

## The Years Make Their Own Годините го прават своето



Film script, Part 2:

Where we came from

Here is a picture of my father Mentesh Kamhi and this is my mother Berta. Dad was a wheat trader and he liked to have coffee in a cafe by the river with his friends after work, Jews and non- Jews. He got along with everybody. I also grew up in Bitola, but I don't have a single picture to show you my family. But I remember how my friend and I would stroll carefree through the streets of Bitola and go out into the hills to hike. It was a wonderful world then even though my family was very poor. My grandfather and my father died when I was very young. We had to live with my aunt Mato and her husband Bencion. This is her son Beno. Almost all the Jewish families from Bitola could trace their roots to Spain. And each of the Jewish quarters had its own synagogue. There were three Jewish sections of town and we called them by their Ladino names: La tabane, La kalaze and Ciflik where the poorest Jews lived. On Friday evenings before the Jewish Sabbath the poor Jews of Bitola would go from house to house with a sack. Some people would give them flour, others gave them money, others gave them food. By the 1930s we were so poor we had to drop out of school. Dario enlisted in the Royal Yugoslav Army in the officer's school and I went to work for a man who repaired rifles. When we were teenagers we started our Has homer has air Club – a leftist Zionist youth club, and the translation was the Young Guards. We met every day and Has homer was all about moving to Palestine and starting a real Jewish state. I joined the Has homer for two reasons. Pepo Kamhi was like a role model for me and I had a crush on his sister Roza. We had a library at Has homer and this is where I learned about the world. This is where my horizons expanded before I even saw the next valley. The first time I went on a train was when we went to one of Has homer's scout camps – a moshav, they call it. Hundreds of Jewish kids from all over Yugoslavia gathered. We did that every year. We cooked our own food, we sang Hebrew songs. This was the first time I slept away from home, under the stars. It was the first time I bathed in a clear sparkling river. We spent hours around a campfire discussing books, ideas, politics. Even what was going on in Germany.

I. Are these statements true or false?

- ☞ Roza Kamhi's family was rich
- ☞ Her father died when she was very young
- ☞ The poorest Jews from Bitola lived in La Tabane
- ☞ Beno enlisted in the Yugoslav Royal Army
- ☞ Beno joined the Has homer club because he wanted to go to Palestine
- ☞ Jewish kids from all over Macedonia gathered in scout camps
- ☞ Beno travelled for the first time by train when he went to the scout camp

II. Answer these questions:

- ☞ What did Roza's father do for a living?
- ☞ Which were the Jewish sections in Bitola?
- ☞ What did the poor Jews used to do on Friday evenings before Sabbath?
- ☞ What did Roza and her friends use to do in their free time?
- ☞ How did the Jewish kids spend their time in the scout camps?

III. Find a word in the text for these definitions:

- ☞ to walk in a slow relaxed way
- ☞ someone whose behavior people copy because of admiration
- ☞ to have romantic feelings about someone
- ☞ a large bag made of strong cloth
- ☞ the grain that bread is made from
- ☞ to leave school before the course finished

IV. Put the verbs in the correct tense : Past simple, Past continuous or Past perfect

It ( snow) .....outside and Stojan's store (be) .....directly across from the police station. We (hear) .....that they (go to take) .....the Jews away, so Stojan (hide) us. We (look) .....out of the shops and we (watch) ..... the Bulgarians throw Jewish families out of their houses and drag them into the streets. And then...there (be) .....silence. We (hear) .....they (take) .....them to the Monopol - tobacco factory. Why they (be) ..... sent there? Then we (hear) ..... that the trains (come) .....and (take) .....everyone north. That (be)..... all we (know).....!

