

Arguete Family At The Wedding Of Bonjour Arguete



This is a photograph of the family taken before the wedding of my brother-in-law Bonjour.

My husband's older sister Suzan-Albert Cukran, his mother Lucy Arguete, Bonjour's mother and father-in-law Mrs. Frankfort, Mr. Frankfort, my husband's sister Ceni and her husband Marko Uziyel are in this photograph.

Yomtov Bonjur Arguete was the apple of the family's eye. He was married to Ketí Frankfort. Ketí was a German Jew. Her father owned a bank. He did not know Judeo Spanish, when this language was conversed within the family, his face became sullen. The Frankfort family was an aristocratic family. *Komo se dize vuantes blankaz* (How do you say this-white gloves. It is a saying indicating you were speaking to someone from the upper crust, i.e. you need to have white gloves to be able to address them). I would be amazed when I went to their house. Starched white table cloths, starched napkins. I would be face to face with a different world view.

My husband's mother's maiden name was Ancel. Lucy Arguete's story is quite interesting. When my mother-in-law was in her first marriage, it was the time for the flu epidemic. This epidemic was called the Spanish flu. This epidemic was in the news in the newspapers too. Her husband died on the night of the wedding before they could even have any relationship. Lucy became a widow with her wedding gown, as a virgin maiden. This flu that was called the Spanish flu, is considered an epidemic historically. A high fever and sudden death were the typical symptoms of this illness. Lucy Arguete lived through such a tragedy on the night of her wedding to her husband.

Lucy turned her back to life with this disappointment. She went to visit her relatives in Ortakoy. In reality the reason they called her to Ortakoy was to introduce her to my father-in-law Anri Arguete. At the time, a widow had to be very careful about the steps she took. Lucy, in reality, was a very optimistic and luminous woman. She loved giving out presents. That is why her purse was always

full of candy and chocolates. When children saw her, they always approached her. This woman who was of short stature, who put her long gray hair up in a bun on her neck, agreed to marry my father-in-law Anri Arguete who was a widower with one child, with the mentality of those days. Anri Arguete had lost his wife in Ortakoy. He was a very religious, quiet and inoffensive person. There was an age difference with Lucy. Along with the age difference, there was a cultural difference and a difference in life style. Lucy was a modern person who liked to go out, to spend money, to strengthen her dialogue with people. My father-in-law Anri on the other hand, was an introverted person who was lost among religious books, who spent his life within religious books. There were differences from their family structures. Lucy had an aptitude for western cultures, due to her siblings and her connections outside the country. Anri on the other hand, was a good person, and that was it. Lucy never treated Anri's daughter Suzan from his first wife different from her own children. When Lucy was married, Suzan was 5 years old. But she became the apple of Lucy's eye. Suzan knew that Lucy was not her mother. Besides, the mother's family used to come to see Suzan. But because Lucy did not distinguish Suzan from her own children, she even showed her preferential treatment at times. When she went out, she always took Suzan with her.

Suzan was a lively, cheerful girl. In later years, she turned out to be a very capable woman. Suzan shared a similar fate with my mother-in-law Lucy. When Suzan married Albert Chukran, Albert's wife had died in childbirth and left her daughter Beki without a mother. In those days, Beki was given her dead mother's name. Suzan took the baby to her heart since she knew the feeling. She did not even tell the three sisters she gave birth to, Juliet, Sara and Zelda this step-daughter situation for years. Beki was told the truth by her fiancé. Beki's first reaction was "It does not matter, Suzan is my mother. Please don't tell it to my sisters". Every sister was told that they were of different mothers by their fiancé, and the sisters never talked about this amongst themselves during their lifetime, in reality. In Suzan's old age, her sons-in-law competed to take her into their house.

My mother-in-law's daughter Ceni Arguete was married to Marko Uziyel. She had one daughter named Bella. Ceni was a chubby woman of medium height. She lived with her mother Lucy. Marko Uziyel's financial situation was not very bright. Ceni-Marko Uziyel lived in Nishantash (One of the best neighborhoods of Istanbul) in a basement flat. That house was a humid house. My mother-in-law had succeeded in making that house cozy. Lucy used to receive financial help from her siblings who lived in Switzerland. She in turn gave it to her daughter. Ceni's daughter Bella did not grow up as the daughter of a family with no means. The best of everything was always at Bella's disposal. Bella married but became a widow at a very young age. She had only one son. Her son is a tutor who prepares students for the university exam.