

Dario And Lily Modiano With Friends



This picture is taken in Athens at the balcony of Aunt Lily's and Uncle Dario Modiano's apartment.

Aunt Lily is third from left, standing and leaning forwards. Uncle Dario is second from left, standing. First on the left, standing is Bertha Benveniste.

Seated is Madam Lucille Gormezano, Mr. Sam Gormezano is first from right, standing, and Rosa Modiano, Lily's daughter is second from right standing.

Before the war, Dario Modiano worked for a German who was an agent of Deutsche Debarque line in Thessaloniki. He was an employee, but he was getting paid quite a lot of money. They sacked him because he was a Jew, and he left for Athens. There, they opened a shop with his brother selling Cashmere.

The bad thing with Dario was that he gambled, he played cards. He had lost a lot of money. The fact that he was gambling always caused problems.

My aunt would cry and get very upset. Dario used to go to the Club de Salonique. He would also go to the Loutraki Casino. He was supposedly going to the hot springs and he would go around the Casino.

He never took his wife with him. She would sit with children at home and he would go and have baths at the hot springs, drink fresh water and then go to the casino to gamble.

I used to hear these things from the elder ones when they talked about it. They were talking about this in front of us, in order to protect us.

Aunt Lily survived the war. When the deportations started, the Italians with an army train took all the Italian citizens who were in Thessaloniki and moved them to the Italian zone.

They didn't let the Germans take them. So, they came down to Athens and hid. When Italy fell and surrendered, Aunt Lily was hiding in Athens with her two children.

Her husband went to the mountains, with the partisans. They helped him go and hide there with his two brothers and his eldest son Tori.

After the war aunt Lily and Dario lived in Athens. Aunt Lily was good friends with Mari's parents. They played cards together a couple of times a week.

Lily must have known Mari's parents from Thessaloniki. I was really close with Aunt Lily. When I was in Athens, I wouldn't stay in a hotel; I would stay in her house. I had a room there that she would accommodate me.

When Dario got seriously ill, and their financial situation was not very good, they went to live with Rosa in the United States.

Dario was born in Thessaloniki, but he died in the United States. Lily died in the United States too, some time around 1977.