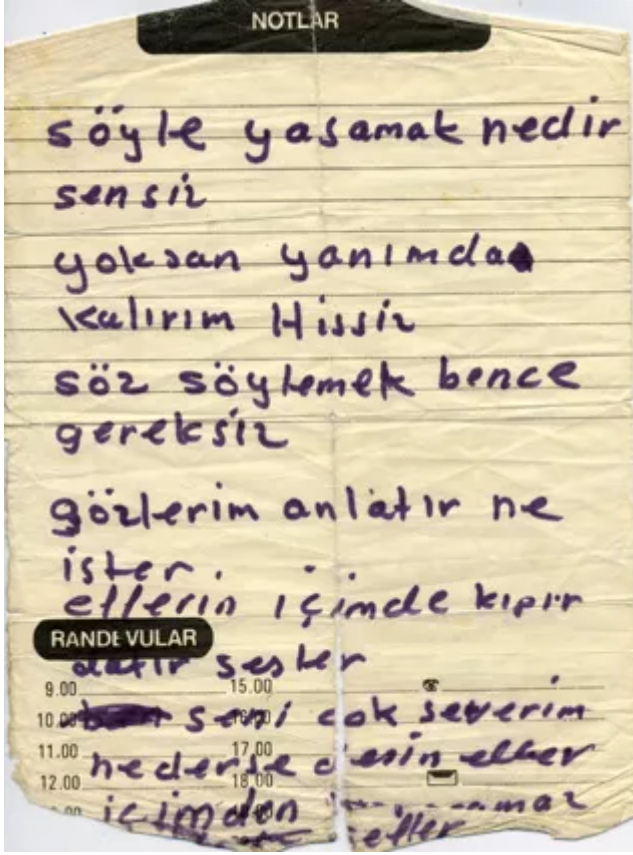


Poem



I write poems on whatever paper I find from time to time, depending on my feelings. Most of my poems are written to my wife or my daughter. I write from the heart. I don't remember why I wrote this.

I, Albert Özlevi, was born on May 3rd, 1936 in Edirne.

I did not go to preschool at all. My mother raised me. We have 20 months between my older brother and me, we grew up together. Because I grew up with my older brother I grew up as someone older than my age. Because we were always together with my brother.

I don't remember what we used to do before school, of course we went to school when it was time.

I started school a year early. My grandfather used to carry flour to bakeries at the time. The principal of the elementary school was either the friend or best customer of the place where he delivered flour. As a result, due to his request, I enrolled into Gazi elementary school right below the the religious school that was below Selimiye Camii(mosque). My older brother attended Kurtulus Ilkokulu(elementary school) a little further down. These were public schools. My older brother and I are 20 months apart but because I started early, we were only one grade apart.

My wife Lüsi Civre was born in Istanbul in 1949. I met her through my father-in-law's uncle, Marko Civre, in Edirne, by matchmaking as was befitting the times. Being the man myself, we came to

Istanbul one Saturday. My father-in-law's store was in Riza Pasha then. The people who arranged our union, Mesulam Telvi and Marko Razon, who were my father-in-law's neighbors, knew me well. They were originally from Edirne too. Marko Razon was in haberdashery, we were in haberdashery. When my older brother went to the military, I would take care of the haberdashery store in Edirne, in Alipasha, they knew me. Marko Civre, Marko Razon and Mesulam Telvi, all introduced me to them with the understanding that I am a really good kid. We left there, together with my current wife Lüsi and our families, we went to A?iyan all together. We had tea all together. Later, they said "go on, take a stroll". I was 27 then. We strolled together. In the evening, there was a place called Club 12, I took my wife there. The next day we met at noon again, there was a show at the sports arena, I can't recall what show it was, we went there. Before when we were walking, she said "ah, what a beautiful t-shirt" admiring a man's shirt when we were passing in front of a store. I immediately went in and bought it. I took off my shirt next to the sport arena in the open and put on the t-shirt. She liked this a lot. I came to Istanbul every weekend for 3 weeks more or less, we went out together. In reality, my business wasn't that accommodating. Because we dealt in luxury haberdashery, Saturdays were our busiest days. There would be a lot of business because government employees were off. Edirne was a city of schools, there was no school Wednesday afternoons, there would be a lot of work, very good business transactions. After going to Istanbul 3 weekends in a row, we came to a decision and said let's get engaged.

My daughter Çela was born on February 9th, 1969 in Istanbul. She studied in Sisli Terakki like my son. She started preschool at age 3, she was in this school through primary school, junior high, until she finished highschool. I did not send my daughter to the university after highschool, I was afraid she would be assimilated. I did not send her with the fear that she would hook up with someone and become assimilated. We made the biggest mistake, her mother and I. To be honest, I wanted it, my wife didn't. I had the power to enroll my daughter in the conservatory. She had a talent for music, her ear and voice were very good. My wife said "kualo çalgici levaz azer"(what, you are going to make her an instrumentalist). And the matter rested. While we were telling her to go to special courses, go here, go there, she married her ex-husband Jojo Motola. She had a son named Melih. For various reasons, the marriage did not work and they separated at the end of the 5th year. My grandson Melih Motola stayed with my daughter. Today, they still interact with each other quite well. They do not create problems for the sake of their son, my daughter is now an exporter, she works in textiles, exports dresses and blouses.