

Gabor Bartos

**STIGMATA OF AUSCHWITZ
PART 2**



But why??? Please let me live!

Part Two

Chapter 63

New Car, Dynamos for Rural Communities Bank Delegation

Well, it's a big day for us, Monday, the 3rd of October as we are back again to Mr Czerny Garage on *Sugár ut*, to collect our new automobile Škoda Superb Luxury.

The taxi driver came to collect us from our house to taking us to Mr Czerny Garage. I have introduced Mr David Adler who is a local taxi driver to Rebekah who is going to teach her to drive of our new car.

Mr Adler came with us to see our new car, as we walked to the garage Mr Czerny welcomed us in his office and after we've completed the paperwork of the sale then he gave me the car keys he walked us to the car. When he opened the door on the passenger side for Rebekah and there was a bouquet of flowers and a box of chocolates on the seat. Rebekah was so touched by Mr Czerny's thoughtfulness that she pecked a kiss on Mr Czerny's face, in responding to that in a mannered gesture and a good salesman attitude he kissed Rebekah's hand and said, 'I hope you will have a pleasurable use of the car, it's matching your look perfectly.'

While we were chatting with Mr Czerny, Mr Adler was looking over the car's features and technical details as he is going to teach Rebeka to drive this automobile. Then he turned to us and said it with an approval in his voice; 'Well Gabriel you have chosen well this is the best and most luxurious automobile on the market. It must of have cost you a lot of money, but it is worth it. I cannot wait to test drive it and give you driving lessons, Rebekah.'

Then we both got in the car and drove away from the garage heading to our factory on Partalja utca. What a sheer joy to drive this car it is truly on experience despite I am a little rusty with driving as I have not driven since I have completed and passed my driving lessons.

When we arrived at the factory and got out Viktoria and Isaack came out from the office to have a look at our new car. A proud Rebekah has walked around the car and shown it to her father and to Viktoria of the inertia and the comfort of the car. She said, 'You know the leather seats are so comfortable they have coil springs just like in our settee. Isaack got into the driver's seat and checked the instruments on the dashboard. With a typical engineering comment, yes it looks very modern and so many instruments to keep you to informed of the engine's performance.' He asked me to open the bonnet and studied the engine and with an approved smile he said, 'Well done my boy Mazel tov to you both.'

Rebekah gave Isaack a hug and said, 'Look Papa, we have an automobile this is what I have dreamed of as a young girl and now it has become reality.'

Isaack pulled Rebekah to his chest and kissed her on the head and with an emotional voice he said, 'Well just praise the Lord Rebekah he is favouring you with giving Gabriel as your husband I am very pleased for you, my beautiful daughter.'

After all the excitement, we got back to reality and went into the office behind our desks to get on with our work. I was looking through my mail and with all the expectations I have received some orders which have made me even happier to know of all these luxurious items we have committed ourselves to will be paid for by the business we are working so hard for.

One letter made my day, the one that came from Zoltán. He has confirmed that our discussion over the idea of portable electricity generator /dynamo has been positively welcomed by the board of directors at Ganz Works and they have a backing from the influential members of the Hungarian Parliament. They like the idea, and they will support it financially as well. So, we have a designer team who have come up with a design for different sizes and specifications of generators to be manufactured. Hoping to exhibit this complete system at the forthcoming Budapest International Spring fair.

Your system's will be ready to be dispatched by the end of this month and you should receive them by Wednesday of 19th November. Yours and Isaack's order is on its way already.

And most importantly thank you for the payment you have transferred for the units we have sent to you at our first consignments on a sale or return basis. Ps. The directors have approved your dealership and they are committed that

they would give you as much support to explore for a much wider region to cover and support us as main agent for Ganz Works.

‘At dinner time, I have volunteered that I will drive all of us to the Star Hotel Restaurant and I will pay for the meal.’

‘That will be fantastic Gabriel, at least we can test the car in action I will ask Rita to come and join us at the Star Hotel so she can have a look at your new car. What a joy it takes only three minutes to get to the restaurant instead twenty minutes walking the same distance.’ Rita just arrived at the hotel as we were getting out of the car. She has applauded us for the car as her way to approve our new car. Rebekah has shown the inside of the car to Rita then she encouraged Rita to sit in the back seat of the car while Rebekah was telling her that she is going to have a driving lesson from Mr Alder the taxi driver.

Sándor walked into the restaurant, but he was not going to stop but he has seen our car in front of the hotel, so he knew that we should of be there.

‘Look Gabriel I must talk to you about a very important subject, if I come to your house about seven would that be alright with you?’

Rebekah said to Sándor, ‘You could have a meal with us, how about that?’

‘That would be very good of you Rebekah, let us make it at seven.’

‘Look forward to seeing you Sándor at seven.’

Rebekah and Rita were chatting about event since two of them not see each other mainly about the Škoda.

‘Isaack was telling me that he had a letter from the officials from Hungarian Agricultural Ministry that a delegation from their River-Engineers who are coming to Beregszász to set up their offices there want to come over here to test our conveyors.’

‘That is fantastic news Isaack! Well, it makes sense as you are the nearest conveyor to the River Tisza and to Beregszász. If any machine would break down, we are the nearest ones to get it fixed or replace it with a new unit.’

After we finished with our lunch, I have drove a small tour around of Munkács just to test our new automobile, Rebekah was sitting in the back seat with Rita and Isaack next to me in the front passenger seat. I was surprised to see on the size of Munkács as I drove around on the cobblestoned roads from the Star Hotel on Rákóczi utca, Zrinyi Ilona utca, Bethlehen utca, Bocskay köz, Sugár ut, Bathányi Lajos utca, Nagyhegy utca, Fő utca Kossuth Lajos utca and then back to our factory on Partalja utca. This journey would of have taken us probably a good couple of hours. We have decided that we will drive to the hills

on Sunday for a picnic. We all got excited over that as Yom Kippur will be over by then.

I had nothing else but appraisal for the car and everybody has agreed that it was a good investment which we are all going to have the benefit of travelling in comfort.

‘Rebekah was saying, and what shall we call this automobile?’

‘Her name is Rebekah, like you my love. She is a feminine looking machine so let us call her Rebekah.’

Rebekah blushed and said, ‘Thank you my darling you are so kind to me.’

‘This is our new baby my love until our real baby will arrive this car will substitute the real baby.’

Isaack and Rita looked at us and before they could say anything I said, ‘No there is no baby on the way as we haven’t really started to plan it yet as we both have been far too busy and exhausted in the hard work that we are putting into our secure future.’ ‘First, we have to establish our life and business before we could commit our self to having a family.’

‘Rebekah was grateful for my quick intervention as she were getting worried that her papa would have believed of us that we have told him about a lie over our hurried marriage arrangement.’

‘Just looked at Rita and Isaack faces as they have relieved of my correction of the truth that we are not having a baby just yet.’

‘In all embarrassment, Isaack has invited Rita to have a look at the factory as it is in full steam of production, and he has shown her the new conveyor as well.’

‘When they walked into the shop floor, some people have greeted Rita as: good afternoon Mrs Grósz.’

‘Rita has enjoyed the tour around the factory floor and at the end they both came back to the office where Rebekah and I were working away at our desks.’

Rita has sat down with a cup of coffee in the office with Isaack then she said goodbye to all of us and with a big smile on her face as she walked past and stroked our automobile, and she has walked home alone.

Then we all buried ourselves in our work without noticing as the time has passed already six in the afternoon. Viktoria has gone and Rebekah has been horrified that we have invited Sándor for a super and we are still at the office. We have locked up the office and got into our “new member of our family” into

the Škoda I have dropped Isaack off at the corner of Partalja utca and Latorca utca as we were continuing home to our house.

As I got out of the car to open the large gate, I drove into our courtyard where I have parked it up for the night. I thought that we must have a garage to keep this car in a secure area. As we got out of the car both dogs rushed to the car and started sniffing the wheels and the body. There was a kind of confusion on the two faithful dog's faces and behaviour.

Rebekah has gone straight to the kitchen to prepare the food that she cooked yesterday, Cholet with smoked beef and fresh bread. I went to the cellar to get some jars full of new wine for the meal.

Sándor has arrived at seven as he promised it and he brought a bouquet of very nice flowers for Rebekah. He looked exhausted which I have not seen him in that state since I have known him.

Rebekah was ready to serve the Cholet, but Sándor went to our bathroom to wash his face and hands for the meal on his return he looked a bit more relaxed as we have prepared to have our *“seudah ha-mafaseket”* (literally, *“meal of separation”* or *“concluding meal”*).

Rebekah has commented on the state of Sándor. ‘You look like someone who had a very busy day Sándor.’

‘Yes, you are right Rebekah, I would not wish a day that I have today not even to my enemy either.’

‘Hmmm, I like the smell of this delicious meal Rebekah already even I have not tasted the food yet.’

Sándor has not said anything about why he wanted to talk to me but really it would not be the right time for it as we have a relaxed conversation with our meal. At the end of our meal, he has opened while Rebekah was doing the washing up in the kitchen.

‘He told me that he had a very heated argument with the present mayor and his other deputy mayor over the election for the next year’s new mayor for obvious reasons the mayor was pushing his other deputy to be the elected mayor from the first of January 1939.’

‘One thing they have forgotten, Gabriel that I am still a practicing barrister and as they have tried to accuse me of interfering with the banking sector in Munkács favouring foreign investors against Czechoslovakian investors interest.’

‘But the Czechs business influences days are on the downhill as the changes are happening already influenced from Hungary in the matter of weeks. This is all the dirty trick of the Transcarpathian Prime Minister Avgusztin Volosin. He is a very nasty person Gabriel, so is his “spy” who is in Munkács council, he is a womaniser, and an ex-army officer, he has been kicked out of the Czech military because of his behaviour, his name is H. Murskovits if you ever come across of him just avoid him, because he is a bully and he doesn’t like Jews and Hungarians at all.’

‘It was Avgusztin Volosin who has instigated András Bródy PM’s to be imprisoned.’

‘The Czech Government is just ignoring the “First Viennese agreement Resolution” which concludes in that agreement that the Czech’s are committed that they will handover Transcarpathia to the Hungarians.’

‘Thank you for the warning I will remember this name Sándor I won’t forget it.’

‘The real reason I wanted to talk to you Gabriel I cannot be seen with the delegation from the Royal Hungarian National Bank representatives who are going to arrive on Wednesday the 5th of November actually the day after tomorrow. They are planning to seal the deal on the property on the Corso and they want to start the alterations on the building.’

‘I understand Mr Segal wants to open the bank by January next year. This is where we want you to help them with your local knowledge like getting their license and overseeing the works on the building till date of opening. They will look after you and your business for the future Gabriel. Not to mention as you know they are members of our organisation, and we owe them this support.’

‘Sándor, you know that I will do anything for our organisation as I have relied on, their support since I arrived here in Munkács. Of course, they can count on my support whichever way I can help them. I can take over the restoration and alteration of this building to suit the banks specification. May well be I can use Mr József Klein he is a good tradesman he did an excellent finish on my house just like the Sutyai Béla Furniture Company, I know the foremen called István they are an excellent company too. As you know the Sutyai company furnished the Ungvár Parliament in 1935–36.’

‘Well, Gabriel it’s looks like you have the team of contractors already for the job.’

‘I must employ someone to help me at the showroom who could take off the weight from my shoulder who is good with sales and also in the office as well. I hope you could recommend someone for me.’

‘I will make some enquiries, Gabriel and will let you know tomorrow. Also, if you would tell Isaack that I have sent some welders who are good enough to do his conveyors.’

‘Also, I was telling him about the good news over the petrol motor driven portable electricity generators from Ganz Works and their successful meeting with Hungarian governmental officials to support this project in financially.’

‘That is going to help our effort to distribute these electricity generators among those in Munkács and Bereg County’s rural communities.’

‘Sándor has apologised for he has to leave so soon as he is very tired from the “day of war” he had to fight with the opposition “gangsters” for the top job, of the Mayor of Munkács.’

‘After Sándor went home, we both had a time to reflect on the exciting day that we had with the new automobile and generally the successful day we had today.’

Rebekah asked me; ‘what has happened with Sándor? I have never seen him in such state.’

‘I was telling her the way the Czech administration is getting nastier towards the Hungarian and Jewish origins as the changes are getting nearer to the end.’

‘According to the First Viennese decision making resolutions that are forcing them to follow that decision they have agreed and signed up to it.’

‘Anyway, darling just let us not think about them as they are spoiling our nice day.’

Before we went to bed, we went to our front door just once more to have a look at our new automobile which looked sparkling in the moonlight.

As we were getting ready for Yom Kippur, I kissed Rebekah as she has cuddled into my arms and soon as she did that, she was already fast asleep.

I did not get to sleep immediately as I was making some plans for next week in my Town Hall as I am going to present my report to the full council. That thought diverted me to sleep.