

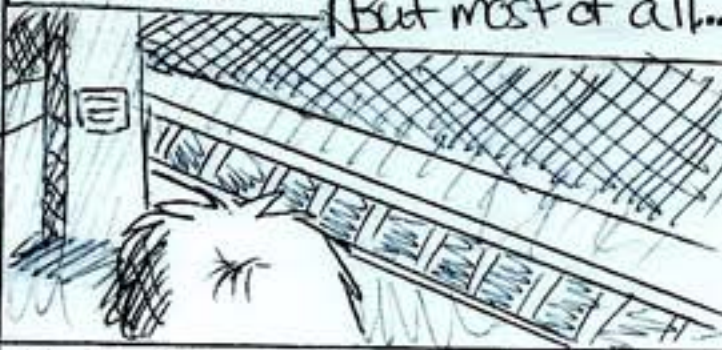
The Revolution as my father tells it...

December 17, 1989

It was a cold, gloomy & dark December evening. We were waiting for the train to go home.



I took a look around and it struck me once again for the umpteenth time how drab everything was... Gray walls, the gray concrete of the platform... But most of all...



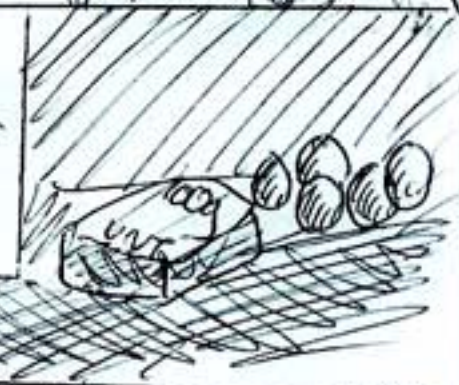
...it was the people with sad gray faces.



All of a sudden, as if she had read my mind...

But she was right. It was cold - not only outside but inside as well.

Five eggs and 100g of butter every month.



Food was scarce and rationalized.



Her mood swings were becoming more frequent because she was 4 months pregnant with you!

Half a loaf of bread and a 1/2 liter of milk per person each day.

But not everybody had to survive on these rations. There were the small communist elite who'd have everything they wanted.

The communist party would feed us sickening propaganda during those two daily hours of television from 8-10pm.

They told us we were richer, healthier, happier every day, every week, every year. **LIES...**

This party was led by the mad dictator, NICOAE CEAUȘESCU, and his illiterate wife, Elena.



But we would turn on our radios to the banned but hugely popular Radio Free Europe, which told the truth about our region as seen from the West.



We were poor, hopeless, imprisoned by a mad regime that had already begun collapsing around us.



However, that evening when we turned on Radio Free Europe, we were excited to hear that something had at long last happened.

"The crowds would not leave the Mania Square although the army has been trying to push them out of it. Later gunfire was heard in the dark."

It's probably somewhere else, somewhere far away...



But I was too hard to believe it could be happening **HERE**.



It took me a couple of minutes to absorb the news and get a rough image of what was happening:

In one of the country's largest cities,



Several dozen young people were protesting, demanding the release of a local dissident. They were proving they weren't afraid of the secret police.

People didn't look in fear at the police anymore, but with hostility.

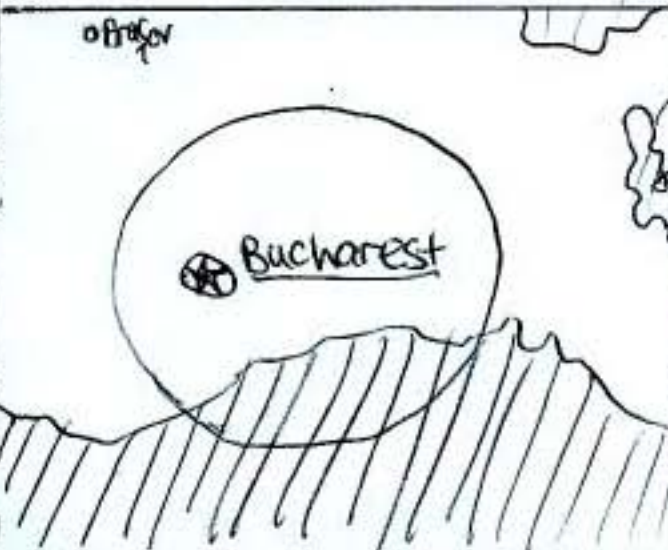


All of a sudden the hopelessness we felt that day, and every day before, on the platform seemed to disappear.



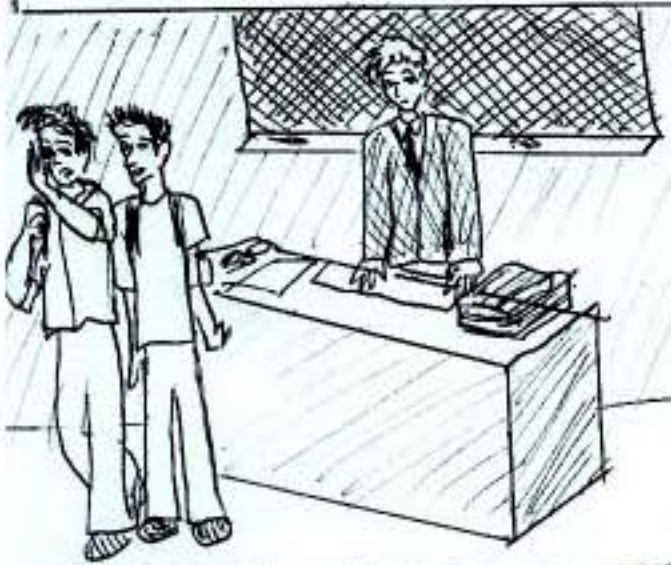
Maybe there was hope after all for our unborn child.

All eyes were on Bucharest because they said that only when the huge masses in the capital would come out, the dictator would fall.



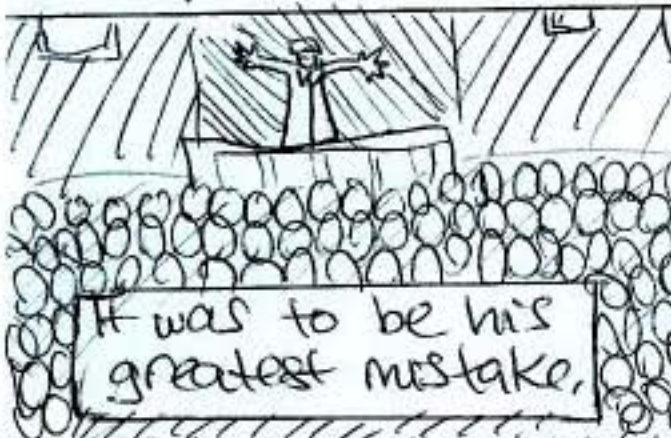
The reality hit me with full force, it was finally HAPPENING! Not in a faraway place, but right here, in Romania.

Next morning at school, everything became clear. People were talking.



In Timișoara people had risen against the regime

The dictator called up a rally on December 21 to show the world he had the support of the people.



It was to be his greatest mistake.



During the meeting we could all see on TV that at one point a huge roar came from the crowd, and he stopped, disoriented. The rally and the broadcast were interrupted for several minutes. When it resumed, he ended abruptly, promising pay raises.

We saw a huge crowd of people marching down from the big factories

A student of mine called up to me...

Come on, teacher... Come with us! Your place is with us!!!

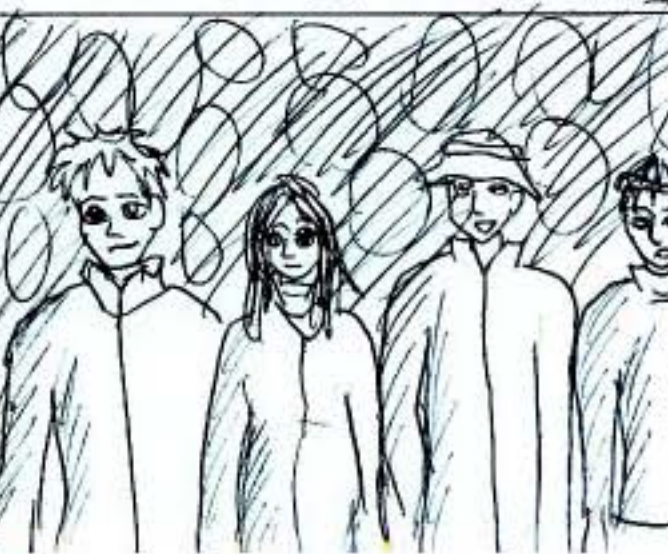


The next morning...

We were woken up at 7:30 by the sound of chanting from outside.



We joined them and marched with them all the way to the party headquarters.



somehow we ended up
 the first row against
 the barrier.



For 2 or 3 hours, we stayed
 there shouting anti-communist
 slogans and demanding that
 the local party leader come
 out, which he eventually
 did. But he couldn't say
 more than 10 words
 because he was boxed.



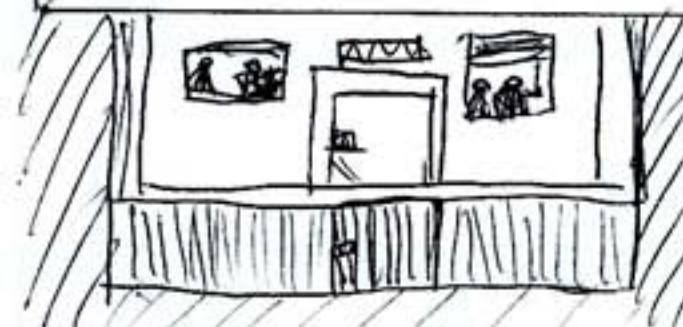
But the communists
 would not budge. We
 were stuck in a tense
 standoff for another
 hour or so.

But all of a sudden,
 some people ran to
 us and started shouting

We're free! We won!
 Ceausescu has fled!
 We're FREE!!!



At first we were skeptical,
 but the party officers ran
 inside the building and
 closed the gates behind
 them.



Not one minute later, the
 commanding officer of the
 troops climbed on top of one
 truck and shouted out us:



He and the other soldiers
 jumped into the crowd
 and started hugging the
 people.



So the revolution
 began in Romania,
 finally overthrowing

Ceausescu and his evil regime.

THE END