

AN INTRODUCTION TO
Home Made
A Graphic Family Memoir with Recipes

Text by Naomi Guttman

Art by Maureen Burdock



Home Made
A Graphic Novel Sample

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Artwork © 2026 Maureen Burdock

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This 32-page sample has been created as a proposal
for a longer graphic novel in development.

Written by Naomi Guttman
Illustrated by Maureen Burdock

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Malvine's Nutcake/Nusstorte Recipe

Preheat oven to 350 Fahrenheit.

Line a 8x8 inch pan with parchment paper (I usually take two long pieces and criss cross them, so that the bottom is covered twice and each side once).

Ingredients

6 eggs, separated while cold, then allowed to come to room temperature

300 grams walnuts, finely ground

300 grams white sugar

1 oz (28 grams) bittersweet chocolate (you can use chocolate chips if you want)

Whipped cream to cover cake with when ready to serve

Steps

Grind the walnuts if not already ground.

Beat egg yolks and sugar together until thoroughly mixed and light in colour.

Melt chocolate in a bain-Marie, or do what I do: in a measuring cup, heat for 30 seconds in the microwave on "Defrost" setting. Remove and stir. Keep doing this until the chocolate is melted. Cool.

Add melted chocolate to egg yolk mixture.

Beat egg whites until they form soft-firm peaks.

Gently fold egg whites into yolk and chocolate mixture alternatively with ground nuts, beginning and ending with egg whites.

Gently pour or scoop batter into the ready pan.

Bake for 50 minutes to an hour. You know it's ready when you can stick a toothpick in and it comes out more or less clean—sticky but not wet.

Allow to cool in the pan, then lift gently out by the parchment to cool completely on a cake rack. The top will form a meringue which usually breaks even while baking and cooling. Don't be alarmed.

When ready to plate, place strips of waxed paper each side of the plate, then reverse cake onto the plate. The top will crack, but now it will be on the bottom. Gently work the parchment paper off the cake and remove any crumbs from the sides of the plate.

Cover cake with a layer of whipped cream (keep some for serving if you want). Pull the waxed paper away so that the plate is clean of whipped cream.

Berries are always a nice accompaniment.

Home Made: A Graphic Family Memoir with Recipes

Text by Naomi Guttman

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“We are the ghosts of our descendants” – Ruth Kluger

Home Made is dedicated to my aunt, Greta Hofmann Nemiroff, who through her example, her love, and her support, has fostered my curiosity and creativity.

Home Made: A Graphic Family Memoir with Recipes grew out of a desire to understand the creative drive and ingenuity of my Viennese ancestors, which survives today in the artistic production of my living relatives. While delving into the context in which my ancestors lived, I was struck by their resourcefulness and creativity in the face of the prejudice they faced as Jews.

The family trees to which I have access go back to the 18th century, with the birth of a man named Löb. His son, Gerson Gustav Löb, married Suzanne Müller; over the next 20 years, they had seven children, including Amalie and her brother Jacob. In 1892, one of Amalie Löb Israel's sons, Gustav, married his cousin Malvine Löb, one of Jacob's daughters. They became my great-grandparents. Their lives and those of their descendants are intertwined with the laws that governed Jews before, during, and after their lifetimes.

Historians believe that Jews first arrived in Austria with the Romans, and records show Jewish habitation as far back as the 9th and 10th centuries. In 1204, Vienna's first synagogue was established. From this point onward, we see a pattern of privileges granted and withdrawn, as well as periods of persecution, mob violence, and expulsions, sometimes followed by periods of tolerance and calm. My great-grandparents grew up during the long reign of Emperor Franz Joseph I in what is known as a “Golden Age” for Austrian Jews.

It was during this period that Jews received full citizenship and became, at least in Vienna, successful in law, medicine, and business, as well as in the arts. This success had its dark side, for it made Jews even more vulnerable to antisemitism. Many Jews tried to fit in through assimilation, becoming less observant or changing their family name; some went so far as to convert to Christianity. My ancestors did all these things. While antisemitism was often inflamed by those in power, such as Vienna's infamous mayor Karl Lueger, the emperor's positive attitude toward Jews discouraged violent expressions of prejudice. This tolerance evaporated after his death, which was followed by the rise of Nazism and the Holocaust. I am lucky enough to have grown up knowing both my grandmother Lisl and her cousin Dora, who left a self-published memoir. By reading this and many other books, family letters, and the memoir of Dora's younger brother Paul, I have learned a great deal about their times and their responses to adversity.

What follows is the story of four of my female ancestors who came of age in Vienna: my great-grandmother, Malvine; her daughter, my grandmother, Lisl; and two of Lisl's cousins, “Aunt Dora” and her sister Ella. Above all, it is the story of how their creativity gave them the strength to become who they were and to survive.

JEWS IN VIENNA TIMEVINE

1740-1780: Empress Maria Theresa expresses repugnance for Jews but allows them to participate in industry and commerce.

1867: Emperor Franz Joseph ushers in "The Golden Age of Viennese Jewry" with Fundamental Laws granting equality to all citizens.

1900: The beginning of Viennese Modernism—a period of extreme artistic and intellectual creativity in Vienna, in which Jews play central roles, including Freud, Wittgenstein, Schönberg, Berg, and Mahler.

1918: End of WWI engenders mass casualties, migrations, and political upheaval. On the losing side, the Habsburg Empire is dismantled and Austria enters a period of economic hardship and social unrest.

1933: Hitler, born in Austria, becomes the chancellor of Germany.

1938: Germany annexes Austria in what is known as the Anschluss. Austrian Jews are now subject to German Nuremberg Laws, stripping them of political rights and social contacts.

1942: On November 1, the Viennese Jewish community is officially "liquidated."

1782: Emperor Joseph II passes the "Edict of Tolerance," which lifts some discriminatory laws against Jews.

1896: Theodor Herzl publishes his brochure, "The Jewish State," promoting political Zionism.

1914: The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Habsburg throne, sets in motion events that lead to WWI.

1920: Austrian women get the right to vote.

1923: Hitler attempts a coup in Germany and is jailed for treason. He serves only 9 months of a five-year sentence during which he writes the first volume of *Mein Kampf*.

1938-1939: Over half Vienna's Jewish population of 200,000.00 flee to safer countries.

1939: The deportation of Austrian Jews to death camps begins. Approximately 70,000 are murdered.

1929: The stock market crashes and The Great Depression begins.

1816: Establishment of the Jewish Community of Vienna Archive, which keeps records on Jewish births, deaths, and marriages until 1938.

1897: Karl Lueger, avowed antisemite, elected mayor of Vienna. He serves until 1910.

1881: Bernhard Isräel marries Rosalie Kersch. They have 8 children, including Ella Irányi (b. 1888) and Dora Irányi Amann (b. 1894).

1785: Gerson Gustav Löb is born in Vienna. He marries Suzanne Müller. Among their children are Jacob (b. 1828) and Amelie (b. 1830).

1890: Bernhard and Gustav Isräel change their family name to Irányi.

1849: Amelie Löb marries Isak Isräel. Among their children are Bernhard (b. 1850) and Gustav (b. 1856) and Daniel (b. 1858).

1860: Jacob Löb marries Therese Einörl and has several children, including my great-grandmother, Malvine Löb (b. 1867).

1892: Gustav Irányi marries his first cousin, Malvine Löb. They have 4 children, including Elisabeth Irányi Hofmann (b. 1900), my grandma "Lisl."

1904: Bernhard and Gustav have themselves and their families converted to Christianity.

1908: Rosa and Bernhard Irányi establish Irányi's Wiener Gugelhupf und Kuchenmasse - the cake mix company.

1911: Rosa's sister-in-law Malvine Irányi takes over the cake mix company and changes the name to Irányi's Kuchenmasse und Backpulver Fabrikation.

1923: My Grandma Lisl reconverts to Judaism.

1930: Lisl and Ernest move from Vienna to Montréal, Canada.

1925: Lisl marries Ernest Hofmann. They have two daughters, my mother, Herta Hofmann Guttman (b. 1933) and Greta Hofmann Nemiroff (b. 1937).

1937: Lisl's mother, Malvine, joins her children in Canada.

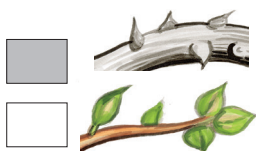
1941: Dora and her husband, with their children, manage to escape Europe as leaders of a Kindertransport bound for the United States.

1942: Rosa Irányi dies in Vienna. Ella Irányi, who has stayed in Vienna to care for her, is deported to Izbica and murdered. Leo Irányi, who had escaped to France, is deported from there to a death camp in Eastern Europe.

1939: Dora Irányi and her family flee to France. Her parents and Ella remain. Bernhard commits suicide. He is 89 years old.

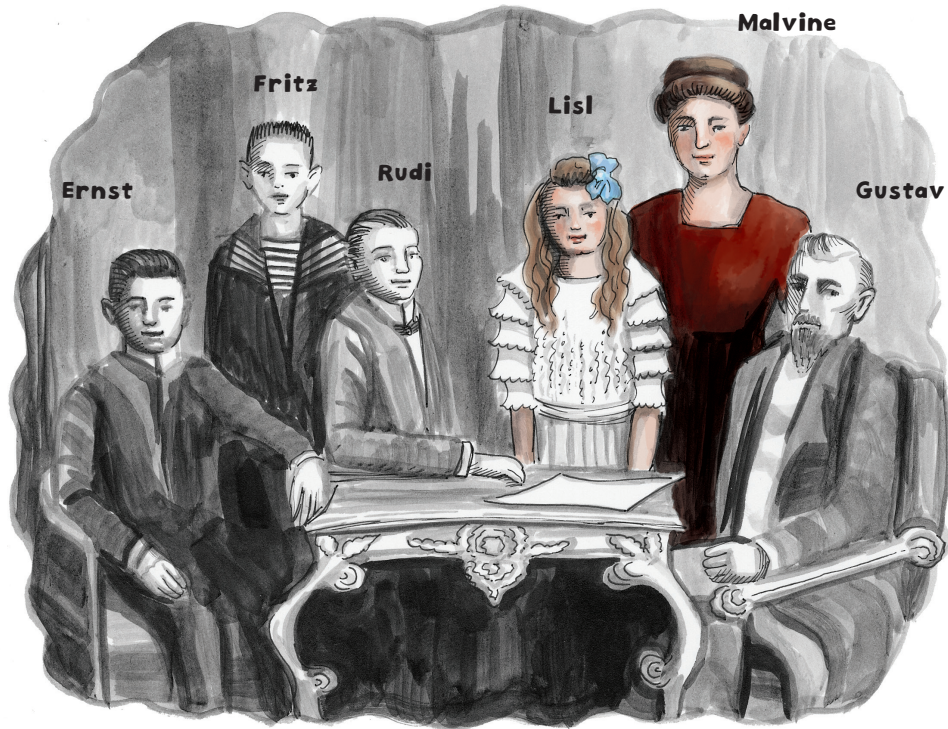
KEY:

THORNS
LEAVES



IRANYI FAMILY TIMEVINE

Dramatis Personae



Gustav Irányi with Family Circa 1911



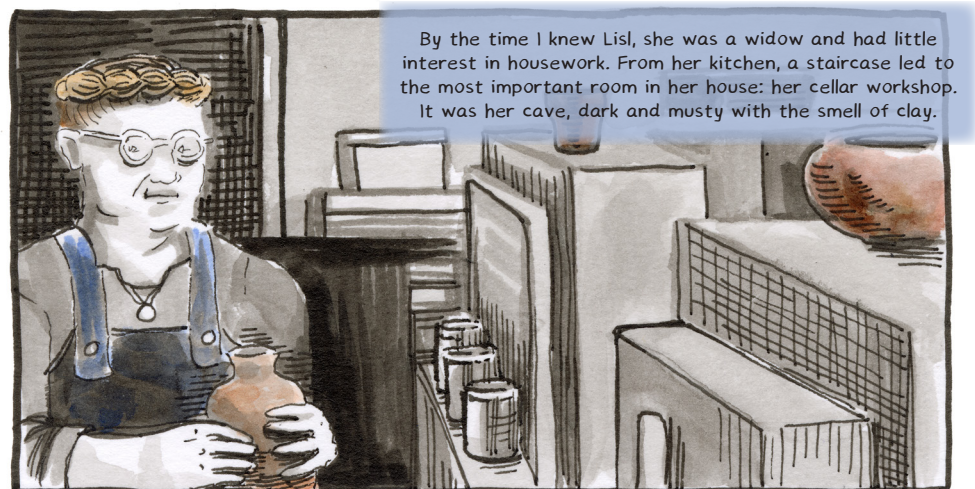
Rosa, originator of the cake mix company

Left to right, front row: Hannerl, Rosa, Peter, Bernhard, Liselotte

Middle row: Mitzi, Ella, Mouse, Dora

Back row: Leo, Fritz, Paul, Walter

Bernhard Irányi with Family Circa 1932



And VERK we did!

with clay



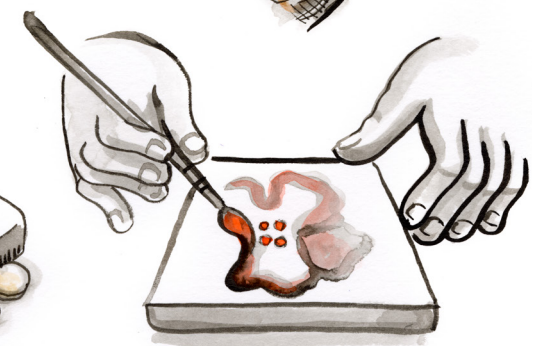
batik



wood



metal



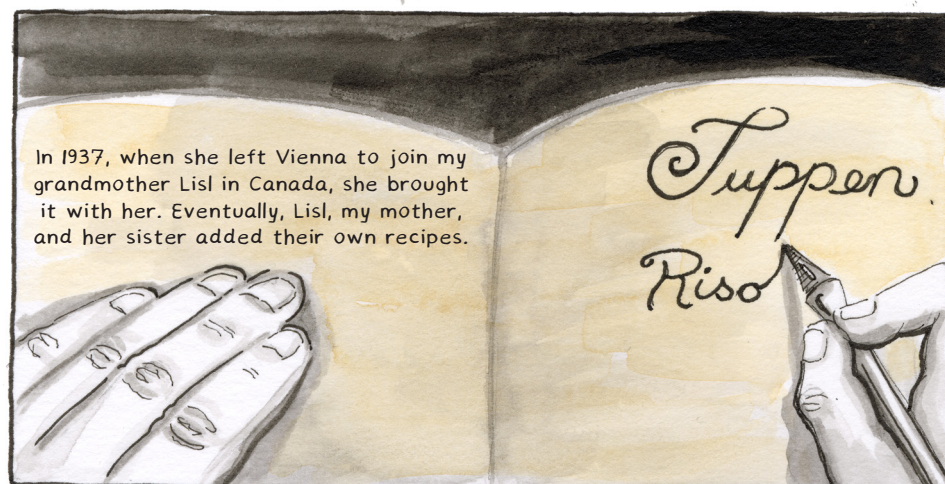
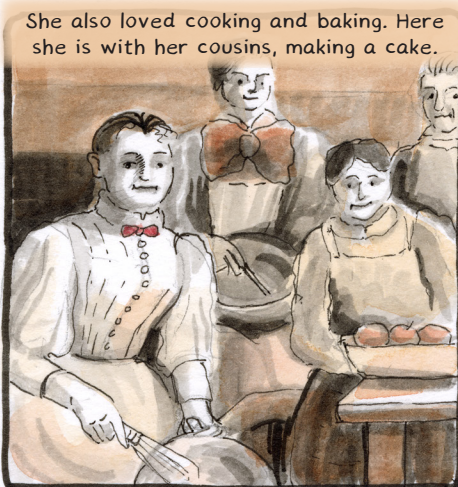
and paint

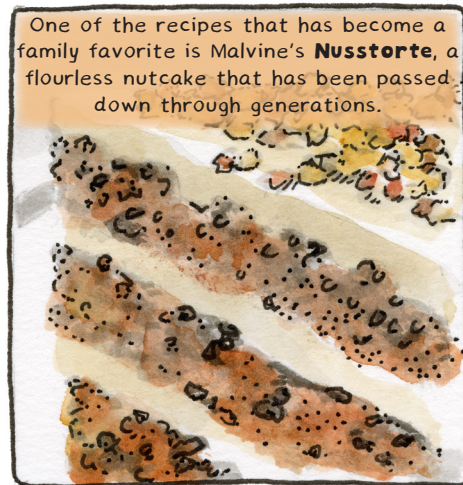
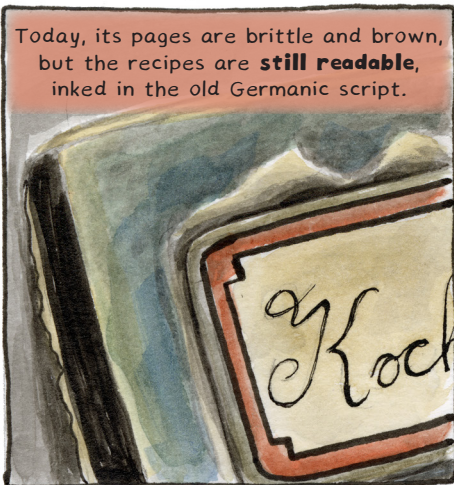


...and embroidering linens for her trousseau.

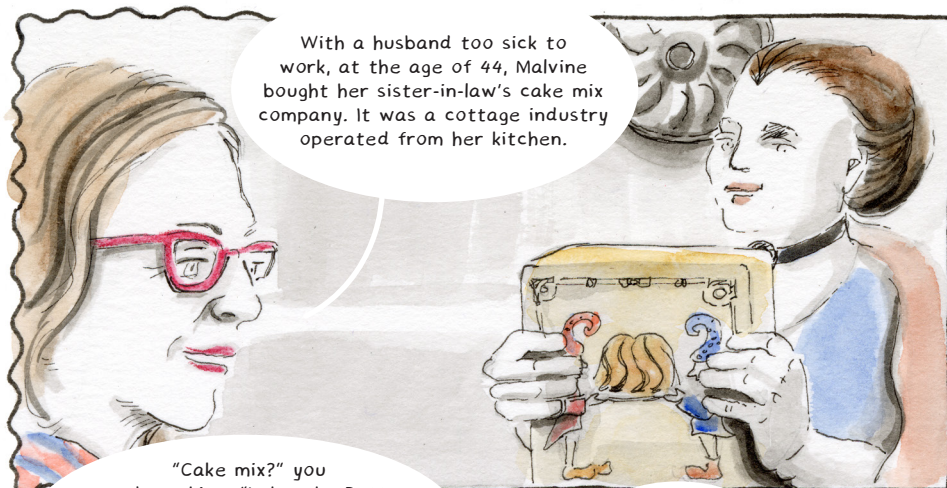


She also loved cooking and baking. Here she is with her cousins, making a cake.

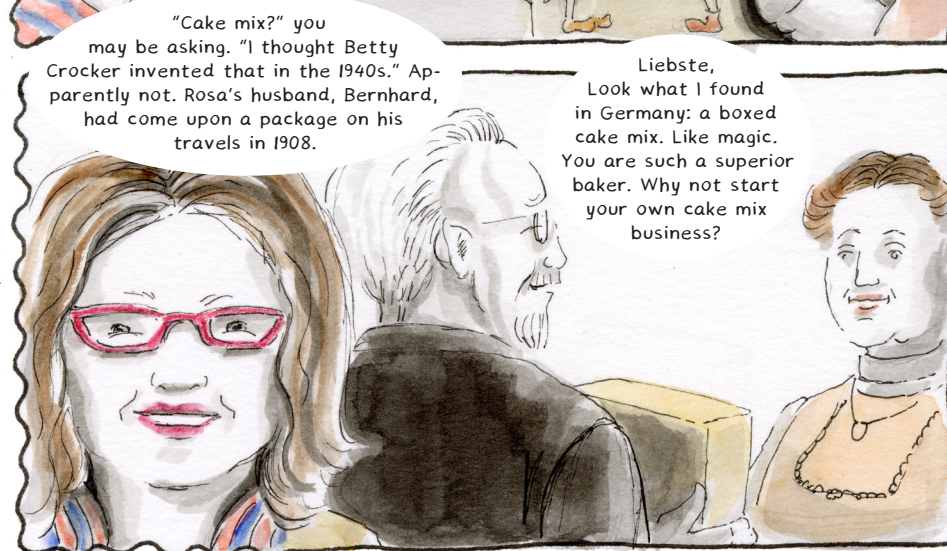




2000s: I pass the recipe down to my children. You can find it at the beginning of this book!



With a husband too sick to work, at the age of 44, Malvine bought her sister-in-law's cake mix company. It was a cottage industry operated from her kitchen.



"Cake mix?" you may be asking. "I thought Betty Crocker invented that in the 1940s." Apparently not. Rosa's husband, Bernhard, had come upon a package on his travels in 1908.

Liebste, Look what I found in Germany: a boxed cake mix. Like magic. You are such a superior baker. Why not start your own cake mix business?



Rosa, Malvine's sister-in-law, signed the company over to her, probably to help her support her family.

If you don't mind, Rosa, I would like to rename the company Irányi's Kuchenmasse und Backpulver Fabrikation.*

*Irányi's Cake Mix and Baking Powder Company.



It may seem ironic that a woman who valued traditional homemaking skills such as needlework and cooking became a producer of cake mix. This is especially true in Central Europe, where taking a break for *Kaffee und Kuchen* is a cultural institution.



It's always important, Lisl, to offer your guests homemade Kuchen.

But this is from your cake mix, Mama! Is it really homemade?

The ingredients are fresh and it's baked at home. I'm simply offering a shortcut for the busy Hausfrau, especially for the one who's a bad baker. Why should her **guests** suffer?

When I'm married, I'll use cake mix.

Cake mix aside, Lisl had many opportunities her mother hadn't had.

Born in 1900, Lisl was the baby in her family and the only girl. Her parents may have indulged her.

This is not a girl—this is a poem!



Then there was the aftermath of WWI. With the end of the Austro Hungarian empire and the deaths of over a million men, things changed for women in politics, work, and education.

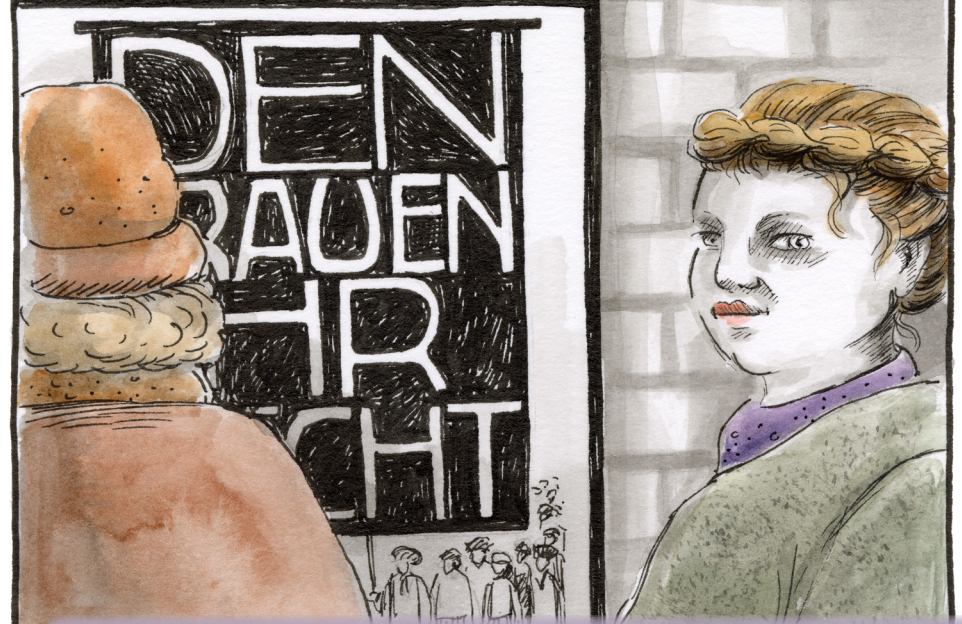


She came of age in a Vienna that was not only an imperial center but also a hub of Modernism...

After high school, Lisl continued her education at Vienna's School of Applied Arts. There, she studied many crafts, including book-binding. Afterward, she worked as a puppet maker.

Women won the right to vote when Lisl was 18.

**DAS FRAUENWAHLRECHT
FORDERN
ALLE FRAUEN UND MAEDCHEN
ALLE MÜTTER
ALLE ARBEITERINNEN**



Taken all together, these factors made Lisl into the confident, independent, strong-minded, and unconventional artist and artisan she became.

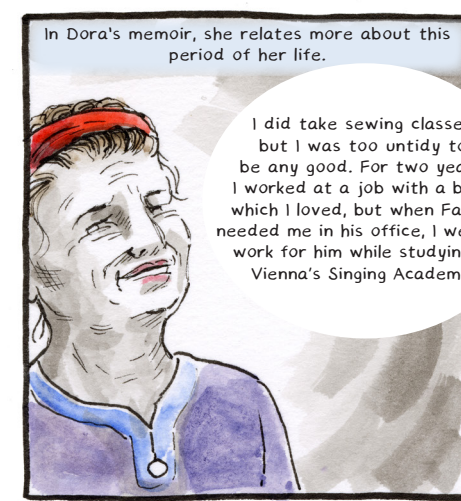
Maybe because Bernhard was more old-fashioned, Ella and Dora had a tough time convincing their father to invest in their artistic education.

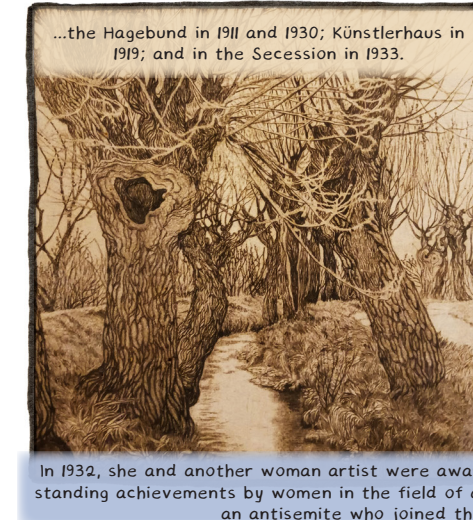
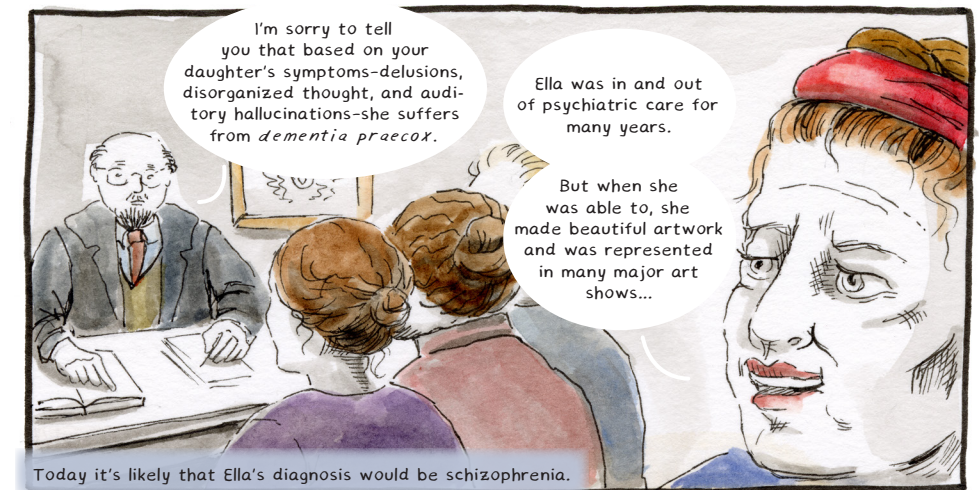
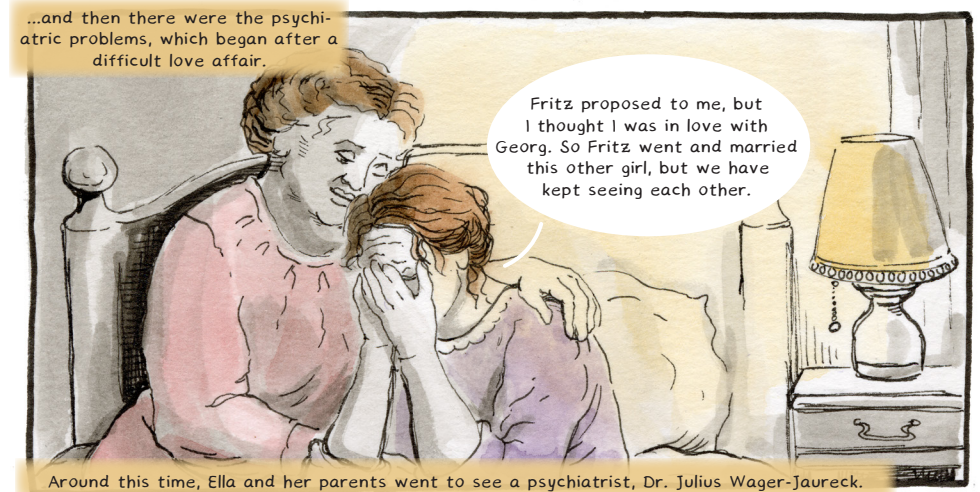
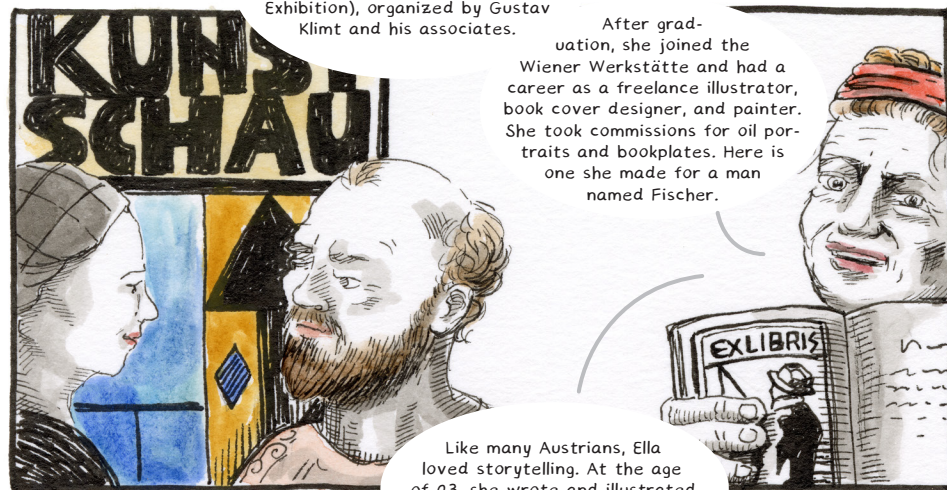
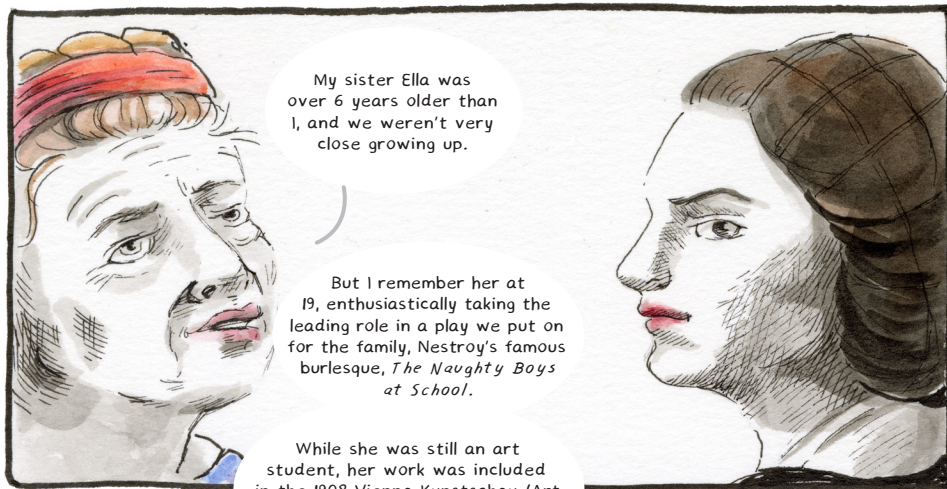


Eventually, Bernhard relented. At the Art School for Women and Girls, Ella studied wood engraving with Friedrich König, metalwork with Georg Klimt, and landscape painting with Tina Blau.



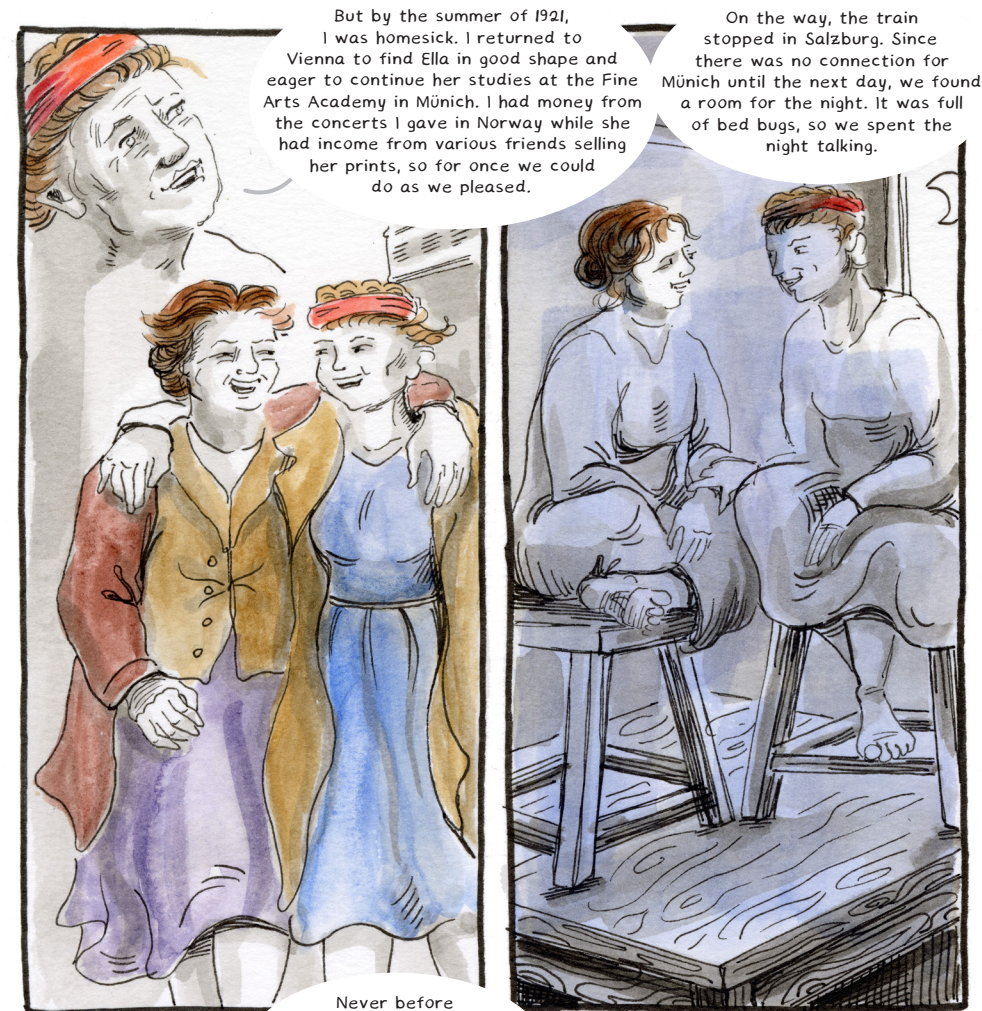
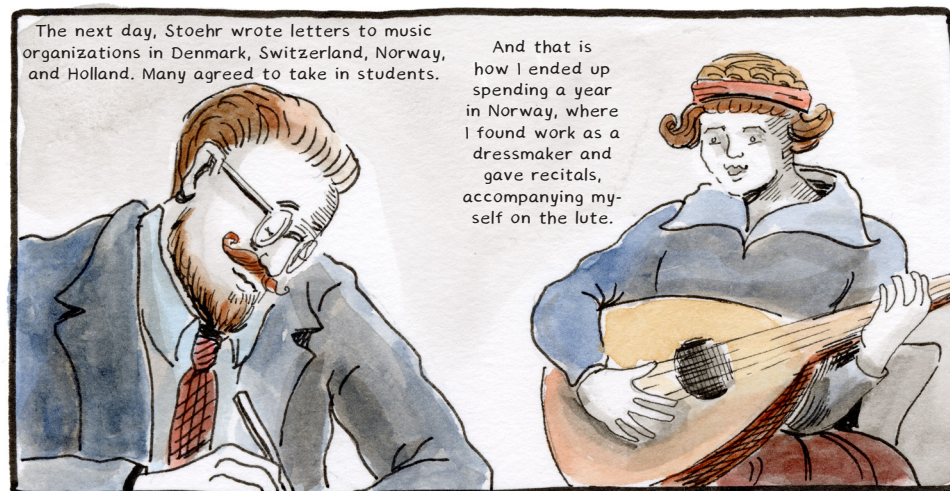
A few years later, Dora finished her general education and wanted to study music.

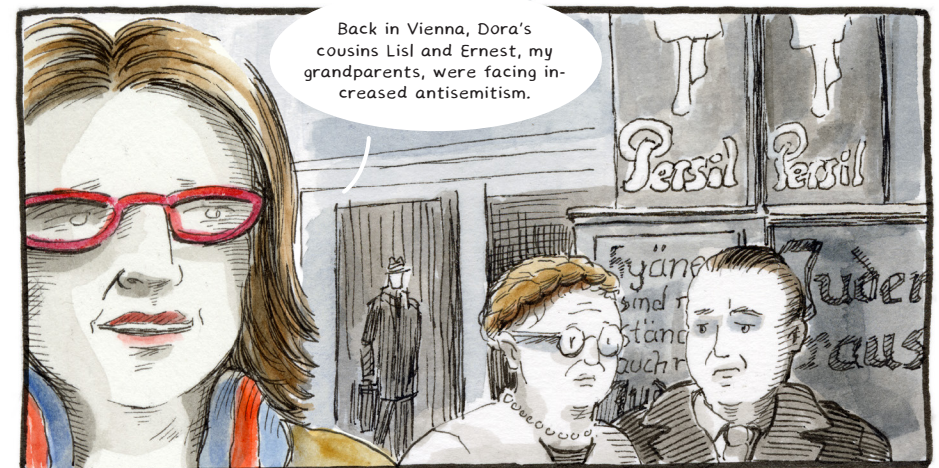




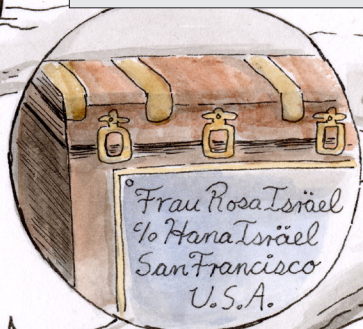
Ella Irányi, who belongs to the Association of Female Visual Artists, is already among the most renowned graphic artists in Austria. On the occasion of Rosa Mayreder's seventieth birthday, she received the welcome commission to create a drawing of the esteemed woman; the drawing is also included in the book *The Rise of Women*, dedicated to Rosa Mayreder.

We warmly welcome the fact that the Board of Trustees of the Marianne Hainisch Foundation, through its decision, has expressed the high esteem that many women's groups hold for the ideal work of these artists, especially under the current difficult circumstances. And we hope that the award bestowed will serve as an incentive for these two tirelessly striving women to continue their outstanding work.

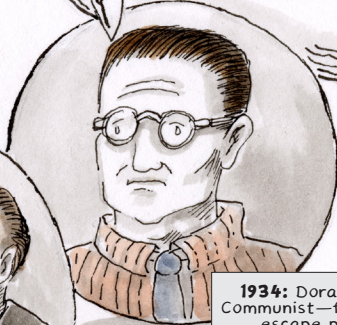
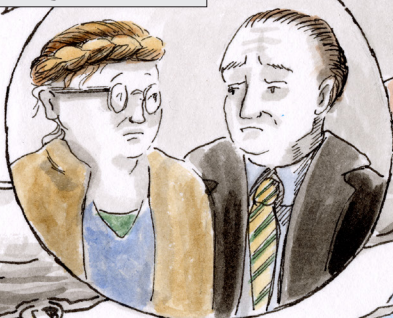




1924: After Hitler's Beer-Hall Putsch of 1923, Aunt Rosa joins her son in the United States.

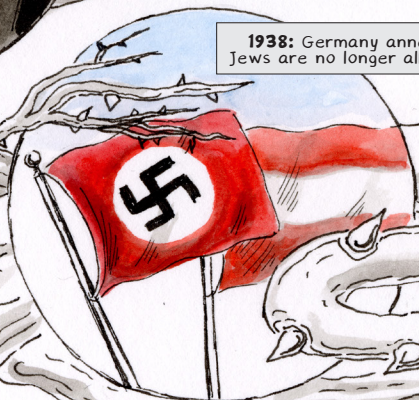


1930: My grandparents, Lisl and Ernest Hofmann, emigrate, joining family in Canada.



1934: Dora's brother Paul—a Communist—flees to the USSR to escape prison in Vienna.

1938: Germany annexes Austria. Jews are no longer allowed to work.



1939: Dora and her husband, Paul Amann, leave Vienna for Paris with their children.



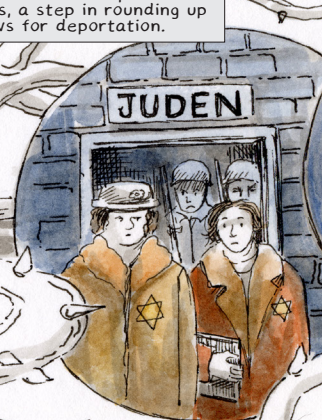
Dora and her family flee Paris for the south of France and then escape to the United States by leading a Kindertransport of over 60 children.



Dora's father, Bernhard, commits suicide at the age of 89.

1940-1942: In Vienna, Ella and her mother are moved to a series of Communal Apartments for Jews, a step in rounding up Jews for deportation.

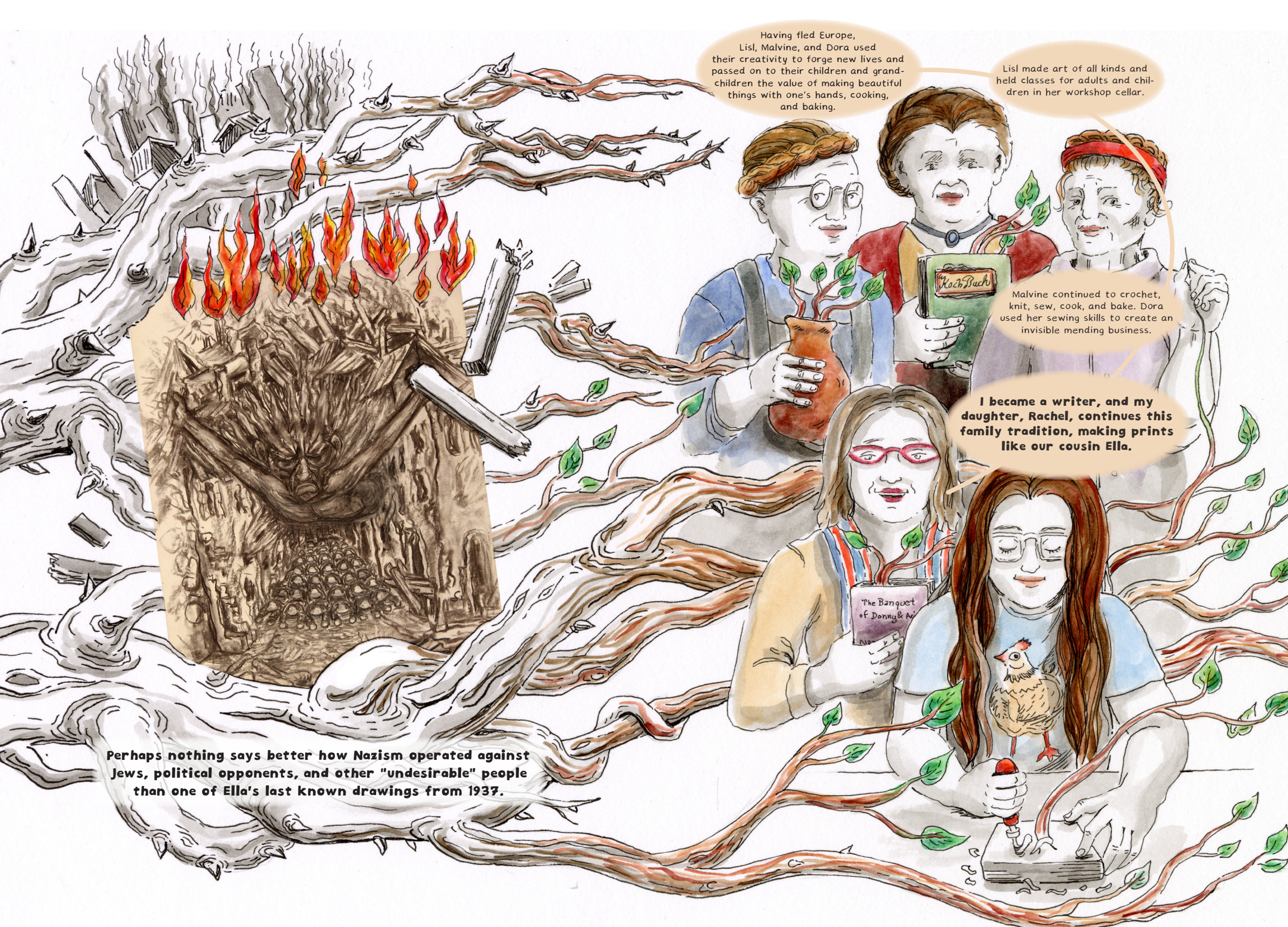
Ella's mother dies.



Ella is deported to Poland and murdered there.



Leo Irányi, Dora's brother, escapes to Southern France but is rounded up and deported to a death camp.



Having fled Europe, Lisl, Malvine, and Dora used their creativity to forge new lives and passed on to their children and grandchildren the value of making beautiful things with one's hands, cooking, and baking.

Lisl made art of all kinds and held classes for adults and children in her workshop cellar.

Malvine continued to crochet, knit, sew, cook, and bake. Dora used her sewing skills to create an invisible mending business.

I became a writer, and my daughter, Rachel, continues this family tradition, making prints like our cousin Ella.

Perhaps nothing says better how Nazism operated against Jews, political opponents, and other "undesirable" people than one of Ella's last known drawings from 1937.

Biographies

Naomi Guttman is a poet, writer, and filmmaker. She has published three volumes of poetry—*Reasons for Winter*, *Wet Apples*, *White Blood*, and *The Banquet of Donny & Ari: Scenes from the Opera*. Her most recent work is the personal documentary about her parents' 64-year marriage, *More Than You Can Know*. She is the Jane Watson Irwin Professor in the Humanities at Hamilton College where she teaches Literature and Creative Writing.

Maureen Burdock—graphic novelist, story strategist, and fearless champion of creative rebels everywhere. The author of three acclaimed graphic novels—*Five Feminist Fables for the Twenty-First Century*, *Queen of Snails*, and *Sleepless Planet*—Maureen creates visual narratives that explore resilience, justice, imagination, and the hidden stories that shape our lives.

Acknowledgments

This comic was made possible by a generous grant from Hamilton College's Daniel W. Dietrich Fund. Thank you to Dan Dietrich and his family for endowing the Dietrich inchworm Grant, created to help artists collaborate, innovate, explore, and take risks.

I read and consulted many books on the history of Austria's Jews and on women's education during the years covered in this memoir. However, the most important sources have been documents left by family members, including letters from the Peter Amann collection, available online at the Center for Jewish History; Dora Iranyi Amann's memoir; and the memoir of her brother, Paul Iranyi. My sincerest thanks to their children and grandchildren who made these documents and others available to me.