We were talking before about when you left the village in 1943.

I left my town.

Your town, excuse me, in 1943.

Not a village.

Yes.

We were very proud because there was a Tluste town and Tluste village, and I am from the town.

Anyway, right after the big Aktion, we called it, Thursday Aktion, May 27, 1943, we tried to go to the villages, where--
I don't know if this is already on record.

They said the Germans needed the rubber.

They tried to raise rubber plants.

And of course they needed food for the army.

And we worked those plantations.

So I went with my mother and sister.

My brother still was alive.

We went to Holovchyntsi which is 5 kilometers from Tluste.

And while I was in that camp some of the village people would take me in to knit sweaters.

They had wool, and I was knitting sweaters.
for all kind of families.

And of course they would feed me and let me sleep in the stable, which was a little safer than being all the time in that camp where we were all-- they could surround us any minute.

So the people were pretty decent to me just because they respected my father very much.

But still now there were the young people that-- they were stupid, some of them.

And just seeing the way the world treats us, they thought that our lives didn't mean anything.

And the story I want to tell you--
just one incident.

There were a few, but this incident is a story which I call the story of my dress.

Before I left the last time my home,

you grabbed the best thing you had to wear.

So I had-- it was a dusty rose wool dress.

It was a beautiful dress from before the war,

before the Russians came.

And a pair of good shoes.

That's the only thing I owned.

So that family had a daughter about my age,
and she probably liked the dress very much.

48
00:03:09,540 --> 00:03:11,450
So she wanted it.

49
00:03:11,450 --> 00:03:15,750
So in order to get it, she put up a scheme.

50
00:03:15,750 --> 00:03:18,600
She was going to ask a girlfriend

51
00:03:18,600 --> 00:03:20,970
to foretell my future.

52
00:03:20,970 --> 00:03:23,610
I did not want to know my future.

53
00:03:23,610 --> 00:03:28,100
You didn't have to be a genius to foretell a Jewish girl's future at that time.

54
00:03:28,100 --> 00:03:28,100
future at that time.

55
00:03:28,100 --> 00:03:33,270
But nevertheless, she told a girlfriend to tell my future,

56
00:03:33,270 --> 00:03:38,690
and of course she told me that in two weeks I'll be killed.

57
00:03:38,690 --> 00:03:41,610
So I said well, I'll be killed.

58
00:03:41,610 --> 00:03:44,370
What can I do, I mean?
So after a while, she comes in with an old dress of hers, a rag, and she tells me why don't we trade?

I said, why should I trade?

And she says I want your dress, and what do you need it for?

In two weeks, you'll be dead anyway.

So I said, well, so in two weeks you'll have my dress.

She goes well, but that will be full of blood.

It's a pity.

Such a pretty dress.

So I looked at her, and I figured she has the right to have the dress and her life.
That was one incident.

Then there's another incident also.

I don't know.

It seems that the older people, maybe they were older.

They knew life better, and maybe they understood.

And once they wanted to take me into their home,

they were really good.

I mean, not everybody did it.

So I don't know if I told you.

The Jewish people were killed by the Poles

and the Ukrainians were shipped to Germany to work.

Right.
So there were very few able-bodied men to work the fields.

So who came from—

Just like you have hillbillies in America,

they had [NON-ENGLISH], and they lived in the mountains,

and they were very poor.

So they used come down to work in that breadbasket of ours.

And from there they were sent to Germany too.

So a young boy from the hillbillies came.

He worked for one of the families there.

And I used to sit at the light.

We had electricity, but
it would come on at dusk,
and till then it was dark.

So one day I was sitting and it was dark,
and the son of the family that I was knitting for came back from town.
And in town there was Ukrainian police.

There were some of them who remained, too.

I know one girl survived because in that Thursday Aktion he caught her.

She was a little girl.

She was maybe six years old.

And he was going with her with the--
Bayonet?

--bayonet and going and taking her out of town.

He said run, child.

And she survived.

He could-- He was a human being, so he took this child and took her out of town and told her to run to save her life.

And then there was another one.

Schab was his name, [NON-ENGLISH]..

He could not eat breakfast till he killed a Jew that day.

And that son of the family
I worked came in from town,
and it was dark.
The lights weren’t on yet.
And I was sitting in the corner, and he comes in.

He says to his mother
I saw this Schab,
and he said that he's going to Lisowce.
That was the village where my future husband was--
to make an Aktion.

And he didn't see me.

He was a nice boy.

He didn't see me in the dark.

When I heard that, I start crying.

And he says now, don't you know?
And he tried to calm me down, and the mother, and they all tried to calm me down. Of course I was very upset. So that night, instead of sitting-- The people, the neighbors would get together, play cards. I mean, life was going on. We were just being killed. They were sitting drinking tea and playing cards, and I would sit and knit when the light was on. It was in the winter. That night I didn't feel like knitting because my boyfriend probably is dead already.
So I was sitting in the corner and not knitting, like sleeping

That young hillbilly Herzl comes in and says,

hey, what's the matter with her?

She's not knitting tonight.

And they tell him the story that the guy I knew--

Ivan, whatever-- came back from town and said that--

So she is worried.

Oh, he says.

I hope they don't kill [INAUDIBLE]..
Sorry.

All the time he used to bother me

I should make gloves for him.

I said as soon as I finish this sweater I'll knit you gloves.

So he says I hope they won't kill her till she makes my gloves.

I have to give credit to the people.

They started yelling at him and telling him that he's not a human being, and I'm a young child.

So I'm not older than he is, and he should not talk like that.

But I should live just long enough to make his gloves.
So things like that were all going on till the Vlasov, the army, Vlasov's army.

These were Ukrainians that worked with the Nazis.

And they were going already.

I mean, Stalingrad was already taken, and there was the--

How do you say Rückzug in English?

Which word?

When the armies are--

Surrounded?

No, no.

Not surrounded.

Rückzug is when the German
army was slowly retreating.

179
00:09:39,810 --> 00:09:40,860
Retreating.

180
00:09:40,860 --> 00:09:44,307
Well, my English-- sometimes
I think in one language--

181
00:09:44,307 --> 00:09:44,890
No, it's fine.

182
00:09:44,890 --> 00:09:46,720
--and it comes out in the other.

183
00:09:46,720 --> 00:09:49,030
When the German
army was retreating,

184
00:09:49,030 --> 00:09:55,300
and the Vlasov's army was going
with the Germans of course.

185
00:09:55,300 --> 00:10:00,470
And that's when things got
very bad in the village

186
00:10:00,470 --> 00:10:02,560
that I was in.

187
00:10:02,560 --> 00:10:08,890
My future husband was in that
Lisowce and there we had--

188
00:10:08,890 --> 00:10:15,040
The story of our survival is
first the Ukrainian priest that

189
00:10:15,040 --> 00:10:20,020
helped, and then we were
lucky that in town there
was a German, from [PLACE NAME] who was a wonderful human being, and he tried his best to protect the few Jews that still survived.

And in the other village where my future husband was, Lisowce there was the Oberleitter--

don't remember the first name--

also, by name of Frank.

He was a cousin of the governor of Poland.

And he was a wonderful man, not like his cousin.

But being a cousin of the governor, he had a big pull.

So he tried also to protect the
few people that worked for him.

And Juris, who was to become my husband, came once and told me I should come there because I have a better chance to survive with him in that Lisowce than being in Holovchyntsi where the Vlasovs have free hand.

My mother and I went to Lisowce by the fields.

I got dressed as a peasant girl.

I remember that we have friends.

They live now in Elizabeth.

She was from [? Yahilnytsya ?], a different town.
I told you that our town had people from all over Europe.

We had from Hungary.

We had from Germany people.

So when she saw me coming to the village speaking with my husband dressed as a peasant girl, she said oh, what a lucky fellow.

Look, a nice Christian girl came.

And she was going to hide him.

And so then she told--

my other girlfriend that's from my town,

she says, a nice Christian girl?

This is Ulka.
She's not a Christian girl.

00:12:15,360 --> 00:12:16,580
This is a girl from--

00:12:16,580 --> 00:12:18,050
She's Jewish.

00:12:18,050 --> 00:12:23,180
And that's the way I and my mother, we came to Lisowce.

00:12:23,180 --> 00:12:30,110
And Lisowce was that Frank, the Oberleitter Frank.

00:12:30,110 --> 00:12:33,800
And whenever the Gestapo would want to come and make

00:12:33,800 --> 00:12:38,030
an Aktion, he would say that please let them

00:12:38,030 --> 00:12:41,030
stay till after the harvest.

00:12:41,030 --> 00:12:47,640
I have to send food to the German army, to the Wehrmacht.

00:12:47,640 --> 00:12:52,400
And if you take away the Poles and the Ukrainians in Germany,

00:12:52,400 --> 00:12:55,640
I need a workforce.

00:12:55,640 --> 00:13:04,310
So that way they always would try to save us.
But that didn't stop the Gestapo to find out.

And one incident was my mother was very sick.

She suffered from asthma.

Of course the conditions we lived were terrible.

In a room maybe 12 by 20 there were 40 people living, the air was not something that a person suffering from asthma could live with.

So she was very sick.

And that day I had the [NON-ENGLISH].. I was the one that was taking care of the sick people.
Help me out, professor.

You were taking care of the infirmary.

Yes, I was taking--

There wasn't an infirmary.

That's where we all lived.

Anyway, and there were a few cases of typhoid there too.

I went through the--

I had typhoid when I was in Tluste,

so I was already immune to the sickness, and so was my mother.

But she was very weak and sick.

She died two weeks after that.

And when I heard shots, I dressed my mother,
and my mother was urging me to run away, to hide myself,
to save myself.

She said she was sick and old, and that's it.

But I just couldn't leave her.

I remember walking with her from that house and shots ringing all over me, falling left and right and over me.

And we were not killed, which, as I told you,

I'm grateful that I don't have to live with the feeling that I abandoned my mother the last days of her life.

That was February 1944.

My mother died.
Think it was February 17.

So it was like the first days of February.

My sister wasn't alive anymore.

I heard that she was shot with her child,

and my brother-in-law was shot a couple weeks after that.

I never discussed it with my mother.

She just kept telling me hold on.

The [NON-ENGLISH] is coming.

You'll be liberated soon.

She died two weeks before we were liberated, -- three weeks.

Now the Vlasovs,
the Ukrainian army

285
00:16:03,350 --> 00:16:07,260
that fought with the
Germans, was going all
through the villages,
and Oberleitter Frank

286
00:16:07,260 --> 00:16:13,850
was afraid to stay.

288
00:16:13,850 --> 00:16:15,300
Already the Russian
army was advancing.

289
00:16:15,300 --> 00:16:21,170
So he was going to
Tluste to fighting

290
00:16:21,170 --> 00:16:26,565
And he told us oh,
don't stay here

291
00:16:26,565 --> 00:16:35,280
by yourself, because the
villagers will kill you.

292
00:16:35,280 --> 00:16:38,090
So he was protecting us.

293
00:16:38,090 --> 00:16:40,550
That's irony.

294
00:16:40,550 --> 00:16:44,480
We went with the German,
with our Oberleitter,

295
00:16:44,480 --> 00:16:47,290
to [PLACE NAME] to Tluste.
And in Tluste, back to our town, and from all the villages, the few people that survived were afraid to stay in the villages, and we all came together there. And how many people were now together at this point? 500 people came together to Tluste and [PLACE NAME]. All of a sudden, I remember like today. And I was always trying to get dressed as a peasant girl.
With my nose, I could.

So I walked out of the camp.

I went to our maid, and she gave me a better jacket yet,

something to get dressed.

All of a sudden, overheard Ukrainian Vlasovs.

So one said that you know that those are Jews here in that town.

Let's go.

So I went and I told the woman that used to be a cook from [PLACE NAME],, the Jewish girl [INAUDIBLE]..

Sent out the German soldiers came, the Wehrmacht.
It was Nazis.

The German soldiers chased away the Vlasovs because they would have massacred all the Jews that were there.

I remember my husband's mother was very sick. She had typhoid, and after typhoid, I don't know, some kind of complications.

And German field doctors were giving her medicine.

And then March 23, 1944 the Russians came.
people in the main--

332 00:18:54,240 --> 00:18:57,490 like the plantation, where the big landowner lived,

333 00:18:57,490 --> 00:19:00,270 and there were barracks made, wooden

334 00:19:00,270 --> 00:19:04,040 barracks, where all those workers lived.

335 00:19:04,040 --> 00:19:09,060 That was like the camp.

336 00:19:09,060 --> 00:19:12,570 As I told you, I still was dressed.

337 00:19:12,570 --> 00:19:14,550 I had a pair of shoes yet.

338 00:19:14,550 --> 00:19:15,640 I was still home.

339 00:19:15,640 --> 00:19:18,660 The people-- the villagers helped me out,

340 00:19:18,660 --> 00:19:23,170 and the maid would come and give me something.

341 00:19:23,170 --> 00:19:26,650 So when we saw the Russian tanks coming,

342 00:19:26,650 --> 00:19:33,210 my husband and I ran out to greet the Russians,
and we ran from one tank to the other till we came out of town.

Meantime, German planes came to bomb the Russians, but they didn't see the Russians.

Those 500 people were running around that compound.

I'm sure that they did not see those are Jews or civilians.

And they bombed those barracks.

150 people died that day that we were liberated.

My best girlfriend, she always kept saying I wish to see again the Russians,

and then I don't care what happens to me.
She burned.

I could never find anything.

She and her little sister burned to ashes.

I am the one that [INAUDIBLE] for her, but nobody--

That was the day that we were liberated by the Russians.

When we came in 1939, the first speech

the Russians gave-- "we came to liberate you."

So they liberated us from our homes, from our everything.

So what did they come to liberate?

But when they came March 23, 1944, they really--

those few people who survived--
So you're approximately then about 350 people who had survived.

Yes.

Yes.

Not all from Tluste.

Correct.

They're not all Tluste people--

Understand.

--but in Tluste.

Well, if you are now in that area,

I don't know of any other town that that many survived.
I have Milowce, [PLACE NAME],, Czortków, Hungary.

What town is [PERSONAL NAME] from?

We have from Warsaw.

We had people from all over in that little town.

What were you feeling, as you've already described it a little bit, when the Russians came?

I can tell you such tragedies on that day, because I told you about my girlfriend.

I'll tell you another couple, that they
had a son about my age.

Of course he was killed.

And the father was a pharmacist.

He had some poison always with him in case they come and kill him, he'll take first.

He survived.

On that day, he and his wife committed suicide.

The will to live was so great.

But when you survived that and looked around,

no family, nobody.

We were numb all the time,
expecting that any minute

you'll be killed.

I remember now this little woman that came also from a different town along with two babies.

She lived at a neighbor's house.

And she had just--

I don't know how much money she had.

So she figured out--

All the time there were rumors.

There's going to be an Aktion.

There won't be an Aktion.

So there was a rumor once that in two weeks

there's going to be an Aktion.
So this woman had figured out she has two weeks to live,

and she spent her money.

Two weeks came and there was no Aktion.

And she said, they promised me Aktion.

So it's things that you cannot comprehend now.

And she said if I would've known,

I would've stretched a little longer.

After the Russians came in, how soon after

were you put into a DP camp?

I was not put in a DP camp.

You were not.
No, the Russians did not put me in a DP camp.

No, not the Russians.

What happened immediately after?

No.

Immediate after that, when I came out,

the maid dressed me from top to bottom with whatever she had.

She tried to help me.

And then my husband--

I mean, not husband.

We were separated He were --

They took him away to work.

So I was on my own.
And if I would not work--

in Russia, if you don't work, you're a vagrant.

So they would have taken me on the Donbas.

If you're hear about the Donbas, you know these are the coal mines on the Don.

And that's all I had to--

Well, I was alone.

Somebody that survived with a mother, older sisters, this -- And being a girl alone, it's never good.

So I had to get a job.

So a friend of my father's, who was--

The borders now were altered.
There was no Romanian border, because the part that was Romania was also under Russia.

Did you hear of our town Czernivtsi, Czernowitz?

Yes.

So one of these friends of my father's became the brewer of the brewery, head of all breweries on the Romanian side.

And he said if I'll come and work there I would be protected.

I'll get a job.

So I became a bookkeeper in the brewery.
To describe you how I kept books there, this is Russia. Of course it was wartime, but it was Russia. We had no paper to write on. So on old Pravdas with a crayon, a red crayon. That way I kept books, because I had no paper. So I worked in the brewery. Some people were nice Jewish people. This is a difference. And all the time, I waited for my husband, my future husband, to come back.
And I just wanted to go be a Polish citizen.

I was born in Poland.

I had the right to emigrate to Poland.

So when in 19--

it was Sukkot time--

'45.

I mean, the war ended in May of '45.

At Sukkot time '45, we came to Poland-- on the Polish side,

what's in Pol--

Katowice, you know?

And from there, of course, I didn't want to stay in Poland, either.
I had enough of Poles, Ukrainians, Russians.

So who went to Austria, and from Austria,

to Germany, from Austria DP camp.

Speaking of DP camps, I was in Austria.

We were in the [INAUDIBLE] Kaserne.

This is where the soldiers used to live.

There were maybe 3,000 Jews in this Kaserne.

The Austrian government wanted the Kaserne back.

And the American army slammed us with tanks, and told us to go.

We didn't want to go.

People that had small
children had to--

we went on a hunger strike.

I don't know.

But it's after the war.

This is adding insult to injury.

But we went through.

So the Austrians wanted the--

what do you call, what
the soldiers live.

They don't live in barracks.

They live in those big houses.

And those who have
a small child had
to smuggle in a little milk for the babies.

And if you think that we won by the hunger strike, no.

We were put into barracks.

The rats were that big.

Every night, somebody else's baby was bitten in the ear.

From there, my cousin, who's not alive anymore,

he was in Ulm on the Donau.

He survived, in Russia.

I had only one cousin that survived the war.

He was of the age that the Russians took him to the army in 1939.
He was in the Russia.

524
00:29:43,495 --> 00:29:45,790
That was the way he survived.

525
00:29:45,790 --> 00:29:49,320
He spoke English,
before the war started.

526
00:29:49,320 --> 00:29:56,110
So when he came to Germany,
in the American zone,

527
00:29:56,110 --> 00:29:58,130
and they spoke
English, of course,

528
00:29:58,130 --> 00:30:01,690
they gave the job, as being
the director of the DP camp.

529
00:30:01,690 --> 00:30:05,050
So he wrote to me to come there.

530
00:30:05,050 --> 00:30:11,710
So I came to Ulm from
there, because to live

531
00:30:11,710 --> 00:30:13,120
in those barracks--

532
00:30:13,120 --> 00:30:18,160
and I was expecting my twins.

533
00:30:18,160 --> 00:30:21,600
So we came to Ulm.

534
00:30:21,600 --> 00:30:24,740
In Ulm, we lived in
those big barracks.

535
00:30:24,740 --> 00:30:26,410

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It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.
We did stay in the barracks.

00:30:26,410 --> 00:30:34,060
And from there, I was
there 3, or something.

Then the Germans wanted
their barracks back.

So we were sent to Fohrenwald.

And there we live
in the little houses

that Hitler built
for his workers.

And from there--

I mean, five years, so we
were got one place, there.

First I was in Ebensee.

I mean, I cannot tell you how
many stops I made in those five

years living with rats,
and dead, and living.

And calories-- I
remembered, from school,
what a calorie was.

But when I came to DP camps, I found out that this spaghetti has a lot of calories.

I could not connect one with the other.

Did you have any help from any of the Jewish organizations, at the time?

The Jewish organizations, at the time,

the Joint was active, too, in Germany.

I mean, we came to the United States.

The Joint brought us over.

They came.
They sent entertainers, which was good.

But we need-- instead of entertainers,

we need a visa, or papers, to come.

But I'm sure it wasn't their fault.

Yeah, I was to ask you what your feelings were, at the time.

I-- we were better.

I couldn't wait to have my own corner,

and to be put a productive human being, again.

The only things I wanted was my own corner

with a place for my children.

And my children should be able to go to school.
And I should be able-- my husband-- to go to work.

That's all.

The children born in what year?

In '47.

In '47.

In Ulm.

So that's all I wanted.

I didn't want to sit.

I didn't want to be given.

I was given spaghetti, and some beans,

and butter, they would give me, and whatever.

We were four people.
I had twins right away.

So we were four people, they give you a chunk of butter, no refrigeration.

I became an expert baker.

I made cookies, because--

But that wasn't my [INAUDIBLE] life.

I want to live a normal life.

After you had been liberated, to spend so many years moving from place to place?

We always thought, once we were liberated, I'll be--

Free.
I'll be free.

I could have been, if I would have stayed in Russia.

I didn't want that.

I'd had enough of that, too.

I didn't want to live, seeing the places.

Now, I have second thoughts.

Maybe my children would like to see where I am from.

They would like to go, now, especially that Sam came back from our hometown.

But to be five years [INAUDIBLE].

Sure.

But let's take a break here, just one second.
Yeah, I wanted to go on for a few minutes.

I'm sorry.

I was trying to convey that.

What time is it?

5:08.

Have we been talking for 45 minutes?

Can we have 10 more minutes?

Yeah.

Are you sure?

Do you mind.

I'm sorry.
They were giving me the signal.

OK.

I'm sorry.

I saw the signal, but--

So as you were saying, there must have been a tremendous amount of bitterness, after being liberated, and then having to spend five years.

What were the circumstances for which you actually came to the United States?

The circumstances were, the truth is, my husband,
and in the beginning, I wanted to go to Israel.

633
00:35:10,080 --> 00:35:12,560
I was raised with the love for Israel.

634
00:35:12,560 --> 00:35:16,140
And we devote our lives, now, for Israel.

635
00:35:16,140 --> 00:35:17,930
My daughter is, now, in Israel.

636
00:35:17,930 --> 00:35:21,880
But the war for liberation started in Israel.

637
00:35:21,880 --> 00:35:22,850
I had twins there.

638
00:35:22,850 --> 00:35:24,960
My children were born in '47.

639
00:35:24,960 --> 00:35:26,880
I was all alone in the world.

640
00:35:26,880 --> 00:35:28,950
And I knew, the minute we stepped down,

641
00:35:28,950 --> 00:35:32,060
my husband was a soldier again.

642
00:35:32,060 --> 00:35:37,855
And that as long as I had to just fend for myself,

643
00:35:37,855 --> 00:35:41,416
to took care of myself, mainly.

644
00:35:41,416 --> 00:35:47,340

Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media. It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.
Two babies, all alone in the world, I couldn't go.

And I wouldn't let him go.

So then, we registered to go to the United States.

And because we did not have--

I did have family, but I had an uncle, who was paralyzed, here.

And the children were young, were [? my?] age, so they couldn't help me.

So that's the reason.

Whoever had family here, of course, came over much sooner.

And we had to wait for the quota and all kind of things.

like that.

I have no regrets.
We came here.

00:36:20,220 --> 00:36:22,770
The country was very good to me.

00:36:22,770 --> 00:36:24,210
We were eager to work.

00:36:24,210 --> 00:36:26,760
We started working, from the minute we came here.

00:36:26,760 --> 00:36:27,930
My husband worked nights.

00:36:27,930 --> 00:36:28,680
And I worked days.

00:36:28,680 --> 00:36:31,920

00:36:31,920 --> 00:36:35,400
A lot of times, we saw each other at the doorsteps,

00:36:35,400 --> 00:36:37,047
because the children.

00:36:37,047 --> 00:36:38,505
Somebody had to watch the children.

00:36:38,505 --> 00:36:41,020
That's the reason we made that.

00:36:41,020 --> 00:36:47,377
But it took us to March 13, 1951, that we came here.

00:36:47,377 --> 00:36:48,960
At any time, were you ever questioned,
by any of the Allied officials, about your experiences in Europe, at all?

No, no, I wasn't. I could tell you a cute story. We were investigated, of course, before we came to the United States. And in Poland, we live in the town of Breslau, Breslau.

So when I was interviewed, where did you live, and this way. So I said I lived in Breslau. So he says, yes, you live. What is the name of the chief of police of Breslau? You know, I was what I say?
What kind of business do I have with the chief of police in Breslau?

[INAUDIBLE]

Ask me for the baker.

So he says, you're cute.

He says, you're cute.

You're the only one that--

I said, look!

Then, when I came to the United States,

and you listen to the radio, and they talk about the chief of police, his question wasn't that inappropriate.
So have we were investigated, screened, till they let us in.
Believe me, like a car, to let in, from Cuba.
We were screened.
There was a screening process, my God.
How did you happen to come to New Jersey?
I don't know.
Did you come to New Jersey?
No, no, no.
First we came--
Certainly, I know you came to New York, first.
Flushing.
Came from Flushing to Brooklyn, from Brooklyn to [PLACE NAME],

and then to Elizabeth.

Everything is-- but thank God.

I'm not complaining.

I just pray for good health, and peace in the world, somehow.

If I survived Hitler and Stalin, I'll survive anything.

You had said something, before, where we were talking privately, about the fact that your husband was very bitter, didn't want to talk about what happened in Europe.

He thought, now, you know, when we came to the United States,
and after we met somebody like Bielski.

00:39:05,900 --> 00:39:08,850
You know Bielski.

00:39:08,850 --> 00:39:13,970
He had the brains, and the courage.

00:39:13,970 --> 00:39:16,310
What he did, went into the woods,

00:39:16,310 --> 00:39:18,530
and saved so many people.

00:39:18,530 --> 00:39:22,000
And he scared the villages, not to.

00:39:22,000 --> 00:39:24,600
They would not dare.

00:39:24,600 --> 00:39:26,440
You know what Bielski did?

00:39:26,440 --> 00:39:31,610
His wife-- his first wife was killed, and then--

00:39:31,610 --> 00:39:34,660
my husband is bitter.

00:39:34,660 --> 00:39:40,610
And he brought the protection of those deep woods,

00:39:40,610 --> 00:39:49,280
of [PLACE NAME] in Lithuania, where they come from.
Armies get lost in those woods.

He had that protection.

We lived in a plateau.

It was a few trees.

It was called a woods.

So we didn't have that.

And we didn't-- we did not have-- we were gentle people.

We were gentle people.

And maybe he was, a little bit, a strong guy.

I don't want to say, he was a little bit of the rough people.

In our town, everybody minding his own business.
son smoked a cigarette in shops,

00:40:36,710 --> 00:40:39,020
it was a big tragedy.

00:40:39,020 --> 00:40:42,830
Who was there to
organize resistance?

00:40:42,830 --> 00:40:45,860
And then, if you heard
it in another town,

00:40:45,860 --> 00:40:50,570
they were killing, because
one boy had hit the German.

00:40:50,570 --> 00:40:53,240
So if I go, and
I hit the German,

00:40:53,240 --> 00:40:56,270
or a young boy hits
the German, then they

00:40:56,270 --> 00:41:00,530
will come and kill his family,
kill every other, 10 Jew.

00:41:00,530 --> 00:41:04,960
So we were killed anyway.

00:41:04,960 --> 00:41:09,750
But you should have killed, at
least, a few Germans, with us.

00:41:09,750 --> 00:41:11,090
[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH].

00:41:11,090 --> 00:41:13,890
There was not.
And now, the after-thoughts, seeing what other people do, to bring their causes.
My husband thinks that we should have been organized, to have something to do to the Germans,
or to the population that was copulating with the Germans.
This is only an afterthought.
But, one thing I can tell, that my husband is right,
that the story should be told, and people should know how to protect themselves, that we were naive.
we were peaceful people.
The only thing we wanted was to live daily life,
and be able to go to synagogue, and the children
got to school, and a date--

normal people, not violent people.
The Jews were never violent.

We were accused of being cowards.

Turned out for the Israeli Army.

No, one calls us any more cowards.

And you could not ask, in the first world war,

if one Jew fell on the kaiser side, and the other

on the tsar's side, he had to kill his brother,
because he lived across the border.

777
00:42:42:050 --> 00:42:47,600
So who was there to organize, as I told you.

778
00:42:47,600 --> 00:42:50,100
First that took the intelligentsia away.

779
00:42:50,100 --> 00:42:54,470

780
00:42:54,470 --> 00:42:58,760
But we were bitter and busy, very busy.

781
00:42:58,760 --> 00:43:04,040
We came with the shirts on our backs, with two small babies.

782
00:43:04,040 --> 00:43:08,450
I remember my aunt seeing me with two babies,

783
00:43:08,450 --> 00:43:12,530
and she says to me, you have two millions,

784
00:43:12,530 --> 00:43:15,685
because I have two girls, they are so better than boys.

785
00:43:15,685 --> 00:43:17,060
So, i said, but in the mean time,

786
00:43:17,060 --> 00:43:20,990
those millions have to be fed.

787
00:43:20,990 --> 00:43:23,460
So we were very
busy, and too bitter

to write into the book, our memories.

But I see that the older people had more sechel than we did.

And they did record a lot, which I am grateful for.

What were your attitudes toward the Jewish community in the United States, for example, when you came?

Was there a sense of bitterness, or outrage?

Or the feeling that the Jewish community in the United States could have done something?

They were saying Kaddish for us.

That was something, because we did not need Kaddish.
We needed support.

And, I think, now, that they live in the United States,

they see that these people here could have gone to Washington,

and yell, and scream, and tell Roosevelt to do something,

not to give lip service.

But things came out later, and promises.

We were hoping that the American Jewry would save us.

I told you, we were waiting for Entebbe.

We didn't call it Entebbe, but we were thinking,

maybe they'll come through Romania, and they will save us.
Now, the Jews of Romania fared better than we in Poland.

And the Romanians were known of being bigger anti-Semites

But it seems that people that did work with the Germans

still didn't want to dirty their hands with Jewish blood.

So the Romanian Jews survived.

They send them to Transnistria to work in camps.

They didn't want to have businesses

together, with Jewish people.

But the Romanian partner kept the business,

and he still was giving them.

The Polish Jews faied the worst.
You will come to Yad Vashem.

You see the chart.

You see.

As I tell you this, our town in comparison--

now, to go to hide with a family,

you had to give the money to go feed you.

We didn't have the money, because, when the Russians came, right away, they took care of our house.

So if your father was in the clothing business,
and you had something to work.

You have a lumber yard, how many birds can you save?

How many bricks can you save, you know.

So we were, like, wiped out, right away.

So we just-- they could give us--

they owed us money.

So they gave us a sack of potatoes, or something,

so that the way we survive.

So the people, they did have something more substantial,

shoes.

So they would go, and take them into hiding.
I told you, if they were really god fearing people,
they kept them, and they survived,
or they killed them for the bread, themselves.

What do you think the lesson to be learned?
The lesson to be learned is--
I'm sad to say, but I was told, in Yad Vashem by an American girl that works, lives now in Israel--
that I still live in the 1940s.
And I told her that I'll never forget the 40s.
The lesson is that you have to look out for yourself.
Nobody cares for you, only you.

I mean the Jewish people.

There are some good people in the world.

But everybody cares for himself.

And if we don't care for ourselves,

and take care of ourselves, and of Israel--

I think that Israel is our life line.

I'm sorry that a lot of American Jews are so ignorant of it.
I come from the hotels.

870
00:48:20,350 --> 00:48:22,580
We sit at the same table.

871
00:48:22,580 --> 00:48:25,250
And maybe I have an accent.

872
00:48:25,250 --> 00:48:30,470
Maybe my English is not as good as theirs.

873
00:48:30,470 --> 00:48:31,880
But they're so ignorant.

874
00:48:31,880 --> 00:48:35,090

875
00:48:35,090 --> 00:48:39,220
Not all of them, but some of them.

876
00:48:39,220 --> 00:48:42,130
To them-- they know so much about Israel,

877
00:48:42,130 --> 00:48:43,980
I know about Cambodia.

878
00:48:43,980 --> 00:48:45,815
Maybe I know more about Cambodia.

879
00:48:45,815 --> 00:48:48,610

880
00:48:48,610 --> 00:48:54,820
Then a process of education is certainly required,

881
00:48:54,820 --> 00:48:56,220
about Israel.
It has much importance for them, and for their children.

Do you attend the annual meetings of the Holocaust?

Were you in Washington?

Yes, I was in Washington, I was in Israel.

Two years ago.

And the thing that--

first of all, the children--

I had more time for myself.

Turned out, I had the means, also.

Let's face it, you cannot go places, if you don't have the means.
And I feel that I have to tell, and share--

tell about the bad, and the good.

I have a lot of bad things.

But the place, in our town, God bless their memory,

they are not alive anymore.

I wrote, now, and I ask if--

what they did, and if every place,

and the public, and the high, would have sent out this message.

What those two people did, do you know how many people would have been saved?

He was not afraid to
speak out to his people.

906
00:50:15,160 --> 00:50:19,700
He spoke to his people with parables.

907
00:50:19,700 --> 00:50:21,670
Why do I know the parables?

908
00:50:21,670 --> 00:50:25,530
Because the maids used to come, with a chicken,

909
00:50:25,530 --> 00:50:28,350
with a little chicken.

910
00:50:28,350 --> 00:50:31,546
And it worked.

911
00:50:31,546 --> 00:50:39,400
They weren't made of a better material than the village

912
00:50:39,400 --> 00:50:42,440
Ukrainians.

913
00:50:42,440 --> 00:50:46,588
It's only if a spiritual leader, or a Denmark.

914
00:50:46,588 --> 00:50:55,350

915
00:50:55,350 --> 00:51:00,900
You needed a leader to tell them how to conduct themselves.

916
00:51:00,900 --> 00:51:07,475

917
00:51:07,475 --> 00:51:08,870
I know you know the Kramers.
Clara Kramer?

Not personally, no.

Not Sol Kramer, no?

Well she survived, 18 people survived in a basement.

No, in a hole in the basement.

Volksdeutsche.

You know what the Volksdeutsche is?

He was a Pole, but all of a sudden, he became a [INAUDIBLE] was Germans.

He saved 18 Jews.
He kept Germans living on top, so he was very kosher.

And he saved the Jews.

He used to say, I hate Jews.

I hate Jews, but not to kill them.

And he saved 18 people.

There's something--
This material.

I would rather have --

But to kill?

To kill infants?

Take the baby, give it to a German women that cannot have babies.

Let the German woman
raise that baby as a Nazi.

I hope that history will never repeat itself.

But if we won't be vigilant, if we won't tell the story, and people don't want to hear it.

People have to hear this.

I'm very happy that I'm around to answer my little granddaughter the questions.

And I'm glad that she wants to know.

She asked me already, two years ago,
she was delivered, now, four years, in Israel.

So she eight when she left.

Before she left, she read already the Diary of Anne Frank.

Anne Frank.

So that's the reason I'm here.

I'm not an actress.

I'm not into interviews, because that's--

In closing, what you had told me before,
in a private conversation, about your children asking about grandparents.
Yes.

If you just wanted to mention.

Yeah, when we came to the United States, in 1951,

they were four years old.

And of course, we came with the shirt on our back

and that's it.

Our aunt got us some kind of apartment.

At that time, it was very hard to get an apartment.

In 1951, everybody was coming from the war.

So of course, we didn't have a television.

So the neighbors would take them in to watch Howdy Doody.

And they would go, how come I don't have a television.
So I said, aunt Susie has.

I said Susie's mother was born here.

So they have already money.

We'll work hard.

We'll buy She said, why weren't you born here?

So, of course, I have no answer for that.

But they were raised in a DP camp.

In a DP camp, there were very few old people, grandparents.

Mostly there were people our age.

There were no young people.

There were no children and teenagers.
There were young couples and babies.

So there were no grandparents.

All of a sudden, to come to the United States, and every child--

and we lived in a house.

There were no other refugees.

Every child had grandparents.

So they came up with another question.

How come we don't have grandparents?

I knew the answer for a television.

I had no answer for grandparents.

They know.
When they got older, from conversation, of course.

I did not sit down and explain to four-year-olds what happened to us.

I want to thank you very much.

You're welcome.

As I told you, it's my duty.

As you know, we all go around with a feeling of guilt. Why did I survive?

If I survive, that can help, for future generations understand what happened to us, and prevent things.

Any time you come, I'll come, and I'll tell.