budapest. Her mother opened a small textile factory with a Hungarian. When the Germans entered the city, they were forced to live with other Jewish families in houses marked with stars. Her father was arrested and sent to a camp. During the war, her sister worked as a seamstress in a uniform factory. She worked in a bricks' factory.

Her mother told authorities that they were refugees and got the apartment of a Jewish family, the Imergluck, which had been sent to Auschwitz. They thought the Imergluck were dead, but later returned.

In November (1944), the Nazis arrested her and sent her to a death march, guarded by Hungarians. She managed to escape with another girl and hid a peasant house around seven days, with the help of the peasants. She had to leave when someone revealed that they were hiding in the house. She managed to go back to Budapest, where she reunited with her mother and her sister. She spent the rest of the war in Budapest. She had tuberculosis. When the war ended, her family could choose to be Hungarian or Slovakian, and they chose to be Slovakian because her sister had married a rich man from Slovakia.

She went back to Košice with her mother and sister. She and her mother had some disagreements with her brother-in-law, and she decided to go to Prague, where she lived for one year.

In a visit to Marienbad, in the Check Republic, she met her husband. They married soon after. Her husband had a store and she worked as cashier. They feared the coming of a Communist government and decided to leave. They were going to go to Australia, but went to Mexico when her husband's brother, who was living in Mexico City, sent his husband a work permit to work with him.

They went to Italy to get a ship to Mexico, in third class. An officer in the boat liked her and bought her the first perfume of her life.

Her brother-in-law waited for them in Veracruz, and took them to Mexico City when they disembarked. They lived together a few weeks, before getting their own apartment. Her mother and her sister later joined her in Mexico.

Some of her friends in Mexico were the Székely family, Vera Vit and her husband, and the Brown family.

Her husband worked for his brother in a laboratory. Later he established his own laboratory. She was a housewife. She had three children: Anita, who changed her name to Shanik (today, Shanik Berman), Mónica, and Andrés.