

Russian soldiers used to drive right into the courtyard to stay for the night. Whenever the Russians arrived, my mother hid and my grandfather and grandmother received them, those Russians. Back then I was 15 years old. I as well had to hide. The Russians were a bit notorious for raping women. This, thank God, did not happen to us, but one had to be careful, nonetheless. Essentially, they were kind. My mother decided to leave for Austria. We did have distant relatives there. But they only had a small apartment, so we could not stay at theirs.

We crossed the Czech-Austrian border on trucks, hidden beneath cover sheets. They were oh so funny, those Russians. We told them: „Don't stop at the border!“ They answered: „We will thumb our noses at the tollkeepers!“ They did not stop at the border, but drove nonstop and in Floridsdorf, Vienna, we had to get off. The bridges were demolished, only the Reichsbrücke was still standing. The Russians drove further along the Alte Donau. We met some people on the street who let us stay with them. We lived near the Alte Donau in a vacation home. My Father did not arrive at that time, yet. So it was my mother, my brother and I.

My mother, Theresia Klement, was born in Borlitz. That is located in the South Moravian Region. Her father was a farmer and my mother was an only child. Her engagement [????] had to start in childhood days, as it was custom back then. We were German natives, Old-Austrian, technically. Once, this area was part of the Austrian Empire. Mother did not have great formal education, but she was street smart, for sure. She could read and write, but that was basically it. She got married early, at age 19. My father was the musical director of a chapel. He was from Ursnitz. A place about one kilometer in distance to Borlitz. I was born in 1930. My mother had experienced two miscarriages before. I, too, was fragile, but I made it.

1940, I was 10 years old, I got to have a brother. My brother died from diphtheria in 1946. He went to school for one week, the elementary school in Schüttau Straße, when an epidemic of diphtheria broke out. Many children died and my brother was one of them. My mother was very brave, it was a tough period. My father returned from imprisonment in 1946, she got to be a facility manager in Vienna's 3rd district. But my parents then separated. There was a divorce process, and my mother did not give her consent. They were separated, my father moved out, but divorced they were not. She was just like that! She said no and pushed through. That was a smart move I must say: When my father died, she received a huge pension. My grandmother reached 96 years of age. She outlived my mother for several months. My grandmother used to say: „I gotta take care of Resi.“

My mother had another child, an illegitimate child of a cousin. That, too, is one kind of a tale! This cousin worked in Salzburg, for the Arch-Diocese, where she started a relationship with a priest. He was no less but a doctor! One important man in his clerical field; and with him she had a child. So, after that happened, she could not remain there any more. We were short on space already, and then that cousin came along with her child! My mother welcomed them! The cousin then married another man and lived with him. Social security regularly sent money for my mother to take care for this foster child, and so she raised him as well. He stayed with her until he got married.