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Today, 21. June 1983, Mrs. J.D. visited me requesting me to speak into a cassette, all that I remember about A = Hanna Szenes. -

I am 81 years old, and it is painful for me to recall those ghastly ~~MEMO~~ memories to my mind about poor, dear A and her dear mother, Mrs. K S. The latter, K Sz from Haifa, has been and is still my dearest friend. We are in constant correspondence, and her latest letter, dated from 25. May, 1983 arrived just a few days ago. As my words may add to dear A 's memory, - I will do it gladly.

I was a young university student, studying in Scotland, - when I became a friend of the ~~HEK~~ Sz family. The father, Mr. B Sz was a famous play wright in Budapest, and I wanted to have one of his excellent plays to be performed in London, so I contacted him, when I was at home on holidays; we have become great friends, with him and his family, wife, granny, the two children, - all of whom were adorable! - It is no wonder that A became a magnificent young girl, as the whole family were outstandingly clever and sweet characters!

It seems, that my life was interwoven with the life of Sz family, - and I want to mention only one or two items of this.

After my graduation I opened a state-licensed "English-Hungarian School" in Budapest, and the two Sz children: Gy : that is G , and A , his younger sister became my students as well, and they were adored by their teachers and school-fellows.

I cannot resist recalling an incident about Gy , /about 12 years old/, who asked his granny to pack him every day an enormous amount of ten o'clock lunch, and when he was asked, why so much, it was revealed that he distributed most of it among his class-mates.-

Later, when A was the foremost student of the famous "Baár-Madas" secondary school, everybody thought, she must be elected to become the head of the school's literary-debuting society as the most outstanding student; - by that time the anti-Jewish propaganda was so strong, that she failed to get it, as she was Jewish; it caused her an ever aching void!-

Then it was , that I tried to persuade her to go to England to continue her studies, where, - in my opinion - she was to become a world famous poetess!-

She answered me : "Auntie J , I want to go to Palestine, for only there I ~~SHOULD~~ shall be able to walk about with my head uplifted!"

Soon she left for her future country, - then : Palestine - now : Israel, - and became a foremost member of it!

By that time Hitler became the leader of Germany and war was imminent. That induced the mother to send Gy to Lyon - France, - to study. - After the war broke out and the Germans invaded France. - When Gy evidently saw that the German troops would invade Lyon also, - he wrote 7 letters, addressed to his mother, and asked a friend of his to mail them one-by-one, every week, so that his mother should not worry about him, and left - illegally - for Spain.

When K - the mother - found that out, - it goes without saying that she was very much upset.-

At that time a lady friend of mine, was a the wife of the Hungarian military attaché in Madrid. So, I wrote to them; - "Dear friend, we suppose, that crossing the frontier to Spain, Gy might have been caught, and put into an interment camp. Please, do your utmost, - find him; he would be surely penniless, - get him out of the camp, buy some clothes for him, and put him on the first boat to Palestine, where his sister lives." Thank Goodness, - so it happened! - He was found, helped and sent off to Palestine.

By that time, - Jews in Hungary had to wear the yellow star on their coat - one day Mrs. came to me - with star concealed -, and told me radiantly: "I shall have to move out of my home to a "star-marked house"-but I don't mind, - I am overjoyed, having received a telegram from my children, saying Gy arrived and we are safely together in Palestine!" I am happy!"

But what she did not know, was, that by that time A was to start - as a British officer, heading a group of brave young boys, - in three days on her fatal trip, - to save Jewish persons out of Hungary.

The next heart-rending news was, that K was taken by the German Gestapo to a military barracks. and investigated about her children. She thought, they want to hear about ; - alas! A was hurled into the room, with teeth broken! - The fact was, that after parachuting from the aeroplane, she and her comrades were arrested and brought to Budapest.

A and her mother, and numerous Jewish ladies were shut into the same prison. Later her mother was ~~transferred to an internment camp~~ transferred to an internment camp, - and after a while set free. - Then it was that she related to me, how A managed to keep up the hope in all the imprisoned ladies, telling, the war was coming to its end, and they all will become free again.

Alas ! - The last dreadful period of "Arrow cross" rule got the upper hand, in the autumn of 1944. - and the execution of Jews were put in motion.

Here, - by great - my person was again interwoven with K Sz. - We have taken her faithful servant, R, to become our servant. That was when K had to live in a "marked house", together with her sister and brother in law.

Then the terrible news came out, that A was executed, - shot, - in prison - on the 7th November, 1944! -

That was more than one could bear ! I went with R to the Jewish marked house, - bribed the concierge of the house to let me in, though my husband warned me not to do this, as I might also get into trouble. Of course, I could not obey him.

When let in, I managed to tell poor K, who was lying on the bed half dead, "Darling, I insist you not to forget what I say now: when you feel that you are at a loss what to do, - come to me ! Promise, you come to me!"-

It happened a few days later that the Jews in Hungary were driven on foot out of the country - to certain death! -

She was lying with closed eyes, half dead, - and I was afraid she didn't hear me. So I insisted again, - come to me !

Just a few days later she was forced to go with a group of others to start on a ghastly tour across Hungary on foot to be driven to a death camp.. -

I was in a frenzy to try to find her. -

By that time the house, we lived in, was invaded by a lot of people who were "bombing out".

When I arrived home after trying - in vain - to find her, - desperate, crying - my dear mother took me to our dining-room, - and there was K. After a hysterical crying of joy, I insisted her to tell us everything she had to go through. during those ghastly days of being driven on foot out of the country. She refused, - as my 13 years old son was also sitting with us at the table.

But I insisted and told : "I want him to hear everything and never to forget, what he has heard !"

She told. -

Then we bathed her and put her to bed.

But in a small family house, the people in the house started to suspect that I am hiding somebody. My husband told: "J, both K and you are in danger, you must find out something!"-

Luckily I had a dear friend, Dr. M D , the chief-surgeon of a man's hospitle, near to us, begged him to help and take K into the hospital with my papers: - He arranged, - bless him! We gave her a ~~SKIMMEL~~ christien prayer-book, taught her "Our Father" etc. etc. and I took her to the hospital, and she spent the dreadful 50 days of Budapest siege in the hospital. - All that you can read it in her own words, described in :

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Jerusalem 1970. - when she was intervieved in London; - how she was able to survive the siege of Budapest. - in 1945 February! -

Needless to say, how happy we were, to have survived all its horrors alive !

After 13th February, when Russian army liberated Budapest, - she was soon taken to Palestine, Haifa! by aeroplane. -

To end my words I would like to mention that she has visited me after 18 years, when she came to Hungary and was my beloved guest in Budapest and at the lake Balaton. -

She insisted me to visit her in Haifa - but, sorry to say that failed because of my poor health. - To my utmost regret ! But to this day - we are corresponding with each other, with ~~at~~ the love that binds us together as long as we live!

Mrs.