

Zsuzsa Merenyi's Diary With Drawings About The Deportation



This is also a page from the copybook, which my sister had during the deportation, she drew in it all the way there, and in the camp, too. There was no heating in the barrack. There was a rumor that the parachutists were going to come and liberate us, that's what they said. But it wasn't true. And that the Swedish would send us packages. During the Holocaust we were privileged in fact, because they really didn't hurt us. Apart from the fact that we starved, because that washbasin of soup wasn't much for a day, they weren't allowed to hurt us. There were guards with cart-whips, but they didn't hurt us. So for sure there was some truth in this medicine thing. We only got a minimal amount of food. They were careful though so that we wouldn't die. There were big brown enameled washbasins, they put everything in those. There was the horrible dishwater that they gave us, and when they distributed the food they commanded 'bowl down!', then we banged this washbasin-like thing down, and they poured some food in it with a big ladle. I don't remember what was in it, but I know that tiny pieces of bacon were floating in it, and I gave them all to my sister. I wanted her to eat it, because she was growing, and I wanted her to get out of this safely. There were long, brick-shaped loaves of bread, and they sliced those up. My sister wrote down on the margin of a drawing, because she was accurate, that a loaf of bread was 24 centimeters long and weighed 150 grams, and they cut those in slices. So we weren't overfed. All kinds of 'skillful' people took from that awful soup, too. There were some who stole bread. That was the capital sin. We put those who stole bread under a ban, we never talked to those again. There was swapping, too. There was someone, I can't forget this, who gave away all her bread in exchange for a cigarette. This meant death. She couldn't give up smoking. So such things happened. We didn't swap. Five of us who had been friends from Budapest formed a small self-supporting community. Two of them

were nursery school teachers, the third one never gave anything from her food, the fourth and fifth were my sister and I. The two nursery school teachers held up firmly, they tried to make this thing human. They had some kind of a dish-cloth, and I remember exactly that they set a table with it on their knees. And one of them measured this square bread so that neither one of them would get more than the other.