

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:38,320

2

00:00:38,320 --> 00:00:39,200

Good afternoon.

3

00:00:39,200 --> 00:00:40,630

My name is Charles de Fanti.

4

00:00:40,630 --> 00:00:43,600

I'm a member of the Kean
College Oral Testimonies Project

5

00:00:43,600 --> 00:00:46,540

of the Holocaust
Resource Center.

6

00:00:46,540 --> 00:00:48,550

We are affiliated with
the Video Archives

7

00:00:48,550 --> 00:00:50,620

for Holocaust Testimonies
at the Sterling

8

00:00:50,620 --> 00:00:53,320

Library of Yale University.

9

00:00:53,320 --> 00:00:56,110

Sharing the interview with
me is Bernard Weinstein,

10

00:00:56,110 --> 00:00:59,680

director of the Kean College
Oral Testimonies Project.

11

00:00:59,680 --> 00:01:03,250

We're privileged to welcome
Edith Farben, survivor

12

00:01:03,250 --> 00:01:06,160

presently living in Union,
New Jersey, who has generously

13

00:01:06,160 --> 00:01:09,850
volunteered to give testimony
about her experiences

14

00:01:09,850 --> 00:01:12,490
before, during, and
after the Holocaust.

15

00:01:12,490 --> 00:01:13,870
Welcome, Mrs. Farben.

16

00:01:13,870 --> 00:01:15,070
Thank you.

17

00:01:15,070 --> 00:01:18,670
We'd like to begin by asking you
something about your early life

18

00:01:18,670 --> 00:01:23,260
before these events, these
terrible events, occurred.

19

00:01:23,260 --> 00:01:24,610
Could you tell us something?

20

00:01:24,610 --> 00:01:25,510
Yes.

21

00:01:25,510 --> 00:01:28,480
I was born in a small town.

22

00:01:28,480 --> 00:01:30,760
When I was born, it
was Czechoslovakia.

23

00:01:30,760 --> 00:01:33,520
The name of the town was Polana.

24

00:01:33,520 --> 00:01:35,390

I'm one of four children.

25

00:01:35,390 --> 00:01:39,700

The third in the family.

26

00:01:39,700 --> 00:01:41,920

My mother was a-- my
father was a shoemaker.

27

00:01:41,920 --> 00:01:43,840

My mother was a housewife.

28

00:01:43,840 --> 00:01:46,570

We lived a very--

29

00:01:46,570 --> 00:01:49,030

almost poor.

30

00:01:49,030 --> 00:01:54,910

We had enough to eat and
clothes on our backs.

31

00:01:54,910 --> 00:01:57,880

We lived in Polana for--

32

00:01:57,880 --> 00:02:01,864

when I was about seven
years, we moved to the city.

33

00:02:01,864 --> 00:02:08,586

There, we lived until 1939,
when the Hungarians occupied

34

00:02:08,586 --> 00:02:10,520

Munkács, the city.

35

00:02:10,520 --> 00:02:12,050

And Polana was still Czech.

36

00:02:12,050 --> 00:02:14,930

So we decided to go back
home, which was short lived,

37

00:02:14,930 --> 00:02:20,160
because a few weeks later, the
Hungarians occupied there, too.

38

00:02:20,160 --> 00:02:23,150
And with that, our problems
started a little bit.

39

00:02:23,150 --> 00:02:25,730

40

00:02:25,730 --> 00:02:32,420
The men were called
to forced labor camps.

41

00:02:32,420 --> 00:02:35,570
It wasn't like concentration
camp, but they had to work,

42

00:02:35,570 --> 00:02:40,010
and we had to wear--

43

00:02:40,010 --> 00:02:40,915
we had curfews.

44

00:02:40,915 --> 00:02:41,540
Not right away.

45

00:02:41,540 --> 00:02:48,020
Maybe in 1940, '41, we were
not allowed to go out at night.

46

00:02:48,020 --> 00:02:56,330
We had to wear yellow bands, and
life started getting difficult.

47

00:02:56,330 --> 00:03:00,980
Do remember the first moment
when you sensed any danger?

48

00:03:00,980 --> 00:03:03,140

Well, real danger--

49

00:03:03,140 --> 00:03:06,350

I think the first time we sensed
the real danger was the night

50

00:03:06,350 --> 00:03:10,040

before we were taken to ghetto.

51

00:03:10,040 --> 00:03:11,480

Yes.

52

00:03:11,480 --> 00:03:13,460

Before we go into
that aspect of it,

53

00:03:13,460 --> 00:03:16,940

would you want to tell us a
little bit about your life

54

00:03:16,940 --> 00:03:20,480

prior to the coming
of the Germans

55

00:03:20,480 --> 00:03:22,020

or the coming of occupation?

56

00:03:22,020 --> 00:03:22,520

Well--

57

00:03:22,520 --> 00:03:24,410

What was your was your
life at home like?

58

00:03:24,410 --> 00:03:26,610

--it was nice.

59

00:03:26,610 --> 00:03:28,310

We didn't have the
material things

60

00:03:28,310 --> 00:03:32,100

that the children growing
up in the United States,

61
00:03:32,100 --> 00:03:36,600
and it was no competition
for like going to the movies,

62
00:03:36,600 --> 00:03:39,950
going to show, going to dinner,
because we did not have that.

63
00:03:39,950 --> 00:03:42,140
If we went into the city
and we went to a movie,

64
00:03:42,140 --> 00:03:44,030
that was a big event.

65
00:03:44,030 --> 00:03:44,850
Go out to eat?

66
00:03:44,850 --> 00:03:46,220
There was no place to eat at.

67
00:03:46,220 --> 00:03:50,270
So, I mean, if a
boy dated a girl,

68
00:03:50,270 --> 00:03:53,390
the biggest treat was a bar of
chocolate, or in the summer,

69
00:03:53,390 --> 00:03:54,260
an ice cream cone.

70
00:03:54,260 --> 00:03:56,700
I mean, that was it.

71
00:03:56,700 --> 00:04:01,220
Life was, as I said, wasn't
rich, but it was nice.

72

00:04:01,220 --> 00:04:03,740

It was relaxing.

73

00:04:03,740 --> 00:04:05,780

We had to go to school.

74

00:04:05,780 --> 00:04:08,570

We couldn't-- the eight
grades, we had to finish.

75

00:04:08,570 --> 00:04:12,380

There was no such a
thing as you don't.

76

00:04:12,380 --> 00:04:18,029

My brother, my oldest brother,
went to Hebrew gymnasium.

77

00:04:18,029 --> 00:04:24,450

He came out here in 1938 to the
United States on the last vote.

78

00:04:24,450 --> 00:04:30,000

And after that, there
was no school for Jews.

79

00:04:30,000 --> 00:04:33,850

After '39, we didn't
go to school anymore.

80

00:04:33,850 --> 00:04:39,420

And then it started getting
more and more difficult.

81

00:04:39,420 --> 00:04:41,010

Was your family
a close-knit one?

82

00:04:41,010 --> 00:04:41,910

Yes.

83

00:04:41,910 --> 00:04:44,550

As a matter of fact,

the whole town,

84

00:04:44,550 --> 00:04:49,050

we were 60 Jewish
families in that town.

85

00:04:49,050 --> 00:04:53,560

And my grandfather
was everybody's uncle.

86

00:04:53,560 --> 00:04:55,350

It was a close--

87

00:04:55,350 --> 00:04:59,370

everybody knew everybody and
sort of distantly related,

88

00:04:59,370 --> 00:05:00,310

most of us.

89

00:05:00,310 --> 00:05:03,250

So there was a communal as
well as a natural family?

90

00:05:03,250 --> 00:05:04,800

Yes, very much so.

91

00:05:04,800 --> 00:05:06,355

It was a mixed town, Polana?

92

00:05:06,355 --> 00:05:06,855

Yes.

93

00:05:06,855 --> 00:05:07,772

Jewish and Christians?

94

00:05:07,772 --> 00:05:10,530

Well, it was more
Christians, more than Jews.

95

00:05:10,530 --> 00:05:12,200

The whole town was

about 300 families.

96

00:05:12,200 --> 00:05:12,910

I see.

97

00:05:12,910 --> 00:05:14,910

We're about 60 Jewish--

98

00:05:14,910 --> 00:05:17,040

between 60 and 65,
something like that.

99

00:05:17,040 --> 00:05:21,960

And what did being Jewish mean
to you personally at that time?

100

00:05:21,960 --> 00:05:23,470

Before 1939?

101

00:05:23,470 --> 00:05:24,120

Yes.

102

00:05:24,120 --> 00:05:26,100

I just took it naturally.

103

00:05:26,100 --> 00:05:27,330

We are Jews.

104

00:05:27,330 --> 00:05:28,140

That's it.

105

00:05:28,140 --> 00:05:30,360

Before 1939, there
was no difference,

106

00:05:30,360 --> 00:05:35,910

because the Czechs were very,
very liberal, very Democratic.

107

00:05:35,910 --> 00:05:40,560

And there was no
discrimination in any way--

108
00:05:40,560 --> 00:05:42,360
Yes.

109
00:05:42,360 --> 00:05:43,320
--at first shot.

110
00:05:43,320 --> 00:05:46,980
So you never felt yourself
set apart or to be different?

111
00:05:46,980 --> 00:05:51,810
Well, we were set apart,
because we were the better.

112
00:05:51,810 --> 00:05:54,930
Like all the others
were the, in our town,

113
00:05:54,930 --> 00:05:59,290
for instance, the Gentiles,
they were all peasants.

114
00:05:59,290 --> 00:06:02,170
And they really
weren't very smart.

115
00:06:02,170 --> 00:06:04,650
They didn't go to school
if they didn't have to.

116
00:06:04,650 --> 00:06:07,440
And when they went, their
primary thing was not to learn.

117
00:06:07,440 --> 00:06:10,260
They were there because
they had to be there.

118
00:06:10,260 --> 00:06:13,740
So we were set apart,
but not as far as--

119

00:06:13,740 --> 00:06:14,485

Discrimination?

120

00:06:14,485 --> 00:06:15,360

--discrimination, no.

121

00:06:15,360 --> 00:06:16,155

We were not

discriminated against.

122

00:06:16,155 --> 00:06:17,080

Ill treatment?

123

00:06:17,080 --> 00:06:21,780

No, not until the

Hungarians came in.

124

00:06:21,780 --> 00:06:24,840

Once the Hungarians

came in, and they

125

00:06:24,840 --> 00:06:28,650

were being fed

propaganda and whatnot,

126

00:06:28,650 --> 00:06:30,540

that's when it started.

127

00:06:30,540 --> 00:06:31,050

Yes.

128

00:06:31,050 --> 00:06:32,670

What sort of propaganda?

129

00:06:32,670 --> 00:06:35,460

I mean, Jews do this,

and Jews take your money,

130

00:06:35,460 --> 00:06:38,445

and Jews-- you know, stuff

like that, the usual.

131

00:06:38,445 --> 00:06:42,820

The kind of defamation that
we're all too familiar with?

132

00:06:42,820 --> 00:06:43,320

Yes.

133

00:06:43,320 --> 00:06:46,230

134

00:06:46,230 --> 00:06:48,990

Go back to where you were
before when we were talking

135

00:06:48,990 --> 00:06:52,157

about the danger and the--

136

00:06:52,157 --> 00:06:53,490

The night before you were taken.

137

00:06:53,490 --> 00:06:54,650

The night before, yes.

138

00:06:54,650 --> 00:06:58,680

Well, as I said, it started in--

139

00:06:58,680 --> 00:07:00,147

we knew that we
were discriminated.

140

00:07:00,147 --> 00:07:01,230

We knew we were different.

141

00:07:01,230 --> 00:07:07,770

Because in the winter of
'43, we needed yellow stars.

142

00:07:07,770 --> 00:07:10,410

They had to be a
certain dimension.

143

00:07:10,410 --> 00:07:12,840
So we already knew we
were discriminated.

144
00:07:12,840 --> 00:07:16,090
As I said, there
was a curfew for us.

145
00:07:16,090 --> 00:07:20,160
We couldn't get-- as far
as food was concerned,

146
00:07:20,160 --> 00:07:25,440
we couldn't get the food that
the Gentiles got, not as much.

147
00:07:25,440 --> 00:07:29,970

148
00:07:29,970 --> 00:07:35,710
And then it was
Passover of 1944.

149
00:07:35,710 --> 00:07:37,420
It was like the middle of April.

150
00:07:37,420 --> 00:07:40,450

151
00:07:40,450 --> 00:07:42,970
The last day of
Passover, my father

152
00:07:42,970 --> 00:07:47,100
went to temple with my brother.

153
00:07:47,100 --> 00:07:50,280
My mother, my sister,
and I stayed home.

154
00:07:50,280 --> 00:07:56,880
And before that, there were
Hungarian soldiers in town.

155
00:07:56,880 --> 00:08:00,210
And if there was somebody
between the soldiers

156
00:08:00,210 --> 00:08:04,320
that really wanted to
speak to a Jewish--

157
00:08:04,320 --> 00:08:08,040
a girl, spend an hour or
two, a social evening,

158
00:08:08,040 --> 00:08:09,480
the would go to a Jewish home.

159
00:08:09,480 --> 00:08:12,910
Even though they were not
allow it, but they'd come in.

160
00:08:12,910 --> 00:08:16,200
So there were these
two Hungarian soldiers

161
00:08:16,200 --> 00:08:18,510
that were sent away
to a neighboring town,

162
00:08:18,510 --> 00:08:19,920
but they came.

163
00:08:19,920 --> 00:08:23,700
And one of them stayed
with my sister and I.

164
00:08:23,700 --> 00:08:26,610
And the other one asked
my mother for a walk.

165
00:08:26,610 --> 00:08:29,500

166

00:08:29,500 --> 00:08:30,930

I didn't know why
my sister didn't

167

00:08:30,930 --> 00:08:35,770

know why this other young
man didn't want to tell us.

168

00:08:35,770 --> 00:08:38,080

And then my father came home.

169

00:08:38,080 --> 00:08:41,350

And my mother asked my
father to go for a walk,

170

00:08:41,350 --> 00:08:44,200

and we didn't know
what it was all about.

171

00:08:44,200 --> 00:08:48,040

It turned out-- we
found out the next day--

172

00:08:48,040 --> 00:08:51,700

that these two
soldiers knew that we

173

00:08:51,700 --> 00:08:57,690

were going to be taken away
the next day to ghetto.

174

00:08:57,690 --> 00:08:59,670

So they came and asked--

175

00:08:59,670 --> 00:09:02,820

wanted permission from my
parents to let my sister

176

00:09:02,820 --> 00:09:05,310

and I go with them.

177

00:09:05,310 --> 00:09:09,120

And they were trying to

send us to their parents

178

00:09:09,120 --> 00:09:11,700
and hide us out.

179

00:09:11,700 --> 00:09:16,210
And my father did
not believe it.

180

00:09:16,210 --> 00:09:21,340
My father said, these two
young men love your daughters,

181

00:09:21,340 --> 00:09:24,250
and that's the way they want
to get them away from you.

182

00:09:24,250 --> 00:09:25,730
That was in the evening.

183

00:09:25,730 --> 00:09:28,870
I would say about 7
o'clock in the morning.

184

00:09:28,870 --> 00:09:31,690
5 o'clock in the morning,
my father went out.

185

00:09:31,690 --> 00:09:33,418
We did not have bathrooms.

186

00:09:33,418 --> 00:09:34,460
He got up in the morning.

187

00:09:34,460 --> 00:09:36,520
He went out.

188

00:09:36,520 --> 00:09:37,870
He came back.

189

00:09:37,870 --> 00:09:39,460
And he wakes us up.

190
00:09:39,460 --> 00:09:45,370
And he said, I think we
better get dressed and pack.

191
00:09:45,370 --> 00:09:48,730
Every Jewish home
is surrounded by I

192
00:09:48,730 --> 00:09:56,710
guess what would be here Boy
Scouts, and those were Nazi.

193
00:09:56,710 --> 00:09:57,436
Nazi [INAUDIBLE].

194
00:09:57,436 --> 00:09:58,190
Hitlerjugend, right?

195
00:09:58,190 --> 00:09:58,690
Yeah.

196
00:09:58,690 --> 00:10:00,000
They were from our hometown--

197
00:10:00,000 --> 00:10:00,792
From your hometown.

198
00:10:00,792 --> 00:10:03,780
--but they were
Hitlerjugend Hungarian.

199
00:10:03,780 --> 00:10:07,430
They called them [HUNGARIAN].

200
00:10:07,430 --> 00:10:10,250
And, of course, that's
how he found out

201
00:10:10,250 --> 00:10:13,040
that those two young
men were right,

202
00:10:13,040 --> 00:10:14,720
and maybe he should
have let us go.

203
00:10:14,720 --> 00:10:17,390

204
00:10:17,390 --> 00:10:18,780
You were 15 at the time about?

205
00:10:18,780 --> 00:10:19,810
I was 19.

206
00:10:19,810 --> 00:10:20,310
Oh, 19?

207
00:10:20,310 --> 00:10:21,570
Yes, in 1944.

208
00:10:21,570 --> 00:10:22,650
I'm sorry.

209
00:10:22,650 --> 00:10:24,090
And how old was your sister?

210
00:10:24,090 --> 00:10:26,170
22.

211
00:10:26,170 --> 00:10:28,180
Well, not quite 22.

212
00:10:28,180 --> 00:10:29,860
Under the terms
here, she'd be 21.

213
00:10:29,860 --> 00:10:32,470

214
00:10:32,470 --> 00:10:37,010
But in between, we had to

like-- between '39 and '44,

215

00:10:37,010 --> 00:10:42,850

we have to find papers that
are like, for instance, would

216

00:10:42,850 --> 00:10:47,170

be my great-grandfather was
born in that country, that area

217

00:10:47,170 --> 00:10:48,100

of the Carpathian.

218

00:10:48,100 --> 00:10:50,715

219

00:10:50,715 --> 00:10:52,730

I can tell you some incident.

220

00:10:52,730 --> 00:10:53,280

Please.

221

00:10:53,280 --> 00:10:56,840

I was trying to find these
papers for my grandparents

222

00:10:56,840 --> 00:10:58,520

and for ourselves.

223

00:10:58,520 --> 00:11:02,330

Because those days
already, we did not

224

00:11:02,330 --> 00:11:06,170

want my father on the
road, because there

225

00:11:06,170 --> 00:11:08,090

were Hungarian soldiers.

226

00:11:08,090 --> 00:11:11,060

And most of them

were anti-Semites,

227

00:11:11,060 --> 00:11:14,420
and they would see a Jew,
they would even pull his beard

228

00:11:14,420 --> 00:11:16,350
or whatever--

229

00:11:16,350 --> 00:11:16,850
beat him up.

230

00:11:16,850 --> 00:11:18,050
Your father wore the
traditional beard?

231

00:11:18,050 --> 00:11:19,310
No, my father did not.

232

00:11:19,310 --> 00:11:20,270
But he was a Jew.

233

00:11:20,270 --> 00:11:21,360
My grandfather did.

234

00:11:21,360 --> 00:11:21,860
Yes.

235

00:11:21,860 --> 00:11:25,940
So I was in charge
of finding papers

236

00:11:25,940 --> 00:11:31,990
for my grandfather, my
mother's father, and for us.

237

00:11:31,990 --> 00:11:35,320
I succeeded for us.

238

00:11:35,320 --> 00:11:38,050
But my grandfather
at the time was 87,

239
00:11:38,050 --> 00:11:41,560
and to file papers
for his grandfather

240
00:11:41,560 --> 00:11:45,430
was kind of difficult-- for
his great-grandfather was

241
00:11:45,430 --> 00:11:52,970
kind of difficult. So I guess
because he was an old man,

242
00:11:52,970 --> 00:11:55,220
they did not deport him.

243
00:11:55,220 --> 00:11:57,950
Was there a reason why it was
so difficult to find the papers?

244
00:11:57,950 --> 00:12:00,320
Because his parents did
not come-- they came from--

245
00:12:00,320 --> 00:12:02,540
his grandparents or
great-grandparents

246
00:12:02,540 --> 00:12:03,740
came from Poland.

247
00:12:03,740 --> 00:12:06,590
And then they had no offices.

248
00:12:06,590 --> 00:12:08,690
They had no birth certificates.

249
00:12:08,690 --> 00:12:10,880
They had nothing.

250
00:12:10,880 --> 00:12:11,990
Those days, they didn't.

251

00:12:11,990 --> 00:12:14,750

They knew they were born in the
summer of such and such year

252

00:12:14,750 --> 00:12:16,820

or in the fall of
such and such year,

253

00:12:16,820 --> 00:12:20,030

but they didn't know
dates or anything.

254

00:12:20,030 --> 00:12:21,800

Yes.

255

00:12:21,800 --> 00:12:28,750

So my grandfather had to report
to the gendarme every Sunday.

256

00:12:28,750 --> 00:12:31,310

He remained behind?

257

00:12:31,310 --> 00:12:34,160

They left him home, but he
had to report that he's here--

258

00:12:34,160 --> 00:12:35,630

I see.

259

00:12:35,630 --> 00:12:38,060

--as if there was any
place for him to go.

260

00:12:38,060 --> 00:12:41,480

261

00:12:41,480 --> 00:12:46,970

Being, again, a Jewish girl
and with a little education,

262

00:12:46,970 --> 00:12:51,605

the Hungarian gendarmes,
also if they needed a--

263
00:12:51,605 --> 00:12:53,870
if they wanted to
spend a social evening,

264
00:12:53,870 --> 00:12:56,360
they too went to a Jewish
home where they were girls.

265
00:12:56,360 --> 00:12:58,840
Because they could not--

266
00:12:58,840 --> 00:13:03,290
there was nothing in common
with the peasant girls.

267
00:13:03,290 --> 00:13:04,520
And I knew them all.

268
00:13:04,520 --> 00:13:07,010
So they agreed to let me come.

269
00:13:07,010 --> 00:13:08,900
It was supposed to
be on a Sunday--

270
00:13:08,900 --> 00:13:11,360
to let me come every
Sunday morning,

271
00:13:11,360 --> 00:13:13,340
and bring my
grandfather's papers,

272
00:13:13,340 --> 00:13:16,640
and they would sign them
so my grandfather would not

273
00:13:16,640 --> 00:13:20,390
have to be exposed to
somebody pulling his beard.

274
00:13:20,390 --> 00:13:22,490
He did have a
traditional beard--

275
00:13:22,490 --> 00:13:23,700
or whatever.

276
00:13:23,700 --> 00:13:25,010
And besides, he was old.

277
00:13:25,010 --> 00:13:28,100
And he-- you know?

278
00:13:28,100 --> 00:13:31,760
One day, one Sunday, I go
there, and for some reason--

279
00:13:31,760 --> 00:13:33,860
that was already
towards the end.

280
00:13:33,860 --> 00:13:36,590
It was like in
the spring of '44.

281
00:13:36,590 --> 00:13:42,020
For some reason, they changed
all the people in that office.

282
00:13:42,020 --> 00:13:42,680
Yes.

283
00:13:42,680 --> 00:13:46,010
And when I got there.

284
00:13:46,010 --> 00:13:49,340
And I got there so I had to
already tell them the reason

285
00:13:49,340 --> 00:13:51,770
why am I there.

286
00:13:51,770 --> 00:13:58,310
And this man said to me, this
paper says Victor Hirsch Jacob.

287
00:13:58,310 --> 00:14:00,740
And he's 87 years old.

288
00:14:00,740 --> 00:14:02,750
You don't look like him.

289
00:14:02,750 --> 00:14:07,910
He says, you either bring
him, or you're arrested.

290
00:14:07,910 --> 00:14:11,150
So I had to go home and
bring my grandfather.

291
00:14:11,150 --> 00:14:15,320
And it's always with the fear
that he was going to be hit,

292
00:14:15,320 --> 00:14:19,200
or his bed was going to be
pulled, or pushed, or whatever.

293
00:14:19,200 --> 00:14:21,820
But that's what we had to do.

294
00:14:21,820 --> 00:14:23,880
Was the person who told
you to do this Hungarian?

295
00:14:23,880 --> 00:14:25,420
Yes.

296
00:14:25,420 --> 00:14:27,640
Yes, he was Hungarian.

297
00:14:27,640 --> 00:14:33,650
So then came that day in

the middle of April of 1944,

298

00:14:33,650 --> 00:14:35,105
and we were taken to the ghetto.

299

00:14:35,105 --> 00:14:38,420

300

00:14:38,420 --> 00:14:42,260

My grandmother was a
frail little old lady,

301

00:14:42,260 --> 00:14:44,630

and my grandfather was--

302

00:14:44,630 --> 00:14:48,000

he wasn't well, but
he was pretty good.

303

00:14:48,000 --> 00:14:51,510

When we got there, the first
thing they did, which was

304

00:14:51,510 --> 00:14:59,020

shave off the beards for
the old men that had beards.

305

00:14:59,020 --> 00:15:04,920

And from that day on, my
grandfather looked dead.

306

00:15:04,920 --> 00:15:09,865

2 and 1/2 weeks later,
he died in the ghetto.

307

00:15:09,865 --> 00:15:12,950

308

00:15:12,950 --> 00:15:21,020

When we cried, the rabbi said
to us, children don't cry.

309

00:15:21,020 --> 00:15:25,540
He is going to have a grave, but
the rest of us, we don't know.

310
00:15:25,540 --> 00:15:28,790

311
00:15:28,790 --> 00:15:30,710
So my grandfather died.

312
00:15:30,710 --> 00:15:31,580
We buried him.

313
00:15:31,580 --> 00:15:36,806
We were not allowed to go to
the cemetery, but he was buried.

314
00:15:36,806 --> 00:15:41,980
And about 10 days later, he
was deported to Auschwitz.

315
00:15:41,980 --> 00:15:44,658
So you were in the ghetto
for all of about a month?

316
00:15:44,658 --> 00:15:46,200
A month, about a
month approximately.

317
00:15:46,200 --> 00:15:48,010
You said it was Mukachevo?

318
00:15:48,010 --> 00:15:48,830
Mukachevo, yeah.

319
00:15:48,830 --> 00:15:49,330
Mukachevo.

320
00:15:49,330 --> 00:15:50,950
In a brick factory.

321
00:15:50,950 --> 00:15:52,300

In Hungary at the time?

322

00:15:52,300 --> 00:15:53,770

That was Hungary
at the time, yes.

323

00:15:53,770 --> 00:15:55,210

Munkács in Hungarian.

324

00:15:55,210 --> 00:15:56,440

Did you work in the ghetto?

325

00:15:56,440 --> 00:15:57,340

Were you--

326

00:15:57,340 --> 00:15:58,870

Not really.

327

00:15:58,870 --> 00:16:02,678

I mean, they made us sweep the
barracks, sweep the streets.

328

00:16:02,678 --> 00:16:03,970

You know, just stuff like that.

329

00:16:03,970 --> 00:16:06,700

And where did you live, and
under what circumstances?

330

00:16:06,700 --> 00:16:10,510

In the huts that the
bricks used to be.

331

00:16:10,510 --> 00:16:14,110

When you make bricks and you
put them out and has to dry,

332

00:16:14,110 --> 00:16:15,190

that's where we stayed.

333

00:16:15,190 --> 00:16:18,400

On the floor, there was straw--

334
00:16:18,400 --> 00:16:19,480
not enough.

335
00:16:19,480 --> 00:16:24,520
And we brought our own
bedding, and pillows,

336
00:16:24,520 --> 00:16:27,800
and that's where we slept.

337
00:16:27,800 --> 00:16:30,070
That's where we were.

338
00:16:30,070 --> 00:16:32,030
The whole family was
together at this time?

339
00:16:32,030 --> 00:16:32,160
Yes, in the ghetto.

340
00:16:32,160 --> 00:16:33,110
With the exception
of your brother

341
00:16:33,110 --> 00:16:34,590
who had left for America?

342
00:16:34,590 --> 00:16:38,970
Yes, we were all together--
my grandparents, my aunt,

343
00:16:38,970 --> 00:16:41,000
my mother's younger sister.

344
00:16:41,000 --> 00:16:43,300
The rest of my mother's
family was here--

345
00:16:43,300 --> 00:16:43,840
not really.

346

00:16:43,840 --> 00:16:44,840

Two brothers were there.

347

00:16:44,840 --> 00:16:49,040

348

00:16:49,040 --> 00:16:53,530

And we were there, as I
said, for about a month.

349

00:16:53,530 --> 00:16:59,010

And then we would put on
a train, the cattle cars.

350

00:16:59,010 --> 00:17:01,650

Was the ghetto liquidated
prior to you're going?

351

00:17:01,650 --> 00:17:03,630

Or were you just selected to go?

352

00:17:03,630 --> 00:17:05,290

It was liquidated.

353

00:17:05,290 --> 00:17:07,254

I mean, we all had to leave.

354

00:17:07,254 --> 00:17:08,400

Maybe not the same day.

355

00:17:08,400 --> 00:17:10,920

Maybe a day apart.

356

00:17:10,920 --> 00:17:12,619

But the ghetto ceased to be?

357

00:17:12,619 --> 00:17:14,040

Yes.

358

00:17:14,040 --> 00:17:17,010

Then like between the middle

of May to the end of May,

359

00:17:17,010 --> 00:17:18,030

the ghetto was--

360

00:17:18,030 --> 00:17:21,089

all the ghettos were

liquidated in the Carpathian.

361

00:17:21,089 --> 00:17:23,430

Yes.

362

00:17:23,430 --> 00:17:27,839

So we were on the train, I don't

know, 2 and 1/2 days, 3 days.

363

00:17:27,839 --> 00:17:31,760

We really lost track of time.

364

00:17:31,760 --> 00:17:37,100

And when we got to

Auschwitz, and they started--

365

00:17:37,100 --> 00:17:40,570

hurry up, hurry up,

get out fast, fast.

366

00:17:40,570 --> 00:17:42,790

And right away, the

men went one way,

367

00:17:42,790 --> 00:17:46,040

and the women went another way.

368

00:17:46,040 --> 00:17:47,053

And there were the--

369

00:17:47,053 --> 00:17:49,711

370

00:17:49,711 --> 00:17:53,450

what do they call--

the Polish Jewish men.

371

00:17:53,450 --> 00:17:55,190

They wore striped suits.

372

00:17:55,190 --> 00:17:57,680

They were called the kapos.

373

00:17:57,680 --> 00:18:00,590

They weren't supposed
to tell us anything.

374

00:18:00,590 --> 00:18:05,072

But quietly, they would say,
young women that have children,

375

00:18:05,072 --> 00:18:06,155

give them to your mothers.

376

00:18:06,155 --> 00:18:09,330

377

00:18:09,330 --> 00:18:13,350

A young girl, if asked
how old, say older.

378

00:18:13,350 --> 00:18:16,740

An older woman, if asked
how old, say younger.

379

00:18:16,740 --> 00:18:18,990

But we had no idea why.

380

00:18:18,990 --> 00:18:22,060

We didn't know what
was happening there.

381

00:18:22,060 --> 00:18:24,240

And unfortunately,
most young mothers

382

00:18:24,240 --> 00:18:25,540

did not give up their children.

383

00:18:25,540 --> 00:18:28,930

384

00:18:28,930 --> 00:18:31,960

Then, of course, we got
to the famous table,

385

00:18:31,960 --> 00:18:36,040

where the finger
was your destiny,

386

00:18:36,040 --> 00:18:37,820

whether you live or die.

387

00:18:37,820 --> 00:18:39,140

If you go left, you die.

388

00:18:39,140 --> 00:18:42,360

If you go right, you live.

389

00:18:42,360 --> 00:18:48,180

And we got to that point, and
we were with this family--

390

00:18:48,180 --> 00:18:49,050

very close.

391

00:18:49,050 --> 00:18:53,800

They were three girls,
three sisters and a mother,

392

00:18:53,800 --> 00:19:00,240

and my aunt, my mother, and my
grandmother, my sister, and I.

393

00:19:00,240 --> 00:19:05,100

And he was showing my
mother to go to the right.

394

00:19:05,100 --> 00:19:06,780

I mean, it was such a--

395

00:19:06,780 --> 00:19:07,740
almost chaos.

396

00:19:07,740 --> 00:19:11,370
We didn't even know what
was happening to us.

397

00:19:11,370 --> 00:19:14,430
He showed my mother
to go to the right.

398

00:19:14,430 --> 00:19:18,470
And my mother says, I have
to take care of my mother.

399

00:19:18,470 --> 00:19:21,440

400

00:19:21,440 --> 00:19:24,350
He says-- and then
this other woman

401

00:19:24,350 --> 00:19:28,430
that had the three
daughters came to the table.

402

00:19:28,430 --> 00:19:30,530
And she takes her kerchief off.

403

00:19:30,530 --> 00:19:32,720
And she says to
him, look, I'm old.

404

00:19:32,720 --> 00:19:35,160
I can't work.

405

00:19:35,160 --> 00:19:39,120
So he says, you take that
old lady, and you can work,

406

00:19:39,120 --> 00:19:40,860
he says to my mother.

407
00:19:40,860 --> 00:19:43,800
The reason she did that
is because the youngest

408
00:19:43,800 --> 00:19:46,280
daughter they thought
was going to go left.

409
00:19:46,280 --> 00:19:49,670

410
00:19:49,670 --> 00:19:53,630
So my mother came with
us, and the other one

411
00:19:53,630 --> 00:19:54,590
went the other way.

412
00:19:54,590 --> 00:19:59,330
For the first couple of days, we
didn't know what was happening.

413
00:19:59,330 --> 00:20:00,650
We saw the chimneys.

414
00:20:00,650 --> 00:20:02,300
We went to Birkenau.

415
00:20:02,300 --> 00:20:06,100
That was Auschwitz, too.

416
00:20:06,100 --> 00:20:07,050
We saw the chimneys.

417
00:20:07,050 --> 00:20:08,730
We saw the smoke and the flames.

418
00:20:08,730 --> 00:20:14,430
We smelled, but we were told

it's bakeries, factories,

419

00:20:14,430 --> 00:20:16,210

whatever.

420

00:20:16,210 --> 00:20:20,920

One day we were noisy,

and the block elder--

421

00:20:20,920 --> 00:20:26,720

that was also a Jewish

inmate that what there,

422

00:20:26,720 --> 00:20:28,370

they built a camp--

423

00:20:28,370 --> 00:20:30,680

she started

screaming at us, what

424

00:20:30,680 --> 00:20:32,150

are you in such a good mood for?

425

00:20:32,150 --> 00:20:33,620

Why do you talk so much?

426

00:20:33,620 --> 00:20:37,160

Don't you know your mothers,

fathers, brothers, sisters,

427

00:20:37,160 --> 00:20:40,240

and children burning over there?

428

00:20:40,240 --> 00:20:44,860

Well, that was like a shock.

429

00:20:44,860 --> 00:20:46,810

We knew that it

can't be too good,

430

00:20:46,810 --> 00:20:50,920

but we didn't think

it was that bad.

431

00:20:50,920 --> 00:20:53,440

Then after, I don't
know, a week or 10 days,

432

00:20:53,440 --> 00:20:55,960

we lost track of time.

433

00:20:55,960 --> 00:20:57,880

When you went with
your mother, what

434

00:20:57,880 --> 00:21:01,090

had happened to your
father and your siblings?

435

00:21:01,090 --> 00:21:06,850

My father and my
brother went separately.

436

00:21:06,850 --> 00:21:10,360

They were separated,
I guess chosen

437

00:21:10,360 --> 00:21:12,340

for work in separate commandos.

438

00:21:12,340 --> 00:21:13,750

So they were separated.

439

00:21:13,750 --> 00:21:15,740

Yes.

440

00:21:15,740 --> 00:21:18,550

My father, which we
were always afraid

441

00:21:18,550 --> 00:21:22,090

that he was going to give
away his bread for cigarettes

442

00:21:22,090 --> 00:21:25,600
and die, did not do it.

443
00:21:25,600 --> 00:21:29,020
He gave away his
cigarettes for bread.

444
00:21:29,020 --> 00:21:35,240
But unfortunately,
he was killed anyway.

445
00:21:35,240 --> 00:21:39,950
You know, like some people
will try to get away from work

446
00:21:39,950 --> 00:21:42,760
and go to the bathroom.

447
00:21:42,760 --> 00:21:45,370
So every now and then,
the Gestapo, the SS,

448
00:21:45,370 --> 00:21:48,930
would go into the
bathroom and club them.

449
00:21:48,930 --> 00:21:51,730
It didn't make any
difference where they hit.

450
00:21:51,730 --> 00:21:55,480
My father was there, because
he needed to be there,

451
00:21:55,480 --> 00:22:00,760
but he got hit over the head
and died right then and there.

452
00:22:00,760 --> 00:22:06,230
And my brother survived,
which, of course,

453
00:22:06,230 --> 00:22:08,290

we didn't know until
the end of the war.

454
00:22:08,290 --> 00:22:10,330
Was it your brother
who told you this?

455
00:22:10,330 --> 00:22:11,320
No, somebody else.

456
00:22:11,320 --> 00:22:12,970
My brother wasn't there.

457
00:22:12,970 --> 00:22:15,680
Somebody else told us.

458
00:22:15,680 --> 00:22:18,190
So anyway, about 10 days--

459
00:22:18,190 --> 00:22:25,360
a week or 10 days after we
were there we got tattooed.

460
00:22:25,360 --> 00:22:27,760
I have a number.

461
00:22:27,760 --> 00:22:32,430
And we were sent to work.

462
00:22:32,430 --> 00:22:37,390
We worked what was called--

463
00:22:37,390 --> 00:22:42,040
they called it Canada,
because it was a rich area.

464
00:22:42,040 --> 00:22:45,070
That was for women, primarily?

465
00:22:45,070 --> 00:22:47,170
Well, men worked at
the station, and women

466
00:22:47,170 --> 00:22:50,150
worked in the barracks.

467
00:22:50,150 --> 00:22:53,420
Well, we sorted.

468
00:22:53,420 --> 00:22:54,410
There were, I think--

469
00:22:54,410 --> 00:22:58,260
if I remember correctly,
there were 10 barracks,

470
00:22:58,260 --> 00:23:01,590
and each group was
assigned to a barrack where

471
00:23:01,590 --> 00:23:06,780
we sorted everybody's,
we came across,

472
00:23:06,780 --> 00:23:08,910
papers of people we knew--

473
00:23:08,910 --> 00:23:10,110
different things that we--

474
00:23:10,110 --> 00:23:13,480

475
00:23:13,480 --> 00:23:19,620
physically, it was work, but
it wasn't very hard work.

476
00:23:19,620 --> 00:23:23,910
Like we didn't have to
carry rocks, or bricks,

477
00:23:23,910 --> 00:23:28,440
or clean bathrooms,
or poor concrete.

478
00:23:28,440 --> 00:23:31,830
We were under cover,
like in a barrack.

479
00:23:31,830 --> 00:23:34,290
We didn't get wet.

480
00:23:34,290 --> 00:23:37,600
The sun didn't burn us.

481
00:23:37,600 --> 00:23:45,390
And whatever food--
we did not have enough

482
00:23:45,390 --> 00:23:49,020
in whatever we were given.

483
00:23:49,020 --> 00:23:51,750
We had-- everybody had
something in their bundles.

484
00:23:51,750 --> 00:23:52,860
There were cookies.

485
00:23:52,860 --> 00:23:53,970
There were crackers.

486
00:23:53,970 --> 00:23:56,507
There was bread, sugar.

487
00:23:56,507 --> 00:23:57,840
I mean, everybody had something.

488
00:23:57,840 --> 00:23:59,610
So we were like--

489
00:23:59,610 --> 00:24:01,105
Relatively luxurious?

490
00:24:01,105 --> 00:24:01,605

Right.

491

00:24:01,605 --> 00:24:04,120

492

00:24:04,120 --> 00:24:06,070

We were kept clean.

493

00:24:06,070 --> 00:24:07,810

In fact, we wore
white kerchiefs.

494

00:24:07,810 --> 00:24:10,960

Our hair was shaved off,
completely shaved off.

495

00:24:10,960 --> 00:24:14,940

We had white kishifs on.

496

00:24:14,940 --> 00:24:17,730

We're used to,
from the beginning,

497

00:24:17,730 --> 00:24:20,370

take stuff and put
them in the kerchiefs,

498

00:24:20,370 --> 00:24:22,080

because they were
like tucked under--

499

00:24:22,080 --> 00:24:23,700

put stuff in the kerchiefs.

500

00:24:23,700 --> 00:24:26,160

Or we had belts--

501

00:24:26,160 --> 00:24:27,930

lose up the dress
and put something

502

00:24:27,930 --> 00:24:33,360

in for people in camp that were
not as fortunate as we were,

503
00:24:33,360 --> 00:24:35,100
if you can call it fortunate--

504
00:24:35,100 --> 00:24:38,290

505
00:24:38,290 --> 00:24:42,070
a cookie, a lump
of sugar, a piece

506
00:24:42,070 --> 00:24:48,100
of bread, or whatever we were
able to, and, of course, shoes.

507
00:24:48,100 --> 00:24:55,770
Shoes-- we used to go put
on a pair of shoes at work,

508
00:24:55,770 --> 00:24:59,640
go back to camp,
and then give them

509
00:24:59,640 --> 00:25:02,760
to somebody that needed
shoes that worked

510
00:25:02,760 --> 00:25:04,740
outside, that needed them.

511
00:25:04,740 --> 00:25:08,370
Go back in rags, whatever
they had, and the next day do

512
00:25:08,370 --> 00:25:10,380
the same thing--

513
00:25:10,380 --> 00:25:12,930
underwear.

514

00:25:12,930 --> 00:25:14,420

And then for a
while, as I said, we

515

00:25:14,420 --> 00:25:16,200

used to carry things in our--

516

00:25:16,200 --> 00:25:17,730

we got caught one day.

517

00:25:17,730 --> 00:25:21,240

And my hand was hit with a club.

518

00:25:21,240 --> 00:25:24,030

And after that, we
decided everybody

519

00:25:24,030 --> 00:25:25,980

has to fight for
their own lives,

520

00:25:25,980 --> 00:25:28,860

and as much as you'd like
to help the next one.

521

00:25:28,860 --> 00:25:30,960

So we didn't hide
anything in our dresses

522

00:25:30,960 --> 00:25:35,010

or in our kerchiefs,
but we did bring shoes,

523

00:25:35,010 --> 00:25:37,560

and we did bring
underwear, and whatever we

524

00:25:37,560 --> 00:25:39,330

were able to for other people.

525

00:25:39,330 --> 00:25:42,450

We would even put a
dress under our dress.

526
00:25:42,450 --> 00:25:46,170
Anything that wasn't
visible, we brought into camp

527
00:25:46,170 --> 00:25:50,030
for other people.

528
00:25:50,030 --> 00:25:54,510
And, as I said, we
considered ourselves

529
00:25:54,510 --> 00:25:57,120
fortunate with material--

530
00:25:57,120 --> 00:26:05,580
like working under a roof,
having supplement for our diet.

531
00:26:05,580 --> 00:26:14,360
But the other way,
mentally, it was awful.

532
00:26:14,360 --> 00:26:17,300
We're talking about seven
months in this place?

533
00:26:17,300 --> 00:26:20,600
We were there seven
months, but in that place

534
00:26:20,600 --> 00:26:25,127
we worked only about
five, maybe six--

535
00:26:25,127 --> 00:26:26,960
between five and six
months we worked there.

536
00:26:26,960 --> 00:26:31,760
Because then the transport
didn't come in anymore.

537

00:26:31,760 --> 00:26:35,100

So they didn't need
us there anymore.

538

00:26:35,100 --> 00:26:40,660

We used to see people
going to the crematorium,

539

00:26:40,660 --> 00:26:44,960

because we worked
between all the chimneys.

540

00:26:44,960 --> 00:26:48,440

We used to see people going in.

541

00:26:48,440 --> 00:26:51,920

And very soon, we would
see the smoke, and flames,

542

00:26:51,920 --> 00:26:54,430

and the smell of bones.

543

00:26:54,430 --> 00:26:55,910

And many times--

544

00:26:55,910 --> 00:26:57,430

And this happened
on a daily basis?

545

00:26:57,430 --> 00:26:58,000

Oh, yes.

546

00:26:58,000 --> 00:27:00,790

At the beginning, it
happened a few times a day.

547

00:27:00,790 --> 00:27:03,880

And you had no mistake
about what this was now?

548

00:27:03,880 --> 00:27:06,290

No, we knew what it was.

549
00:27:06,290 --> 00:27:10,030
We definitely knew what it was.

550
00:27:10,030 --> 00:27:16,830
They used to bring in people,
elderly, that couldn't walk.

551
00:27:16,830 --> 00:27:22,040
They would put them on
a truck at the station

552
00:27:22,040 --> 00:27:23,780
and bring them to
the crematorium.

553
00:27:23,780 --> 00:27:28,540
For the first time I saw
it, they dumped them.

554
00:27:28,540 --> 00:27:33,070
A dump truck-- lifted the
truck and dumped the people.

555
00:27:33,070 --> 00:27:35,710
I mean, very few
people saw that.

556
00:27:35,710 --> 00:27:38,890

557
00:27:38,890 --> 00:27:43,660
I went to Washington to
the Holocaust gathering,

558
00:27:43,660 --> 00:27:47,950
and I got to speak to a couple.

559
00:27:47,950 --> 00:27:51,490
They were from Greece,
and they were also--

560

00:27:51,490 --> 00:27:55,660
they were in Birkenau, the
same camp that I was at.

561
00:27:55,660 --> 00:27:59,500
And he asked me, where was
I, and where did I work?

562
00:27:59,500 --> 00:28:01,660
And I told him.

563
00:28:01,660 --> 00:28:04,490
And he turns to me,
and he says to me,

564
00:28:04,490 --> 00:28:07,580
I want to ask you a question.

565
00:28:07,580 --> 00:28:10,100
How do you live a normal life?

566
00:28:10,100 --> 00:28:13,760
He says, we all knew
what was happening,

567
00:28:13,760 --> 00:28:16,640
but we didn't see
it, and you did.

568
00:28:16,640 --> 00:28:17,570
And it's true.

569
00:28:17,570 --> 00:28:18,200
We did.

570
00:28:18,200 --> 00:28:20,300
We saw it.

571
00:28:20,300 --> 00:28:24,440
They used to take little
old ladies and men

572

00:28:24,440 --> 00:28:27,320

on a pushcart, one
of these that used

573

00:28:27,320 --> 00:28:29,270

to be on the East
Side, the olden days--

574

00:28:29,270 --> 00:28:30,130

Yes.

575

00:28:30,130 --> 00:28:31,100

--and bring them.

576

00:28:31,100 --> 00:28:35,040

And that, the inmates did.

577

00:28:35,040 --> 00:28:38,870

And if one of them
wanted to help

578

00:28:38,870 --> 00:28:42,470

an old lady of that pushcart,
the German would say,

579

00:28:42,470 --> 00:28:44,660

we did not bring her
here for vacation.

580

00:28:44,660 --> 00:28:46,010

Just drop it.

581

00:28:46,010 --> 00:28:48,085

So when you drop
that, it goes over.

582

00:28:48,085 --> 00:28:49,460

You know, the kind
on two wheels.

583

00:28:49,460 --> 00:28:49,960

Yes.

584

00:28:49,960 --> 00:28:55,250

It goes over, and
they would just drop.

585

00:28:55,250 --> 00:28:59,840

And that was-- anyway.

586

00:28:59,840 --> 00:29:02,120

I had my mother there--

587

00:29:02,120 --> 00:29:05,880

my sister, and my mother,
my mother's sister.

588

00:29:05,880 --> 00:29:09,980

We all kept very close together.

589

00:29:09,980 --> 00:29:12,860

We always made
sure that wherever

590

00:29:12,860 --> 00:29:15,590

we went to line up
that my mother was not

591

00:29:15,590 --> 00:29:16,850

in front of the line.

592

00:29:16,850 --> 00:29:20,170

593

00:29:20,170 --> 00:29:22,780

She was always in the middle--

594

00:29:22,780 --> 00:29:24,880

not in the back and not
in front, because they

595

00:29:24,880 --> 00:29:27,790

would go around, the SS.

596

00:29:27,790 --> 00:29:30,310

Always in the middle,
because we don't

597

00:29:30,310 --> 00:29:32,700

want her to be very visible.

598

00:29:32,700 --> 00:29:35,560

599

00:29:35,560 --> 00:29:40,930

And then when we stopped
working in Canada, you know,

600

00:29:40,930 --> 00:29:42,620

when the transports
stopped coming in,

601

00:29:42,620 --> 00:29:44,560

also the uprising
at the crematorium

602

00:29:44,560 --> 00:29:47,010

where they threw a few SS
in the oven and whatnot--

603

00:29:47,010 --> 00:29:49,510

There was an uprising there at
the time when you were there?

604

00:29:49,510 --> 00:29:50,230

Sure, in October.

605

00:29:50,230 --> 00:29:52,063

Can you tell us a little
about that, please?

606

00:29:52,063 --> 00:29:53,740

We really didn't
know much about it.

607

00:29:53,740 --> 00:29:56,440

We just heard

something happened,

608

00:29:56,440 --> 00:30:00,490

because tales like that
were not carried around.

609

00:30:00,490 --> 00:30:04,300

And those were men,
and men in Auschwitz--

610

00:30:04,300 --> 00:30:07,090

men and women were
not in contact.

611

00:30:07,090 --> 00:30:09,580

We were in different
camps in Birkenau.

612

00:30:09,580 --> 00:30:12,730

Other camps, they were
just in different barracks.

613

00:30:12,730 --> 00:30:15,460

But in Birkenau, we were
different camps divided

614

00:30:15,460 --> 00:30:17,600

by electrified barbed wires.

615

00:30:17,600 --> 00:30:18,490

Yes.

616

00:30:18,490 --> 00:30:20,410

So we really didn't know much.

617

00:30:20,410 --> 00:30:25,410

When we worked where
we worked, we used to--

618

00:30:25,410 --> 00:30:27,810

the man that locked away the--

619

00:30:27,810 --> 00:30:30,790

separate issues and
separate this and that--

620

00:30:30,790 --> 00:30:35,340

we would sometimes
save jewelry for them,

621

00:30:35,340 --> 00:30:36,810

because they sort of--

622

00:30:36,810 --> 00:30:41,640

I don't know how-- but they were
in touch with the underground.

623

00:30:41,640 --> 00:30:45,960

We would say jewelry for them
to give it to the underground.

624

00:30:45,960 --> 00:30:48,510

So then we, once in a
while, would hear something.

625

00:30:48,510 --> 00:30:50,410

They would maybe
tell us something.

626

00:30:50,410 --> 00:30:53,500

But after we stopped working
there, we didn't know anything.

627

00:30:53,500 --> 00:30:55,920

We just knew that
there was an uprising,

628

00:30:55,920 --> 00:30:59,940

and that a few SS were
thrown into ovens.

629

00:30:59,940 --> 00:31:03,030

And after that, there
was no more burning.

630

00:31:03,030 --> 00:31:08,080

We saw no smoke, no
more fire, and that.

631

00:31:08,080 --> 00:31:11,380

So they put us in a
factory where we were

632

00:31:11,380 --> 00:31:18,220

making ropes for parachutes.

633

00:31:18,220 --> 00:31:19,620

And there was an incident.

634

00:31:19,620 --> 00:31:24,350

It was Yom Kippur,
Erev Yom Kippur.

635

00:31:24,350 --> 00:31:27,770

We had a quota how
much we needed to make.

636

00:31:27,770 --> 00:31:32,390

Somehow, we knew that Yom
Kippur was on the way.

637

00:31:32,390 --> 00:31:35,420

We found out that it
was, and we decided

638

00:31:35,420 --> 00:31:39,890

that we are going to try and
make up so that that day we

639

00:31:39,890 --> 00:31:41,060

can just play around.

640

00:31:41,060 --> 00:31:42,170

It's a holiday.

641

00:31:42,170 --> 00:31:45,650

We shouldn't work.

642

00:31:45,650 --> 00:31:50,300

And the SS somehow
or other found out.

643

00:31:50,300 --> 00:31:55,490

We were kneeling all night
outside because of that.

644

00:31:55,490 --> 00:32:00,080

And the next day, they
made sure that we worked.

645

00:32:00,080 --> 00:32:03,195

646

00:32:03,195 --> 00:32:04,860

The next day being Yom Kippur?

647

00:32:04,860 --> 00:32:07,810

648

00:32:07,810 --> 00:32:10,760

I mean, we knew we were
going into the factory.

649

00:32:10,760 --> 00:32:12,850

There was no two ways about it.

650

00:32:12,850 --> 00:32:16,690

We just thought that maybe
we can goof off and not work,

651

00:32:16,690 --> 00:32:20,784

because it was a high holiday.

652

00:32:20,784 --> 00:32:21,850

We couldn't do it.

653

00:32:21,850 --> 00:32:24,390

654

00:32:24,390 --> 00:32:28,240
Also, in the summer, Tisha B'Av?

655
00:32:28,240 --> 00:32:30,370
Yes.

656
00:32:30,370 --> 00:32:32,510
That's the day of the
destruction of the temple.

657
00:32:32,510 --> 00:32:33,880
Where you're supposed to fast.

658
00:32:33,880 --> 00:32:35,570
Yes.

659
00:32:35,570 --> 00:32:38,330
They found out that some
people were fasting.

660
00:32:38,330 --> 00:32:41,080

661
00:32:41,080 --> 00:32:49,570
They rounded up as many as
they could and took blood.

662
00:32:49,570 --> 00:32:53,830
They drew every
ounce of blood they

663
00:32:53,830 --> 00:32:56,740
were able to get
out of the people,

664
00:32:56,740 --> 00:33:00,670
because they found out
that we were fasting.

665
00:33:00,670 --> 00:33:05,170
I mean, they took blood anyway,
but maybe not to that extent.

666

00:33:05,170 --> 00:33:08,330

Maybe they would
leave a few ounces.

667

00:33:08,330 --> 00:33:10,583

But as long as the blood
was coming out of the veins,

668

00:33:10,583 --> 00:33:12,340

they let it run.

669

00:33:12,340 --> 00:33:14,410

They selected certain
people to do that to?

670

00:33:14,410 --> 00:33:14,920

Whoever.

671

00:33:14,920 --> 00:33:17,320

That day, it was whoever
they could round up.

672

00:33:17,320 --> 00:33:19,210

For some reason, I was lucky.

673

00:33:19,210 --> 00:33:20,440

I escaped it.

674

00:33:20,440 --> 00:33:22,120

My mother did and my sister.

675

00:33:22,120 --> 00:33:28,050

We did not fall
into their hands.

676

00:33:28,050 --> 00:33:32,600

But those were the things
that were happening.

677

00:33:32,600 --> 00:33:40,370

And then we were there
sometimes in November.

678
00:33:40,370 --> 00:33:43,010

679
00:33:43,010 --> 00:33:45,500
Every time we went
to the showers,

680
00:33:45,500 --> 00:33:52,830
we never knew who
was going to come out

681
00:33:52,830 --> 00:33:56,030
or who was going
to be taken away.

682
00:33:56,030 --> 00:34:03,400
At that point, my sister
was quite sickly-looking.

683
00:34:03,400 --> 00:34:08,790
And one day, they just
took her out of line,

684
00:34:08,790 --> 00:34:13,929
and we were sure that
that was the end of her.

685
00:34:13,929 --> 00:34:20,409
But then we found out
that she was sent away.

686
00:34:20,409 --> 00:34:22,690
And she died in Bergen-Belsen
two or three days

687
00:34:22,690 --> 00:34:24,081
before liberation.

688
00:34:24,081 --> 00:34:28,010

689

00:34:28,010 --> 00:34:33,980

In fact, my mother got
to Bergen-Belsen just

690

00:34:33,980 --> 00:34:39,889

a day or two after she died.

691

00:34:39,889 --> 00:34:41,889

How was she told?

692

00:34:41,889 --> 00:34:44,380

Someone told her that they
saw her and that she died.

693

00:34:44,380 --> 00:34:48,739

She had typhoid when
she died-- typhoid.

694

00:34:48,739 --> 00:34:55,909

Anyway, so that was
about November of 1944.

695

00:34:55,909 --> 00:35:01,720

In December, again,
they made a selection.

696

00:35:01,720 --> 00:35:06,640

And they looked
for younger girls,

697

00:35:06,640 --> 00:35:12,890

and they also asked occupation.

698

00:35:12,890 --> 00:35:15,470

So I was dressmaker.

699

00:35:15,470 --> 00:35:19,530

In fact, I still
do it for myself.

700

00:35:19,530 --> 00:35:21,920

So I told them what I was.

701

00:35:21,920 --> 00:35:25,030

And so I was separated
from my mother.

702

00:35:25,030 --> 00:35:28,020

703

00:35:28,020 --> 00:35:30,540

And this other friend of
mine that I mentioned before,

704

00:35:30,540 --> 00:35:31,750

the three sisters--

705

00:35:31,750 --> 00:35:32,520

Yes.

706

00:35:32,520 --> 00:35:35,010

--the oldest sister-- that
was my very dear friend from

707

00:35:35,010 --> 00:35:36,120

childhood on--

708

00:35:36,120 --> 00:35:40,160

she and I were separated
from the others.

709

00:35:40,160 --> 00:35:42,000

We didn't know what
happened to them.

710

00:35:42,000 --> 00:35:44,720

They didn't know
what happened to us.

711

00:35:44,720 --> 00:35:49,880

We were taken to Germany,
Sudetenland, to a camp.

712

00:35:49,880 --> 00:35:52,970

It was only about

300 or 400 women.

713

00:35:52,970 --> 00:35:56,900

It was a small camp
and an unknown one.

714

00:35:56,900 --> 00:35:59,350

And we worked in a factory.

715

00:35:59,350 --> 00:36:03,860

We were working on
communication systems--

716

00:36:03,860 --> 00:36:07,130

telephones, radios for
the ships, for the planes,

717

00:36:07,130 --> 00:36:09,580

for stuff like that.

718

00:36:09,580 --> 00:36:15,110

So they wanted someone that
has flexible fingers that can--

719

00:36:15,110 --> 00:36:18,440

like we needed to solder
a thin little wire--

720

00:36:18,440 --> 00:36:18,980

Yes.

721

00:36:18,980 --> 00:36:23,210

--and that precision.

722

00:36:23,210 --> 00:36:27,860

Where, again, if you can
consider yourself lucky,

723

00:36:27,860 --> 00:36:30,590

we were lucky.

724

00:36:30,590 --> 00:36:32,180

Because it was winter.

725

00:36:32,180 --> 00:36:33,605

We worked in a worm factory.

726

00:36:33,605 --> 00:36:36,540

727

00:36:36,540 --> 00:36:41,860

We did not have enough
food, but at least

728

00:36:41,860 --> 00:36:48,900

if you're hungry, and warm,
and basically not too filthy,

729

00:36:48,900 --> 00:36:50,760

it was more bearable.

730

00:36:50,760 --> 00:36:52,680

Nobody in that camp died.

731

00:36:52,680 --> 00:36:55,940

732

00:36:55,940 --> 00:37:02,210

And then we had the Czech
forced laborers working there.

733

00:37:02,210 --> 00:37:08,750

It was like a [NON-ENGLISH],, an
inmate, and a Czech, an inmate,

734

00:37:08,750 --> 00:37:10,160

and a Czech.

735

00:37:10,160 --> 00:37:13,410

They weren't supposed
to talk to us,

736

00:37:13,410 --> 00:37:17,430

because they were civilians.

737
00:37:17,430 --> 00:37:20,280
We were prisoners.

738
00:37:20,280 --> 00:37:23,910
But we would sit and
work, do our work,

739
00:37:23,910 --> 00:37:26,650
and they would tell us
what's going on in the world.

740
00:37:26,650 --> 00:37:32,610
So we knew more or less
that the war is ending soon,

741
00:37:32,610 --> 00:37:36,630
and we were just hoping
that somebody survives,

742
00:37:36,630 --> 00:37:38,970
that somebody will
be there to tell

743
00:37:38,970 --> 00:37:40,370
the tale of what has happened.

744
00:37:40,370 --> 00:37:43,570

745
00:37:43,570 --> 00:37:48,030
They would bring us maybe
sometimes a lump of sugar

746
00:37:48,030 --> 00:37:49,890
and push it with--

747
00:37:49,890 --> 00:37:53,490
if they would have been caught,
they would have been dead--

748
00:37:53,490 --> 00:37:56,210

749

00:37:56,210 --> 00:38:00,500

sometimes a little bit
of salt. You know, these

750

00:38:00,500 --> 00:38:02,330

were very dear commodities.

751

00:38:02,330 --> 00:38:04,640

They had access to these things?

752

00:38:04,640 --> 00:38:07,250

They had a ration, but they had.

753

00:38:07,250 --> 00:38:09,320

But we didn't.

754

00:38:09,320 --> 00:38:15,410

This friend of mine, she
couldn't eat without the food.

755

00:38:15,410 --> 00:38:18,680

I mean, it was really
like you chewing on paper.

756

00:38:18,680 --> 00:38:21,470

It was horrible.

757

00:38:21,470 --> 00:38:28,390

So he had brought us salt
and in a piece of paper.

758

00:38:28,390 --> 00:38:29,950

And she was so happy.

759

00:38:29,950 --> 00:38:32,290

She took that salt, and she
was like going to put it

760

00:38:32,290 --> 00:38:34,000

in her soup all at once.

761
00:38:34,000 --> 00:38:35,420
I grabbed it from her.

762
00:38:35,420 --> 00:38:37,670
And I said to her, I'm
not going to eat it.

763
00:38:37,670 --> 00:38:39,940
I'm going to save it for you.

764
00:38:39,940 --> 00:38:42,920
But I'll give you a
little bit at a time.

765
00:38:42,920 --> 00:38:44,500
That's how I did it.

766
00:38:44,500 --> 00:38:47,530
On every soup, I gave
her a little bit.

767
00:38:47,530 --> 00:38:50,620
Well, she and I,
as I said before,

768
00:38:50,620 --> 00:38:54,820
we were very dear friends from
childhood on-- still are--

769
00:38:54,820 --> 00:38:58,390
we went through from
beginning to end together.

770
00:38:58,390 --> 00:39:02,310

771
00:39:02,310 --> 00:39:08,250
We had a friend with us that
has some kind of an eye disease.

772
00:39:08,250 --> 00:39:10,080

Right now, she's almost blind.

773

00:39:10,080 --> 00:39:13,390

But at the time, she
was OK during the day,

774

00:39:13,390 --> 00:39:14,810

but she couldn't see at night.

775

00:39:14,810 --> 00:39:17,630

776

00:39:17,630 --> 00:39:19,220

What would God give?

777

00:39:19,220 --> 00:39:22,270

She was sent to the night shift.

778

00:39:22,270 --> 00:39:27,650

And we knew that she cannot
see how to walk to steps.

779

00:39:27,650 --> 00:39:30,770

She's going to-- they're
going to kill her.

780

00:39:30,770 --> 00:39:34,250

But we know some other
women at the night shift.

781

00:39:34,250 --> 00:39:36,620

This friend of mine
and I knew these--

782

00:39:36,620 --> 00:39:39,320

they were also three sisters.

783

00:39:39,320 --> 00:39:45,580

And we ask them to
please take care of her,

784

00:39:45,580 --> 00:39:47,110

and we told them why.

785

00:39:47,110 --> 00:39:49,550

And nobody was supposed
to know about that,

786

00:39:49,550 --> 00:39:50,740

but we told them why.

787

00:39:50,740 --> 00:39:55,030

Because if they're going
to see that she can't see--

788

00:39:55,030 --> 00:40:01,390

inside already she was
OK, but not outdoors.

789

00:40:01,390 --> 00:40:03,670

And she always--
every time we speak

790

00:40:03,670 --> 00:40:07,870

to each other she always says,
I owe my life to you and Helen,

791

00:40:07,870 --> 00:40:08,680

always.

792

00:40:08,680 --> 00:40:12,535

Because if not for us, she
could have never ever survived.

793

00:40:12,535 --> 00:40:17,320

794

00:40:17,320 --> 00:40:18,280

And--

795

00:40:18,280 --> 00:40:18,780

No.

796

00:40:18,780 --> 00:40:20,430

Please, go ahead.

797

00:40:20,430 --> 00:40:21,200

She was lucky.

798

00:40:21,200 --> 00:40:24,350

Her mother and father
survived, this girl's.

799

00:40:24,350 --> 00:40:25,930

So she's OK now.

800

00:40:25,930 --> 00:40:27,590

Almost blind, but she's OK.

801

00:40:27,590 --> 00:40:30,080

How old was she at the time?

802

00:40:30,080 --> 00:40:31,160

She was about 21.

803

00:40:31,160 --> 00:40:34,780

804

00:40:34,780 --> 00:40:36,920

21, yes.

805

00:40:36,920 --> 00:40:40,100

And then came spring--

806

00:40:40,100 --> 00:40:42,860

807

00:40:42,860 --> 00:40:46,850

March, April.

808

00:40:46,850 --> 00:40:51,920

Then it got nice, and
things don't change.

809

00:40:51,920 --> 00:40:53,960

Because we work and all that.

810

00:40:53,960 --> 00:40:55,760

Everything's going on the same.

811

00:40:55,760 --> 00:40:59,180

812

00:40:59,180 --> 00:41:02,180

Well, we may one morning.

813

00:41:02,180 --> 00:41:03,770

We went out to work.

814

00:41:03,770 --> 00:41:06,920

And again, we could
be out at 6 o'clock

815

00:41:06,920 --> 00:41:09,670

in the morning, what they
called [INAUDIBLE] Appel,

816

00:41:09,670 --> 00:41:10,970

to be counted.

817

00:41:10,970 --> 00:41:12,920

Roll call.

818

00:41:12,920 --> 00:41:19,960

And we went out to stand five
abreast and wait to be counted,

819

00:41:19,960 --> 00:41:21,940

wait to go to work.

820

00:41:21,940 --> 00:41:23,320

And the time goes on.

821

00:41:23,320 --> 00:41:24,400

Nobody shows.

822

00:41:24,400 --> 00:41:26,230

We don't see any Germans around.

823

00:41:26,230 --> 00:41:27,800

We don't see anything.

824

00:41:27,800 --> 00:41:30,580

We don't see anybody.

825

00:41:30,580 --> 00:41:37,570

It was like late morning when
finally the director of the SS

826

00:41:37,570 --> 00:41:39,980

women came.

827

00:41:39,980 --> 00:41:44,050

And we started
scrambling to our places.

828

00:41:44,050 --> 00:41:45,290

She says, no, no, no.

829

00:41:45,290 --> 00:41:46,730

Stay where you are.

830

00:41:46,730 --> 00:41:50,100

You don't have to
be in your places.

831

00:41:50,100 --> 00:41:55,610

I have something to tell you,
and I wish you would listen.

832

00:41:55,610 --> 00:41:58,740

And so she said, it's good news.

833

00:41:58,740 --> 00:42:01,020

The war is over.

834

00:42:01,020 --> 00:42:03,150

The Germans surrendered.

835
00:42:03,150 --> 00:42:06,180

836
00:42:06,180 --> 00:42:08,670
Nobody's going to
do anything to you.

837
00:42:08,670 --> 00:42:11,940
The fence is not--

838
00:42:11,940 --> 00:42:14,970
the barb wires and
not electrified.

839
00:42:14,970 --> 00:42:18,670
The gate is not locked.

840
00:42:18,670 --> 00:42:22,280
The warehouse is open.

841
00:42:22,280 --> 00:42:25,790
I know you have no
reason to listen to me,

842
00:42:25,790 --> 00:42:28,520
because I'm a SS woman.

843
00:42:28,520 --> 00:42:31,690
But I wish you'd listen.

844
00:42:31,690 --> 00:42:35,050
Don't go anyplace,
because there are

845
00:42:35,050 --> 00:42:41,190
a lot of angry Germans on
the road that have arms.

846
00:42:41,190 --> 00:42:43,230
And if they'll see
a [NON-ENGLISH],,

847
00:42:43,230 --> 00:42:46,260
they'll shoot on sight.

848
00:42:46,260 --> 00:42:51,570
Don't eat raw
potatoes, or turnips,

849
00:42:51,570 --> 00:42:53,970
or whatever you find
in the warehouse,

850
00:42:53,970 --> 00:42:56,640
because you are
going to get sick.

851
00:42:56,640 --> 00:43:00,970
Be careful of what you
eat, and by all means,

852
00:43:00,970 --> 00:43:03,480
don't leave the
camp for a few days

853
00:43:03,480 --> 00:43:08,640
until either Americans
or Russians come around.

854
00:43:08,640 --> 00:43:10,860
Because there was no one there.

855
00:43:10,860 --> 00:43:12,840
Did you believe this
when you heard it?

856
00:43:12,840 --> 00:43:14,500
We did, and we didn't.

857
00:43:14,500 --> 00:43:15,660
We were afraid.

858
00:43:15,660 --> 00:43:17,550

Believe it or not, we
were afraid to go out.

859
00:43:17,550 --> 00:43:18,880
Nobody left.

860
00:43:18,880 --> 00:43:21,990
Everybody stayed.

861
00:43:21,990 --> 00:43:28,030
And then a couple of days
later, maybe two days later,

862
00:43:28,030 --> 00:43:34,000
these men that we worked with,
the Czech forced laborers,

863
00:43:34,000 --> 00:43:36,230
came.

864
00:43:36,230 --> 00:43:40,400
And they each took a girl, two
girls, three girls, whatever,

865
00:43:40,400 --> 00:43:43,160
to their homes.

866
00:43:43,160 --> 00:43:45,440
We went with them.

867
00:43:45,440 --> 00:43:51,580
And we are just all very
sorry that we lost touch

868
00:43:51,580 --> 00:43:53,830
with these people.

869
00:43:53,830 --> 00:43:56,060
These people were so nice to us.

870
00:43:56,060 --> 00:43:57,980
They were so good.

871
00:43:57,980 --> 00:44:05,630
The first few days, they
only gave us potatoes

872
00:44:05,630 --> 00:44:11,050
without anything on them
and bread without anything.

873
00:44:11,050 --> 00:44:16,170
Because-- and not as much
as we wanted to, either.

874
00:44:16,170 --> 00:44:21,640
Because they knew that if
we're going to start eating all

875
00:44:21,640 --> 00:44:26,140
we want or anything,
we'll get sick.

876
00:44:26,140 --> 00:44:29,980
And within two weeks,
you'd be surprised

877
00:44:29,980 --> 00:44:31,960
what a difference it does.

878
00:44:31,960 --> 00:44:36,230
It makes a tremendous
big difference.

879
00:44:36,230 --> 00:44:41,132
So we stayed there for two
weeks, and everything was--

880
00:44:41,132 --> 00:44:42,340
these people were just great.

881
00:44:42,340 --> 00:44:45,730
They gave us materials.

882

00:44:45,730 --> 00:44:47,260
They bought us shoes.

883
00:44:47,260 --> 00:44:49,130
I made dresses for everybody.

884
00:44:49,130 --> 00:44:50,620
We had blankets from camp.

885
00:44:50,620 --> 00:44:51,790
I made jackets.

886
00:44:51,790 --> 00:44:55,000
I was busy sewing.

887
00:44:55,000 --> 00:45:00,070
They made a big party in
town hall in our honor.

888
00:45:00,070 --> 00:45:01,210
Everything was great.

889
00:45:01,210 --> 00:45:06,010
If we wanted to, we could
have just remained there

890
00:45:06,010 --> 00:45:07,780
for the rest of our lives.

891
00:45:07,780 --> 00:45:09,770
Everything was fine.

892
00:45:09,770 --> 00:45:15,080
But we decided it's
time to go home,

893
00:45:15,080 --> 00:45:19,460
because we have
to see if there's

894
00:45:19,460 --> 00:45:23,135
anybody left for us-- if we

have a family or whatever.

895

00:45:23,135 --> 00:45:26,030

896

00:45:26,030 --> 00:45:31,030

So one day we said, well,
tomorrow, or whatever,

897

00:45:31,030 --> 00:45:33,840

we're leaving.

898

00:45:33,840 --> 00:45:40,110

These ladies cooked, and
baked, and gave us food.

899

00:45:40,110 --> 00:45:44,950

We should have
food for the road.

900

00:45:44,950 --> 00:45:46,300

And we started for home.

901

00:45:46,300 --> 00:45:49,610

902

00:45:49,610 --> 00:45:54,320

But to get home, I mean,
you got on the train.

903

00:45:54,320 --> 00:45:56,520

And the train was running.

904

00:45:56,520 --> 00:45:59,150

It was going like
an hour or two hours

905

00:45:59,150 --> 00:46:02,940

just up to the station
for a day or two.

906

00:46:02,940 --> 00:46:09,740

So really, it was
horrible, just horrible.

907
00:46:09,740 --> 00:46:15,560
So after surviving
concentration camp,

908
00:46:15,560 --> 00:46:21,442
we had other problems,
the girls especially--

909
00:46:21,442 --> 00:46:22,150
Russian soldiers.

910
00:46:22,150 --> 00:46:25,400

911
00:46:25,400 --> 00:46:26,750
It was unbelievable.

912
00:46:26,750 --> 00:46:33,650
If they got a hold of a
girl, she was raped by 3,

913
00:46:33,650 --> 00:46:37,410
4, 5 soldiers, 10 soldiers--
makes no difference.

914
00:46:37,410 --> 00:46:42,750
In fact, from a neighboring
town, one girl died.

915
00:46:42,750 --> 00:46:44,830
So it's a problem, too.

916
00:46:44,830 --> 00:46:47,550
And they said, it didn't
make any difference--

917
00:46:47,550 --> 00:46:48,540
16 or 60.

918

00:46:48,540 --> 00:46:51,260

919

00:46:51,260 --> 00:46:53,030

The liberators were
solely Russian?

920

00:46:53,030 --> 00:46:53,670

Yes.

921

00:46:53,670 --> 00:46:54,770

In that area?

922

00:46:54,770 --> 00:46:56,845

In the area where we
were traveling home,

923

00:46:56,845 --> 00:46:57,835

they were Russians.

924

00:46:57,835 --> 00:46:59,320

Yes.

925

00:46:59,320 --> 00:47:01,490

So we had that problem.

926

00:47:01,490 --> 00:47:05,950

So we had to try and
attach ourselves to a man.

927

00:47:05,950 --> 00:47:11,550

If they saw a girl sitting with
a man, they didn't bother her.

928

00:47:11,550 --> 00:47:14,340

One night we were standing
in a train station.

929

00:47:14,340 --> 00:47:16,840

There were no men around.

930

00:47:16,840 --> 00:47:20,740

My friends and I went
into the bathroom.

931
00:47:20,740 --> 00:47:23,590
We went in as many as
we could, standing up

932
00:47:23,590 --> 00:47:26,310
so that nobody can
open up the door,

933
00:47:26,310 --> 00:47:28,335
because we were afraid
of the Russian soldiers.

934
00:47:28,335 --> 00:47:32,480

935
00:47:32,480 --> 00:47:35,340
So it took us a long time.

936
00:47:35,340 --> 00:47:39,990
As I said, the train would
ride for an hour, two hours,

937
00:47:39,990 --> 00:47:43,080
and stand for a day or
two or even three days,

938
00:47:43,080 --> 00:47:44,940
and we didn't know what to do.

939
00:47:44,940 --> 00:47:46,950
How much distance
were you covering?

940
00:47:46,950 --> 00:47:48,810
Very little, very little.

941
00:47:48,810 --> 00:47:49,962
We didn't even know--

942

00:47:49,962 --> 00:47:51,420
sometimes we didn't
even know where

943
00:47:51,420 --> 00:47:54,900
we were, because they didn't
even stop at the station.

944
00:47:54,900 --> 00:47:58,530
They stopped like out of
town out of the station.

945
00:47:58,530 --> 00:48:03,660
And we would maybe cover 20
kilometers, 25, 30-- whatever,

946
00:48:03,660 --> 00:48:04,620
very little.

947
00:48:04,620 --> 00:48:06,795
And it meant that
it's going to take us

948
00:48:06,795 --> 00:48:07,920
a whole summer to get home.

949
00:48:07,920 --> 00:48:10,020
It must have been agonizing.

950
00:48:10,020 --> 00:48:13,050
From what is now Russia
back to Czechoslovakia?

951
00:48:13,050 --> 00:48:14,370
From what-- yes.

952
00:48:14,370 --> 00:48:16,140
Well, we were in
Czechoslovakia, and we

953
00:48:16,140 --> 00:48:17,970
were going back to Russia.

954

00:48:17,970 --> 00:48:21,240

Where I come from, the
Russians occupied it.

955

00:48:21,240 --> 00:48:25,840

956

00:48:25,840 --> 00:48:27,010

So we're traveling.

957

00:48:27,010 --> 00:48:29,640

We're going home.

958

00:48:29,640 --> 00:48:36,890

And we got to Bratislava,
and the train stopped.

959

00:48:36,890 --> 00:48:41,710

And there were a lot of
people in the train station.

960

00:48:41,710 --> 00:48:45,330

And I said to my
friend, I said, Helen,

961

00:48:45,330 --> 00:48:48,630

there are a lot of people here.

962

00:48:48,630 --> 00:48:50,300

Let's stop.

963

00:48:50,300 --> 00:48:53,570

Maybe we can pick up--

964

00:48:53,570 --> 00:48:56,050

maybe we'll find someone.

965

00:48:56,050 --> 00:49:02,500

She says, my father said,
whoever survives is going home.

966

00:49:02,500 --> 00:49:08,260
And the sooner I get there,
the sooner I know who survived.

967
00:49:08,260 --> 00:49:11,530
So I said to her, my
father said the same thing,

968
00:49:11,530 --> 00:49:13,230
but maybe somebody is here.

969
00:49:13,230 --> 00:49:14,800
She says, no.

970
00:49:14,800 --> 00:49:16,480
I said, you know, it's too bad.

971
00:49:16,480 --> 00:49:22,580
All this time we
shared a bite of bread.

972
00:49:22,580 --> 00:49:27,830
Someone gave us a basin of hot
water, we both washed in that.

973
00:49:27,830 --> 00:49:30,260
I said, and now?

974
00:49:30,260 --> 00:49:32,270
She said, well, if
that's what you want.

975
00:49:32,270 --> 00:49:33,540
I felt I wanted to stop.

976
00:49:33,540 --> 00:49:34,640
She felt she wanted to go.

977
00:49:34,640 --> 00:49:37,200

978
00:49:37,200 --> 00:49:38,670

I got out of the train.

979

00:49:38,670 --> 00:49:41,400

And I said, reconsider
it, because your sisters

980

00:49:41,400 --> 00:49:43,320

were with my mother--

981

00:49:43,320 --> 00:49:44,698

maybe.

982

00:49:44,698 --> 00:49:45,240

She says, no.

983

00:49:45,240 --> 00:49:47,310

She's going home.

984

00:49:47,310 --> 00:49:50,850

I get out of the train, and
the train started moving,

985

00:49:50,850 --> 00:49:54,270

and she is on the train.

986

00:49:54,270 --> 00:49:56,560

I get into the station
house-- not alone,

987

00:49:56,560 --> 00:49:58,770

other people that I knew also.

988

00:49:58,770 --> 00:50:03,780

I get into the station
house, and I see this woman

989

00:50:03,780 --> 00:50:06,870

that I know.

990

00:50:06,870 --> 00:50:12,900

And she says to me, my Jewish
name is [? Idel. ?] But

991
00:50:12,900 --> 00:50:15,630
as endearing, I was
called [? Idy. ?]

992
00:50:15,630 --> 00:50:20,020
So she says to me, you're
[? Idy ?] Miller, aren't you?

993
00:50:20,020 --> 00:50:20,880
I says, yes.

994
00:50:20,880 --> 00:50:22,080
And she starts, ah--

995
00:50:22,080 --> 00:50:22,580
like this.

996
00:50:22,580 --> 00:50:25,260
She goes, your mother.

997
00:50:25,260 --> 00:50:27,630
I says, what's with my mother?

998
00:50:27,630 --> 00:50:30,370
I couldn't wait for
her to say the word.

999
00:50:30,370 --> 00:50:35,050
She says, your mother is here.

1000
00:50:35,050 --> 00:50:36,790
I says, where?

1001
00:50:36,790 --> 00:50:42,870
She says, just go in town,
and ask, and you'll find her.

1002
00:50:42,870 --> 00:50:46,050
I run to find my mother.

1003

00:50:46,050 --> 00:50:48,760
Then I meet this other girl
from a neighboring town.

1004
00:50:48,760 --> 00:50:52,290
And she says to me, ooh,
[? Idy, ?] your mother is here.

1005
00:50:52,290 --> 00:50:53,340
I says, where?

1006
00:50:53,340 --> 00:50:56,780
She says, just follow me.

1007
00:50:56,780 --> 00:50:59,300
And she runs ahead of me.

1008
00:50:59,300 --> 00:51:01,640
And here I see my mother.

1009
00:51:01,640 --> 00:51:04,730
Even now, she's kind of stout--

1010
00:51:04,730 --> 00:51:06,560
always was.

1011
00:51:06,560 --> 00:51:11,250
I see this skinny
little broken-down woman

1012
00:51:11,250 --> 00:51:16,650
coming towards me with a young
man that is skinny and tall

1013
00:51:16,650 --> 00:51:19,560
that I didn't recognize.

1014
00:51:19,560 --> 00:51:22,440
That was like a distance.

1015
00:51:22,440 --> 00:51:29,420
And then I see it's my

mother and my brother.

1016
00:51:29,420 --> 00:51:34,790
When I saw them, you
know, we stopped,

1017
00:51:34,790 --> 00:51:36,380
and we embraced, and we cried.

1018
00:51:36,380 --> 00:51:39,230
And everybody around us cried.

1019
00:51:39,230 --> 00:51:40,790
That was lunchtime.

1020
00:51:40,790 --> 00:51:44,330
My mother went for
breakfast that morning.

1021
00:51:44,330 --> 00:51:49,375
And someone comes running to her
and said to her in Hungarian,

1022
00:51:49,375 --> 00:51:51,800
[HUNGARIAN]-- that's like aunt--

1023
00:51:51,800 --> 00:51:52,970
Yeah.

1024
00:51:52,970 --> 00:51:56,030
[? Volvi's ?] here.

1025
00:51:56,030 --> 00:52:00,500
And in front of that same
store on the same spot,

1026
00:52:00,500 --> 00:52:03,420
she met me at lunchtime.

1027
00:52:03,420 --> 00:52:08,190
Everybody, but everybody
did-- the people that owned

1028
00:52:08,190 --> 00:52:09,000
the stores--

1029
00:52:09,000 --> 00:52:12,270
and everybody was
around us and crying.

1030
00:52:12,270 --> 00:52:17,232
And wherever we went,
fingers were pointed at us--

1031
00:52:17,232 --> 00:52:18,315
a mother has two children.

1032
00:52:18,315 --> 00:52:21,250

1033
00:52:21,250 --> 00:52:27,350
And so I was already happy
that I have somebody.

1034
00:52:27,350 --> 00:52:30,940
And then we found
out about my father.

1035
00:52:30,940 --> 00:52:35,368
And then I see my friend's
two sisters there.

1036
00:52:35,368 --> 00:52:36,660
And they knew we were together.

1037
00:52:36,660 --> 00:52:41,530
So, of course, they got very
scared that she's no longer.

1038
00:52:41,530 --> 00:52:42,800
I said, no, she is.

1039
00:52:42,800 --> 00:52:43,700
She's on the train.

1040
00:52:43,700 --> 00:52:47,150
She's on the way home.

1041
00:52:47,150 --> 00:52:52,100
But the train pulled out
of the station and stopped.

1042
00:52:52,100 --> 00:52:55,010
So she decided to--

1043
00:52:55,010 --> 00:52:55,790
Join?

1044
00:52:55,790 --> 00:52:58,160
--join, to come into town.

1045
00:52:58,160 --> 00:53:00,800
And just as they were
running to the station

1046
00:53:00,800 --> 00:53:06,140
to see maybe she's there,
she was coming into town.

1047
00:53:06,140 --> 00:53:11,390
And that's how, little
by little, we went home.

1048
00:53:11,390 --> 00:53:13,690
Did you believe that
you would survive

1049
00:53:13,690 --> 00:53:14,690
while this was going on?

1050
00:53:14,690 --> 00:53:16,980
No.

1051
00:53:16,980 --> 00:53:19,240
We didn't believe-- I
didn't believe that anybody

1052
00:53:19,240 --> 00:53:20,115
was going to survive.

1053
00:53:20,115 --> 00:53:22,720

1054
00:53:22,720 --> 00:53:27,700
We really thought that, if
the Germans would lose the war

1055
00:53:27,700 --> 00:53:30,520
and if anybody's going to be
alive before they lose it,

1056
00:53:30,520 --> 00:53:32,860
they'll kill us.

1057
00:53:32,860 --> 00:53:34,300
That's what we believed.

1058
00:53:34,300 --> 00:53:36,280
What kept you going?

1059
00:53:36,280 --> 00:53:39,550
Was it just the idea that
you were living from one day

1060
00:53:39,550 --> 00:53:40,100
to the next?

1061
00:53:40,100 --> 00:53:40,600
Yes.

1062
00:53:40,600 --> 00:53:41,230
Or was it fate?

1063
00:53:41,230 --> 00:53:41,730
Or what?

1064
00:53:41,730 --> 00:53:44,920

Just I guess the idea
for one day to the next.

1065
00:53:44,920 --> 00:53:50,260
We used to stand there as
[NON-ENGLISH] roll call,

1066
00:53:50,260 --> 00:53:54,655
and we'd see birds, butterflies.

1067
00:53:54,655 --> 00:53:58,570
And we'd say, aren't they lucky?

1068
00:53:58,570 --> 00:54:02,950
Or many times, we would stand
there and freeze to death.

1069
00:54:02,950 --> 00:54:04,480
And a plane would fly by.

1070
00:54:04,480 --> 00:54:06,130
And we would say,
God, please let them

1071
00:54:06,130 --> 00:54:08,710
throw a bomb so we'll
be out of misery.

1072
00:54:08,710 --> 00:54:11,250

1073
00:54:11,250 --> 00:54:20,140
And yet, as I said before, I
did not go through half as much

1074
00:54:20,140 --> 00:54:20,935
as--

1075
00:54:20,935 --> 00:54:26,160
I mean, in the camps where
I was, at least physically.

1076

00:54:26,160 --> 00:54:28,440
I did not work hard.

1077
00:54:28,440 --> 00:54:29,230
I worked.

1078
00:54:29,230 --> 00:54:31,920
I had to produce,
but I didn't have

1079
00:54:31,920 --> 00:54:38,670
to do any concrete
or stuff like that.

1080
00:54:38,670 --> 00:54:42,630
There were girls that would
chop stones for gravel.

1081
00:54:42,630 --> 00:54:45,210

1082
00:54:45,210 --> 00:54:48,270
There were people that
were cleaning the bathrooms

1083
00:54:48,270 --> 00:54:53,880
and taking the
stuff to the fields,

1084
00:54:53,880 --> 00:54:58,790
making bricks with their hands--

1085
00:54:58,790 --> 00:55:01,610
no machinery or anything--

1086
00:55:01,610 --> 00:55:03,050
pouring concrete.

1087
00:55:03,050 --> 00:55:05,930
All these things, I didn't do.

1088
00:55:05,930 --> 00:55:10,130

So basically, I
say in comparison,

1089
00:55:10,130 --> 00:55:14,230
in comparison to what
my mother went through,

1090
00:55:14,230 --> 00:55:15,370
we had it very easy.

1091
00:55:15,370 --> 00:55:18,610

1092
00:55:18,610 --> 00:55:20,507
And yet, it was a nightmare.

1093
00:55:20,507 --> 00:55:24,170

1094
00:55:24,170 --> 00:55:26,410
We'll take a brief
intermission now and rejoin

1095
00:55:26,410 --> 00:55:28,226
Mrs. Farben in a few minutes.

1096
00:55:28,226 --> 00:55:30,593

1097
00:55:30,593 --> 00:55:32,926
It'll give us a chance to get
out from under the lights.

1098
00:55:32,926 --> 00:55:33,650
How do you feel?

1099
00:55:33,650 --> 00:55:35,500
I'm OK.

1100
00:55:35,500 --> 00:55:42,000