

Eva Heyman on the Deportations from the Ghetto to Poland

Eva Heyman was 13 years old when she started writing her diary. She was brought up in a secular bourgeoisie family in Hungary. Eva started writing her diary in February 1944 and continued writing until May 1944, the day she was deported to Auschwitz. She died on October 17th, 1944.

May 30, 1944

The people of Block One were taken away yesterday. All of them had to be in their houses in the afternoon. We've been locked up in here a long time, but now even those with special passes aren't allowed to go out any more. We even know already that we can take along one knapsack for every two persons. It is forbidden to put in it more than one change of underwear; no bedding. Rumor has it that food is allowed, but who has any food left? The gendarmes took everybody's food away when they took ours. It is so quiet you can hear a fly buzz. Nobody cries. We don't even care that only Grandpa and Uncle Béla are allowed to take a knapsack.

Dear diary, everybody says we're going to stay in Hungary; the Jews from all over the country are being brought to the Lake Balaton area and we are going to work there. But I don't believe it. That train-wagon is probably awful, and now nobody says that we're being taken away, but that they deport us. I've never heard this before, and now Ági says to Uncle Béla: Béluska, don't you understand? We are being deported! There's a gendarme pacing back and forth in front of the house. Yesterday he was in Rédey Park, from where the Jews are being deported. Not from the real railroad station, because then it would all be seen by the city, Grandpa says. As though the city cares at all. If the Aryans had wanted to, they could have prevented our being put in the ghetto. But they were even glad about it, and now they also don't care what happens to us! That gendarme in front of the house, whom Uncle Béla calls a friendly gendarme, because he never yells at us and doesn't even speak familiarly to the women, came into the garden and told us that he will have to leave the gendarmerie, because what he saw in Rédey Park isn't a fit sight for human beings. They stuffed eighty people into each wagon and all they gave

them was one pail of water for that many people. But what is even more awful is that they bolt the wagons. In this terrible heat we will suffocate in there! The gendarme says that he doesn't understand these Jews: not even the children cried; all of them were like zombies; like robots. They walked into the wagon so mechanically, without making a sound. The friendly gendarme didn't sleep all night, even though – he said – he usually falls asleep as soon as his head touches the pillow. It was such an awful sight that even he couldn't fall asleep, he said. And after all, he's a gendarme! Ági and Uncle Béla are whispering something to each other about our staying here in some kind of typhoid hospital, because they plan to say that Uncle Béla has typhoid fever. It's possible, because he had it when he was in the Ukraine. All I know is that I don't believe anything any more, all I think about is Márta, and I'm afraid that what happened to her is going to happen to us, too. It's no use that everybody says that we're not going to Poland but to Balaton. Even though, dear diary, I don't want to die; I want to live even if it means that I'll be the only person here allowed to stay. I would wait for the end of the war in some cellar, or on the roof, or in some secret cranny. I would even let the cross-eyed gendarme, the one who took our flour away from us, kiss me, just as long as they didn't kill me, only that they should let me live.

Now I see that friendly gendarme has let Mariska come in. I can't write anymore, dear diary, the tears run from my eyes, I'm hurrying over to Mariska...

(End of diary)

Source: *The Diary of Eva Heyman*, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem 1974, pp. 103- 105.