

Lichtman - translation

BOBINE 1

Lichtman 1

Q: Yes, good. We begin..Good, do you remember the time the Germans entered Krakau? You were in Krakau , right?

A: No, at that time I was in Wieliczka, 14 Km. from Krakau.

Q: Yes.

A:near Krakau. It is a small town where there used to be salt mines, in Poland.

Q: And you were born there?

A: No, I was born in a small town in Galicia, in Jaroslav.

Q: Yes.

A: Yes, and then we came to Krakau. There I finished my training and started to work. And...

Q: How old were you?

A: When I came to Krakau? It was 1928. with 13 I came to Krakau.

Q: Yes. And where did you live in Krakau?

A: I lived with my parents. And we resettle from Krakau... from Jaroslav, and then we lived there. There I studied. The whole family lived there.

Q: Yes, but where in Krakau did you live?

A: Osterowiczina. I remember it was a very beautiful street.

Q: In the Jewish quarter?

A: It was near the Jewish quarter. Not really in the Jewish quarter.

Q: And what was your father's profession?

A: My father was.....he made the upper parts of the shoes.

Q: Upper?

A: Upper parts....he made the upper parts for shoes, yes.

Q: He was a shoemaker?

A: No, that is only.... only what is on the shoes....The soles and the rest was made by the shoemaker.

Q: Yes.

A: That is....it is called Zuschneider or so...Steppemeister Those things....

Q: Yes.

A: And I was still....I was at school. And then I finished school, and worked with children. I worked....There was an institution, social care for poor children - school children from elementary to high school. One looked after them. We bought them books and sent them for summer holidays. I worked there. Not far from Kriniza, in a small town by the name of Ritro. And there I was in charge of a group of children. There were groups - it was called a round - 75 children...50 children. It was a mixed group, of all sorts and all classes, from school and such....No, one can not say poor children, but those of workers, who could not afford to send the children away. I always worked there in summer. And then I worked in my children home also in helping the afternoons... It was work all day long.

Q: Yes, and what happened when the Germans....?

A: Ah, well, then we lived in Krakov, lived there long. And the Germans came in, and started....Right on the first day, they started to take people to work in town, to clean the dirt and gather it at a big square....Square, can one say it in German?

Q: Yes.

A:

A: Clean, sweep...every day. And the men were taken to different hard labour. There they were shot and caught. And then I came back, I came back to Krakau myself, and spent some time with my girl friends. (my parents were in Wieliczka). And so, back and forth....Til the days of the holidays....How does one say holidays? Now is it called in German? The holiday we are having now, this time of Mosh Hashana. Before that I was at home. The Germans assembled the Jews there on the square, on the market place. They said that ^{they} will go to work. They led away the people. After a few hours we saw that they did not come back, so we went to look for them. I went for my father...

Q: What men?

A: My father, different men, of all Jewish houses. They were taken out of every house, whoever it was: young, 22 years old, and old ones, different people. They have gathered thirty odd men, led them away into a small wood. I remember it was the 11 September....September in the morning. It was the eve of...

Q: What year?

A: 39.

Q: 39-

A: Yes. It was eve of...before the holidays. You were saying

Q: Eve of Mosh Hashana.

A: Yes, the eve of Mosh Hashana. And there they...They were led to a small wood, shot, and put in a....made like in a picture...They put the men with their heads to the outside and their feet together. That was...it was in the shape of half a circle. They were all shot. And we came to the wood and saw all that. We started running and begged to have the men taken back into town,

and that they should be given proper burial. And..

Q: Your father was....

A: My father was among them, yes. Moses Fajsher. I was speaking genenrally. There were...there was my father, my neighbour and different...other acquaintances. And so we went to the mayor. At that time my father was... did some work, without payment, for the municipality. it was....he worked also in the community. And I came. A professor worked there, an old gentile. And I told him: listen, they said they were taking the men to work and have shot them all. So he....

Q: it was a big shock?

A: Well, of course, it was dangerous. We did not know what had fallen on us. We ~~prayed~~ begged to be given the the possibility to bring back the dead. He said: But this is not real. it is not true. So I said: Yes, it is. I am coming....And I was covered with blood, because when I saw my father, I fell on the ground to kiss him. He was completely cold and covered with blood. So I said: Mister, look at me, I am covered with blood. All have been shot. So he took out...opened a drawer and said: what? these...all these? And he had a letter, took it from a big file, a piece of paper, and there were all the names written down, and under it was written: these were shot at 11 o'clock in the wood of Tatshisha. I... perhaps I do not say exactly how it was. But so it was.

Lichtman 2

Q: Go.

A: What?

Q: Go.

A: Go?

Q: Yes, the following....

A: Well, you ask....

Q: No, no, I do not ask, you were...

A: Ah, I should....

Q: ...go on...

A: What have I....Then he...over...There in town...they....

Q: Yes, with your father. You were....

A: Yes, they gave the....I was covered with blood, and I told him, he was....they shot all of them. My father as well. And that I kissed him and am therefore covered with blood. And that I want to bring him back. So they, the people of the municipality, gave us a horse with a cart. We gathered, all the girls and women whose men were shot. And we went out with it to bring the dead to town. On the way there were different difficulties.... It was hard to get through. Peasants came and harassed us on the way. And the peasant who was supposed to take us out, chased us with his whip. He didn't want to go. Different ~~moments~~ instances were very difficult. So we brought them all to the field where one buried the dead, and took them off...put all the dead down. Then came peasants and told us: now they are coming to shoot you all. Go and hide. We really didn't know what to do, so we went into the room where the dead are being washed. During that time the peasants took everything off the Jews, the boots, everything they had. My father for example had a golden watch with a golden chain, such as were worn once.

~~Andxix~~

And they took away the ring on his finger...

Q: The polish peasants?

A: Yes- And they took away everything they had in their pockets. because we had no....I didn't have the strength to do that....to...to...how does one say? to take out of the pockets and to take the gold. But they did it. Then they ran off. w^h...When we came out again, we saw what had happened, and started to dig the graves. we put them all...made a common....

Q: pit, ditch...

A: ditch. Yes. Thirty odd people. And...

Q: And that was at the beginning of the war?

A: Yes.

Q: September 11.

A: Yes, yes, yes.

Q: 49-

A: This was perhapsthe fifth...They came on the fifth....

no, six days after they came to Poland.

Q: Yes.

A: And then I went back. Then I was...Of course we set shiva...

Q: Shiva?

A: Yes, these are the days after....I came back to Krakov, and lived there with my girl-friends in the Jewish quarter, with strangers..There the Germans also...every day someone was caught for forced labour and shot, and... it was wild. They caught the Jews, shaved them with knives till they were bleeding, with pieces of flesh almost coming off...different....Such things, such games were made...

Q: The religious?

A: The Germans....These were not religious Jews, it was only the Jewish quarter. All Jews....many of them,were already shaved, but there were also those with beards...

Q: And you saw it yourself?

A: Saw it myself. In the house where I lived, there lived a rabbi, a great rabbi, and there were religious, very religious people...

Q: Very religious....

A: Very religious, yes. And...Once they...the Germans made a game: they caught a tall one(?)

Q: What kind of a game?

A: The gave the Jews the in his hand, and he should pretend he was beating a German. They took pictures. And different such games...then they made once a big revisionThey closed off the streets, cordoned off, and each place....each house was surrounded with Germans. Wherever they saw light, they shot into the windows, when they saw some movement of children and women, they shot at them. And they searched all rooms. Ridiculous searches, looking into the cupboards for instance, or under the bed, tearing out the mattress to look for men. They... They came and looked for armed men....and didn't find anything. At the time they shot many people.

Q: Yes-

A: It was also at the beginning.

Q: Yes. and what happened later?

A: Later they also ordered that one has to wear a mark, on the arms, a sign on the arms with ...

Q: ...yellow star...

A: Star....no, at our place it was white...a white band with a blue star.

Q: Yes.

A: And one was not permitted to go out in the evening, after a certain hour. One could not go in certain streets, or..

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. that....Then they said one has to clear....that is leave all flats and that we will resettle...Yes, meanwhile...

Q: Resettle?

A: Yes, Meanwhile, when....after my father was killed, my fiancé came back. He was in Russia. We got married...

Q: Fiance?

A: Yes, and we married and we were supposed to go to Russia, go away. But we did not manage, because during this time they started to chase the people from all ~~partxxxxxxx~~ direction back into town, all those who had tried to flee Krakov. They brought many people from an insane asylum....Insane asylum, does one say so? They brought many people. They were chased with bare feet, without hats, without putting on clothes. At that time it was already very cold and snowing, light snow and rain. So we decided to wait. Well, and so we stayed and were resettled to another town, Mierlitz.

Q: Mierlitz?

A: Yes. There was...That was a town, where underground there were building aeroplanes....

Q: Yes.

A: It was called Berghof. There II was given a flat, a small one, under the staircase. This was already with my husband. And we were there for some time doing forced labour. I worked at the railway construction. He worked with mel...Meliorationen at the beach. And after a few months they did....they said they would resettle us. But the Jews...- there was a Jewish committee - they came and

*Back to
Sibut*

said....

Lichtman 3

A: The Judenrat arranged everything for the Jews in Mielitz.
There were also people who were sent away to work..Sent
away to work in the mountains...

Q: coupe...coupe...

Lichtman 4

A: The Judenrat arranged all negotiations and all matters
which were...with Jews and Germans. The Judenrat sent
Jews from Mielitz out to Pustkov. These were big woods.
The woods were cut, and there was construction, I don't
know. My husband was also taken there...

Q: But you were already married?

A: I was already married. My husband was called Marek...
Markus Weissner.

Q: Markus Weissner ?

A: Yes.

Q: And since when were you married?

A: Also...I have married in Stoppard on the 11..the 11th
May 1939 I got married. And after almost one and a half
years...not yet one and a half years - he was taken to
forced labour and killed.

Q: Your husband....

A: Yes, yes, yes.

Q: ...was also killed, not only your father?

A: They worked very hard over there - forced labour. They
were chased up at 5 o'clock in the morning, there was
hard work. And then, when the people were already exhaus-
ted, tired, they were...~~they~~ with a stone...- so I was
told, I have not seen it myself. Only the few who escaped
from there, who ran away, have said that they had such
a death: they tied a heavy stone to a rope. The people
were stood up and the stones were let down on their
heads. So they were killed. After a time I have

not be
more

received such awhat is it called? They sent me a letter. These were standard letters, such...like a postcard with a black frame...a print...printed matter. And there - I don't remember - they wrote that this and this person does not live anymore. That was all.

Q: Who wrote it, the Germans?

A: The Germans sent it, yes. And I...I was....

Q: This means you have lost your husband, your father....

A: ...and my whole family....my...all. We were seven at home. I remained alone. I lost all...

Q: But later?

A: Later...Only one brother was...has...

Q: survived?

A: Yes, but he was...He escaped to Russia and stayed there. But besides him - all. So I stayed in Mielitz for some time til the...till it was to be made Judenrein. They... I started telling...The Judenrat....

Q: It was constant flight?

A: Yes, people were chased all the time. One also had to hide. During the day and night young Germans came in and looked for something to steal and someone to ...and they shot... shot at people, and did different such things. So we thought we were about to be chased away from Mielitz. So the Judenrat took from all the Jews coffee, cacao, food, fur-coats, good things, ~~jewelry~~ expensive things, money, gold - from whoever had it, jewelry. They took it and gave it to the Germans. And the Germans promised that we shall remain there....

La challe

Q: promised?

A: Yes, They promised that we would...There was such a joy, that we would not have to...

Q: .. go away...

A: ...go away and all...The next morning we heard shooting and alarm signals. "out", "Out". And they came to every house, to every floor, and chased out the people, chased the people from their homes. We could take only what we had in our hands...Well, then we went out and were sent again...right, left...I was at that time with my parents in law - I was with them the whole time. We were taken to the market place - a big square - where we stood for some time till the Jews were brought from other...from the whole area. We were taken to Berdigh~~at~~.

Q: Berdigh~~at~~?

A: Berdigh~~at~~.

Q: Berdigh~~at~~.

A: Yes, where they....And at that time...During this time, they took the Jews and threw them into the synagogue...synagogue?

Q: synagogue.

A: ...the synagogue, and there they put fire to the Jews and burnt all, alive. And the people tried to...

Q: You saw it?

A: I still saw this, yes. And the people tried to jump out of the windows, so they shot at them. And all that time there was...

Q: What did you think at that time? what were...

A: I cannot...

Q: ...your thoughts?

A: I only thought how I...how I will find my death. because ~~no one~~ no one thought anymore about survival. Even....

Q: The death was sure?

La chella

Intestine & heart

C. Chalk

A: Death was sure. The whole time from their entering...from the moment the Germans entered, and when they started the resettlement, the chasing and the flight, no one thought of survival. Yes, one...I know, perhaps being younger, perhaps I had some...some hope, perhaps this would end, perhaps a bombing will be made, perhaps there will be help from America. Because at different times one said...one said that the French will help, and the British. And one saw nothing. When the Germans came, they also tried to talk to the Jews. Ah, do you speak German, do you speak French? And then, they only asked do you speak French, we had something, some hope, that they would perhaps help us. But it was not like this. Thethe beating and everything continued, and one could not think something good would happen. Even the...the gentiles, the Poles, polish gentiles have done a lot, a lot, in order to destroy our lives. They used the situation in order to take our things and steal everything and beat us. They have...

in Polish

Q: The Poles?

A: Yes, they were different. There were good and there were bad, And there....

Q: The majority was bad?

A: I don't know. I have met different ones. And after all I was not with everyone of them. I am one. So I cannot tell. I have met many good and many bad.

Q: Yes.

A: Many many, and...

Q: But there existed a polish anti-Semitism?

A: Yes, the Antisemitism was not only during the war, it was before...before the war. Before the war there was the boycott. Antisemitic Herrman was beating the Jews. Once I was in Alin, in Krakov, there was tnear the university, the university, there was . And women were walking there with children....

Lichtman 5

A: The following excesses were: Before the war the Polish students expelled the Jewish students from the university. There was also the Numerus Clausus. And one day was....the students made a...such a small revolt on the of Krakov and they were beating children, they killed children and killed the.... They were beating and pushing on the....

Q: Yes.

A: They had a lot of...

BOBINE 5

Lichtman 6

A: They were pushing us...all with...People took with them what they could, some had a suitcase, some made some kind of parcel and carried it on their back. I prepared a parcel of pictures I had - photographs, pictures,- And when they stood us up, they took everything....some of them, not every one and not everything, took it out from our hands and threw away my... well, my box with the pictures, just threw it away. All of it blew in the wind...the wind chased it away. And there I saw all my life, it all...it blew away. And we were chased, of course beaten strongly and killed on the way. And the people had to go through a, stepping over dead and those who were still alive. Till we...we came to Berdighof, to the aeroplane factory. It was closed, the gates were opened only for us, and we went in. There was a lot of snow there. We were assembled and different SS came

and chased us back and forth. And then we were assembled again and they promised to give us bread. They have closed the doors, locked them. And if anybody hadwanted to go out and do something, drink something, there was nothing doing. They were beating to death. And they gave us bread. But it was so difficult. From the couple of thousand people (we were gathered there about 6 to 7 thousand - not only from Krakau and Mierlitz, but also from the surrounding area) only a small group of strong people, who could get to the table with the bread, managed to have a piece. The others had snow....took....went out, someone brought some snow and divided it. Some people still had something in their pockets. Today I think that perhaps a piece of sugar....Thus we fed ourselves. We were like this for several days till the next selection was made. Large, large parts of the people were shot. They took us out one day and also....it was heavy snow....

BOBINE 6

Lichtman 7

A: After different happenings, we were taken on. We were assembled again and chased again til...till Dubianka.

Q: Where is Dubianka?

A: Dubianka is at the Bug, near the Bug. A small...small town, very primitig. But that is already near to the Ukraine. The...the accent is more Ukrainian than Polish. It is a little village, mixes, next to a river. Very poor.

Q: Yes.

A: There we were released, but only among the Jews. The Jews were concentrated in a small quarter, that is perhaps two or three streets.

Q: In Dubianka?

A: In Dubianka. One was not permitted to move outside this
....that quarter.

Q: It was a ghetto?

A: It was a Getto, yes. A Jewish....Jewish Quarter. And
one could also....There were only two or three food
shops, and even they had nothing to offer. And the food
was mainly bought from the peasants for clothing and
for jewelry, for....there was nothing to eat. Bread
for instance cost.....a lot of money. I remember, I
had to give away a skirt for bread. It was joined with
potatoes or something else heavy. And so we survived
till they...till one day we were assembled again. This
was already in spring...spring...

Q: Spring?

A: Yes, also before a holiday....

Q: Pessach.

A: Before....No, Shvuot.

Q: Ah, yes, shvuot.

A: before . And they chased us to Dubianka. We
were concentrated, but on a big field. Many people
were shot there during this time. And then they chased
us, some people on foot and some on horse-carts, till
Dubianka....till Sobibor. No, not till Sobibor, only
to a roadto the...the railway station.

Q: Yes?

A: And at the railway station they let us into ...perhaps
more than one hundred people into one car.

Q: wagon.

A: A wagon. It was a cattle wagon. And they closed it
off, without air, without water, without anything. And
we took off for a little while. And then on the way-

le dance.

I don't know what it was, where it was - they stopped the wagons. And they ordered us to take off our ~~xxx~~ clothes, all of them, and they said that we are to be...that they are going to make a disinfection. And so it was. They chased us naked from one wagon to the other. In one wagon they made a shower, very hot, like fire. And all of a sudden cold water. And afterwards, we were naked, soldiers came and put together different pairs. For example,....Jews as well, old Jews together with young girls - naked. And the other way round. And soldiers....And they put on a record player, made music and ordered us to dance.

Q: To dance?

A: Yes.

Q: In the wagon?

A: In the wagon. There was no wagon, there were ~~xxxxxx~~...much....two, three, where all the things were done. And then one withdrew and what anyone....

Q: You yourself have danced?

A: I have not danced at that time, I always hid in a.... but I was also undressed, without anything. I also had to go through naked, chased from one wagon to the other. And then we received back part of...of the clothing. The underwear was missing, or with someone else the shirt was missing. One got only part of the clothes back. And we were locked again in the cattle wagons. And we were brought....but that was after many days. We were taken with the wagons back and forth, back and forth. We didn't know where we were, till we were brought to Sobibor.

Q: I didn't....Dubianka is not far from Sobibor.

A: It is not far, that's what I am saying. They have taken the machines, the train, specially back and forth. They took off wagons and also...at another spot they would add wagons. We saw it through...we did not....

Q: Through the window?

A: No. Without windows. We have ourselves....I remember
I made such a little opening with a knife. So we
saw how they brought people, whole groups. How they
were let in. And the other way round, they took out
people, and then one heard shooting. And this was one
week or more, I cannot be sure.

Q: But this is not only your imagination, your....?

A: On that....No, no, it is not ima....I think, that
while one was still going, and there....Sometimes one
meets, one meets quite by accident, a person who was
also on this transport. But no imagination. When I
tell you this, I do not tell you the hundredth part
of what I lived through and of what it was in reality.

Q: Yes, really?

A: Yes. really. Because.....yes. If I should tell it all,
one would have to sit for several months, sit and
listen and tell the story. Yes, but this is impossible
....to....the whole time. So, finally we were taken
to Sobibor, and the...what is it called? the wagons
were closed. Then they opened the wagons, one after
the other....

Q: Did you hear anything about Sobibor before?

A: No, no, no. On the way they sometimes opened. On
the way or in the middle of the night. We didn't know
when it was night or day....

Q: You didn't know...

A: No, because we were pressed together, one on top of
the other. Some died on the way, some became...some
became crazy.

Q: crazy.

A:became crazy. After all it was terrible there.
No one had air, no possibility to go out. Sometimes

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one jumped down to do something or catch something,
a ~~piece~~ dirty piece of something to eat or what...
and.....

Q: In the wagons there....

A: Many dead...

Q: Many?

A: Yes. But in one case, while we...we were dragged
around this way, the door opened wide, and an
aeroplane went over us at low altitude...low so
that it almost touched the top of the wagons...the
wagons are high...

Q: Yes.

A: And these were cattle cars. And they flew and shot
inside. Those who were hit remained...And these...
the dead...and the smell...all of it with us.

Q: With aeroplane?

A: Yes, shooting into the wagons, almost shooting in.
And once this Ukrainian jumped in. One of those
who helped the Russians with the transport. And also
other soldiers. They demanded whether we still had
gold items. They almost cut off the wedding ring
I still hadand whoever had anything. So they
requested: Look, I have to keep it. When we arrive
I will be able to sell it for a piece of bread. +
Ah, you won't need anything + he told us. But we...
I could not digest it in my mind.....

Q: Did the Poles

Lichtman 8

A: After several days we finally arrived at Sobibor.

We heard a whistling of the train and the whistling and screaming of the Germans, of the SS men. And the wagons were pushed one after the other and brought into Sobibor.

Q: But excuse me, I have a question. During the trip, did the Poles for instance try to warn the Jews or not?

A: No, as I said, only the Ukrainians said that we are going to...that we won't need anything anymore, Because we are going to die, we won't be needing anything. Perhaps other people were, but in our....

Q: I have for example spoken to Poles in Treblinka. And the Polish peasants who lived at the time have told me that they always made this sign.

A: No, no, no. we were in....Still in the street of Mielitz, some people were carrying things. Peasants came and took them away. Others came and screamed at them and said: why do you take it. Today they, tomorrow it will be us. And they tried to give us something to eat for the way. They were different. But warning? I have noticed nothing.

Q: In Sobibor was the train divided?

A: In Sobibor the people were let off the train and stood up 5 in a row.....And the Germans stood there, laughing, They had dogs with them, big ones and small ones.

Q: But exactly, your first impression....

A: I came down...

Q: Did you see the railway station?

A: The railway - of course. I came down...

Q: What was written?

A: There was written: Sonderkommando Sobibor, only that.

Q: SS Sonderkommando?

A: SS Sonderkommando. And then I saw that the Germans were standing with whips and with guns, and with sticks. The older people were treated with sticks, so they had many in their hand. And they moved around and shouted "Out, go, fast, fast". With the people.... Some were thrown out because they could not walk. Other jumped...jumped down and the...And then we were all stood up in rows. And all of a sudden I saw a line of German officers with a dog. And one of them called me and asked: Are you alone? (I was already alone. My parents in law did not live any more). And then one of them said to me - later I learned it was Wagner, at that time I didn't know their names.

Q: Wagner?

A: Yes. I knew it were officers. And Wagner asked me what my profession was. So I said: Kindergarten teacher. So he said: Ah, then you will be able to wash our laundry nicely. I: Yes, Mr. Officer. And I was taken out. And then he said to me: take a girlfriend to work with you. I wanted to take my girlfriend, but unfortunately she was already with her parents and everybody else....(She was only one row behind me.) They had already gone down the road ...that gate, that lead to death. And there,...pardon,

Q: She didn't know?

A: No, we didn't know what was going on and what will happen. I have believed that we come to work. I have thought to myself that they are killing on the way children, sick and old people....I thought that they must need people for work. And for sure if one works, one would live. And so the whole time...The first days I didn't know....yes, when I was taken out a girl from Dubianka came...it was a young woman.

And she asked me to take her to work, because her husband and child remained somewhere on special documents....

Q: Yes,

A: in Dubianka. So I said, good. And then a girl jumped to where we were. Wagner told her he didn't want to take her. And she begged me very much. She knew me - I did not know her, although I lived in the neighbourhood. And we...we stood there ready to work and she begged so much, so he let her. So three of us women remained of the whole transport of 7000 people. Right after all had gone, we were told to clean a villa for the Germans.

Q: A what?

A: A...a house, a country style house. That was the Jolly Flea.

Q: What is that?

A: That is a house, a country style house, and there the Germans lived, the officers, those who were in charge of the whole of Sobibor, that all....

Q: And what was the Jolly Flea?

A: That was....No, that was the label they gave it. There were fleas, huge fleas...all over the camp, and there was a lot of dirt, as there was yet no cleaning woman. So they were never cleaned, never, and they lived that way....

Q: But this house was called...

A: They gave it...The Germans gave it a name: the Jolly Flea. They made a sign. They were also jolly....They were happy....

Q: Yes.

A: ...joyous. And so we cleaned there. And the next day, the next day they brought me a big...such a ...like a cabinet...because the laundry belonged to the Jews of the transport. And they ordered me to

wash, clean, desinfect of course...make a disinfection
They gave me . And so from about five o'clock in the morning I had to stand there and wash the laundry, after Appell of course, and prepare it so that it will be ready to be put away.

Q: But, ... yes, good.

A: And that is what I did. Later every...every German saw how nice and good the laundry is, they started choosing. They would come and say: please, prepare me 3 or 6 shirts. And we prepared it, cleaned it.

Q: And ironed it?

A: Washed all, ironed and examined where buttons were missing, where some fitting has to be made. I did all...we prepared everything. And then....But after some months, other women and girls were successively taken out from transports for this work, so they were given other work. And then...then came the transports from Holland, Belgium, France. And the girls always worked...

BOBINE 5b

Lichtman 9

A: When...when I came to Sobibor, I saw that at the beginning there was a big rush. The Germans stood by the wagons, chased the people out of them, threw them out of the wagons, whirled them out, beat, chased. One heard only "out" and "fast" and "go on". And the Germans were armed with guns and sticks and were beating everyone. Once the people were out, they were stood up, but...."hen I arrived...came down.... everything around me was...made the impression of being a summer resort, a place where one goes for the summer to rest.

Q: Yes.

A: It was cozy. The houses were country style and a house built out of wood and...very beautiful. I have...
...the whole time I didn't know what was going on. I was...I didn't react specially. And we were stood up in rows. One...Then I was called out for work. At the...Once we were in the camp and allotted a room, other workers came in and...~~xxxxxfxtkxxxx~~ One said... one of us (we were three chosen out) said: don't you see what is being done here? I said: no. I didn't believe. I said: what is it? So she was angry at me and said: that she knew that one went to one's death here. And I didn't believe it.

Q: You did not believe?

A: No, didn't believe for a couple of days, till the workers started to build a barn for the things taken away from the Jews. As with...the transports, the Jews brought with them clothes, things belonging to children and different linen, bedding. There were even doctors (?) who brought their tools with them and different things. So one had to enlarge. Everything was still in such heaps, everything was thrown ~~into~~ on a heap. Also prams, childrens' cots, clothes, dolls, everything, everything. At the beginning they only made such....like mountains. Then they built a barn, and there....

Q: When did you arrive in Sobibor?

A: I came 42...beginning of 42.

Q: Yes, but what month....March?

A: No, I think it was later. It was also before a....

Q: In summer?

A: In summer, in hot summer.

Q: Yes.

A: And there were already....There....the barns were built, where everything was put in. They always made order. At the beginning there was not so much of order in the camp, there were not so many houses.

And then slowly slowly they built it up. For example
another accomodation for the Germans was Schwalben-
nest. And then the....

Q: Schwalbennest?

A: Sch,...also, yes. That was also a house. These were
houses....I think it was something like German huts.
But here...such huts like here, in the country. But
they were with a window in the roof and there....
They changed, others....The Germans always, also
the high ~~affixixix~~ leading officers of Sobibor ~~xx~~
frequently changed. Newer ones came...

Q: When did you know and believe?

A: After a couple of days, after a couple of days, when
they were building a barn and a worker climbed on the
roof. He saw it from the roof, what they were doing
with the people. He came back to us and told it. He
was mute, could not speak. His brother who was a
cobbler spoke for him. He told him. They conveyed it
to us, that he saw the people were lying dead and
being...were being buried. During the first period
of the existence of Sobibor the people were only
buried. And then - I say it all - they improved more
and more. Then they already burned them.

Q: But when did the transports arrive?

A: The transports came every day, every day, three times.
....

Q: Did you for example hear this ^{noise} ~~smell~~ of the diesel-
motors?

A: No.

Q: No?

A: No. We only heard the trains arrive and the big rush.

He (then) saw
Pelwaiki

BOBINE 7

Lichtman 10

Q: Yes, good, we are in summer in Sobibor. You are in Sobibor since....

A: A couple of months.

Q: ...a couple of months, or a couple of weeks. OK. What is your life like?

A: Yes, finally the...they gave us a small room, and there were three wooden shelves...

Q: Yes.

A: ...to sleep on. stories....down on the floor and three. There was a small table near them and then there was already the door. There was no light and no water. And at 5 o'clock was...they made appell, the Germans began, the Germans called "line up" and then, later, there was already someone with a...

Q: trumpet...

A: ...blowing a trumpet. And we knew that we had to put our clothes on and go out. And then we were assembled, very early at 5, stood in line: women....

Q: How many people were you?

A: At the beginning we were three and then successivelybecause transports came, they took out of every transport a couple of women...three, five, sometimes ten, sometimes more, sometimes less. At the beginning from Poland, from different areas...

Q: Yes.

A: There were in the first part young girls, who were still from elementary school....

Q: beautiful girls?

A: Yes, they were all beautiful.

Q: only beautiful ones?

A: Not only because they were beautiful, but they were all young and beautiful. very beautiful girls, elegant ones- that was another thing. That was...they took them out from the Austrian and German transports, and they were like the artists in the markets and fairs. They were differently dressed and were

taken by the Germans for their...that...their personal use. They worked in the Casino nearby, spending time with them and dancing....I know...all...

Q: Yes.

A: Yes, but we were a work battalion. Each one was allocated work. At the beginning all of us, almost all of us, washed the laundry and ironed and sewed everything. And then the number of workers was enlarged. Then there was already different work - sewing shirts for the officers, cleaning the wagons. They brought suede gloves and took them for themselves. Then they also organised a knitting room, and there old wool was rolled up and socks were knitted specially for...

Q: How many hours per day did you work?

A: Many hours, from 5 I think till it became dark...till 5. But there was one hour at lunchtime.

Q: Yes.

A: And then...then one worked again...After the lunch break we also had to line up and march into camp and stand up. They counted. And then one...one got the food. It was a...a soup.

Q: How was it? Was it nice?

A: The surrounding was very nice, but we ourselves had a hard life, because we had only a small...a small room without anything. In the field there was a big...there was a big...There where we worked, was a well and there we took the water with...

Q: What kind of a surrounding was there at Sobibor?

A: What?

Q: The surrounding, how was it?

A: It looked like a beautiful village for rest, where one goes to rest. If someone would...

Q: How many houses were there?

A: At that time there were not...At the beginning there was in the first row a big barrack, divided into two, for us and for the men. Then there was a barrack for other work, for the sorting out of what was taken from the train, the with the...with the clothes and shoes. And there was perhaps another house. And in the German part there was a...in the first, in the Vorlager, was a house - to the Jolly Flea, then there was the casino, and a small building where the auxiliary, the Ukrainians lived. And then it was successively enlarged. Out of every transport people were taken for work, men and women, and then big huts were built out of wood. And there were already...The same time houses were built for the Germans also a villa, they called it Schwalbennest. And theythe important Germans moved over there.

Q: But you once told me it was like a cinema.

A: Not cin...cinema, only like...like in the cinema, like one imagines a summer resort: green all around, small houses, good air, such country....in Polish one says....

Q: In your memory, the gas chambers....

A: The...

Q: The Camp 3, number 3, was it very far?

A: We never saw it, because after our camp there was a camp surrounded by a wooden fence, there, where the people were chased in to take off their clothes. We were not permitted to go there, at least not when the transports came and when the people took off their clothes.

Q: When the transports came, what did you think?

A: We were locked in or in our working places.

Q: Yes.

A: We worked but were not permitted to move around.

Q: You knew that the transports came?

A: Yes, one could hear it, one heard the train arrive, one heard screams of the Germans. We looked out of the windows and saw different things. For example we saw...Once a transport arrived with small children. They were stood up and immediately chased. And with only two, three women. Once we saw how they throw out of the waggons (this was already later, in winter time)...how they threw out small newly born babies, naked. And Wagner - the one they have now caught - stood there with _____ in his mouth and one foot on the...on the wagon, and with one hand he threw them out into a car for transporting stones, there he threw the children. And the children were screaming so with an austrian voice...it was an austrian voice to....At the beginning I myself could not understand. I said...we had a small...it was forthe window for the women, I made a small opening and looked out. I thought they were throwing geese out of the wagons. And then I heard it. It was not far from us.

out back
P. W. W. W. W. W.

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Q: Was it possible to see the wagons?

A: Yes. Because I....I told you, with time they built different things. And once they built a new laundry and...

Q: There was no (?) ?

A: What?

Q: How does one say? Fence. There was no fence? There was only....

A: There was a fence, but not between us and the railway station and the trains, to the railway. There was a hedge, green....fence....but on the outside of the street, so that one should not be able to see...

Q: Yes.

A: Not of the....of the movement out...from outside. But we could nevertheless...we had...that surrounded us with it, we could see....

BOBINE 8

Lichtman 11

Q: And how far away were the gas chambers?

A: I think two, three kilometers.

Q: Two three kilometers?

A: Two three, I don't know exactly.

Q: That is also your opinion? (talks Polish with husband)
Really two or three kilometers? Yes, but this is not true.

A: No.

Q: No.

A: How much was it?

Q: Between the railway station of Sobibor...

A: Yes.

Q: ...where you arrived and the gas chambers...

A: Yes.

Q: ...there is exactly...

A: Yes.

Q: ...400 meters.

A: Yes.

Husband: Not even one kilometer?

Q: No.

A: Well, our understanding is that...that....

Q: Sobibor was very small.

A: Well, but...

Q: But I think that your imagination....

A: Yes, but I say that with our understanding, we imagine so because....We did once go there. We were there once.

Q: Where?

A: Not far from the gas chambers, yes.

Q: Yes?

A: Yes, but we walked so long, very long...there and back.

Q: When were you...were you there?

A: There were escapes from the camp...a couple of men ran away and others stayed. They were brought back from the forest. They were workers from the wald-kommando.

Q: Yes.

Pichonki

A: And they came back...so...some of them, they were caught in the forest. So they were told to crawl on their belly, were lead down, and then we were taken out of the camp. A...they made an appell. We were lead - nothing was said to us -. ~~xxxxxxxx~~ ^{they} were shouting at us, screaming and ~~xxxxxxxx~~ saying certain things. And we were lead right there to the third camp. There they made a ~~xxxxxxxx~~ with those left of the escapees, of those left. And they were shot. They talked then, screaming. Later they said to us: lood, ~~they~~ wanted to run away from the camp, you should not, don't even think about it. Because the same will happen to you. And we went back...back into our camp...labour camp.

Interview with husband: Q: And what did you do in Sobibor?

A: I worked in Sobibor - shoemaker.

Q: Yes? And did you meet Ada in Sobibor?

A: Met in Sobibor, yes.

Q: How?

A: (y) . In Camp one.

Q: And when did you come to Sobibor?

A: Mai 15th.

Q: In mai. At the beginning, at the beginning. where from?

A: From Schulkeuka. That is not far from Lublin.

Q: Ah, yes.

A: A small town. The whole family - five brothers and parents and wife and children - all went to the forest. I did know what they did. But I did not know they were doing it in Sobibor. In our place the Germans came, and once caught 50 men. They lead them away, and no one knew where to find them. So the Jewish Council sent Gentiles, so that we will know what is being done with the Jews, where they are. They came and said that they are brought to....

Q: Excuse moi, il parle du Judenrat....

A: They were taken to belzes. And there there were gas

chambers. One knew it. But our transport was not led in the direction of Belzec, we were taken in another direction. There was a railway station...

And there came the Germans and told everyone to give away their gold, money, all one possessed. Afterwards they said they were taking young men to work in Maidanek. But I stayed, I didn't want to leave my parents, my brothers, to be together with them. Afterwards they took us in the direction of Sobibor. When we arrived in Sobibor, we were ordered to leave the trains. The Ukrainians and the Germans were screaming and beating. Fast

chased from the train. The luggage was taken away. In the...At the train there were some Jews working, groups of Jews from the camp. They took away the luggage.

and into the first camp. And they put the men separate and the women and children separate.

Q: Mais demande lui..... Que ce que c'est son souvenir le plus fort?

A: I think...one thinks of what was going on there. They took away the parents, five brothers, the wife and child. A wife and child. All went, all were taken. There were 5-6 thousand people on the transport I came with, and five men were taken out. When all the men were stood up, an Ukrainian came and looked for 8 men to fetch the coffee, but I....And we took the coffee to camp three. (intermission of recording) ...Was a German looking for a shoe maker. They took out all the skilled workers, there was no shoe maker. So my father said: go to the German Perhaps you will survive. I went to the....

Lichtman 12

interview with Ada L.
continued

A: At the time the Germans arrived, and ~~sometimes~~ in several cases earlier, transports with children arrived. The children had with them beautiful dolls, and the Germans did....sometimes they practically tore them out of the hands of the children, sometimes it was already when the children were....they had already been dragged and were dead. So they brought in to us...The SS men, the Germans brought the dolls to our laundry, our ironing room.

Q: There were many dolls?

A: Very many dolls, different ones, beautiful and big ones, broken ones and....different.

Q: New, there were also new ones?

A: Very new and fresh, beautifully dressed and also dirty ones, the way a doll is dirty. And they always said with great joy: well, please make something for us.... it should be so that we can take it home. We are going on leave. So we took the dolls, cleaned and washed them, then we ^{re}dressed each doll, sewed different clothes for her. And they....It was always with great joy that they put it in their luggage to take with them among other things.

Q: What does it mean? The Germans took the dolls of the Jewish children....

A: ...took them for themselves...

Q: ...for their own children?

A: ...for their own children to enjoy. After all, they did not take only dolls, they took other toys as well. Wagner for example took a basket of a child, of a new born child, and a blanket. He brought it to be cleaned for taking home. And I really prepared it

beautifully for him, cleaned it.

Q: But this was your work, to dress dolls?

A: It was. And then I dressed the dolls, made beautiful dresses and hats for them. Not only me, the girls who worked with me. What I wanted to say : there were many young girls who also....who were with us, Jewish ones, and among them was a small girl. I think she was perhaps 10 years old - Muschka Ritter or Reiter - her name was something like this. She was small but very beautiful. She...she looked herself like a doll with beautiful ^{long} black hair. She was always the first one to take the dolls and she played with them. She took them in her arms and played with them the way a child plays with a doll... She was perhaps 10 years old.

Q: And she survived? Was she in the camp?

A: No, she was in the camp. She was there for a long time, till the revolt. After that I don't know.

Q: She was not killed?

A: After that we do not know, because when we fled with the revolt, everyone dispersed. One does not know what happened. The whole battalion of workers....

Q: Yes.

A: ...was almost killed. Only few people survived. They fell at the gate, at the mines and in the....

Q: And they have these....

A: She....undressed all the dolls, this one, She always said: you should dress this one with something nice. And we always did something. But first of all she played with it herself.

Q: With the dolls?

A: ...with the dolls, yes. And we...we made dresses for the dolls, dressed them or...And them...Once we had the idea one should....We did it with big heart ache. It lay heavy on our hearts, that the

children...the dolls of the Jewish children live no more, and they are going to have fun. So once we dressed many dolls as an SS man. We always worked and did something. Also the shirts which the Jews wore ... one should say...there were beautiful nightgowns of the women, so they were...

Q: Night gowns?

A: Yes, night gowns in one color. So this was worked into shirts for the day for the men, for our SS men, for the officers, not such...

Q: Please make it on the table. But this is very difficult to dress a doll, no?

A: Not so difficult. One has to cut and do it. The German made huge parcels with childrens' clothes.

Q: But these beautiful dolls came with the transports from the west?

A: From....also. They came from Austria, from Germans, from Holland, different areas. And I think also from the Polish ones. [After all there were many rich Jews and children have always played. And always they took for the trip the...they bought the most beautiful things for the children, so that they have fun.] They knew that they....I think many people knew where they were going and what happened on the way.

Q: Yes, but many didn't know.

A: Many did not know - like me. I didn't know for many days what...what was happening there. I never could imagine. Only when I saw what was being done with the things and heard what was told, I did learn of it.

Q: And did you have a special contact with the Germans, the SS men? You lived all together, right? for months ...for years...

glad

A: They came in, and I did everything they ordered. But to this we added - how does one say it? - our inventions, so that we will have more to do. Because out of every transport they took women - there were many. And there was not always much work. For example - the Germans were only thirty-odd men. And the auxiliary, the Ukrainians, were one hundred fifty odd...forty odd...about one hundred...perhaps one hundred fifty. And we washed their laundry and ironed and sewed everything...everything. And there was not so much work. So we ourselves looked for something...so that there will be good work. One made something else...and in spite of this there were....

Q: What inventions for example?

A: To clean something for instance. The... we brought and cleaned it. And made shirts, sewed them.

Q: But why did you do it: to be needed, to....

A: Yes, we were afraid...There were moments when the... there was not so much work. when the ch...the girls were bored and wanted to sleep. And sometimes it was so that someone...we looked out...some girls looked...

Lichtman 13

Q: OK, you can talk.

A: At this work we always sang and had different talks...

Q: What kind of talks?

A: We always talked about what was going on outside. Perhaps something will happen, there will...One... one asked whether one would survive or not...different questions of life....

Q: Did you have hope to survive or not?

A: Yes, yes, yes. There were only few such moments when one had hope. And some moments one thought: no,

everything will change. Sometimes airplanes flew, and we thought : oh, perhaps they already come to liberate us. And there were also good Ukrainians who talked politics to us. Sometimes one found some...an old news paper, and one read something about what was going on in the world. One could not know what was going on in the world, but what was in Poland, in Germany....less....And that gave us hope. One did... And always when we were singing, one said that surviveone would...one would survive it.

Q: What did you sing?

A: Different songs.

Q: Do you remember?

A: Pardon? I remember. One sang: No father, no husband, no sister, no brother, all all have gone.....and we will not be there any more. All are not in the world.. ...And so...and one sang....

Q: Could you sing? Try.

A: I am afraid....I am afraid everyone will run away...

Q: No, try it.

A: All right, one sang: No father, no husband, no sister, no brother. Alone I am in the world...you see, I am not....

Q: Again.

A: Alone I am in the world. Up there I won't sing any more...Only the song...I don't want to be any more.... Or one used to sing : I want to go only there...want to go into the world...And different other songs....I realize, when one has to, one cannot remember.

Q: Please.

A: There was a song being sung. A girl from Lublin used to sing it. It....I'll sing it: (Polish)

Q: Please, do you remmamber?

A: No.

Husband: We sang with the Germans, they ordered us to sing.

Q: Yes. You didn't sing?

A: But...

Q: But?

A: When one has to, it works, but there could...it is

very(sings): She will...appear in front of me. She will be good in the world. She will shine through the clouds, her rays hidden....I had a song in this life. I didn't have my parents for long....I don't know....I wait for...for my ^{happiness} ~~happ~~, you are my happiness.

Q: It is sad.

A: Yes....So my happiness will still...as the sun shines on me. I do remmamber this song, because the last period was sometimes so difficult, heavy with clouds, cold and snow. And we sang it, and all at once the sun would shine. Then we used to say: yes, perhaps something good will come, perhaps the sun will really shine on us again. But...

Q: Yes, and....

A: One forgets the words...one really....that it is the sun, the big one, that we are away in our own country. ...

Q: It is unbelievable to dress a doll in a death camp, right?

A: Unbelievable...everything is unbelievable....It is unbelievable that we were in the death camp and went through so much, that we were beaten and...and tortured in different ways...There were days we did not hunger much, but there were days when we die hunger. But not long and not the whole time...and.

Lichtman 13 a

Q: Who made these songs?

A: These were songs, folk songs, old songs. The girls sang them, other ones. There was one from Lublin... and others did...Everyone sang something at work, as one always does while sewing, while ironing....

Q: The Germans liked it when you sang?

A: They were not with us. They only came in when they needed something, wanted to ask a question, or were passing through...something, an announcement... But they heard us singing. Singing was...There was an order to sing while marching up or marching away during appell. But then all of us had to. There was even one who gave us the rhythm, and telling us we were singing badly or well...and...Sometimes we were punished because we hadn't sang properly as they liked.

Q: Yes.

A: Yes, and there were different songs, and each...how does one say? there were people from every transport. And the different people had different songs: Russian from the Russians...how does one say? the Russian.... when there came the transports half prisoners of war. But from them also only few were taken to work, like Lerner...

Q: Yes.

A: And then we sang different songs, Russian....

BOBINE 11

Lichtman 14

Q: After the destruction of a transport, was there a special, a specific silence in the camp?

A: Ah...I don't understand.

Q: After the extermination of a transport, was there a silence?

A: When there were no transports coming, one worked all... all in the same places, but the atmosphere was depressed. And all said that now it is our turn. That they would....

Q: Can you explain it, why was the atmosphere depressed?

A: A...it was also depressed because we knew that finally they were not le...leave us to survive, because we are in the camp and see the disappearance of so many people. It was....They always thought that we did not know what was going on there. For example, there was an ~~Ubershharfuehrer~~ Stangl...He always went around with a beautiful white jacket and...

Q: Stangl.

A: Stangl, yes. He came to Yitzhak's window and talked to him. And...Now I have to explain to you: for example the house we lived in, it was like a barrack. It was a country style house. On the one side were the windows of Yitzhak's workshop. And here where there were windows from inside, next to it, on the other side again, was our door, leading to this side of the work.. Their door was on the other side. We worked for a long time outside on...next to our door and their window, in this place. Thus we were together. We could talk and everything. And Stangl came and stood next to the window, here, at the shoemakers', and always said: Oh, all of those you see here go through the... they change clothes, wash, put on clothes and go to the Ukraine. And you, once you finished your work, will get special certificates. that you have worked well, so that you will get good jobs there. And they are going today...

Q: They...The Germans believed that you didn't know...?

A: That we did not know what was going on here. And we had to pretend and act the role that we do not know.

Q: You played that game?

A: Yes, At the beginning I really didn't know. But then I knew very well, because one day while we were lined up in appell, we saw a fire, as big as the wall of a huge house, fire. And one felt the...

Q: There was also noise...a smell?

A: The...the smell of burn...of burnt corpses. And we know it. And in spite of that...the water where we were was already spoilt. The water felt...it had...the water had a colour...it wasn't clear anymore like water is. And then they have ...everything, all the machines were changed, and the people were exterminated in a different way.

Q: It was prohibited to speak of these things?

A: No, we acted the role that we do not know. And one was not allowed to...to speak. We were not permitted to go to the...to the people who had come with transports. There were different transports. For example...

Q: This means you played your part in this Potemkin game?

A: Yes, yes, I had...had to play the part that I didn't know...

Q: Could you describe this Potemkin....

A: What is Potemkin?

Q:thing.

A: Well, we...we...Always when transports came we had to be at our working places. We were not permitted to move about among the people and say something. And they were afraid when we tried....There were instances when I had to go to the water. I did not tell it yet. There was a big well there and we took the

water....I needed much water for doing the laundry, and had to carry it with a....there was this bucket made out of wood, very heavy with water. And there was a long stick on which we hung it. It was very heavy. Sometimes I arrived there and there were people from a transport there who had to stay the night or sit around for a while. I went to them and wanted to give them water. As long as no German saw me it was all right. So I gave the water with...

Q: But you said nothing?

A: I didn't.... I did not speak, not at all. And sometimes I had candy with me. Of course I did not buy it, it was from what we stole from arriving transports. So I gave out the candy, the sweet things as well. Once - it was a fact - a German came, Rehwalt, Franz Rehwalt. We all said that he was a good man.

. He came and saw me doing it. So he dragged me out with a stick... a stick, what old people use for walking. Then...he held me by my neck and dragged me out. And he said: Listen, take care. Today it was only me. You shouldn't mix with them....so...Always...

Q: How was Wagner?

A: Wagner was feared by everybody. He was was a fright for all. One...when one only said: Wagner comes (or we called him Wewel), oh, Wewel is coming. Be careful. -Sometimes we were eating something or what, then one was afraid. Everyone...he went by...here he was... was beating someone....

BOBINE 12

Lichtman 15

Q: Tell me, would you like to meet Wagner?

A: Yes. I would like to see him, because I would like to hear what he has to say to all his deeds. He has done a lot, things he shouldn't have. After all, there were Germans there who didn't persecute the Jews as much, they did not do so much evil as he did.... He did everything on his own...he was....He beat people the whole day long. They...With me he behaved very nicely, I have to admit that. That is the truth. I had different...there were such opportunities. Once the...an Ukrainian was beating me and chased me out of our camp....You know how it was....till ~~the~~ Camp One, near the new Casino, beating me all along with a whip...

Q: Why?

A: Pardon?

Q: Why did he...?

A: It was something...what? was....And Wagner came and sent him away, chased him away and sent me back to work, and....Why he? I don't know why he was so nice to me. I always worked hard. Perhaps because I had this ^{currency} ~~currency~~, that each day of work gives one day of life. That was my currency. And if I work honestly and truthfully and well, then I will live. And then, later I thought differently. Later I thought that after all the whole people, all...all the Jews have worked well. And the cases that people did something were sporadic. But when one did not run fast or do something fast enough, one does not have to be killed for that. One should not kill....

Q: You ran fast...you...

A: No, no, I once got it in the back with a stone from Frenzel, and with a whip because I didn't run fast

when marching away afterafter appell. He said... said: run fast, and I did not run, I only walked away. It angered him and he pushed a stone at me... And wagner once found me eating....eating food that our....Those who worked in the Casino brought me a pancake that had been left over by the Germans. I was eating it and wagner came in. When they came in, we had to shout...one of us "attention", then we remained standing until he would say : "carry on". And I had my mouth full with food, so I bent forwards and spit the food out, threw it out. He...he had such long legs and it took him perhaps two or three steps to come from the door to my table where I worked, he looked at it and said: where did you get that food from? At the same time he saw that I had sugar and all those things we had. - and where do you have this from? I did not answer. And at once....I remember, I was in a thin silk blouse with short sleeves, because we washed and dried the laundry in the same place and it was hot. But outside it was very cold, a frosty day. He said to me: come on. Then I knew already I am going and he is going to send me away. So I....So I went out as I was standing there, with a skirt and a thin blouse, and followed him. He ate and I went with him till he entered one of the store-rooms where all the things.....store-rooms - is that what it is called? where all the things the Germans took for themselves were stored. It was stored there. He came in and said: Hedda, take for me things to dress, and he told me I should take clothes for his wife. Then he told me his wife is expecting a baby. He has one child already and now she is to

have another one. And I should choose for him. Then he took from me the things he had ordered....Many. I did not know what to take, and thought that I would later sort them out. He would say: well, is that nice? I said: yes. He would take it. Then he called someone, and said to him: Fips, take this with you and you and Hedda get out. When I came back, came back with the things, Ohh....everyone was so astonished. Everyone thought already I would never come back. All were crying and it was a real...a real happiness. He didn't do anything to me. There was once, I remember, we ~~wurden~~ had forced labour, hard labour. We had to carry stones at the railroad. And I was also there carrying. And they....We were stretching out our hands and were given the stones. We could hardly see anything, it was heaped up to our noses. And we had to move at running pace, moving the stones from one place to another. I really... I never refused work...forced labour or forced ~~xxxxxx~~ exercise. I always stood in the lines. And Wagner came and said: "what are you doing here? get out. Once he also told me to bring him towels to the casino. he always took me out of the hard harassments. He was....

Q: It was lucky?

A: Yes. And he was nice....

Q: Yes, as well?

A: Yes. He was to me. Yes. Once I got it from him with a whip, and he told me they will kill me, because there was a disappearance....

Q: But you made clothes for his wife?

A: Yes he had for his...For the child I made a beautiful basket, beautiful dolls and what I....For him - the best - it is really true - the best and most beautiful things were always for Wagner, Steube, Niemann and the Hauptsturmfuehrer Willi Grosse. There was also Schwarz...Obersturmfuehrer....

Q: You made also clothes for men?

A: Yes, we...not I personally. There were already more people, also men, in the workshop...girls and all... One made shirts for them, nice shirts. We made short ones for gym...

Q: Yes,

A: ...such white ones. This we also did, there, in the ironing workshop. Everything. Yes? Wagner was always well informed, he knew everything. He had good taste. And ... yes, he knew he could rely on me. When Eichmann came to the camp, there was also such an incident, very unpleasant. It could have ended badly. We always took the fat when one had rabbits....

Q: Eichmann or Himmler, who was it who came?

A: Eichmann. Himmler was also. That was an official thing but Eichmann was incognito...came. Several hours. He walked around the whole camp. But with Himmler it was a big official....I think Eichmann came only twice more. With Eichmann....And also so, no one knew, I didn't know myself that it was him. Only here, when there was the trial, I was called and ^{saw} ~~xx~~ that I had with him.....

Q: What did...Did they organize a special gassing?

A: A special gassing and....

BOBINE 13

Lichtman 16

Q: Wagner kept you alive?

A: Why?

Q: Because you are....That is very beautiful what you are doing...

A: I did not only this, I also did other....I....Everything I did - it is true - I did precisely, correctly and neatly. And all the girls who worked with me know

...how they...I always said: minimum work but it should...it should not look fatigued. One should not be tired. We always watched....

Q: How many girls worked under you?

A: differently...it was sometimes 8, sometimes 6, sometimes 10...

Q: You were in charge?

A: Yes, I was the Aelteste. Yes, the Aelteste of the workers. Yes, ~~Ilana~~ always worked with me, I think for some time. And the other one...

Q: Who?

A: Ilana.

Q: Ah, Ilana Safran. Yes, could you tell me what happened with the Dutch transports, with Ilana?

A: They came in big numbers, big transports, the late Dutch transports.

Q: Yes.

A: And they always came in nice...not cattle cars like us, only sleeping and....

Q: Pullman.

A: Pullman...Pullman cars, yes. And ~~xxxxxx~~ at the end there was...after the people, was a wagon with food: with bread, with marmalade, with different tinned food. The people were always beautifully dressed and had....All...almost all spoke German. There was a lot of youth, a lot. Many people were taken out of these transports, women and many painters...there were artists who....For the Dutch first....one wanted them to know they did not come to a death camp, only a work camp. One made long tables next to the syliphon

Q: Yes?

A: And on them was put coffee, ~~xxx~~ nicely set, and bread and marmalade, and they were told to eat. Then groups of the Dutch were taken, shown around all the work-shops. We...some girls of the laundry were also called out and presented that we are working. And

they were taken around. And then they selected. Some remained in the camp to work, such as ~~the~~ there were also others: Kittl and Selma, and others. And there were many painters who....good, good painters. They later made portraits for the Germans. But the people...the people were ordered to write letters. They quickly distributed postcards and said to them to write what they saw...what was there...and...

Q: And they wrote it was very good?

A: They all wrote....

Q: The beginning was very good....

A: Yes, all of them wrote the letters, and after several minutes, when they all finished, it was collected till...and then the people were chased off to be exterminated...

Q: To the Gas chamber..

A: ...to the gas chamber. I think the letters had not... had not yet left the camp when they people existed no longer. But in Holland the letters were received, because people who came were all happy and followed with such a train. And they knew they were going to work, they would get jobs.

Q: Yes, and you never tried to tell the truth?

A: The Dutch also learned the truth...the Dutch themselves learned ... in the first place they also worked in all...those who remained...

Q: Yes, but they did....

A: But they went away.

Q: This visit....

A: Never. One did not dare, one did not want...I say, there were moments when one...when I had hope.

and one was afraid. One was not allowed....

Q: You were afraid?

A: Yes, all were afraid. Although wagner was good and did not beat me, all were ~~shivering~~ trembling.

Q: You were always deadly afraid?

A: Yes, deadly afraid, more than deadly. I thought there comes...once...You know how the young ones say: you die only once. But there was a very subconscious feeling that one would survive. One still wants to see something of how it will be. What will be there... And certainly ~~xxxx~~ one was prepared that at any minute and any day one would go down.

Q: Every minute.

A: Every minute, even every minute. Nobody made long term plans...

Q: Were there suicides?

A: Yes, several.

Q: Yes?

A: There were several, yes.

Q: Several?

A: Yes.

Q: At the beginning?

A: It was in the middle, they....

Q: But people who had been in the camp for a long time?

A: They were only rarely. There were only few who committed suicide. They were not so young, I think. I did not know them personally. Although they were near... we lived in a....Only a thin wall separated our hut from them. Because later....At the beginning we lived in a small room. Three layers....but afterwards...they....they rebuilt it and took out more girls. Then there were about 50 in a room. And it was a big room, with big...big planks on the wall. ~~After~~ Behind the wall were the painters...the painters and other workers

Only they remained in the house...in this house where they had started work. There were also selections made by the Germans. Different selections at different occasions. If they didn't feel like...didn't like it, they took people out and led them away. They never came back. Also there was....much food....bringing for food...stealing or buying - we often bought from the Ukrainians. The Ukrainians would bring something for us from the village. Then there were these executions...they were in the first period made by Wagner.

Q: Yes.

A: Otherwise he organized everything. He built, he...

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