



Prievoz Cottages.

ered by snow. Nearly all families seem to keep chickens, ducks, and dogs. We hear them, especially the early cocks crowing, through our windows.

*February 21*

I walked through the snow for an hour today in the old place that we have dubbed “the village.” Bare trees line nearly all the streets that are now cramped pathways through the snow shared by cars and people alike. Where I passed in front of one house, a young couple was building a snowman and decorating it with a hat and scarf. Children are everywhere pulling each other on sleds, throwing snowballs, and sliding in the icy streets.

*March 14*

We now know the name of the village. It is called Prievoz, “ferry” or “ferry boat.” The name is left over from a time when the Danube, or a tributary, meandered further to the north than it now does and Prievoz really was an isolated settlement along its banks. Now, surrounded by the growing city, Prievoz retains a village atmosphere. A convent, now seen isolated in the snow behind wrought-iron fences, centers the village. Attached to the convent is a hospital to serve the community and a church whose bells we hear from our apartment every Sunday. We walk to Prievoz daily to shop and take refuge in its tree-lined streets and ancient cemetery.



Prievoz Convent.

*March 21*

Today I walked through the oldest part of Bratislava, up to the Hrad (fortress palace), and looked southward and across the Danube to Petržalka. This newest part of the city is approached only by a modern suspension bridge. One end slices through the fabric of the old city, separating the Hrad from the cathedral, St. Martins. The other end connects to a continuous and uniformly high landscape of pale gray buildings that reach to the horizon. I have not yet visited this place but have been told that all the

buildings are multiple housing. People who live there must commute daily across the bridge to work because there is no commerce or industry in Petrzalka.

*April 3*

This morning we took the trolley and two different busses to Petrzalka for a close-up look. The place is designed on the Soviet models of architecture and planning. Thirteen-story buildings are of uniform height and aspect made of precast concrete panels. Ground floors are covered with graffiti suggesting personal unrest, alienation, and uncertainty. Randomly oriented to sun and wind, the buildings stand like featureless monoliths floating in a vast and unattended landscape. We saw people picking their way across spaces without structure or boundaries. There are no gardens. Where spaces are occupied at all, it is with cars that are required for the daily commute.

*April 4*

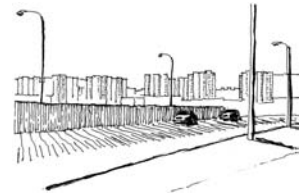
We have found much peace in the cemetery of Prievoz. The outside world is barely visible through its trees. Sounds are muted. There is a central path, crooked and uprooted, lined by old trees on either side. Many of the trees are splitting open with age but are constantly repaired with cement. Through their dark branches and decaying trunks can be glimpsed the graves, many with small lanterns to protect candles that are regularly replaced, lighted, and left to flicker in the twilight like fireflies. Tiny gardens, regularly tended by the villagers, surround each carefully polished headstone. The gardens are now being prepared for spring planting of flowers.

*April 25*

The wind has been blowing hard from the south all week and Prievoz has been transformed. Cherry trees that line nearly every street are now heavy with blossoms. Individual gardens are all sprouting new crops of sweet peas, tulips, and little blue flowers.



Danube River Bridge to Petrzalka.



Petrzalka: Uniform 13-story buildings separated by featureless open spaces.