

Anna Mass And Andzia Borensztajn



It's my best friend from Lublin, Andzia Borensztajn. We spent so much time together. In Lublin, we used to go to the Saski Garden, it was very special for us.

The Saski Garden in Lublin... It certainly wasn't smaller than the Lazienki in Warsaw. In the summer there was always a military band on Sundays, a concert bowl, you could listen to concerts. In the winter there were toboggan runs. Huge ones. You could really go far... Before the war, the garden was open until dusk. Then a janitor went around with a clapper, announcing it was time to leave. And everyone went, they closed for the night. If someone uttered a profanity on the street or dropped a cigarette butt, a policeman would spring up out of nowhere and you had to pay two zlotys. A fine.

In the Saski Garden we had the following encounter once: I was with a girl friend of mine, Andzia Borensztajn, we were about to go home. We were sitting on a bench, the last five minutes. And there suddenly come two girls with two boys. We are to vacate the bench because they want to sit here. And there were empty benches around. We said, 'We sit here. If you don't like it, don't want to sit next to us, very well, there are empty benches around.' So they attacked us. And what I liked the most about the situation was that the two of us fought against those two girls, and the boys stood at the side and didn't interfere. We won, and we ostentatiously sat on the bench for five more minutes, only for five because we had to go home. And then we got up and left. We won so we could leave.

What can I tell about Andzia... On the eve of the outbreak of the war, in 1939, they announced a call-up in Lublin. And the two of us were just returning from Bystrzyca, which was a small river. We were walking down Krakowskie Przedmiescie Street and someone made us a photo. We saw those large call-up posters. And then I ask her, 'How do you think, Andzia, will you survive the war?' And she says, 'No, I won't.' 'And I will.' And that proved true. She didn't survive, I did.