

[MUSIC PLAYING] Good afternoon, my name is Bernard Weinstein, and I'm the director of the Kean College Oral Testimonies Project at the Holocaust Resource Center. We are affiliated with the video archives for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University. We are privileged to welcome Cyla Stal of East Brunswick, New Jersey, a survivor, who has generously volunteered to give testimony about her experiences before, during, and after the Holocaust.

Thank you.

Mrs. Stal, welcome.

Thank you.

I would like to ask you, first of all, to tell us a little bit about the town where you grew up, and about your life before the Holocaust.

I grew up-- my age and what everything I need to tell?

Whatever.

I'm born in Pruzana in 1914.

That is where, Pruzana.

In Pruzana.

In Poland?

In Poland. This is not far from Brest-Litovsk or near Warsaw, for my father died in Warsaw. In the '20-- 1922, '23, I don't remember. I was in Poland till 1942. Later, 1942-- in 1939 the Russian came to us. It was until 1942-- before the war.

Yeah, before we talk about the Russians and the beginning of the war, can you tell us a little bit what your life was like? Your family and--

When my father was-- my father died very young in the '20s. I was maybe 12 years old, 13 years old. Right away in Europe what was they gave right away to somebody to sew it, you know? A [NON-ENGLISH].

As a seamstress?

Right. So I was over there. But it was very hard to get a job, another job in Europe, very hard. So I was over there. Maybe later I went-- I was working till 1940-- 1939.

Was your family very close to each other?

Yeah. Yeah, we was six-- seven children, three brothers and four girls. My brother, the older, got married. And he wasn't living in the same city, it was in another city, Antopol. It's not far from Pruzana.

And the other brother was married, too. A couple years later he got married, too. But he died in 1941 when the Germans came, they beat him up. From this he died, my brother.

As you were growing up what did being Jewish mean to you?

When I grow up?

Yes.

What I was thinking about my life, or what?

Yeah, well were you living--

I was engaged.

--in a Jewish community?

Yeah, I was-- yeah, we were in a Jewish community. Later, in 1941 I was engaged. Engaged, but he came to Auschwitz and he died over there. And later, when the Germans came in 1942 so they took us in concentration camps.

Prior to the beginning of the war did you experience any anti-Semitism, or was there--

Yeah, yeah, in Poland wasn't good.

Can you tell us about that, please?

I think before wasn't good. There was-- oh, I think, they came and they broke the stores, the Polish. Very bad, was. I think it started in 19-- in the '30s, '37, '38 was very bad even by the Polish. Very bad, they just made names, we didn't names like [NON-ENGLISH] in Polish, like-- we are Jews.

They would just call you Jew?

Right.

And not by your name?

No, never. This was very bad, very bad. In Poland where we was living in Pruzana, we hadn't factored it to work. too. When we started to work for somebody, so we was working and working, until the end, that's all. It was very bad.

When did you first feel that you were in danger, or that you were in trouble?

When the Germans came.

When the Germans came in 1942?

Right, they make our city a ghetto. Pruzana was a ghetto. When the people came from all over, Vilna, and the Shershev, not far from their cities, so they came in our ghetto, Pruzana ghetto.

So between 1939 and 1941 or '42 you didn't feel-- under the Russians you didn't feel that it was so dangerous yet, or so terrible?

Not like it by the Germans. Not like by the Germans, we were in Russia was very bad when they was-- we were standing for our bread night maybe 10, 12 hours to get our bread by the Russians, too. We were standing nighttime for our pan salt. Whiskey they had. whiskey they had plenty. Just bread, not clothes, not salt, these were the worst things by the Russians.

Under the Russians did they keep the Jews separate when it came to these things or did they--

No, not separate, no, no. We was in the same house that we was. We didn't move nowhere. But when it came the Germans then it was a ghetto. That was very bad.

What specific things happened immediately when the Germans came?

When they came right away it was committed right away they took a lot of Jewish, the rich men. Right away they told them ordered to bring them gold, to bring them everything, but they needed. They took us right away to work. Right away to work. We didn't have nothing-- they took everything out from us. Then what it was the [INAUDIBLE] and every day we went to work.

Now, they built a ghetto in Pruzana?

In Pruzana. We had in Pruzana the ghetto. Yeah, when the people they came from the other cities, they came to us.

To your own house?

Yeah, right.

They lived in your own house?

We had maybe three, four families. We was seven people in the house. It was maybe about 15, 20 people in the house.

At a time?

Right. It was very bad, very bad. Until 1942, that was in February they took us right away to in concentration camp in Birkenau.

Living in the ghetto, did you have food? Did you have a place to sleep?

Yeah, we had well, we was working. So they gave us nothing with nothing, but it's better like in concentration camp for us. The brothers was working.

What kind of work?

What kind of work? To clean up everything what-- in the kitchen, they was working in the kitchens. One brother every day was working, so they gave him something to bring in the house, to eat something. But we didn't have nothing. Too much we didn't have.

What kind of work did you have to do?

To clean the houses where they were living. The nicest houses they took it. The nicest houses when they threw away everyone from the houses, and we was cleaning.

Did you have to live with a curfew where you had to come?

Yeah, they took us, sure. They told us to came in a place, 7:00. It was not myself, it was hundreds and hundreds people. When they took us, the persons, the Germans, they took us over there, and we was cleaning. What they told us to do we did it.

So nighttimes they took us back in the place and later we went home in the houses. Every day we had the same.

Yeah. Were people taken away frequently, or did they do it all at once? What happened?

What do you mean?

When they took you away--

Yeah.

Did they take everybody away at once from the ghetto?

No, no, no, not one. No, not everyone. It was in streets. This street, five and Sixth Street this day. Later, Five Street other days-- not everyone. It was in our city, I think-- Pruzana is not a big city. It was maybe together Gentile and Jewish maybe about 18,000 people.

Before you were taken away did you see what they were doing, or did you understand what was happening around you?

When we was in concentration camp?

When they were taking the people away from the ghetto?

Yeah.

Did you see other people before you, yourself, were taken away? Did you see other families taken away or what?

To work or what?

No, to the concentration camps.

Oh, yeah, sure. They took us, it was every day they took other streets. We was five streets, six streets they took us. we came to Birkenau in February the 2nd, so we were the first to come. Later the other day they took other transport. Every day they took another transport.

Well, I have 933142, on every in Pruzana they came to us, so they have 33, you know higher numbers. So every day they took it. We didn't know they will take you tomorrow. We know just they took us, but we didn't know tomorrow we will go another. But they didn't tell us nothing.

How did you yourself feel living with that uncertainty, not knowing when they would come for you?

Very bad, very bad, very bad. We was crying and crying every day. And we didn't know what will be.

They told us take everything. Take when you have gold, you have something so [INAUDIBLE] will led me the gold, don't worry you will go to work. They didn't tell us we will be in a concentration camp. Tell everything, nothing.

Well, a lot of people they had in their shoes gold. My mother, rest in peace, made sweaters. So she took what she had, gold pieces, and she took the buttons. Maybe we will come in that camp or where, and we will let to buy a piece of bread. But the clothes or buttons, nothing, nothing.

So when we came the first day in camp, in Birkenau, so right away they told us-- they beat us. My sister they beat so much she didn't know what [INAUDIBLE]. So she told me, come on, Cyla, come on home. I say, Sara, we can't go home. We don't have no more home while the Polish people was waiting for our houses. And they took right away the houses.

How far was Birkenau from Pruzana?

Oh, it was a couple of days, I think. We was with the train's cattle-- when the cattle--

They put you in cattle cars?

Right.

And what was the journey like?

It was nighttime. It was not far they took us. It was wintertime, in February. So they took us not far to the train. It was maybe for wintertime maybe about two, three hours to come to the train. I don't know how to say [NON-ENGLISH] it's not wagons, no.

Carts? They took you in carts like?

Yeah. On they put us and we came. I remember the Linowo, Linowa. It's a small city over there was [INAUDIBLE]. It was-- the train's over there.

A railway station?

Right. And over there we went on the cattles.

Boxcars?

The cattle, what they filled and transport the cattles.

Yeah.

No windows, nothing. A lot of people. My mother was in [NON-ENGLISH] how you say.

Fainted?

Yeah, she fainted right away. We didn't have water, nothing. We was crying water, we want water. When they promised us you will get water, you will get. And a lot of people they fainted.

They took our rabbi, it was a very religious rabbi. So right away they took him when he asked water, so they took him right away in the room, made a fit outside. When I saw that I was crying.

They threw him off the train?

Right, right. When we came right away, and everybody was-- well, it was no windows, nothing.

No air?

No air, nothing, nothing. And they beat us. Oh, I remember my whole life till the last minute.

Who--

This was later, I think, a couple of days we was-- we came in Birkenau.

Who was it, by the way, who beat you? Was it the SS?

Yes.

Was it-- they were on the train?

Right. There was in one wagon, one train, maybe 20, 30 people, they was watching us.

Yeah, and when you came to Birkenau?

Birkenau, when we came right away they took off the wagons. It was the older people and here were the younger

people. So we didn't know what they will do with the young people and the older people. So right away they put my uncle, my tante and my mother right away. And from that time on, the first minute when I saw it, we was crying. No more I saw them.

You never saw your mother or your aunt?

No, no, no. The smell we smell it. But they told us later that the older people they took in gas chamber.

Did you know what the smell was at the time?

First, we didn't know nothing. But later, weeks later, they told us to take the ashes from the people. I was working of the field, to put the ashes of the field. So was smarter people for me, so they told me this is the ashes from our mothers and fathers and children.

We saw a transport but we didn't-- we not allowed to see nothing when the transport came from Romania or Czechoslovakia came it was a wedding. When they came and she came with a wedding gown. They didn't know nothing. Later they pulled over there and they went to the gas chamber. But they didn't know.

Couple days later we smell. Every night we not allowed to go outside. Not in the bathroom. The bathroom was in the room was everything.

When they separated you from your--

Yeah, they me in another--

--family, where did they take you?

--barrack, and the mother I never saw it. That's all, not the mother or not my brother. One brother-- the two brothers-- one died before. It was in 1941. They beat him when the Germans came in 1941, so they beat him so much he took sick. And in 1941 he died.

So he had that one son, six months old. He got married in 1941-- no, 1939 he got married. And I never saw the wife, nothing.

Or the child?

No. Not my mother--

So you don't know what happened to the--

Not the other brothers with the children near house where we was living, he was living in another city.

Yeah. What happened to you? Were you with any of your brothers or sisters when they separated you from the rest of your family?

I was just with one. In 1939 my sister went to Israel. She came from Poland. This was in 1939. So she went a couple of months before the Russian came. And later, in '39 she went to Israel. And we didn't hear nothing from her. So I had just my sister, Sara.

So now she's in Israel. I came to America in the same year. No, she left Germany Feldafing, She left in 1946.

So were you with Sara the whole time?

All the time, till the last minute we was free. Now she's in Israel. I saw her there. We had the bat mitzvah over there, so I

saw her, yeah. She don't feel good, too.

So what happened when they took you? They put you and Sara in barracks in the same place or what?

We was together, yeah. We were together in the same barrack. But they beat us so much so she was very sick, so they took her on hospital. They took her on hospital. So when she was in hospital every day when I was working, so she prepared me a portion bread. When somebody died so she took the portion bread with the sister to come from work. So she gave me--

She saved it for you?

A little water and the portion bread [INAUDIBLE]. The [INAUDIBLE] was bigger for us. We was keeping here the-- the bread we never keep like this on the table.

Exposed?

Oh, no. We had a-- we was afraid maybe you will take away or the second take away. So the nighttime we was keeping the-- six weeks we didn't have water. When it was a rain and snow so I was licking for another. We had sores here. We had sores because we didn't have a bed.

Bedsore.

Right. So [INAUDIBLE] it was very good, well, every day they came and they look. And right away you didn't know, we didn't have names. We had these.

Numbers.

This was our names, the numbers. And later they took your name, and it was a block, the 26 block. Right away you didn't know nothing. They took your name or not, we didn't know nothing. When Eichmann came, Mengele, what's his name. So we didn't know they can.

Go ahead and make a bed, later was a bed. But when we came six weeks we didn't have nothing. No bed, nothing. We was licking from one [INAUDIBLE] to the other. My sister, they took everything out.

We didn't have the clothes what we came over there. They gave us pants. They gave us one sleeve, the other sleeve you didn't have it. It's like Muslim men [INAUDIBLE]. We didn't have hair, nothing.

They shaved your heads?

Nothing. Men, was all over, we didn't have. And later they took everything. For that, we didn't have [INAUDIBLE] nothing. For three years, we didn't have the [INAUDIBLE]. We didn't know nothing. We alive or not, but later when I was freed by the England in 1945, then we was thinking maybe we are alive. But so every minute we was thinking they'll come any minute.

A lot of people from our city came to me and said, Cyla, come on, the end of day we will not be alive. Come on, they went by themselves. In block 26 and later tomorrow, in gas chamber.

So one day they were there, and the next day they were gone?

One day couple times they said to me, come on. So I said, mine [NON-ENGLISH] with mine, I don't want to go by myself. And god forbid, then I will fall and something will happen with me, so I will go. But I will know now I will going in the block 26. And tomorrow I will go maybe in the gas chamber. So I didn't go with them.

But a lot from my city, from Pruzana, they went by themself. Because they knew right away, will not be today, will be

tomorrow I will not be alive. But god spare me like everybody say. Are you alive? I said, maybe I'm-- I don't know, god spare.

In--

Days and night, it's not finished. This what we have in the three years, from 1942 to 1945.

Yeah, when you were in Birkenau did they give you any work to do?

Yeah, we was working, sure.

What did you do?

We was working when it was-- when the airplanes came they bombed it so it was broken everything. So we was working to take the everything out, how you say--

The things that were damaged? The things that were bombed?

Yeah, right. So take everything away to make plates, to be able to fix it, that's what we was working.

So the camp was--

In Auschwitz we was working other. I was working by the [? shoe ?] kommando. This is the name [? shoe ?] kommando. This mean the people what they came in Auschwitz was already a bed to sleep. We had like the soldiers, 1, 2, 3, 4, here.

So things were better in Auschwitz than they were in Birkenau?

In Auschwitz was better like in Birkenau. In Birkenau we was sleeping like in ovens like in Europe, we didn't have windows, nothing. It's packed like herring. Here was the head, the other had the face in my side. So we didn't know she died, we didn't know nothing. In the morning we know we went to sleep 10:15, I wake up maybe [INAUDIBLE]. And I didn't know I'm sleeping with dead people.

What did the people die of?

They didn't have nothing to eat. They were beating us. Oh, beating when the dogs, the dogs right away when they saw something you don't feel good, right away the person they told them right away.

When I was-- I wasn't like a Muslim man. I was like I had something, so we took off [INAUDIBLE] and we brought her in the camp. And she was a-- she died. But we took, when the person [INAUDIBLE] when he was watching and we carrying her.

How did you keep your strength up? How did you keep going?

Maybe god gave me strength. I don't know what, but it's a miracle.

You didn't become a muselmann.

One portion bread, the [INAUDIBLE] was bigger. We didn't sleep, 5:00 we must be-- 4:00 say appell. It was--

Roll call.

I don't know. I'm wondering myself. I think I believe in God, always was religion. So every night when I went to sleep I beg god tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow, and tomorrow came.



But like all else, I never was skinny. Never in my life, so maybe I had something. So they was thinking go ahead and carry it. So it was a couple four, five, when they was dead. And that's all, the dog right away. I can't explain what my eyes saw it.

Do you think your sister survived for the same reason?

My sister yeah, but I will tell you, when she came over there she didn't know nothing. She was nothing, come on home, I want to go home. I say, Sara, we don't have already a home. We are in concentration camp. But she didn't know.

They beat her. When they give us the pants or the blouses, they beat-- just beat and beat. And I was maybe, 1, 2, 3, I was-- she was maybe not so like I am, to run. I was running, running, not do have the beating on me. So that's why, I don't know. But she was very sick.

Were you--

She didn't know nothing.

Were you taking care of her most of the time?

Yeah, we was together till the last minute. That should say to the other sister, when I come to Israel where my husband is buried in Israel. So when we come in Israel, so she said to everyone, this is my sister and she--

Saved me?

She saved me, my life. These words like this. She was in hospital, I every day came. I was in hospital, too.

Why?

I had malaria.

While you were in the camp?

Right, I had malaria. So she came to me when I was with-- when she was sick, I was with her. So that's one when I was spared, too.

But when I was in Auschwitz, when they took us, they took us in hospital-- they took me in hospital. So it was over there a nurse, a very nice. I don't remember her name. So she told me today will be a selection, and god forbid maybe you will go in the block 26. So I was crying.

I was crying so she later, she came, she gave me-- you call it, [NON-ENGLISH]. When you nighttime, the old people they have to pee inside. How you call it?

A bed pan or something?

A bed pan. A bed pan, well let him know Eichmann came. And they were thinking maybe them I am waking over there. But she took me out from the bed. When she say, Cyla, come on. Take just the pan, let them think on that one I'm alive, too.

Because he thought you were working?

Then I would be in bed, right away they would take me. I don't remember her name. She was working in hospital, and this was--

You felt she saved your life at that moment?

Right, right.

Because you think they would have selected you if you had been--

Oh, for sure. When everyone what was in bed right away they took. You didn't know nothing, but right away they took. And tomorrow they said come on in block 26, and that's all. This was the end.

Yeah, this was in Auschwitz?

Right.

How long did you spend in Auschwitz?

In Auschwitz I was, I think, more of a year. More of a year. In Bergen-Belsen I was maybe about seven, eight, months, that's all.

Why did they take you from Auschwitz to Bergen-Belsen? Did you ever know?

Well, they told us that the Russians will come near us. So that's why they took us. We was working days and days oh, wintertime. It was cold, nighttime, just nighttime they let us to go when they need to go somewhere. Just nighttime, daytime not. Daytime work, and nighttime we was working.

And a lot of people right away they fall, they fainted. They didn't came.

So did you sleep? Was there any sleep?

Sleep, what kind sleep was it?

What kind of work--

They took maybe 1,000 people in one stadium, in one room.

What kind of work could you do as you were walking? What did they make you do?

Nothing, we was working nighttime, working, working. To work, they had work for tomorrow morning. They had work for us. Just nighttime, daytime they gave us other things to do, and nighttime to work.

How many days did it take to get from Auschwitz to Bergen-Belsen?

I think maybe about three days, or two days, I don't remember.

And what happened when you got there?

When we came over there it wasn't good, too. It was same. It was over there the girls was watching us. The kapos like it was the Germans, over there it was girls, [NON-ENGLISH]. It wasn't good, too, we was working off the field.

Doing what?

When it was the-- when everybody took already everything out, from the field, so we was, I should say, fixing up the ground-- to prepare the field.

I see. And tell us a little about the time you spent in Bergen-Belsen. Was it worse, was it better than what you had

experienced before?

The worse it was for me was Birkenau The worst was we didn't have-- over there they didn't have floor, nothing. Just lime. We was walking on lime. No sleep. We were sleeping, no hay, nothing. Sleeping in ovens-- in ovens, no window, nothing. The [INAUDIBLE] was bigger for us over there, but we didn't have a bed.

When we came Auschwitz was a little-- they gave us a bed. The bed was while Eichmann came to look. That's all.

And when you got to Bergen-Belsen?

Bergen-Belsen we was working, but better like Birkenau I will remember Birkenau my whole life. It wasn't good here, it wasn't good over there, but Birkenau was worst.

It was the worst? Did you have a bed in--

One portion bread--

--in Bergen-Belsen?

A what?

A bed and food?

Over there?

Yeah.

Yes, they gave a bad once a month.

Why do you think things seemed better in Bergen-Belsen?

Why things in Bergen-Belsen, I will tell you. That's why we didn't have nothing over there in Feldafing-- Not Feldafing-- oh, I forgot.

Birchenau?

In Birkenau oh.

That's all right, that's all right.

So it wasn't good, it was very bad, very bad, that's all. But now I think it wasn't me. It can't be me. While to be in a time like we was over there three years, very bad.

You feel as though it had happened to somebody else rather than to you?

The same, the same happened to everybody. They have the same like we had. Then they was in Birkenau they have the same. When they have a year they had in Auschwitz, they had a company was the [NON-ENGLISH], you know what this mean?

They had the women, but they had experiment.

The medical experiments?

Right. So I didn't know they took my number, and I didn't know. It was one time I remember in Auschwitz when they

took my number, and I didn't know. But it was a man from my city, and he was a tailor. So right away a tailor by the Gestapo.

So right away, somebody told me that they took my number, so I was right away crying. So right away, I don't know, somebody told them, so even he was working by the Gestapo so he took my number out. But I was ready to go for experiment, you know they make experiment with the women.

Yes.

That's all. I was ready. They took my number and I didn't know, but later they told me, you know they took your number. I say when? I didn't know. But they took it and this man, rest in peace is not-- was in Philadelphia-- and then he took my number out while he was working. He was a tailor by the Gestapo, so he took my number out. For not I would be.

So he helped save your life, too?

Right, he saved, yeah.

Did you keep in contact with him afterwards?

Yeah, it was Italy. When he only was in Italy he want to marry me again. But I had somebody ready in 1946. So he came to Philadelphia, and every time he visit us. He got married in Italy or where, and he came every time. We were very good friends after the war. He died in Philadelphia.

When did liberation finally come?

What you mean? When--

The liberation for you.

For me when it came, the liberation, when I was free in 1945.

And who liberated you?

England, England makes me free.

The British came?

The British, yes, they came and they make me free. Right away they send us in convalescent home. I was over there. Later, I came to Feldafing.

What was your feeling on the day of liberation?

Oh, I didn't believe it. When it came this time, when everybody said you know we free, I said oh, no, oh, no, it can't be. But later we saw it, the Germans was already dead. A lot of Germans was dead. And we were sleeping until 8:00, 9:00, and every day before it was 5:00, 4:00 up.

But we didn't believe it, can't be, be free-- no, it can't be free. Can we be free? But right away they told us not to eat nothing, but everything is poison. Well, Hitler [INAUDIBLE], when I will lose my war, everybody will go with me. Well, everything gets poisoned. The bread and everything, right away they told us, please, don't eat nothing. So went to the--

Who told you this?

This-- it was everybody said. It was the--

The other people in the camp?

Right, right. When Hitler lost and I said in Yiddish, I don't know, it was his word, when I will be dead, everybody will be dead in the concentration camp. So but later we didn't believe it. We didn't believe it we are free. It was a day when we were sleeping late, so we were thinking what's the matter? 8:00, we still in the barracks? We need to go up. But later--

And that's when you saw the British?

Right, oh, they were Germans and that's what.

And where did they take you?

They take me in Holland. Over there is nuns. The nurses was nuns. and they gave us right away the care, and they built us up. And later we went everybody when they took us to Feldafing. We came in Feldafing, so I was until 1949 at Feldafing.

And is that where you met your husband and married, and had your child?

Yeah.

Yeah, what was life like in that camp? I mean, in Feldafing?

Feldafing was like in a palace, really. We was in concentration camp was here. So right away we get for out city a committee, men it was maybe about 300, 200 people. So they gave us in Feldafing a building. And later the Americans send us care packages, and money. So thank god we had something. And over there I met my husband.

How did you meet?

I met them-- my life is very hard to tell while I had another one. I met him when I came in 1945, 1945. So later in '46 we came in Feldafing, I met a man. But he didn't tell me he had a wife. So we was maybe about six, seven month, eight months, we was dating. In the same building, but men was on this site and the women was on this side, the Pruzhana was on this side.

So later came and I didn't know. It was very hard for me. I was believing, he never told me. It's for [? Radom ?] [? the same. ?] You never told me that he have somebody, never mentioned.

So it was a great shock to you?

Right, later she came, and she took him. But for me it was very hard. But later not maybe two months, three months from the same city came, rest in peace, my husband. So I had in my life. That's why I said my book they can read better like the writing the books.

Like a novel?

While I had-- my life was very hard, even in Poland. When after, when I came in Philadelphia, I didn't have peaches and cream, too. Well, my husband was a religion man. He never was a butcher-- a kosher butcher. It was only with skin leather. But he was thinking maybe we'll come to America.

When I had over there cousins, one is a doctor, he died already. And the uncle, so they will maybe send them to make a business for him. So that one so later he went, he took a butcher store, but he didn't like a butcher store.

So this was my life. Later in 1947 my daughter was born. So we were still in Philadelphia till my husband died in 1981, December the 3rd. So I bury him in Israel. My daughter got married in '72.

But she in 1969 from Philadelphia I took her in Israel in Hebrew college. So she met her husband over there, Yad Vashem. She was in college and later she was working in Yad Vashem. And the life was, thank god, we was living. But not rich, even in Philadelphia.

But it was better than what you had gone through?

Oh, yeah, oh, yeah. He never was sick, my husband, never a day. He was always ask when I was free I didn't know I have high blood pressure. In Europe you never check for high blood pressure. But when I came to America before they told me you can't go while you have high blood pressure.

So they gave me medicine two weeks, and I came to America. But for my husband, he was picked for Israel. My husband was a religion, and he said he will go to Israel like my sister. And I said, no, I will go to America. So that's why we came to America.

Until '81 I was in Philadelphia. And later my daughter said, when she was living in New Jersey in East Brunswick, so she said, mom, what you will do alone in Philadelphia? So I came to Philadelphia. So six years I'm in East Brunswick.

Have you been able to talk to your daughter about these experiences you had in the war?

Yeah, I always mention, even now the children when they see something, or I mention something, she's not-- oh, mom, I don't want to tell. Mom, I don't want to hear. Right away she is afraid maybe my pressure will be high. Now I had my three bypass, too. In '84, in January of '84 I never suffer of my heart, never in my life. To being in concentration camp, when everything you know-- and all of a sudden. So I had my three bypass too.

Yeah. You've come through a great deal.

That's why I said for my and since I'm born I didn't have peaches and cream. But when it comes now where my husband would be alive, would be alive for me, you know what I mean? Thank god I have three grandchildren, very nice. Thank god they're going into yeshiva. And this is my nachas, my happiness now. But my husband, all of a sudden, a day in his life, and that's what he never took when he was in concentration camp.

It's hard to explain things like this, isn't it?

I think I forgot things 47 years later-- 42 years. 1945 I was free, and now it's '87, 42 years. So in the 42 years you have plenty.

Yeah, is there anything you want to say in closing and ending the tape?

In ending the tape I want just--

That's meaningful to you?

--happiness for my children now. They're going the right way, thank God til now, I'm very happy for them. My son-in-law is a very nice boy. And my daughter, I think, not many daughters is like-- I'm a good mother, too, but she's a very nice. When I need to go somewhere or to the doctor, mom, don't worry, I will take you.

So now I'm leaving just for my children. How many years is left for me.

A great many I hope.

Yeah, now I will move, too. The children will not let me be. That's very hard for me not to move. Back from

Philadelphia six years, or now six years again to move in Washington. It's very hard for me.

Well--

But they say don't worry, mom, don't worry. So I hope.

You started many new lives, and this will be another one.

I think it's not finish-- not finish.

Keep on. Thank you very much, Cyla.

You're welcome.

[MUSIC PLAYING]