

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:22,650

2

00:00:22,650 --> 00:00:23,808

Good morning.

3

00:00:23,808 --> 00:00:25,350

My name is Bernard

Weinstein, and I'm

4

00:00:25,350 --> 00:00:27,720

the director of the Kean

College Oral History

5

00:00:27,720 --> 00:00:30,780

Project at the Holocaust

Resource Center.

6

00:00:30,780 --> 00:00:33,300

We are affiliated with

the Video Archives

7

00:00:33,300 --> 00:00:36,880

for Holocaust Testimonies

at Yale University.

8

00:00:36,880 --> 00:00:40,020

Sharing the interview

with me is Selma Dubnick.

9

00:00:40,020 --> 00:00:43,620

We are privileged to welcome

Cecile Seiden, a survivor

10

00:00:43,620 --> 00:00:47,190

presently living in Livingston

who has generously volunteered

11

00:00:47,190 --> 00:00:50,160

to give testimony

about her experiences

12

00:00:50,160 --> 00:00:52,160
during and after the Holocaust.

13

00:00:52,160 --> 00:00:55,260
Mrs. Seiden, I'd
like to welcome you.

14

00:00:55,260 --> 00:00:59,910
And since you were
a child survivor--

15

00:00:59,910 --> 00:01:02,550
a very young child survivor--

16

00:01:02,550 --> 00:01:06,220
I would like to
begin by asking you

17

00:01:06,220 --> 00:01:10,560
what your first memories were?

18

00:01:10,560 --> 00:01:13,440
And where they of the time
of the Holocaust or before?

19

00:01:13,440 --> 00:01:17,140

20

00:01:17,140 --> 00:01:18,860
I lived in Antwerp, Belgium.

21

00:01:18,860 --> 00:01:22,480
And my first memories
were, if you've ever

22

00:01:22,480 --> 00:01:25,480
seen the program on Anne Frank
and you heard the bleeping cars

23

00:01:25,480 --> 00:01:29,410
of the Germans, that was my
first encounter that there

24
00:01:29,410 --> 00:01:31,330
was something else
going on in Antwerp.

25
00:01:31,330 --> 00:01:33,400
I remember the bleeping cars.

26
00:01:33,400 --> 00:01:35,830
I saw the flags on
all the buildings.

27
00:01:35,830 --> 00:01:40,690
And that was really my first
encounter with the Holocaust.

28
00:01:40,690 --> 00:01:42,730
How old were you then?

29
00:01:42,730 --> 00:01:46,940
This was in 1941.

30
00:01:46,940 --> 00:01:51,100
And I remember listening to the
music and marching towards--

31
00:01:51,100 --> 00:01:53,680
my mother would sort of
spank me and say, no, this

32
00:01:53,680 --> 00:01:55,330
is not our music.

33
00:01:55,330 --> 00:01:58,180
Just a very catchy
marching music.

34
00:01:58,180 --> 00:02:01,600
And there were loudspeakers
all over on all the buildings.

35
00:02:01,600 --> 00:02:02,620

Flags were up.

36

00:02:02,620 --> 00:02:04,990

And you would see the
soldiers marching.

37

00:02:04,990 --> 00:02:06,943

You know, Belgium
has cobblestones.

38

00:02:06,943 --> 00:02:08,860

And you could hear the
clicking of their boots

39

00:02:08,860 --> 00:02:10,780

on the cobblestones.

40

00:02:10,780 --> 00:02:13,930

I would watch this from
my apartment window.

41

00:02:13,930 --> 00:02:15,860

You were just four years old?

42

00:02:15,860 --> 00:02:16,360

Right.

43

00:02:16,360 --> 00:02:17,170

Four or five.

44

00:02:17,170 --> 00:02:17,840

Years old.

45

00:02:17,840 --> 00:02:19,650

Yeah.

46

00:02:19,650 --> 00:02:24,460

Did you find these things at any
time frightening or disturbing?

47

00:02:24,460 --> 00:02:31,210

Or did you did you

respond with curiosity?

48

00:02:31,210 --> 00:02:35,110

I asked my mother why we
have soldiers in the streets.

49

00:02:35,110 --> 00:02:38,740

And she tried to explain that we
have been invaded by the Nazis.

50

00:02:38,740 --> 00:02:40,480

But to me, I didn't
understand what

51

00:02:40,480 --> 00:02:43,270

that meant until
a few years later

52

00:02:43,270 --> 00:02:45,700

where I saw their
brutality as a child.

53

00:02:45,700 --> 00:02:47,960

I saw people being beaten.

54

00:02:47,960 --> 00:02:50,200

I remember seeing
a man being dragged

55

00:02:50,200 --> 00:02:53,500

by his beard across the
street by a Nazi soldier.

56

00:02:53,500 --> 00:02:55,990

So I did see things like that.

57

00:02:55,990 --> 00:02:58,150

But my mother always
tried to cover up my eyes

58

00:02:58,150 --> 00:02:59,530

and tried to shield me.

59

00:02:59,530 --> 00:03:05,230

And after 1941, after we had
the curfew in Antwerp, which

60

00:03:05,230 --> 00:03:07,690

was a 7:00 curfew,
Jews were not permitted

61

00:03:07,690 --> 00:03:11,650

to leave their houses, we
basically kept to our house

62

00:03:11,650 --> 00:03:12,310

pretty much.

63

00:03:12,310 --> 00:03:13,840

We were afraid to go out.

64

00:03:13,840 --> 00:03:16,180

And especially my mother
did not take me out.

65

00:03:16,180 --> 00:03:18,100

If she did leave,
she would leave me

66

00:03:18,100 --> 00:03:21,490

with the neighbors in the house.

67

00:03:21,490 --> 00:03:25,780

I wonder if we could
backtrack a little bit

68

00:03:25,780 --> 00:03:30,010

and if I could ask you perhaps
to reconstruct in any way

69

00:03:30,010 --> 00:03:33,340

as it may have been
told to you something

70

00:03:33,340 --> 00:03:36,700

about your family, your
parents, their background, what

71
00:03:36,700 --> 00:03:40,390
they did for a living,
and things like that.

72
00:03:40,390 --> 00:03:44,800
My parents had moved to
Belgium in the 1920s.

73
00:03:44,800 --> 00:03:46,960
My father was born in Romania.

74
00:03:46,960 --> 00:03:49,240
My mother was of Polish descent.

75
00:03:49,240 --> 00:03:51,310
And they had both
come to Belgium

76
00:03:51,310 --> 00:03:52,780
and had married in Belgium.

77
00:03:52,780 --> 00:03:56,650
And I was born in
1937 in Antwerp.

78
00:03:56,650 --> 00:03:58,930
Antwerp was a very Jewish city.

79
00:03:58,930 --> 00:04:01,180
We lived in a very
Jewish neighborhood.

80
00:04:01,180 --> 00:04:03,430
My father was a
jeweler by profession.

81
00:04:03,430 --> 00:04:08,080
Most Jews were involved in the
diamond and jewelry business.

82

00:04:08,080 --> 00:04:11,810

We lived right in
the Jewish district.

83

00:04:11,810 --> 00:04:14,830

We were considered a
family of middle income.

84

00:04:14,830 --> 00:04:19,630

We lived in a four-apartment
house, mostly Jewish people.

85

00:04:19,630 --> 00:04:23,477

We did live in a neighborhood
where Christians did live

86

00:04:23,477 --> 00:04:24,310

in our neighborhood.

87

00:04:24,310 --> 00:04:26,828

And it was, you know,
we got along very well

88

00:04:26,828 --> 00:04:28,870

in the neighborhood, and
we felt very comfortable

89

00:04:28,870 --> 00:04:31,030

in the neighborhood.

90

00:04:31,030 --> 00:04:35,080

When Hitler marched into
Belgium in May of 1940,

91

00:04:35,080 --> 00:04:37,060

this is really where
we had the first taste

92

00:04:37,060 --> 00:04:38,770

of what was going to come.

93

00:04:38,770 --> 00:04:43,390

My parents, after they
bombed Antwerp totally,

94
00:04:43,390 --> 00:04:44,470
I mean, not completely.

95
00:04:44,470 --> 00:04:47,500
But they dropped a lot of bombs.

96
00:04:47,500 --> 00:04:49,810
My parents picked up, and
they decided that they

97
00:04:49,810 --> 00:04:52,520
would try to get to England.

98
00:04:52,520 --> 00:04:55,840
So we went without
clothing, without luggage,

99
00:04:55,840 --> 00:04:57,910
because this was
the way to travel.

100
00:04:57,910 --> 00:05:01,060
And we went to France,
into France trying perhaps

101
00:05:01,060 --> 00:05:03,590
to get to the
seacoast in this way,

102
00:05:03,590 --> 00:05:05,680
but we traveled over to England.

103
00:05:05,680 --> 00:05:07,270
My parents were not successful.

104
00:05:07,270 --> 00:05:11,260
They were rounded up, and they
were taken back to Antwerp.

105

00:05:11,260 --> 00:05:13,780
And where were
they at that point

106
00:05:13,780 --> 00:05:15,580
when they were rounded up?

107
00:05:15,580 --> 00:05:19,450
They were in Paris-Plage,
which was in France, close

108
00:05:19,450 --> 00:05:20,740
to the water.

109
00:05:20,740 --> 00:05:25,270
And later on, my parents
came back to the apartment.

110
00:05:25,270 --> 00:05:27,940
My father was still
doing some jewelry work.

111
00:05:27,940 --> 00:05:30,610
But as you know, when
you're going hungry,

112
00:05:30,610 --> 00:05:32,710
you don't need jewelry.

113
00:05:32,710 --> 00:05:34,750
He was busy for a
while because people

114
00:05:34,750 --> 00:05:37,930
were converting all their money
into jewelry, into diamonds,

115
00:05:37,930 --> 00:05:40,600
because that was the way that
they could save themselves.

116
00:05:40,600 --> 00:05:43,030
If you had money at

that particular time,

117

00:05:43,030 --> 00:05:45,010

you could still buy a
fake passport, which

118

00:05:45,010 --> 00:05:47,050

was a fortune at the time.

119

00:05:47,050 --> 00:05:49,850

And you could not
come to America.

120

00:05:49,850 --> 00:05:51,610

You could not go to Palestine.

121

00:05:51,610 --> 00:05:53,770

So there weren't too many
places you could go to.

122

00:05:53,770 --> 00:05:57,010

Belgium is surrounded
by Germany, by France,

123

00:05:57,010 --> 00:05:59,200

and by Holland to the north.

124

00:05:59,200 --> 00:06:01,753

If you were lucky and
you had a visa someplace,

125

00:06:01,753 --> 00:06:02,420

you could leave.

126

00:06:02,420 --> 00:06:04,600

But very few ports were open.

127

00:06:04,600 --> 00:06:07,540

The only port that was
really open was Shanghai.

128

00:06:07,540 --> 00:06:09,640

So there was nowhere to go.

129

00:06:09,640 --> 00:06:12,430

Many Jews went into
Holland to hide, you know.

130

00:06:12,430 --> 00:06:14,650

We stayed in Antwerp,
because we did not have

131

00:06:14,650 --> 00:06:17,480

enough money, really, to leave.

132

00:06:17,480 --> 00:06:17,980

Yeah.

133

00:06:17,980 --> 00:06:22,520

134

00:06:22,520 --> 00:06:32,070

What was the mood in your house
in the early days, 1940, 1941?

135

00:06:32,070 --> 00:06:35,610

Were your parents very severely
depressed by what was going on?

136

00:06:35,610 --> 00:06:38,730

Were they hopeful that
they might be able to--

137

00:06:38,730 --> 00:06:41,940

My father had his first taste,
really, of what the Nazis--

138

00:06:41,940 --> 00:06:43,560

of Nazi brutality.

139

00:06:43,560 --> 00:06:44,880

He was going on the street.

140

00:06:44,880 --> 00:06:47,820

He was going to go
join a factory which

141
00:06:47,820 --> 00:06:49,860
did work for the underground.

142
00:06:49,860 --> 00:06:52,560
And he was going out
to buy fatigue suit.

143
00:06:52,560 --> 00:06:54,780
And he was caught on the street.

144
00:06:54,780 --> 00:06:59,340
And they arrested him and took
him to a interrogation center.

145
00:06:59,340 --> 00:07:03,210
They beat him very severely
and returned him to the house.

146
00:07:03,210 --> 00:07:06,250
And suddenly we heard a terrible
knock on the front door.

147
00:07:06,250 --> 00:07:08,550
This was a four-family
house, and we lived upstairs.

148
00:07:08,550 --> 00:07:11,430
And my father was
thrown into the doorway.

149
00:07:11,430 --> 00:07:13,500
And this was really
the first taste

150
00:07:13,500 --> 00:07:16,410
of what we saw the Nazis
are capable of doing.

151
00:07:16,410 --> 00:07:19,500
So my father decided he

would try to do his utmost

152

00:07:19,500 --> 00:07:21,510

to try and get us out of there.

153

00:07:21,510 --> 00:07:26,610

But by 1941, Jews were asked to wear the yellow star already.

154

00:07:26,610 --> 00:07:27,900

We had the curfews.

155

00:07:27,900 --> 00:07:31,450

Food was getting very difficult to find.

156

00:07:31,450 --> 00:07:33,250

You know, parents were very tense.

157

00:07:33,250 --> 00:07:36,820

I noticed my mother, I could not question her about things.

158

00:07:36,820 --> 00:07:38,340

I always asked her why.

159

00:07:38,340 --> 00:07:40,140

I remember one incident my mother

160

00:07:40,140 --> 00:07:41,970

and I were walking on the street.

161

00:07:41,970 --> 00:07:43,950

A woman walked over to us.

162

00:07:43,950 --> 00:07:47,700

She just gathered the spittle in her mouth and spit at me.

163

00:07:47,700 --> 00:07:51,490

And I was so shocked by
being spat at that I said,

164

00:07:51,490 --> 00:07:52,950

why did this woman do this?

165

00:07:52,950 --> 00:07:56,200

And my mother said,
because she hates Jews.

166

00:07:56,200 --> 00:07:57,510

And I kept asking her why.

167

00:07:57,510 --> 00:08:00,150

So my mother answered me,
please don't ask me why.

168

00:08:00,150 --> 00:08:02,310

It's just a terrible
time we're living in,

169

00:08:02,310 --> 00:08:03,880

and they don't like us.

170

00:08:03,880 --> 00:08:05,550

So that was very puzzling to me.

171

00:08:05,550 --> 00:08:09,840

I came home, and I just
couldn't rub it enough.

172

00:08:09,840 --> 00:08:11,400

My cheek was all
red from rubbing

173

00:08:11,400 --> 00:08:14,700

because I thought this was a
terrible, horrible thing to be

174

00:08:14,700 --> 00:08:17,340

spat at.

175

00:08:17,340 --> 00:08:20,760

I noticed that
after 1941 we went

176

00:08:20,760 --> 00:08:22,200

into the basement a great deal.

177

00:08:22,200 --> 00:08:24,120

We had a basement in our house.

178

00:08:24,120 --> 00:08:29,520

And we noticed that the Nazis
would make arrests mostly

179

00:08:29,520 --> 00:08:30,450

at night.

180

00:08:30,450 --> 00:08:33,210

They would always try to catch
you in your night clothing.

181

00:08:33,210 --> 00:08:36,539

So as a result, my mother
and I and my father

182

00:08:36,539 --> 00:08:39,720

would try and find work or
we would try and find food.

183

00:08:39,720 --> 00:08:41,440

The food lines were
very, very long,

184

00:08:41,440 --> 00:08:44,610

my parents told
me after the war.

185

00:08:44,610 --> 00:08:49,620

And we were dressed fully,
always ready to move.

186

00:08:49,620 --> 00:08:51,690

I always had two dresses on.

187

00:08:51,690 --> 00:08:53,450

And we were always ready--

188

00:08:53,450 --> 00:08:55,050

Summer and winter.

189

00:08:55,050 --> 00:08:56,430

Summer and winter.

190

00:08:56,430 --> 00:08:58,440

And we were always
ready to be on the move

191

00:08:58,440 --> 00:09:01,350

because you had to be on the
move without your luggage

192

00:09:01,350 --> 00:09:03,720

because that would
cause suspicion.

193

00:09:03,720 --> 00:09:06,150

And you had to wear your
yellow star, of course.

194

00:09:06,150 --> 00:09:08,490

And we had already lived
in the Jewish neighborhood,

195

00:09:08,490 --> 00:09:10,170

so they didn't have
to round this up

196

00:09:10,170 --> 00:09:11,920

to put us into the
Jewish neighborhood.

197

00:09:11,920 --> 00:09:13,500

We were already living there.

198

00:09:13,500 --> 00:09:15,390

And it was very tense
in the basement.

199

00:09:15,390 --> 00:09:17,350

The four other families,
there were about five,

200

00:09:17,350 --> 00:09:18,870

six children there.

201

00:09:18,870 --> 00:09:20,190

We couldn't play.

202

00:09:20,190 --> 00:09:22,290

We couldn't talk.

203

00:09:22,290 --> 00:09:23,730

One time I remember
I had my mouth

204

00:09:23,730 --> 00:09:27,930

taped up because
they were afraid.

205

00:09:27,930 --> 00:09:31,680

I remember in 1942
after my father had been

206

00:09:31,680 --> 00:09:33,645

taken for the second time--

207

00:09:33,645 --> 00:09:35,490

I'm backtracking a second--

208

00:09:35,490 --> 00:09:37,620

I remember the Nazis
broke into the house

209

00:09:37,620 --> 00:09:39,090

in the middle of the night.

210

00:09:39,090 --> 00:09:42,640

And they carried out--
they looted the house.

211

00:09:42,640 --> 00:09:44,160

They did a very odd thing.

212

00:09:44,160 --> 00:09:47,010

My mother had a composite
photography of myself

213

00:09:47,010 --> 00:09:48,540

at the age of four.

214

00:09:48,540 --> 00:09:51,570

I think they took it because
it had a silver frame.

215

00:09:51,570 --> 00:09:53,910

And they took dishes,
and they took linens.

216

00:09:53,910 --> 00:09:55,950

And we still had
candlesticks left.

217

00:09:55,950 --> 00:09:57,210

They took everything.

218

00:09:57,210 --> 00:09:59,160

And they machine gunned
down the front door.

219

00:09:59,160 --> 00:10:02,730

So we saw-- they were always
very nosy when they came in.

220

00:10:02,730 --> 00:10:04,020

And we had feather beds.

221

00:10:04,020 --> 00:10:05,460

We slept in feather beds.

222

00:10:05,460 --> 00:10:07,380

And they rifled
them, so the feathers

223

00:10:07,380 --> 00:10:09,220

went flying all over the place.

224

00:10:09,220 --> 00:10:10,140

They took wallpaper.

225

00:10:10,140 --> 00:10:11,850

They ripped it up on the walls.

226

00:10:11,850 --> 00:10:15,090

Anything to give you the
aura, you know, this terror

227

00:10:15,090 --> 00:10:17,200

had just taken place.

228

00:10:17,200 --> 00:10:18,430

Who was it who did this?

229

00:10:18,430 --> 00:10:19,720

Were these SS?

230

00:10:19,720 --> 00:10:21,450

Or were they military?

231

00:10:21,450 --> 00:10:23,295

These were SS soldiers.

232

00:10:23,295 --> 00:10:26,470

233

00:10:26,470 --> 00:10:28,480

You did not see
any Belgian police

234

00:10:28,480 --> 00:10:31,210

in the street stopping them.

235
00:10:31,210 --> 00:10:34,270
A number of Belgian police did
collaborate with the Nazis.

236
00:10:34,270 --> 00:10:38,200
But you could see the
soldiers roaming the streets.

237
00:10:38,200 --> 00:10:40,540
And they would just come
and stop at the car,

238
00:10:40,540 --> 00:10:43,660
run up to your building,
and come to arrest you.

239
00:10:43,660 --> 00:10:46,050
My father went out again.

240
00:10:46,050 --> 00:10:47,380
My father tried to find work.

241
00:10:47,380 --> 00:10:49,780
And he was caught
again on the street.

242
00:10:49,780 --> 00:10:51,740
This time he was very smart.

243
00:10:51,740 --> 00:10:54,020
He took his wedding band,
and he threw it away.

244
00:10:54,020 --> 00:10:55,750
And he ripped up
his passport, which

245
00:10:55,750 --> 00:10:58,086
every passport had Juden--

246
00:10:58,086 --> 00:11:02,800

"juif," Jew written across
it in a big letter J in red.

247
00:11:02,800 --> 00:11:06,070
And he was sent to a camp.

248
00:11:06,070 --> 00:11:09,070
He really ended up in Auschwitz.

249
00:11:09,070 --> 00:11:12,640
The main deportation center
from Belgium was Malines.

250
00:11:12,640 --> 00:11:16,510
Malines was about 3/4 of
an hour away from Antwerp,

251
00:11:16,510 --> 00:11:18,220
maybe an hour away from Antwerp.

252
00:11:18,220 --> 00:11:21,490
And he was taken off
the street, right,

253
00:11:21,490 --> 00:11:25,090
and shipped there
into Auschwitz.

254
00:11:25,090 --> 00:11:29,030
I noticed from his transport
he was taken on September 12

255
00:11:29,030 --> 00:11:30,730
in 1942.

256
00:11:30,730 --> 00:11:33,250
Most of the Jews were
shipped from Belgium

257
00:11:33,250 --> 00:11:34,400
straight into Auschwitz.

258

00:11:34,400 --> 00:11:37,630

My uncle, my aunt, my
cousins, they perished.

259

00:11:37,630 --> 00:11:38,930

My father was very lucky.

260

00:11:38,930 --> 00:11:40,810

He looked very robust.

261

00:11:40,810 --> 00:11:43,120

And he was six
weeks in Auschwitz,

262

00:11:43,120 --> 00:11:46,510

and then they shipped
him to a labor camp.

263

00:11:46,510 --> 00:11:49,300

But in the meantime, we did
not hear from my father.

264

00:11:49,300 --> 00:11:50,080

I remember this.

265

00:11:50,080 --> 00:11:52,270

I really adored my father.

266

00:11:52,270 --> 00:11:55,210

And we waited the first week.

267

00:11:55,210 --> 00:11:57,790

We waited like, six weeks
we did not hear from him.

268

00:11:57,790 --> 00:11:59,950

And my mother
received a postcard.

269

00:11:59,950 --> 00:12:02,320

I'm going to the
East to a local camp.

270

00:12:02,320 --> 00:12:04,330
Send me all my warm clothing.

271

00:12:04,330 --> 00:12:07,150
So my mother packed a bag,
and she sent it to him.

272

00:12:07,150 --> 00:12:09,280
Of course, he never received it.

273

00:12:09,280 --> 00:12:12,400
At that time, people around
the house started to agitate.

274

00:12:12,400 --> 00:12:14,860
You know, your husband
has been arrested.

275

00:12:14,860 --> 00:12:15,910
You must leave.

276

00:12:15,910 --> 00:12:18,910
And things became exceedingly
nervous in the house.

277

00:12:18,910 --> 00:12:21,710
I remember the children weren't
allowed to play anymore.

278

00:12:21,710 --> 00:12:24,070
And things became very serious.

279

00:12:24,070 --> 00:12:26,770
My mother would let me
sleep during the day.

280

00:12:26,770 --> 00:12:29,140
And she would watch
the windows to see what

281

00:12:29,140 --> 00:12:32,140
the activity was in the street.

282
00:12:32,140 --> 00:12:33,970
We had a very kind--

283
00:12:33,970 --> 00:12:36,580
I call her righteous--
gentile and neighbor

284
00:12:36,580 --> 00:12:37,900
who had a fruit store.

285
00:12:37,900 --> 00:12:40,420
And whatever fruits she had
left at the end of the day,

286
00:12:40,420 --> 00:12:42,970
and vegetables, she would
send to her Jewish neighbors.

287
00:12:42,970 --> 00:12:44,170
She was a wonderful person.

288
00:12:44,170 --> 00:12:46,900

289
00:12:46,900 --> 00:12:50,680
My uncle who was
a dentist and also

290
00:12:50,680 --> 00:12:53,560
a Belgian citizen-- that's the
one who perished in Auschwitz.

291
00:12:53,560 --> 00:12:57,025
He was shipped in 1942.

292
00:12:57,025 --> 00:12:59,810
He had a maid who
worked for them.

293
00:12:59,810 --> 00:13:02,500
And she was a wonderful woman.

294

00:13:02,500 --> 00:13:06,770

She decided that we could not
stay in this house anymore.

295

00:13:06,770 --> 00:13:09,550

So she took her
boyfriend, and they came

296

00:13:09,550 --> 00:13:11,590

to get us with a little truck.

297

00:13:11,590 --> 00:13:13,600

And in the middle of
the night, you know,

298

00:13:13,600 --> 00:13:15,730

my story was always in
the middle of the night

299

00:13:15,730 --> 00:13:20,320

because that's when you really
moved out and you try to go.

300

00:13:20,320 --> 00:13:23,590

My mother said, you may
only take one item with you.

301

00:13:23,590 --> 00:13:25,480

So I took my favorite doll.

302

00:13:25,480 --> 00:13:27,970

And my mother ripped
a few photographs

303

00:13:27,970 --> 00:13:30,010

out of the albums,
whatever photographs

304

00:13:30,010 --> 00:13:31,480

we had in those days.

305

00:13:31,480 --> 00:13:33,670
And she closed the door
to the apartment door,

306
00:13:33,670 --> 00:13:35,560
and we left with nothing.

307
00:13:35,560 --> 00:13:37,450
Because we had to
travel, we could not

308
00:13:37,450 --> 00:13:39,170
take anything with us.

309
00:13:39,170 --> 00:13:45,520
And we were taken with this
truck to this man's farm.

310
00:13:45,520 --> 00:13:47,950
It was his parents' farm.

311
00:13:47,950 --> 00:13:51,170
And these people
had never seen us.

312
00:13:51,170 --> 00:13:54,400
And they took us in.

313
00:13:54,400 --> 00:13:55,960
Their farm was a potato farm.

314
00:13:55,960 --> 00:13:59,420
They had animals and livestock
to sustain themselves.

315
00:13:59,420 --> 00:14:01,910
This was in a
village called Boom.

316
00:14:01,910 --> 00:14:05,290
It was about 3/4 of an
hour away from Antwerp.

317

00:14:05,290 --> 00:14:07,120

To me, the ride
seemed like forever.

318

00:14:07,120 --> 00:14:10,540

It was nighttime, and I was
told, you may not speak.

319

00:14:10,540 --> 00:14:12,407

And I was really
quite frightened.

320

00:14:12,407 --> 00:14:14,740

What were the thoughts that
were going through your head

321

00:14:14,740 --> 00:14:16,120

during that ride?

322

00:14:16,120 --> 00:14:18,520

You were such a young child.

323

00:14:18,520 --> 00:14:20,210

I was really scared.

324

00:14:20,210 --> 00:14:22,360

I didn't know where we're going.

325

00:14:22,360 --> 00:14:26,170

And by that time, by the way,
we did not speak about my father

326

00:14:26,170 --> 00:14:27,020

anymore.

327

00:14:27,020 --> 00:14:28,930

And every time I
mentioned, where is daddy,

328

00:14:28,930 --> 00:14:31,960

my mother would change
the subject on me.

329
00:14:31,960 --> 00:14:33,980
I asked her, is he dead?

330
00:14:33,980 --> 00:14:36,580
And dead was a very
hard term to understand

331
00:14:36,580 --> 00:14:37,990
when you're a young child.

332
00:14:37,990 --> 00:14:38,890
She said, no.

333
00:14:38,890 --> 00:14:41,590
But he's very far away.

334
00:14:41,590 --> 00:14:43,090
I was very frightened.

335
00:14:43,090 --> 00:14:46,600
But the people were
absolutely wonderful.

336
00:14:46,600 --> 00:14:49,450
The woman was living
there with her son,

337
00:14:49,450 --> 00:14:52,405
her husband on the farm, her
daughter, and her husband.

338
00:14:52,405 --> 00:14:55,210

339
00:14:55,210 --> 00:14:56,950
She was a woman
who was active who

340
00:14:56,950 --> 00:14:59,830
was a Roman Catholic
because Belgium

341
00:14:59,830 --> 00:15:01,480
has a lot of Roman Catholics.

342
00:15:01,480 --> 00:15:04,330
She was active somewhat
with the underground.

343
00:15:04,330 --> 00:15:06,820
She kept an active full
part in the underground.

344
00:15:06,820 --> 00:15:09,370
Also very active in her church.

345
00:15:09,370 --> 00:15:13,840
And they told the story, she had
a brother who lived in Antwerp.

346
00:15:13,840 --> 00:15:16,490
And he was sort of the
black sheep of the family.

347
00:15:16,490 --> 00:15:22,840
And she told them that we are
the surviving widow and niece.

348
00:15:22,840 --> 00:15:25,250
So my mother and I became--

349
00:15:25,250 --> 00:15:26,750
my mother became
the sister-in-law,

350
00:15:26,750 --> 00:15:28,430
and I became the niece.

351
00:15:28,430 --> 00:15:31,360
Now here I was
discharged from Antwerp.

352
00:15:31,360 --> 00:15:32,930

I'd never been on a farm.

353

00:15:32,930 --> 00:15:36,990

And they had to acclimate
me to farm life.

354

00:15:36,990 --> 00:15:38,810

I remember I had to
wear wooden shoes.

355

00:15:38,810 --> 00:15:41,930

And I worked on the farm,
just like everyone else did.

356

00:15:41,930 --> 00:15:43,610

And it was so ironic.

357

00:15:43,610 --> 00:15:46,700

Wherever I was seen, I
called her tante-- aunt.

358

00:15:46,700 --> 00:15:49,280

And wherever I was seen with
this woman, they said to me,

359

00:15:49,280 --> 00:15:53,270

your niece looks
just like you, which

360

00:15:53,270 --> 00:15:57,990

is-- it's really incredible how
you can sell yourself this way.

361

00:15:57,990 --> 00:16:01,280

My mother-- excuse me.

362

00:16:01,280 --> 00:16:03,200

My mother worked very
hard on the farm.

363

00:16:03,200 --> 00:16:05,810

She really participated
and helped.

364
00:16:05,810 --> 00:16:10,370
And I even worked where
I helped to milk the cows

365
00:16:10,370 --> 00:16:13,940
and collect eggs
from the chickens.

366
00:16:13,940 --> 00:16:15,920
I really loved the
farm very, very much

367
00:16:15,920 --> 00:16:17,720
because I was totally--

368
00:16:17,720 --> 00:16:20,480
I was surrounded by
people who loved me.

369
00:16:20,480 --> 00:16:22,970
There was a problem, however.

370
00:16:22,970 --> 00:16:25,890
I had to be debriefed
as to who I was.

371
00:16:25,890 --> 00:16:27,722
And I may not tell
that I'm Jewish.

372
00:16:27,722 --> 00:16:29,180
And I would play
with the children.

373
00:16:29,180 --> 00:16:31,910
And they had a terrible game
they always used to play.

374
00:16:31,910 --> 00:16:34,160
They always wanted to
play Nazis and good guys,

375

00:16:34,160 --> 00:16:36,620

like children play
cowboys and Indians today.

376

00:16:36,620 --> 00:16:42,470

And I was always the Nazi, which
I told my mother, they were--

377

00:16:42,470 --> 00:16:44,630

one of the children
was a terrible bully.

378

00:16:44,630 --> 00:16:47,750

And he talked about if he
would ever see a Jew himself,

379

00:16:47,750 --> 00:16:49,290

he would kill him.

380

00:16:49,290 --> 00:16:52,740

And I remember running home to
my mother telling the story.

381

00:16:52,740 --> 00:16:56,600

She said, you must not ever
tell that you are Jewish.

382

00:16:56,600 --> 00:16:59,270

I learned how to speak Flemish
because when I was born,

383

00:16:59,270 --> 00:17:02,060

my parents spoke German to me.

384

00:17:02,060 --> 00:17:04,550

Flemish is very
similar to German.

385

00:17:04,550 --> 00:17:06,230

And Belgium is bilingual.

386

00:17:06,230 --> 00:17:08,990

They speak French and Flemish.

387

00:17:08,990 --> 00:17:11,060

We lived on the farm
about a year and a half--

388

00:17:11,060 --> 00:17:12,800

In this house with the family?

389

00:17:12,800 --> 00:17:13,609

In the same house?

390

00:17:13,609 --> 00:17:15,680

Yes.

391

00:17:15,680 --> 00:17:17,819

The family was
absolutely wonderful.

392

00:17:17,819 --> 00:17:19,849

I even attended Catholic church.

393

00:17:19,849 --> 00:17:22,940

I was being prepared
for communion.

394

00:17:22,940 --> 00:17:24,980

I remember going
into the church.

395

00:17:24,980 --> 00:17:28,602

As a Jewish child when you first
enter the church, it was-- you

396

00:17:28,602 --> 00:17:29,820

know, it was huge.

397

00:17:29,820 --> 00:17:32,510

And I remember getting lessons.

398

00:17:32,510 --> 00:17:35,090

And I don't remember what

the lessons were all about,

399

00:17:35,090 --> 00:17:39,620

but I remember learning about
the Roman Catholic faith.

400

00:17:39,620 --> 00:17:42,740

And here I think at that time
I knew more about Catholicism

401

00:17:42,740 --> 00:17:47,180

than I did about my
own Jewish religion.

402

00:17:47,180 --> 00:17:50,510

We had an incident where
I developed very bad sores

403

00:17:50,510 --> 00:17:51,710

on my legs.

404

00:17:51,710 --> 00:17:54,450

And we had to go-- there were no
doctors around where we really

405

00:17:54,450 --> 00:17:54,950

lived.

406

00:17:54,950 --> 00:17:56,870

It was a country area.

407

00:17:56,870 --> 00:17:58,880

And we went to
Malines, which was

408

00:17:58,880 --> 00:18:01,940

the shipping center
of the Jews of Belgium

409

00:18:01,940 --> 00:18:04,010

straight to Auschwitz.

410

00:18:04,010 --> 00:18:06,440
And we went to a convent.

411
00:18:06,440 --> 00:18:08,180
I was treated for my sores.

412
00:18:08,180 --> 00:18:12,020
And I thought I was being very
brave as they treated these.

413
00:18:12,020 --> 00:18:13,230
So they were very painful.

414
00:18:13,230 --> 00:18:17,240
I had them all over my legs,
I guess from malnutrition.

415
00:18:17,240 --> 00:18:21,448
And on the way home, my tante
squeezed my hand so hard.

416
00:18:21,448 --> 00:18:22,740
And I just couldn't understand.

417
00:18:22,740 --> 00:18:24,710
I said to her, I did not cry.

418
00:18:24,710 --> 00:18:28,790
I was so brave, like a
soldier, I explained to her.

419
00:18:28,790 --> 00:18:30,800
And she just said, no.

420
00:18:30,800 --> 00:18:32,180
Don't talk.

421
00:18:32,180 --> 00:18:34,520
Just let's walk home quietly.

422
00:18:34,520 --> 00:18:35,810
And we came home.

423
00:18:35,810 --> 00:18:39,710
And I found out from
my mother later why.

424
00:18:39,710 --> 00:18:42,590
At the convent she heard two
sisters speaking to each other.

425
00:18:42,590 --> 00:18:45,590
And she said, one sister
said to the other sister,

426
00:18:45,590 --> 00:18:47,780
did you see how those
poor Jewish children were

427
00:18:47,780 --> 00:18:50,123
standing at the
train this morning,

428
00:18:50,123 --> 00:18:51,290
all alone, no one with them.

429
00:18:51,290 --> 00:18:52,770
My heart goes out to them.

430
00:18:52,770 --> 00:18:54,920
So the other sister said,
don't worry, Sister.

431
00:18:54,920 --> 00:18:56,630
They're only Jewish children.

432
00:18:56,630 --> 00:19:01,250
When she heard that she
just felt so horrible.

433
00:19:01,250 --> 00:19:02,660
And she did a terrible thing.

434
00:19:02,660 --> 00:19:04,370

She withdrew from her church.

435

00:19:04,370 --> 00:19:07,010

She became inactive.

436

00:19:07,010 --> 00:19:09,210

That was a big mistake.

437

00:19:09,210 --> 00:19:12,440

The priest came
calling almost weekly.

438

00:19:12,440 --> 00:19:14,420

Why am I not coming to training?

439

00:19:14,420 --> 00:19:16,040

I did not go to
school at the time,

440

00:19:16,040 --> 00:19:18,980

but I was still going for
training for communion.

441

00:19:18,980 --> 00:19:25,550

And it caused a slight tension
with her and the church.

442

00:19:25,550 --> 00:19:29,150

We were afraid that we
would endanger her life.

443

00:19:29,150 --> 00:19:31,910

So she made a decision
that we should go live

444

00:19:31,910 --> 00:19:33,320

in her daughter's house.

445

00:19:33,320 --> 00:19:36,050

The daughter was living with
her at the time, by the way.

446

00:19:36,050 --> 00:19:37,910

And many times at
the dinner table

447

00:19:37,910 --> 00:19:40,700

my mother said she would
be close to fainting.

448

00:19:40,700 --> 00:19:43,220

The daughter was
very anti-Semitic

449

00:19:43,220 --> 00:19:44,720

and would have discussions.

450

00:19:44,720 --> 00:19:46,640

You know, I wouldn't
save a Jew who

451

00:19:46,640 --> 00:19:48,560

was sitting at
this dinner table,

452

00:19:48,560 --> 00:19:53,510

with her mother who saved a
Jewish woman and her child.

453

00:19:53,510 --> 00:19:56,690

The woman gave us her
house, her daughter.

454

00:19:56,690 --> 00:19:58,700

She gave us her coal supply.

455

00:19:58,700 --> 00:20:00,590

And we lived in
this one-room house.

456

00:20:00,590 --> 00:20:03,710

But we were not
allowed to go out.

457

00:20:03,710 --> 00:20:04,830

It was just so bad.

458

00:20:04,830 --> 00:20:08,240

I had no books to read,
so I became a knitter.

459

00:20:08,240 --> 00:20:11,670

We would rip out socks or
sweaters, and we knit them.

460

00:20:11,670 --> 00:20:17,330

And my mother was very,
very sad, I noticed.

461

00:20:17,330 --> 00:20:20,360

She would try to make
me cheery, but I noticed

462

00:20:20,360 --> 00:20:22,100

that she was just very sad.

463

00:20:22,100 --> 00:20:23,540

Who furnished food for you?

464

00:20:23,540 --> 00:20:26,500

465

00:20:26,500 --> 00:20:29,890

The people where I was at,
they gave us food supplies.

466

00:20:29,890 --> 00:20:34,210

It was mostly dry goods,
you know, flour, yeast.

467

00:20:34,210 --> 00:20:36,700

Sometimes they would bring
in yeast to us or some bread,

468

00:20:36,700 --> 00:20:39,130

because she did grow
everything on the farm.

469

00:20:39,130 --> 00:20:44,620

I mean, we weren't hungry, but
there was not a lot of food.

470

00:20:44,620 --> 00:20:47,260

At that time, really, I didn't
care whether I ate or not.

471

00:20:47,260 --> 00:20:51,220

When you're a child, it's not
one of your main concerns.

472

00:20:51,220 --> 00:20:52,870

A terrible flood developed.

473

00:20:52,870 --> 00:20:55,450

Belgium is a low
country like Holland.

474

00:20:55,450 --> 00:21:00,760

And the water started to
rise around the house.

475

00:21:00,760 --> 00:21:03,850

And my mother said,
we have to leave.

476

00:21:03,850 --> 00:21:04,690

So we left.

477

00:21:04,690 --> 00:21:06,760

And this is a horrible scene.

478

00:21:06,760 --> 00:21:08,297

We were swimming for a while.

479

00:21:08,297 --> 00:21:09,380

I didn't know how to swim.

480

00:21:09,380 --> 00:21:11,830

My mother could only
do the breaststroke,

481
00:21:11,830 --> 00:21:14,200
and I was hanging
on to her neck.

482
00:21:14,200 --> 00:21:15,670
And she said, don't choke me.

483
00:21:15,670 --> 00:21:17,560
And I was so nervous.

484
00:21:17,560 --> 00:21:21,550
And I saw people, you know,
I saw animals floating by.

485
00:21:21,550 --> 00:21:23,110
It was very, very scary.

486
00:21:23,110 --> 00:21:26,350
And we were picked up by
two men with a little boat.

487
00:21:26,350 --> 00:21:28,250
They really saved our lives.

488
00:21:28,250 --> 00:21:30,190
And we were taken
back to the farm.

489
00:21:30,190 --> 00:21:32,260
And they were so
happy to see us.

490
00:21:32,260 --> 00:21:36,290
And we stayed on the
farm for a while.

491
00:21:36,290 --> 00:21:39,220
And I remember the
farm was near a river.

492
00:21:39,220 --> 00:21:41,530

And the only part of
the war that I saw,

493
00:21:41,530 --> 00:21:44,290
the sky was always
pink and black.

494
00:21:44,290 --> 00:21:48,490
And the other notice that I
had of the war, one time a bomb

495
00:21:48,490 --> 00:21:50,020
dropped very close to us.

496
00:21:50,020 --> 00:21:53,410
And they also would drop
chaff, which is a silver foil

497
00:21:53,410 --> 00:21:55,150
to block radar.

498
00:21:55,150 --> 00:21:57,220
And we would make
balls out of it

499
00:21:57,220 --> 00:22:00,280
and play ball with it
because we virtually

500
00:22:00,280 --> 00:22:03,400
had no toys as children.

501
00:22:03,400 --> 00:22:06,520
My mother felt that--

502
00:22:06,520 --> 00:22:10,300
we heard of nightly raids
in the surrounding areas.

503
00:22:10,300 --> 00:22:12,070
And we were very much
afraid that we would

504

00:22:12,070 --> 00:22:14,920
endanger this woman's life.

505

00:22:14,920 --> 00:22:19,240
So we asked the woman to get
in touch with her contacts

506

00:22:19,240 --> 00:22:20,530
of the underground.

507

00:22:20,530 --> 00:22:23,860
And perhaps we could try
and get to Switzerland.

508

00:22:23,860 --> 00:22:27,370
In the meantime, my father,
who had been a jeweler,

509

00:22:27,370 --> 00:22:30,730
had left some gold and platinum
in his workshop in the house.

510

00:22:30,730 --> 00:22:33,400
And he had put it behind
a brick in the wall

511

00:22:33,400 --> 00:22:35,290
and then put wall
paper up on top of it.

512

00:22:35,290 --> 00:22:40,550
And he told my mother, only
take it if your life is at risk.

513

00:22:40,550 --> 00:22:45,430
So my mother went back with
the woman who had saved us.

514

00:22:45,430 --> 00:22:48,670
And she said when she came
back, it was a horror.

515

00:22:48,670 --> 00:22:51,970
The top floor apartment
had been bombed.

516
00:22:51,970 --> 00:22:54,550
She said wherever she looked,
there were empty apartments.

517
00:22:54,550 --> 00:22:56,020
She said it was horrible.

518
00:22:56,020 --> 00:22:58,060
This was in '43.

519
00:22:58,060 --> 00:23:01,840
By '43 they really had shipped
most of the Belgian Jews.

520
00:23:01,840 --> 00:23:03,940
And she said she tried
to find neighbors.

521
00:23:03,940 --> 00:23:05,800
People were gone.

522
00:23:05,800 --> 00:23:08,560
The woman with the
vegetable store

523
00:23:08,560 --> 00:23:11,200
who had been very kind
to us, she said to her,

524
00:23:11,200 --> 00:23:14,080
we're going to try and
smuggle into Switzerland.

525
00:23:14,080 --> 00:23:20,020
So if my husband ever should
come back, please tell him.

526
00:23:20,020 --> 00:23:23,572
And she kissed us and wished

us good luck-- you know,

527

00:23:23,572 --> 00:23:24,280

kissed my mother.

528

00:23:24,280 --> 00:23:29,560

And the woman who helped

us, her name was Joss.

529

00:23:29,560 --> 00:23:32,170

And my mother came

back to the farm.

530

00:23:32,170 --> 00:23:34,510

I was very scared

that night because I

531

00:23:34,510 --> 00:23:36,850

was afraid my mother would

also disappear on me.

532

00:23:36,850 --> 00:23:39,160

I had this paranoia, you know.

533

00:23:39,160 --> 00:23:40,570

Here I didn't have a father.

534

00:23:40,570 --> 00:23:41,890

I was an only child, you know.

535

00:23:41,890 --> 00:23:44,110

My mother's gone again.

536

00:23:44,110 --> 00:23:45,220

She did return.

537

00:23:45,220 --> 00:23:47,245

And she woke me up

the next evening

538

00:23:47,245 --> 00:23:48,370

in the middle of the night.

539

00:23:48,370 --> 00:23:50,200

I said, why must we leave?

540

00:23:50,200 --> 00:23:51,340

Because we have to leave.

541

00:23:51,340 --> 00:23:53,630

We're endangering
tante and her family.

542

00:23:53,630 --> 00:23:55,910

And I really loved
them very, very much.

543

00:23:55,910 --> 00:23:57,610

I could barely leave them.

544

00:23:57,610 --> 00:23:59,710

They loved me, and I loved them.

545

00:23:59,710 --> 00:24:03,310

And we were taken with
the Belgian Underground.

546

00:24:03,310 --> 00:24:06,220

We walked and rode trucks.

547

00:24:06,220 --> 00:24:07,480

We were in trains.

548

00:24:07,480 --> 00:24:09,820

And we did not have fake papers.

549

00:24:09,820 --> 00:24:12,430

So had we been
caught at any point,

550

00:24:12,430 --> 00:24:15,880

I wouldn't be here
to tell you my story.

551

00:24:15,880 --> 00:24:20,500

I remember we went from Belgium
into France and from France

552

00:24:20,500 --> 00:24:21,430

into Switzerland.

553

00:24:21,430 --> 00:24:24,430

This was in 1943.

554

00:24:24,430 --> 00:24:27,520

Switzerland at that time did
not accept refugees anymore.

555

00:24:27,520 --> 00:24:29,800

She had closed her
borders already.

556

00:24:29,800 --> 00:24:33,910

And we had to cross
illegally the border.

557

00:24:33,910 --> 00:24:35,800

I remember the
barbed wire fence.

558

00:24:35,800 --> 00:24:39,490

I also remember an incident
where we were almost caught.

559

00:24:39,490 --> 00:24:42,640

We were walking along
the bed of a river

560

00:24:42,640 --> 00:24:46,750

because the Germans at that
time were hunting people

561

00:24:46,750 --> 00:24:48,640

with dogs, German shepherds.

562

00:24:48,640 --> 00:24:51,160

Still today-- and I
happen to like dogs--

563
00:24:51,160 --> 00:24:54,310
but when I see a German
shepherd, I freeze.

564
00:24:54,310 --> 00:24:57,400
Because I remember I once
saw a terrible incident

565
00:24:57,400 --> 00:24:59,050
with a German
shepherd and a soldier

566
00:24:59,050 --> 00:25:02,110
and how he attacked a person.

567
00:25:02,110 --> 00:25:04,360
And that was stuck
out in my mind.

568
00:25:04,360 --> 00:25:08,770
How many of you were there
escaping into Switzerland?

569
00:25:08,770 --> 00:25:10,330
There were about 30 of us.

570
00:25:10,330 --> 00:25:13,300
Now, the underground-- some
people did it for money.

571
00:25:13,300 --> 00:25:16,660
Some people did it just for
the sake of helping people.

572
00:25:16,660 --> 00:25:18,460
There were always
people who profited

573
00:25:18,460 --> 00:25:21,190
from other people's problems.

574

00:25:21,190 --> 00:25:26,350

We had to travel as a family
unit, we had to adopt a man.

575

00:25:26,350 --> 00:25:29,050

And we adopted
this man, Mr. Rice.

576

00:25:29,050 --> 00:25:32,800

I felt very sorry for him
because I was terrible to him.

577

00:25:32,800 --> 00:25:34,540

I was not a terrible
child in any way,

578

00:25:34,540 --> 00:25:36,880

but I kept telling him,
you're not my father.

579

00:25:36,880 --> 00:25:38,500

I can't call you Papa.

580

00:25:38,500 --> 00:25:39,610

It was very hard for me.

581

00:25:39,610 --> 00:25:41,410

I was six years old.

582

00:25:41,410 --> 00:25:43,060

And he said, just pretend.

583

00:25:43,060 --> 00:25:44,830

I have to be your papa.

584

00:25:44,830 --> 00:25:49,810

So we were walking, and we went
in trains, we slept in huts.

585

00:25:49,810 --> 00:25:52,450

Sometimes we were fed

by people on the way.

586
00:25:52,450 --> 00:25:54,370
They would give
us some groceries.

587
00:25:54,370 --> 00:25:55,780
Sometimes we did not eat.

588
00:25:55,780 --> 00:25:59,470
But I remember this particular
river bed because we walked,

589
00:25:59,470 --> 00:26:01,750
and I was wearing knit slacks.

590
00:26:01,750 --> 00:26:04,040
And they kept dragging
down into the water.

591
00:26:04,040 --> 00:26:05,500
My mother carried me.

592
00:26:05,500 --> 00:26:07,390
And at one point
we were resting.

593
00:26:07,390 --> 00:26:10,690
And we heard-- we were near
a railroad track somehow.

594
00:26:10,690 --> 00:26:12,430
And there were soldiers--

595
00:26:12,430 --> 00:26:14,350
Nazi soldiers-- with their dogs.

596
00:26:14,350 --> 00:26:15,790
And they were patrolling.

597
00:26:15,790 --> 00:26:20,740
And somehow, one of the

people screamed out.

598

00:26:20,740 --> 00:26:21,880

Something fell on him.

599

00:26:21,880 --> 00:26:23,770

And he was a terrible grouch.

600

00:26:23,770 --> 00:26:25,900

He was not a very nice
person to travel with.

601

00:26:25,900 --> 00:26:28,360

He complained constantly,
I can't go on.

602

00:26:28,360 --> 00:26:31,480

And people, we were
trying to help each other.

603

00:26:31,480 --> 00:26:33,400

And he said, I'm staying here.

604

00:26:33,400 --> 00:26:34,750

I can't go on anymore.

605

00:26:34,750 --> 00:26:37,450

And I kept saying to my mother,
why is he such a grouch?

606

00:26:37,450 --> 00:26:39,700

And at one point he cried out.

607

00:26:39,700 --> 00:26:41,110

And they heard that.

608

00:26:41,110 --> 00:26:43,090

Two soldiers heard that.

609

00:26:43,090 --> 00:26:47,590

And had been let go the dogs,
we would have been caught.

610
00:26:47,590 --> 00:26:50,560
Now, I understand from my
mother that the group that

611
00:26:50,560 --> 00:26:53,050
just went before us got
caught at the border,

612
00:26:53,050 --> 00:26:55,920
and they were sent back.

613
00:26:55,920 --> 00:26:58,480
The guards were bribed
with gold and sil--

614
00:26:58,480 --> 00:27:00,400
with gold and platinum.

615
00:27:00,400 --> 00:27:04,110
Money was, of course, not
of value at that time.

616
00:27:04,110 --> 00:27:07,720
And when we came to the border,
it was an electrified fence.

617
00:27:07,720 --> 00:27:08,590
He shut it off.

618
00:27:08,590 --> 00:27:10,510
He turned around, and
he smoked a cigarette.

619
00:27:10,510 --> 00:27:12,790
That I remember very distinctly.

620
00:27:12,790 --> 00:27:16,540
The children were taken,
and they cut the first wire

621
00:27:16,540 --> 00:27:18,340

because it was
very near the dirt.

622
00:27:18,340 --> 00:27:21,040
And they pushed all
the children through.

623
00:27:21,040 --> 00:27:23,230
There must have been about
eight or nine children

624
00:27:23,230 --> 00:27:24,880
with the group.

625
00:27:24,880 --> 00:27:26,962
And I was already--

626
00:27:26,962 --> 00:27:28,170
You were one of the youngest?

627
00:27:28,170 --> 00:27:28,960
Or--

628
00:27:28,960 --> 00:27:30,010
Yes.

629
00:27:30,010 --> 00:27:30,790
Yes.

630
00:27:30,790 --> 00:27:33,760
I was one of the
youngest children there.

631
00:27:33,760 --> 00:27:35,080
I was always told to be quiet.

632
00:27:35,080 --> 00:27:36,622
After a while I
didn't speak anymore.

633
00:27:36,622 --> 00:27:38,890
I just walked quietly

with my mother.

634

00:27:38,890 --> 00:27:42,190

You realize that I
didn't understand

635

00:27:42,190 --> 00:27:44,900

the whole implication
of what was happening.

636

00:27:44,900 --> 00:27:47,230

But you know, when
everybody is tense

637

00:27:47,230 --> 00:27:49,900

and you see you're
traveling in secret,

638

00:27:49,900 --> 00:27:52,460

you get to understand that
there's something wrong.

639

00:27:52,460 --> 00:27:53,800

And you're quiet.

640

00:27:53,800 --> 00:27:55,900

I was very quiet.

641

00:27:55,900 --> 00:28:01,030

I was already in
Switzerland when

642

00:28:01,030 --> 00:28:03,850

my mother and some other
women, they couldn't climb.

643

00:28:03,850 --> 00:28:05,980

They were very-- I mean,
they weren't climbers.

644

00:28:05,980 --> 00:28:08,110

And I remember at that
time it was fashionable,

645

00:28:08,110 --> 00:28:10,660
she still had a Teddy bear coat.

646

00:28:10,660 --> 00:28:12,250
She got her coat torn.

647

00:28:12,250 --> 00:28:15,880
And she herself got
stuck on the barbed wire.

648

00:28:15,880 --> 00:28:17,440
And I was on the other side.

649

00:28:17,440 --> 00:28:19,030
I really was hysterical.

650

00:28:19,030 --> 00:28:22,090
So they put a hanky in my
mouth because they were afraid.

651

00:28:22,090 --> 00:28:24,130
They could shoot
across the border.

652

00:28:24,130 --> 00:28:25,780
It's not like you
had the protection.

653

00:28:25,780 --> 00:28:27,430
It's only barbed wire.

654

00:28:27,430 --> 00:28:32,470
It took about half an hour
until everybody crossed over.

655

00:28:32,470 --> 00:28:34,990
And my mother was cut
up from the barbed wire.

656

00:28:34,990 --> 00:28:37,448
And at that moment

I really thought,

657

00:28:37,448 --> 00:28:39,490

she's not going to make

It What am I going to do?

658

00:28:39,490 --> 00:28:41,860

You know, panic set in.

659

00:28:41,860 --> 00:28:45,580

And we were taken

to a refugee camp.

660

00:28:45,580 --> 00:28:49,420

In that refugee camp we stayed--

661

00:28:49,420 --> 00:28:51,490

I must have stayed

there about two months.

662

00:28:51,490 --> 00:28:54,070

And my mother became very ill.

663

00:28:54,070 --> 00:28:57,010

And in the middle of the night,

she had a gall bladder attack.

664

00:28:57,010 --> 00:28:58,660

I was with the children.

665

00:28:58,660 --> 00:29:00,920

They separated the

parents from the children.

666

00:29:00,920 --> 00:29:02,950

Some children had one parent.

667

00:29:02,950 --> 00:29:04,900

Some children had two

parents, depending

668

00:29:04,900 --> 00:29:08,770

on how you crossed the border.

669

00:29:08,770 --> 00:29:11,350

The next morning I woke up,
and I went to find my mother.

670

00:29:11,350 --> 00:29:13,360

And my mother was gone.

671

00:29:13,360 --> 00:29:14,680

And I asked the--

672

00:29:14,680 --> 00:29:18,120

we used to call them Herr
Commandant and Frau Commandant,

673

00:29:18,120 --> 00:29:20,800

you know, the leaders
of the refugee camp.

674

00:29:20,800 --> 00:29:23,425

And he said, well,
your mother's gone.

675

00:29:23,425 --> 00:29:24,310

Don't worry about it.

676

00:29:24,310 --> 00:29:26,080

She'll be back next week.

677

00:29:26,080 --> 00:29:27,730

Didn't say that my
mother was taken

678

00:29:27,730 --> 00:29:29,740

to the hospital with
a gallbladder attack.

679

00:29:29,740 --> 00:29:32,050

Had they only said
that to me, I may not

680

00:29:32,050 --> 00:29:35,920
have worried as much as I did.

681
00:29:35,920 --> 00:29:38,710
There was also a flea epidemic.

682
00:29:38,710 --> 00:29:41,090
I mean, a lice epidemic.

683
00:29:41,090 --> 00:29:42,970
Everybody had their hair cut.

684
00:29:42,970 --> 00:29:45,130
When I came in, I
had very long hair.

685
00:29:45,130 --> 00:29:47,560
They didn't cut my hair anyway
because the lice epidemic

686
00:29:47,560 --> 00:29:48,370
was over.

687
00:29:48,370 --> 00:29:51,160
And the children resented me
because of that, I remember.

688
00:29:51,160 --> 00:29:54,130
And I asked them, would you
please cut my hair, also?

689
00:29:54,130 --> 00:29:57,790
So I sort of hid it
under a kerchief.

690
00:29:57,790 --> 00:29:59,050
Many weeks went by.

691
00:29:59,050 --> 00:30:01,300
I would come to
this Frau Commandant

692

00:30:01,300 --> 00:30:04,230
and say to her,
where is my mother?

693
00:30:04,230 --> 00:30:06,880
On visitor's day, people
came from other camps

694
00:30:06,880 --> 00:30:11,050
to visit their children, or
they came to see their children.

695
00:30:11,050 --> 00:30:14,140
And I did not find out
where my mother was.

696
00:30:14,140 --> 00:30:15,650
And I was taken.

697
00:30:15,650 --> 00:30:18,370
I remember one day,
they lined all of us up.

698
00:30:18,370 --> 00:30:20,830
And the Swiss Red Cross came in.

699
00:30:20,830 --> 00:30:27,020
And an elderly couple
came over to me and said,

700
00:30:27,020 --> 00:30:29,600
I'll take that one.

701
00:30:29,600 --> 00:30:32,375
And I remember they
had brushed our hair.

702
00:30:32,375 --> 00:30:33,000
Pointed to you?

703
00:30:33,000 --> 00:30:33,290
Yes, pointed to me.

704

00:30:33,290 --> 00:30:35,600

I was standing in the
line with other children.

705

00:30:35,600 --> 00:30:38,190

And they said,
I'll take that one.

706

00:30:38,190 --> 00:30:41,250

I couldn't understand
what was going on.

707

00:30:41,250 --> 00:30:44,630

I said, why are you taking me?

708

00:30:44,630 --> 00:30:46,820

So they said, oh, we
want to give you a home,

709

00:30:46,820 --> 00:30:50,660

and we want to take care of you.

710

00:30:50,660 --> 00:30:53,810

The couple lived in a
remote little village--

711

00:30:53,810 --> 00:30:57,470

I don't know the name of it--
on a hill, on a mountaintop.

712

00:30:57,470 --> 00:31:01,540

And the man was a Christian.

713

00:31:01,540 --> 00:31:02,210

He was Swiss.

714

00:31:02,210 --> 00:31:04,440

And the woman was
Dutch and Jewish.

715

00:31:04,440 --> 00:31:07,520

They were an elderly couple

who never had children.

716

00:31:07,520 --> 00:31:10,460

And he was a cuckoo clock maker.

717

00:31:10,460 --> 00:31:14,300

And I think his
clocks got to him.

718

00:31:14,300 --> 00:31:17,870

He was an obnoxious man.

719

00:31:17,870 --> 00:31:19,725

He did terrible things to me.

720

00:31:19,725 --> 00:31:23,070

I mean, you actually had
to leave the refugee camp

721

00:31:23,070 --> 00:31:24,260

and go and live with him?

722

00:31:24,260 --> 00:31:24,797

Yes, yes.

723

00:31:24,797 --> 00:31:26,380

And you still hadn't
seen your mother?

724

00:31:26,380 --> 00:31:27,020

No.

725

00:31:27,020 --> 00:31:28,610

But by this time,
how long had you

726

00:31:28,610 --> 00:31:30,170

been separated from your mother?

727

00:31:30,170 --> 00:31:31,797

Two months.

728

00:31:31,797 --> 00:31:32,630

Two or three months.

729

00:31:32,630 --> 00:31:34,820

How long was your mother
actually in the hospital?

730

00:31:34,820 --> 00:31:35,830

Six weeks.

731

00:31:35,830 --> 00:31:37,130

And then where did she go?

732

00:31:37,130 --> 00:31:39,500

Then she was sent
to a women's camp.

733

00:31:39,500 --> 00:31:43,670

A hotel was converted on top of
a mountain called Sonnenberg.

734

00:31:43,670 --> 00:31:46,400

And they knit socks
for the Allies.

735

00:31:46,400 --> 00:31:49,160

So they had people there
from all nationalities.

736

00:31:49,160 --> 00:31:52,130

They had Russians, those
people who had lived in Europe.

737

00:31:52,130 --> 00:31:53,880

They had some Poles there.

738

00:31:53,880 --> 00:31:57,290

They had mostly Jews, though.

739

00:31:57,290 --> 00:31:59,810

But there were other
people who were not Jewish.

740
00:31:59,810 --> 00:32:04,430
And my mother was put in
charge of the knitting area.

741
00:32:04,430 --> 00:32:08,210
And she did knit on
the side for people

742
00:32:08,210 --> 00:32:10,160
and earn a little bit of money.

743
00:32:10,160 --> 00:32:14,090
And I did not see my mother
for the next six months.

744
00:32:14,090 --> 00:32:17,420
Did this couple think they
were adopting you permanently?

745
00:32:17,420 --> 00:32:19,220
No.

746
00:32:19,220 --> 00:32:20,775
The man, he was very sick.

747
00:32:20,775 --> 00:32:23,990
He was a very sick man.

748
00:32:23,990 --> 00:32:26,462
He told me that--

749
00:32:26,462 --> 00:32:28,670
he would always tell me the
story of Red Riding Hood.

750
00:32:28,670 --> 00:32:30,350
You know, the
European version is

751
00:32:30,350 --> 00:32:33,090
where the wolf eats the

grandmother and Red Riding

752

00:32:33,090 --> 00:32:33,590

Hood.

753

00:32:33,590 --> 00:32:36,220

And then the woodsman come and
split the belly of the wolf

754

00:32:36,220 --> 00:32:36,720

open.

755

00:32:36,720 --> 00:32:38,960

It's a violent story.

756

00:32:38,960 --> 00:32:41,478

I used to like stories,
you know, fairy tales.

757

00:32:41,478 --> 00:32:43,520

Because my mother always
read them to me before I

758

00:32:43,520 --> 00:32:44,930

went to bed at night.

759

00:32:44,930 --> 00:32:47,780

And I couldn't stand this story.

760

00:32:47,780 --> 00:32:50,990

And there was a reason
why he told me this story.

761

00:32:50,990 --> 00:32:56,270

He one day left me in
the woods by myself.

762

00:32:56,270 --> 00:32:57,590

We went blueberry picking.

763

00:32:57,590 --> 00:32:59,030

And I adored this woman.

764
00:32:59,030 --> 00:32:59,960
I called her mama.

765
00:32:59,960 --> 00:33:02,390
And he wanted me to call
him Papa, and I didn't.

766
00:33:02,390 --> 00:33:03,710
Couldn't stand him.

767
00:33:03,710 --> 00:33:06,440
And he left me in the
woods all by myself.

768
00:33:06,440 --> 00:33:07,220
It got dark.

769
00:33:07,220 --> 00:33:08,600
I got lost.

770
00:33:08,600 --> 00:33:10,010
I heard animals in the wood.

771
00:33:10,010 --> 00:33:11,370
And I thought it was a wolf.

772
00:33:11,370 --> 00:33:13,670
It was really a fox,
but I didn't know that.

773
00:33:13,670 --> 00:33:15,470
And then the woodsman found me.

774
00:33:15,470 --> 00:33:17,030
I had climbed a tree.

775
00:33:17,030 --> 00:33:19,100
And he said, you know,
you're a naughty child.

776

00:33:19,100 --> 00:33:20,780
Papa was looking for you.

777
00:33:20,780 --> 00:33:22,700
And when we came
back to the house,

778
00:33:22,700 --> 00:33:26,210
he warned me, if I tell this
to Mama, he will take an ax

779
00:33:26,210 --> 00:33:28,130
and chop off my head.

780
00:33:28,130 --> 00:33:29,120
Oh, God.

781
00:33:29,120 --> 00:33:30,470
Which is a story--

782
00:33:30,470 --> 00:33:32,360
I told this to my
mother after the war.

783
00:33:32,360 --> 00:33:34,680
When I had seen my mother
for the first time, she said,

784
00:33:34,680 --> 00:33:36,420
why didn't you say
anything to me?

785
00:33:36,420 --> 00:33:38,660
I said, Mother, I was
still living in the house.

786
00:33:38,660 --> 00:33:40,400
I was terrified from him.

787
00:33:40,400 --> 00:33:42,920
So I became this woman's--
my Mama's-- shadow.

788

00:33:42,920 --> 00:33:45,630

Wherever she went,
I went with her.

789

00:33:45,630 --> 00:33:49,915

And she couldn't understand that
why I was so attached to her.

790

00:33:49,915 --> 00:33:51,600

And I used to tell
her I love her.

791

00:33:51,600 --> 00:33:52,643

I really did like her.

792

00:33:52,643 --> 00:33:54,060

And you never said
anything to her

793

00:33:54,060 --> 00:33:55,500

about what her
husband was doing.

794

00:33:55,500 --> 00:33:56,000

No.

795

00:33:56,000 --> 00:33:57,320

What of my life?

796

00:33:57,320 --> 00:34:01,220

What was his relationship to
you during this period when

797

00:34:01,220 --> 00:34:03,710

you were sticking so
closely to his wife?

798

00:34:03,710 --> 00:34:06,680

He was very jealous.

799

00:34:06,680 --> 00:34:09,677

He threatened-- he

threatened me several times.

800

00:34:09,677 --> 00:34:11,719

This was not the first
time he had threatened me.

801

00:34:11,719 --> 00:34:13,580

But the axe scared
me the most because I

802

00:34:13,580 --> 00:34:15,590

had seen him chop wood with it.

803

00:34:15,590 --> 00:34:20,280

And he called-- he told me-- do
you know what a prostitute is?

804

00:34:20,280 --> 00:34:21,500

I said, no.

805

00:34:21,500 --> 00:34:22,250

And he told me.

806

00:34:22,250 --> 00:34:24,550

You know, my mother
had come to visit.

807

00:34:24,550 --> 00:34:26,750

She gotten permission
to come and visit.

808

00:34:26,750 --> 00:34:29,090

And she looked
terrible, by the way.

809

00:34:29,090 --> 00:34:31,190

Then I found out
where she had been.

810

00:34:31,190 --> 00:34:32,870

And she wore lipstick.

811

00:34:32,870 --> 00:34:35,870

And he said, all women who
wear lipsticks are prostitutes.

812

00:34:35,870 --> 00:34:38,699

813

00:34:38,699 --> 00:34:41,510

And I was so upset, I cried.

814

00:34:41,510 --> 00:34:43,580

And I didn't tell that
to my mother either.

815

00:34:43,580 --> 00:34:46,429

I was so afraid to talk to her.

816

00:34:46,429 --> 00:34:48,230

I was very lucky.

817

00:34:48,230 --> 00:34:49,850

He couldn't stand
me after a while.

818

00:34:49,850 --> 00:34:55,489

And he took me back to the Red
Cross without his wife knowing.

819

00:34:55,489 --> 00:34:58,430

One day he said, we're going
to go buy milk in the village.

820

00:34:58,430 --> 00:34:59,780

And he took me with him.

821

00:34:59,780 --> 00:35:01,490

And I never returned
to the house.

822

00:35:01,490 --> 00:35:04,730

And he told me one thing.

823

00:35:04,730 --> 00:35:08,300

Where I'm taking you now, you'll
never see your mother again.

824

00:35:08,300 --> 00:35:12,740

So I was taken back
to a refugee camp.

825

00:35:12,740 --> 00:35:16,760

And another family
came to adopt me.

826

00:35:16,760 --> 00:35:18,800

I was there several weeks again.

827

00:35:18,800 --> 00:35:20,990

And I remember the
feelings of the children.

828

00:35:20,990 --> 00:35:23,942

We would discuss what it's
like to be in a foster home.

829

00:35:23,942 --> 00:35:25,650

And of course, I told
them my experience.

830

00:35:25,650 --> 00:35:27,440

And then all of them
didn't want to go.

831

00:35:27,440 --> 00:35:30,000

You know, children
speak to each other.

832

00:35:30,000 --> 00:35:33,630

And the treatment in
that particular camp,

833

00:35:33,630 --> 00:35:38,010

it was not the best
conditions either.

834

00:35:38,010 --> 00:35:39,990
And it was uncomfortable.

835
00:35:39,990 --> 00:35:42,390
Many children were there
who did not have parents.

836
00:35:42,390 --> 00:35:44,070
And children speak
to each other.

837
00:35:44,070 --> 00:35:45,870
We were really very tense.

838
00:35:45,870 --> 00:35:46,680
We did play.

839
00:35:46,680 --> 00:35:50,680
But it was more with--

840
00:35:50,680 --> 00:35:51,870
we were tense.

841
00:35:51,870 --> 00:35:55,560
Were these camps for children
under the auspices of the Swiss

842
00:35:55,560 --> 00:35:56,440
Red Cross?

843
00:35:56,440 --> 00:35:57,590
Yes.

844
00:35:57,590 --> 00:35:58,280
Yes.

845
00:35:58,280 --> 00:36:01,350
The Swiss Red Cross, by the
way, also had a regulation.

846
00:36:01,350 --> 00:36:02,820
If you were under

the age of six,

847

00:36:02,820 --> 00:36:04,760

you could be with a parent.

848

00:36:04,760 --> 00:36:06,550

But I was over the age of six.

849

00:36:06,550 --> 00:36:08,270

So I could not be
with my mother.

850

00:36:08,270 --> 00:36:10,280

So a second family adopted me.

851

00:36:10,280 --> 00:36:13,610

When the second family came
to adopt me, I was wild.

852

00:36:13,610 --> 00:36:14,390

I kicked them.

853

00:36:14,390 --> 00:36:17,200

I cried.

854

00:36:17,200 --> 00:36:18,680

This was a wonderful family.

855

00:36:18,680 --> 00:36:21,050

They had a 16-room villa.

856

00:36:21,050 --> 00:36:23,660

And they were both Swiss.

857

00:36:23,660 --> 00:36:26,270

Very wealthy family
with two children.

858

00:36:26,270 --> 00:36:28,310

And I went on a hunger strike.

859

00:36:28,310 --> 00:36:30,140

I did not eat for several days.

860

00:36:30,140 --> 00:36:35,660

And finally, the young daughter,
who was 15 at the time,

861

00:36:35,660 --> 00:36:37,520

won my confidence.

862

00:36:37,520 --> 00:36:39,290

And I explained the
whole story to her.

863

00:36:39,290 --> 00:36:41,130

These people were
wonderful to me.

864

00:36:41,130 --> 00:36:42,620

I started school.

865

00:36:42,620 --> 00:36:46,370

This was in a town called
Zofingen. Zofingen is not

866

00:36:46,370 --> 00:36:48,590

too far away from Zurich.

867

00:36:48,590 --> 00:36:51,420

And they were wonderful to me.

868

00:36:51,420 --> 00:36:54,300

And I started to
have a normal life.

869

00:36:54,300 --> 00:36:56,450

But of course, I did
not have my mother.

870

00:36:56,450 --> 00:36:59,180

I was allowed to visit
my mother once more.

871

00:36:59,180 --> 00:37:01,250

So I really saw her
twice more in Switzerland

872

00:37:01,250 --> 00:37:04,280

in a year and a half.

873

00:37:04,280 --> 00:37:07,320

And I remember traveling
in the train all alone.

874

00:37:07,320 --> 00:37:08,570

They put me on the train.

875

00:37:08,570 --> 00:37:12,200

And I was going to go to
where she lived in Sonnenberg.

876

00:37:12,200 --> 00:37:15,620

And I had a ticket on my lapel.

877

00:37:15,620 --> 00:37:17,720

And I remember sitting
in a compartment

878

00:37:17,720 --> 00:37:19,790

with a woman with her
two children there.

879

00:37:19,790 --> 00:37:22,280

And they were drinking cocoa.

880

00:37:22,280 --> 00:37:24,080

She suddenly saw this ticket.

881

00:37:24,080 --> 00:37:27,230

And I felt so rejected.

882

00:37:27,230 --> 00:37:30,450

So I hid the ticket
and as a result,

883

00:37:30,450 --> 00:37:32,360

almost missed my stop
because the conductor

884

00:37:32,360 --> 00:37:35,720

was looking for this little
girl with a ticket on her lapel.

885

00:37:35,720 --> 00:37:38,180

And she offered
me hot chocolate.

886

00:37:38,180 --> 00:37:42,740

And almost, she
felt sorry for me.

887

00:37:42,740 --> 00:37:44,270

And I said, no thank you.

888

00:37:44,270 --> 00:37:45,890

I drink hot chocolate
all the time,

889

00:37:45,890 --> 00:37:51,680

I told her, which was my
reaction of telling her

890

00:37:51,680 --> 00:37:52,970

I was well taken care of.

891

00:37:52,970 --> 00:37:55,400

I arrived to my mother's camp.

892

00:37:55,400 --> 00:37:56,723

And we had to walk.

893

00:37:56,723 --> 00:37:57,890

There was no transportation.

894

00:37:57,890 --> 00:38:00,950

They had a cable car
going up to Sonnenberg.

895
00:38:00,950 --> 00:38:02,840
It was a very high hill.

896
00:38:02,840 --> 00:38:04,400
But the cable car
wasn't working.

897
00:38:04,400 --> 00:38:05,840
So we walked up.

898
00:38:05,840 --> 00:38:09,060
And everybody in the camp,
really, they spoiled me.

899
00:38:09,060 --> 00:38:11,750
I stayed, I think,
two or three days.

900
00:38:11,750 --> 00:38:13,850
And then I had to go back again.

901
00:38:13,850 --> 00:38:15,470
My mother took me
into the village.

902
00:38:15,470 --> 00:38:17,510
And Switzerland is
very, very beautiful.

903
00:38:17,510 --> 00:38:18,470
I remember that.

904
00:38:18,470 --> 00:38:20,090
I remember looking
at the scenery,

905
00:38:20,090 --> 00:38:22,310
and it was just magnificent.

906
00:38:22,310 --> 00:38:25,640
I, of course, had a terrible

time leaving my mother.

907

00:38:25,640 --> 00:38:30,800

And it was like I was being
taken away from her again.

908

00:38:30,800 --> 00:38:32,450

And she assured me, don't worry.

909

00:38:32,450 --> 00:38:34,550

These people love you.

910

00:38:34,550 --> 00:38:36,740

These people also
asked my parents--

911

00:38:36,740 --> 00:38:39,620

their name was
[? Stettler, ?] whether--

912

00:38:39,620 --> 00:38:40,880

my mother, excuse me--

913

00:38:40,880 --> 00:38:43,820

whether I could attend church.

914

00:38:43,820 --> 00:38:45,470

So I remember I attended church.

915

00:38:45,470 --> 00:38:48,920

My mother said, do whatever
you do as a family.

916

00:38:48,920 --> 00:38:50,913

And I attended church.

917

00:38:50,913 --> 00:38:53,330

I remember I did not have to
kneel, which was interesting.

918

00:38:53,330 --> 00:38:54,413

She did not make me kneel.

919
00:38:54,413 --> 00:38:57,860
And I remember people looking
at me because I did not kneel.

920
00:38:57,860 --> 00:38:59,060
And--

921
00:38:59,060 --> 00:39:00,450
This was a Catholic church?

922
00:39:00,450 --> 00:39:00,950
Yes.

923
00:39:00,950 --> 00:39:01,610
No.

924
00:39:01,610 --> 00:39:02,440
Protestant.

925
00:39:02,440 --> 00:39:03,880
Protestant.

926
00:39:03,880 --> 00:39:07,570
And I also remember an
incident very vividly

927
00:39:07,570 --> 00:39:09,130
when I was at her house.

928
00:39:09,130 --> 00:39:11,230
It had come-- Christmas
time had come around.

929
00:39:11,230 --> 00:39:13,990
And in Switzerland they
had father Nicholas

930
00:39:13,990 --> 00:39:15,160
who dressed in gray.

931

00:39:15,160 --> 00:39:17,410
And he came with a bag
visiting the children

932
00:39:17,410 --> 00:39:18,862
at the various houses.

933
00:39:18,862 --> 00:39:20,320
And I remember
sitting on his knee.

934
00:39:20,320 --> 00:39:21,737
He asked me if I
was a good child.

935
00:39:21,737 --> 00:39:22,930
I told him yes.

936
00:39:22,930 --> 00:39:24,550
And he gave me a gift.

937
00:39:24,550 --> 00:39:27,490
But that gift did not impress
me as much as the gift

938
00:39:27,490 --> 00:39:30,730
that I received in the mail.

939
00:39:30,730 --> 00:39:34,690
I remember receiving a package
from the United States.

940
00:39:34,690 --> 00:39:36,880
It was not addressed
to me personally.

941
00:39:36,880 --> 00:39:41,410
But in the package was a leaden
dreidel, some coloring pencils,

942
00:39:41,410 --> 00:39:44,770
some chocolates,
and several hankies.

943
00:39:44,770 --> 00:39:49,090
I was so thrilled that this
package came from America.

944
00:39:49,090 --> 00:39:51,280
I had heard of America.

945
00:39:51,280 --> 00:39:52,150
It was a country.

946
00:39:52,150 --> 00:39:54,040
But I didn't know
anything about America.

947
00:39:54,040 --> 00:39:57,340
But I was so happy
that I personally

948
00:39:57,340 --> 00:39:59,560
received a gift from
so far away that I

949
00:39:59,560 --> 00:40:02,590
remember I carried the chocolate
around until it melted.

950
00:40:02,590 --> 00:40:03,910
And--

951
00:40:03,910 --> 00:40:05,800
Did you know what the
dreidel was all about?

952
00:40:05,800 --> 00:40:06,760
No.

953
00:40:06,760 --> 00:40:10,070
No, I did not know what
the dreidel was all about.

954
00:40:10,070 --> 00:40:13,420

And the woman explained, it
must be something, a toy.

955
00:40:13,420 --> 00:40:15,852
She didn't know what
it was about either.

956
00:40:15,852 --> 00:40:16,810
And I kept the dreidel.

957
00:40:16,810 --> 00:40:19,100
After the war, I
found out what it was.

958
00:40:19,100 --> 00:40:22,020
And there was also a
little tiny mezuzah

959
00:40:22,020 --> 00:40:25,510
in there, a little mezuzah
made from aluminum.

960
00:40:25,510 --> 00:40:27,310
You know, it's not
a real parchment.

961
00:40:27,310 --> 00:40:29,170
But I guess they wanted--

962
00:40:29,170 --> 00:40:31,420
the United States sent
these packages around

963
00:40:31,420 --> 00:40:32,590
to the various children.

964
00:40:32,590 --> 00:40:35,230
And I felt very good about it.

965
00:40:35,230 --> 00:40:37,935
Did you ever find out who
specifically had sent it?

966

00:40:37,935 --> 00:40:38,435

No.

967

00:40:38,435 --> 00:40:40,060

I never found out
the organization

968

00:40:40,060 --> 00:40:43,010

who sent it or anything.

969

00:40:43,010 --> 00:40:45,460

I am in contact with
the family that I'm

970

00:40:45,460 --> 00:40:46,930

talking about right now.

971

00:40:46,930 --> 00:40:48,130

I spoke to the woman.

972

00:40:48,130 --> 00:40:49,360

She's in an old age home.

973

00:40:49,360 --> 00:40:50,950

She's an elderly lady today.

974

00:40:50,950 --> 00:40:51,920

And I spoke to her.

975

00:40:51,920 --> 00:40:53,720

She called me from Switzerland.

976

00:40:53,720 --> 00:40:56,260

I'm in touch with the
daughter that lives in Greece.

977

00:40:56,260 --> 00:40:59,980

And when I heard her
voice after, you know,

978

00:40:59,980 --> 00:41:01,870

this was just done last summer.

979

00:41:01,870 --> 00:41:05,440

I was so emotionally touched,
I couldn't speak to her.

980

00:41:05,440 --> 00:41:07,510

And we spoke in German.

981

00:41:07,510 --> 00:41:09,460

She spoke several languages.

982

00:41:09,460 --> 00:41:12,580

And I learned Schweizerdeutsch
while I was in Switzerland.

983

00:41:12,580 --> 00:41:14,650

But I don't speak
it anymore today.

984

00:41:14,650 --> 00:41:18,760

And I said, thank you so
much for what you did for me.

985

00:41:18,760 --> 00:41:20,290

Please don't thank me.

986

00:41:20,290 --> 00:41:22,060

This was the right thing to do.

987

00:41:22,060 --> 00:41:24,530

And the family who had
hidden us during the war,

988

00:41:24,530 --> 00:41:26,080

it was the same thing

989

00:41:26,080 --> 00:41:28,150

Did you ever find tante again?

990

00:41:28,150 --> 00:41:29,740

Yes.

991
00:41:29,740 --> 00:41:32,170
The tante-- first
tante in Switzerland?

992
00:41:32,170 --> 00:41:32,800
Or the one in--

993
00:41:32,800 --> 00:41:33,600
The one in Berlin.

994
00:41:33,600 --> 00:41:34,850
The one in Berlin.

995
00:41:34,850 --> 00:41:35,350
Yes.

996
00:41:35,350 --> 00:41:38,120
After the war we
went to visit them.

997
00:41:38,120 --> 00:41:41,440
And my father bought them
several supply of coal

998
00:41:41,440 --> 00:41:43,540
because coal was so expensive.

999
00:41:43,540 --> 00:41:47,680
And we asked them,
why did you do this?

1000
00:41:47,680 --> 00:41:50,560
And they explained to
me, there's no question.

1001
00:41:50,560 --> 00:41:51,670
This was the thing to do.

1002
00:41:51,670 --> 00:41:54,370
I'm not a hero or heroine.

1003

00:41:54,370 --> 00:41:55,570

This was the thing to do.

1004

00:41:55,570 --> 00:41:57,190

They were wonderful,
wonderful people.

1005

00:41:57,190 --> 00:41:58,370

And by the way, the daughter--

1006

00:41:58,370 --> 00:41:59,537

I was just going to ask you.

1007

00:41:59,537 --> 00:42:02,390

--who was so antisemitic,
she disowned her.

1008

00:42:02,390 --> 00:42:05,200

She was not allowed to
come to her house again.

1009

00:42:05,200 --> 00:42:11,020

And it was-- I went back, by the
way, to play with the children.

1010

00:42:11,020 --> 00:42:13,890

And I had one friend over
there in particular, a girl.

1011

00:42:13,890 --> 00:42:15,670

And I said, do you
know I'm Jewish?

1012

00:42:15,670 --> 00:42:18,490

That's the first thing
I said after the war.

1013

00:42:18,490 --> 00:42:20,160

She said, you are?

1014

00:42:20,160 --> 00:42:22,390

It was like shock.

1015
00:42:22,390 --> 00:42:24,130
But she was still
friendly with me

1016
00:42:24,130 --> 00:42:28,463
because remember, this was a
town where a lot of farmers

1017
00:42:28,463 --> 00:42:30,130
had lived, there was
a lot of prejudice.

1018
00:42:30,130 --> 00:42:32,470
And these children
heard the prejudice

1019
00:42:32,470 --> 00:42:33,775
at their dinner tables.

1020
00:42:33,775 --> 00:42:35,720
It's not that they
disliked a Jew.

1021
00:42:35,720 --> 00:42:39,450
They didn't know what
a Jew was, really.

1022
00:42:39,450 --> 00:42:42,280
I'm not in touch with them
right now, unfortunately.

1023
00:42:42,280 --> 00:42:44,830
You know, sometimes you
lose touch with each other.

1024
00:42:44,830 --> 00:42:48,640
I have not been back
to Belgium since 1949.

1025
00:42:48,640 --> 00:42:50,070
Have you visited Switzerland?

1026
00:42:50,070 --> 00:42:50,570
No.

1027
00:42:50,570 --> 00:42:51,070
No.

1028
00:42:51,070 --> 00:42:51,640
Not yet.

1029
00:42:51,640 --> 00:42:52,780
But I'm planning to.

1030
00:42:52,780 --> 00:42:56,980
I wanted to ask you if all the
children in the refugee camps

1031
00:42:56,980 --> 00:43:00,520
were Jewish, because I imagine
that some Belgian children

1032
00:43:00,520 --> 00:43:04,120
might have been sent out
to avoid the bombings.

1033
00:43:04,120 --> 00:43:07,040
I would say that about 90%
of the camp was Jewish.

1034
00:43:07,040 --> 00:43:09,310
They were mostly
Jewish refugees.

1035
00:43:09,310 --> 00:43:11,020
There were some
plans during the war,

1036
00:43:11,020 --> 00:43:16,960
by the way, of convents adopting
children and taking them

1037
00:43:16,960 --> 00:43:17,730
and hiding them.

1038
00:43:17,730 --> 00:43:19,850
And my mother did
have such an offer.

1039
00:43:19,850 --> 00:43:23,080
And she was seriously
thinking about it.

1040
00:43:23,080 --> 00:43:25,000
When it came down
to really doing it,

1041
00:43:25,000 --> 00:43:26,450
she said, I can't do it.

1042
00:43:26,450 --> 00:43:28,820
I will try to survive with her.

1043
00:43:28,820 --> 00:43:30,970
This was after my
father had been taken.

1044
00:43:30,970 --> 00:43:33,830
My father, in the meantime,
was in concentration camp

1045
00:43:33,830 --> 00:43:35,800
for about three years.

1046
00:43:35,800 --> 00:43:38,320
And he was in many war camps.

1047
00:43:38,320 --> 00:43:42,220
And what saved him was the
fact that he was a jeweler,

1048
00:43:42,220 --> 00:43:45,370
so he lied, and he
said he was a welder.

1049
00:43:45,370 --> 00:43:48,220

So he was sent to factories.

1050

00:43:48,220 --> 00:43:50,190

You were given a
card-- issued a card.

1051

00:43:50,190 --> 00:43:52,070

And you could go in
and out of the camp.

1052

00:43:52,070 --> 00:43:55,360

And he also made rings
from the jewelry,

1053

00:43:55,360 --> 00:43:58,910

from the gold of the
teeth of the inmates.

1054

00:43:58,910 --> 00:44:01,690

And he made them for
trinkets for the kapo,

1055

00:44:01,690 --> 00:44:04,260

which was the lowest ranking
officer in the concentration

1056

00:44:04,260 --> 00:44:05,010

camp.

1057

00:44:05,010 --> 00:44:07,590

Ruthless, cruel, brutal.

1058

00:44:07,590 --> 00:44:10,922

And my father knew this was gold
of teeth, but it meant bread.

1059

00:44:10,922 --> 00:44:13,380

And he could share the bread
with people in his bunk, which

1060

00:44:13,380 --> 00:44:14,760

was very important.

1061

00:44:14,760 --> 00:44:18,687

My father said whenever he saw
a woman's transport come in--

1062

00:44:18,687 --> 00:44:20,520

they used to divide the
transport-- whenever

1063

00:44:20,520 --> 00:44:22,950

a train came in, they made
the women and children

1064

00:44:22,950 --> 00:44:25,260

go to one side and the
men go to the other side.

1065

00:44:25,260 --> 00:44:28,170

He would always run to
the fence looking for me,

1066

00:44:28,170 --> 00:44:31,110

and of course, thank
God, never found me.

1067

00:44:31,110 --> 00:44:36,390

And my father was
freed by the Russians.

1068

00:44:36,390 --> 00:44:38,100

And he weighed 85 pounds.

1069

00:44:38,100 --> 00:44:40,860

1070

00:44:40,860 --> 00:44:44,160

After the war, this was the--
they were called Muselmanner,

1071

00:44:44,160 --> 00:44:46,570

because you were just bones.

1072

00:44:46,570 --> 00:44:49,500

And, you know-- but
he was very swollen.

1073
00:44:49,500 --> 00:44:52,290
He had holes in his lungs
from the malnutrition

1074
00:44:52,290 --> 00:44:54,390
and the beatings.

1075
00:44:54,390 --> 00:44:58,600
So the Russians had no
time to take care of you.

1076
00:44:58,600 --> 00:45:01,410
They just freed you and
went on to kill the Nazis.

1077
00:45:01,410 --> 00:45:03,760
They had a very good
mission in mind.

1078
00:45:03,760 --> 00:45:07,620
And he was handed over to
the Belgian underground,

1079
00:45:07,620 --> 00:45:09,210
and he was spoonfed.

1080
00:45:09,210 --> 00:45:12,390
And he said when he was freed,
the Russians freed the camp

1081
00:45:12,390 --> 00:45:13,380
and then left.

1082
00:45:13,380 --> 00:45:16,682
And suddenly, the inmates
found themselves all alone.

1083
00:45:16,682 --> 00:45:17,640
And they were in shock.

1084

00:45:17,640 --> 00:45:19,182

They didn't know
what to do at first.

1085

00:45:19,182 --> 00:45:21,240

And then they
raided the kitchens.

1086

00:45:21,240 --> 00:45:23,460

And many Jews died
as the result.

1087

00:45:23,460 --> 00:45:26,100

My father said he remembered
grabbing chocolate and eating

1088

00:45:26,100 --> 00:45:27,610

it, and he became violently ill.

1089

00:45:27,610 --> 00:45:29,460

He's lucky he did not die.

1090

00:45:29,460 --> 00:45:32,010

And he somehow managed--

1091

00:45:32,010 --> 00:45:35,080

after several months he
came back to the house.

1092

00:45:35,080 --> 00:45:38,760

And by that time, our floor
had been totally bombed out.

1093

00:45:38,760 --> 00:45:41,220

And he stood there crying.

1094

00:45:41,220 --> 00:45:42,900

And the woman of
the vegetable store

1095

00:45:42,900 --> 00:45:45,790

saw him, tapped him on

the shoulder and said,

1096
00:45:45,790 --> 00:45:48,810
I think they're alive
somewhere in Switzerland.

1097
00:45:48,810 --> 00:45:51,060
So he got in contact
with the Red Cross.

1098
00:45:51,060 --> 00:45:52,110
There were no papers.

1099
00:45:52,110 --> 00:45:53,742
The telephone lines were down.

1100
00:45:53,742 --> 00:45:55,200
I mean, it was
virtually-- you know

1101
00:45:55,200 --> 00:45:56,850
how people found each other?

1102
00:45:56,850 --> 00:46:00,015
They left-- you know, I
call in a kvitel, which

1103
00:46:00,015 --> 00:46:01,140
is a little piece of paper.

1104
00:46:01,140 --> 00:46:03,480
They would pin little
pieces of paper

1105
00:46:03,480 --> 00:46:06,390
anywhere and everywhere,
especially in synagogues

1106
00:46:06,390 --> 00:46:08,520
on bulletin boards, if
a synagogue still stood

1107

00:46:08,520 --> 00:46:10,470
or it was partially bombed.

1108
00:46:10,470 --> 00:46:12,270
And that's how people
found each other.

1109
00:46:12,270 --> 00:46:13,937
They would meet each
other on the street

1110
00:46:13,937 --> 00:46:15,630
and say, listen, I have family.

1111
00:46:15,630 --> 00:46:18,420
They were last heard of
in this particular camp.

1112
00:46:18,420 --> 00:46:20,340
Have you heard of them?

1113
00:46:20,340 --> 00:46:24,420
And it was very difficult
to get in touch with people.

1114
00:46:24,420 --> 00:46:26,460
I remember I was being bathed.

1115
00:46:26,460 --> 00:46:28,860
The only reason
why I'm telling--

1116
00:46:28,860 --> 00:46:32,790
explaining it is because I
was so excited that I almost

1117
00:46:32,790 --> 00:46:35,050
went under the water.

1118
00:46:35,050 --> 00:46:37,500
The young girl in
Switzerland was bathing me.

1119

00:46:37,500 --> 00:46:38,665

Her name was Eva.

1120

00:46:38,665 --> 00:46:40,290

She said, there's a
phone call for you.

1121

00:46:40,290 --> 00:46:42,810

I've never received a
phone call in my life.

1122

00:46:42,810 --> 00:46:46,740

And she said, your mother
is on the telephone.

1123

00:46:46,740 --> 00:46:51,090

And my mother said,
you'll never guess what.

1124

00:46:51,090 --> 00:46:52,780

Your father's alive.

1125

00:46:52,780 --> 00:46:55,380

Well, you can't imagine the joy.

1126

00:46:55,380 --> 00:46:57,870

I was just tremendous joy.

1127

00:46:57,870 --> 00:47:00,240

It took a while to
come back to Belgium.

1128

00:47:00,240 --> 00:47:04,110

And my father was a
very, very handsome man.

1129

00:47:04,110 --> 00:47:08,550

And he came back,
and he had no money.

1130

00:47:08,550 --> 00:47:09,190

He had nothing.

1131
00:47:09,190 --> 00:47:10,530
We had virtually nothing.

1132
00:47:10,530 --> 00:47:12,990
Belgium looked like
Germany did, bombed

1133
00:47:12,990 --> 00:47:14,790
out houses, bombed out streets.

1134
00:47:14,790 --> 00:47:16,710
You hardly recognized
your neighborhood.

1135
00:47:16,710 --> 00:47:18,630
People were looking
through the rubble.

1136
00:47:18,630 --> 00:47:21,450
And one of his customers--

1137
00:47:21,450 --> 00:47:25,770
one of his-- a
metallurgist who my father

1138
00:47:25,770 --> 00:47:28,350
worked with because he would
melt down the gold shavings

1139
00:47:28,350 --> 00:47:32,790
or prepare gold or platinum
for him took my father in.

1140
00:47:32,790 --> 00:47:36,150
He was a Gentile.

1141
00:47:36,150 --> 00:47:38,730
And he really took care of him.

1142
00:47:38,730 --> 00:47:41,880
And when we arrived in

Belgium, they gave us shelter.

1143
00:47:41,880 --> 00:47:43,470
They gave us clothing.

1144
00:47:43,470 --> 00:47:44,880
They supplied food for us.

1145
00:47:44,880 --> 00:47:48,090
Now, I remember the first
time I saw my father.

1146
00:47:48,090 --> 00:47:50,940
My father was out
in a line going

1147
00:47:50,940 --> 00:47:54,570
for a soup plate, one soup
plate that we could all share.

1148
00:47:54,570 --> 00:47:57,510
Because, you know, that's
how you got your supplies.

1149
00:47:57,510 --> 00:48:01,350
And the man, Mr.
[? Flamar, ?] took me to where

1150
00:48:01,350 --> 00:48:03,120
my father was standing in line.

1151
00:48:03,120 --> 00:48:05,336
And he said, there's your papa.

1152
00:48:05,336 --> 00:48:08,070
Well, I didn't recognize him.

1153
00:48:08,070 --> 00:48:09,540
First of all, he
had stubbled hair.

1154
00:48:09,540 --> 00:48:12,600

He was very heavy, very swollen.

1155

00:48:12,600 --> 00:48:15,890

And he thought, he
was envisioned--

1156

00:48:15,890 --> 00:48:17,040

he had lost track of time--

1157

00:48:17,040 --> 00:48:19,560

that I would be this
big girl coming back.

1158

00:48:19,560 --> 00:48:22,530

And I was only eight years old.

1159

00:48:22,530 --> 00:48:24,540

And it took a while.

1160

00:48:24,540 --> 00:48:26,940

And he said my name.

1161

00:48:26,940 --> 00:48:30,810

He recognized me, but
I just looked at him.

1162

00:48:30,810 --> 00:48:32,790

But when I heard his
voice, I recognized him,

1163

00:48:32,790 --> 00:48:33,900

and I ran to him.

1164

00:48:33,900 --> 00:48:35,700

And we couldn't
talk to each other.

1165

00:48:35,700 --> 00:48:37,320

I spoke Schweizerdeutsch.

1166

00:48:37,320 --> 00:48:39,430

He spoke German, French,

and other languages.

1167

00:48:39,430 --> 00:48:42,570

So he would always have to ask
my mother, what is she saying?

1168

00:48:42,570 --> 00:48:43,830

And can't she slow down?

1169

00:48:43,830 --> 00:48:45,750

The Swiss speak very quickly.

1170

00:48:45,750 --> 00:48:50,190

And Mr. [? Flamar, ?] the
metallurgist, took care of us

1171

00:48:50,190 --> 00:48:51,930

for quite a number of months.

1172

00:48:51,930 --> 00:48:54,060

Then we rented a one room.

1173

00:48:54,060 --> 00:48:56,820

And he lent us some money.

1174

00:48:56,820 --> 00:49:02,070

And we slowly became
a normal family again.

1175

00:49:02,070 --> 00:49:05,080

Of course, my father
suffered terribly.

1176

00:49:05,080 --> 00:49:07,900

He would smoke very heavily,
and he would have nightmares.

1177

00:49:07,900 --> 00:49:09,240

I slept in their room.

1178

00:49:09,240 --> 00:49:10,920

And they would have

these discussions.

1179
00:49:10,920 --> 00:49:14,400
He also brought back
pictures of the trenches,

1180
00:49:14,400 --> 00:49:16,860
you know, the burial,
the funeral pyres,

1181
00:49:16,860 --> 00:49:19,205
because he was afraid that
people would not believe him

1182
00:49:19,205 --> 00:49:20,080
and what he had seen.

1183
00:49:20,080 --> 00:49:22,110
How did he acquire
these pictures?

1184
00:49:22,110 --> 00:49:23,670
When they raided
the kitchens, they

1185
00:49:23,670 --> 00:49:25,350
broke into the German lockers.

1186
00:49:25,350 --> 00:49:27,120
The Germans kept
meticulous pictures,

1187
00:49:27,120 --> 00:49:30,230
and they kept
meticulous records.

1188
00:49:30,230 --> 00:49:33,510
That's how I found out
when my father was taken

1189
00:49:33,510 --> 00:49:36,020
and where he was shipped
from such records.

1190
00:49:36,020 --> 00:49:38,430
Did he keep these
pictures with him?

1191
00:49:38,430 --> 00:49:39,570
Yes.

1192
00:49:39,570 --> 00:49:42,630
He hid them in the house
on top of a closet.

1193
00:49:42,630 --> 00:49:46,740
And my parents had a habit after
the war to go for long walks.

1194
00:49:46,740 --> 00:49:50,490
And I took these pictures
once, and I laid them all out

1195
00:49:50,490 --> 00:49:51,540
on the floor.

1196
00:49:51,540 --> 00:49:54,780
I'll see those pictures
to my dying day.

1197
00:49:54,780 --> 00:49:58,950
They were the worst, like
what you see on Night and Fog.

1198
00:49:58,950 --> 00:49:59,760
Horrible.

1199
00:49:59,760 --> 00:50:05,580
Trenches, bodies half burned,
gas ovens, funeral pyres,

1200
00:50:05,580 --> 00:50:09,770
mutilated bodies, hands, legs.

1201
00:50:09,770 --> 00:50:10,520

The worst.

1202
00:50:10,520 --> 00:50:11,540
Just the worst.

1203
00:50:11,540 --> 00:50:13,130
I'll never forget that.

1204
00:50:13,130 --> 00:50:16,370
And my father knew
I had watched them.

1205
00:50:16,370 --> 00:50:18,660
I kept having
nightmares after that.

1206
00:50:18,660 --> 00:50:22,380
And he burnt them,
which was very sad.

1207
00:50:22,380 --> 00:50:24,930
But he just felt
he had to do that.

1208
00:50:24,930 --> 00:50:28,220
And he said, I'm never
talking about it again.

1209
00:50:28,220 --> 00:50:34,060
And it was a very difficult
period for us after the war.

1210
00:50:34,060 --> 00:50:38,630
In a way, you saw after the
war what you were spared--

1211
00:50:38,630 --> 00:50:39,410
During the war.

1212
00:50:39,410 --> 00:50:39,660
--during the war.

1213

00:50:39,660 --> 00:50:40,400

Yes.

1214

00:50:40,400 --> 00:50:44,730

And as a young woman, I became
obsessed with the subject.

1215

00:50:44,730 --> 00:50:47,390

And when I first
came to America--

1216

00:50:47,390 --> 00:50:50,690

I had come to America in 1954--

1217

00:50:50,690 --> 00:50:54,000

in 1965 I became a
religious school teacher.

1218

00:50:54,000 --> 00:50:55,520

And I started to teach.

1219

00:50:55,520 --> 00:50:57,590

And I wanted to talk
about the Holocaust,

1220

00:50:57,590 --> 00:51:00,000

but nobody wanted to listen.

1221

00:51:00,000 --> 00:51:02,840

And now I can't talk
about it enough.

1222

00:51:02,840 --> 00:51:06,170

I'm invited into public
schools, and I'm invited

1223

00:51:06,170 --> 00:51:07,880

to do teacher workshops.

1224

00:51:07,880 --> 00:51:10,470

And I do a lot of speaking.

1225

00:51:10,470 --> 00:51:12,920

In fact, sometimes I can't
take the pressure of it,

1226

00:51:12,920 --> 00:51:14,510

but I never say no.

1227

00:51:14,510 --> 00:51:16,580

If a public school
calls me, I really

1228

00:51:16,580 --> 00:51:21,290

always go because I feel
it must never be forgotten.

1229

00:51:21,290 --> 00:51:24,890

You spent some time in
Australia, did you not?

1230

00:51:24,890 --> 00:51:25,460

Yes.

1231

00:51:25,460 --> 00:51:28,880

What made you go
there, or your family?

1232

00:51:28,880 --> 00:51:32,480

My father wanted-- my mother
had family in America.

1233

00:51:32,480 --> 00:51:34,700

My mother came from
a family of 10.

1234

00:51:34,700 --> 00:51:36,740

And seven had perished
in the Holocaust

1235

00:51:36,740 --> 00:51:39,110

with children and
husbands and cousins.

1236

00:51:39,110 --> 00:51:41,210

And my mother decided
she would like

1237
00:51:41,210 --> 00:51:44,120
to be with her two brothers who
lived one in New York and one

1238
00:51:44,120 --> 00:51:45,720
in New Jersey.

1239
00:51:45,720 --> 00:51:47,210
But we could not
come to America.

1240
00:51:47,210 --> 00:51:49,970
We did not have a quota number.

1241
00:51:49,970 --> 00:51:54,170
And my father was Romanian,
therefore, considered a behind

1242
00:51:54,170 --> 00:51:55,400
the Iron Curtain.

1243
00:51:55,400 --> 00:51:56,250
It was a problem.

1244
00:51:56,250 --> 00:51:58,250
People coming from
behind the Iron Curtain

1245
00:51:58,250 --> 00:52:00,920
were not permitted
to come to America.

1246
00:52:00,920 --> 00:52:02,820
He was not a citizen of Belgium?

1247
00:52:02,820 --> 00:52:03,530
No.

1248
00:52:03,530 --> 00:52:06,330

My parents never attained
Belgian citizenship.

1249
00:52:06,330 --> 00:52:09,980
It was very difficult
for Jews to do this.

1250
00:52:09,980 --> 00:52:12,080
My uncle had become
a Belgian citizen

1251
00:52:12,080 --> 00:52:15,560
because he went to
medical school in Belgium.

1252
00:52:15,560 --> 00:52:22,490
And it was very-- it was an
extremely difficult situation.

1253
00:52:22,490 --> 00:52:25,370
My father decided, why
don't we go to Australia,

1254
00:52:25,370 --> 00:52:28,940
attain the British citizenship,
and then after Australia,

1255
00:52:28,940 --> 00:52:30,800
we'll try and come to America.

1256
00:52:30,800 --> 00:52:34,180
In the meantime, we had lived
in Australia for five years.

1257
00:52:34,180 --> 00:52:37,700
And in 1954, my American
quota number came through.

1258
00:52:37,700 --> 00:52:38,880
I was stateless.

1259
00:52:38,880 --> 00:52:39,980
My mother was Polish.

1260
00:52:39,980 --> 00:52:41,660
My father was Romanian.

1261
00:52:41,660 --> 00:52:44,010
I was permitted to come
here with my mother,

1262
00:52:44,010 --> 00:52:46,700
but we did not want to separate.

1263
00:52:46,700 --> 00:52:48,890
I had an ironic experience.

1264
00:52:48,890 --> 00:52:51,230
This was my first
impression of America.

1265
00:52:51,230 --> 00:52:55,340
I ended up on Ellis Island being
taken there by police paddy

1266
00:52:55,340 --> 00:52:59,930
wagon and standing behind
barbed wire fence looking

1267
00:52:59,930 --> 00:53:02,960
at the Statue of Liberty.

1268
00:53:02,960 --> 00:53:05,790
There was something
wrong with our X-ray.

1269
00:53:05,790 --> 00:53:07,492
We had tiny little X-rays.

1270
00:53:07,492 --> 00:53:09,200
And in order to come
to the United States

1271
00:53:09,200 --> 00:53:12,050
you have to have a

tuberculosis X-ray.

1272
00:53:12,050 --> 00:53:16,070
So we ended up on Ellis
Island, one of the last people

1273
00:53:16,070 --> 00:53:19,310
because they closed
Ellis Island in 1954.

1274
00:53:19,310 --> 00:53:22,520
And it was an odd
experience to have.

1275
00:53:22,520 --> 00:53:23,180
But you know--

1276
00:53:23,180 --> 00:53:25,870
The land of freedom, and you're
standing behind barbed wire.

1277
00:53:25,870 --> 00:53:28,640
But that notion was
quickly corrected

1278
00:53:28,640 --> 00:53:32,510
when I came to my relatives and
I saw how wonderful the United

1279
00:53:32,510 --> 00:53:35,300
States is and the fact that
you could live in freedom

1280
00:53:35,300 --> 00:53:37,950
and no one persecutes you.

1281
00:53:37,950 --> 00:53:38,450
Yeah.

1282
00:53:38,450 --> 00:53:44,036

1283

00:53:44,036 --> 00:53:48,980
Have you been able to
communicate your experiences

1284
00:53:48,980 --> 00:53:50,580
to your own children?

1285
00:53:50,580 --> 00:53:52,010
Yes.

1286
00:53:52,010 --> 00:53:54,290
I started doing this very early.

1287
00:53:54,290 --> 00:53:58,340
I felt that they know my story,
they know my husband's story.

1288
00:53:58,340 --> 00:54:03,200
And I introduced them to
the Holocaust through books.

1289
00:54:03,200 --> 00:54:05,030
And we talk about it.

1290
00:54:05,030 --> 00:54:08,060
We're an open family
where we discuss things.

1291
00:54:08,060 --> 00:54:12,020
My father, on the other hand,
never said anything to me.

1292
00:54:12,020 --> 00:54:15,030
My mother can't talk about it.

1293
00:54:15,030 --> 00:54:18,050
So you know, it's a
very difficult subject

1294
00:54:18,050 --> 00:54:19,290
to speak about.

1295

00:54:19,290 --> 00:54:21,830

I feel that I can speak
about it because I had not

1296

00:54:21,830 --> 00:54:23,720

been in a camp.

1297

00:54:23,720 --> 00:54:27,380

And I always tell my
students, what I went through

1298

00:54:27,380 --> 00:54:32,630

is really not a very hard thing
because all my friends, some

1299

00:54:32,630 --> 00:54:35,250

of them had been in convents
without their parents.

1300

00:54:35,250 --> 00:54:37,280

Some of them had
hidden in woods.

1301

00:54:37,280 --> 00:54:40,580

And most of our friends
that we socialize with right

1302

00:54:40,580 --> 00:54:44,220

now are survivors,
which is interesting.

1303

00:54:44,220 --> 00:54:45,710

We didn't do it on purpose.

1304

00:54:45,710 --> 00:54:46,700

These are my child--

1305

00:54:46,700 --> 00:54:48,980

these are my husband's
childhood friends.

1306

00:54:48,980 --> 00:54:50,930

So a lot of them are survivors.

1307
00:54:50,930 --> 00:54:52,820
And many of them
don't speak about it.

1308
00:54:52,820 --> 00:54:55,670

1309
00:54:55,670 --> 00:54:58,730
They find it obviously
too difficult

1310
00:54:58,730 --> 00:55:01,340
to bring back such memories.

1311
00:55:01,340 --> 00:55:03,290
It's only recently,
you know, I would

1312
00:55:03,290 --> 00:55:06,350
say within the last 10 years.

1313
00:55:06,350 --> 00:55:08,527
And especially since the
program was on, you know,

1314
00:55:08,527 --> 00:55:09,110
The Holocaust?

1315
00:55:09,110 --> 00:55:10,250
Mm-hmm.

1316
00:55:10,250 --> 00:55:15,050
And that people are more
willing to listen to it.

1317
00:55:15,050 --> 00:55:18,290
And I think I
learned a great deal

1318
00:55:18,290 --> 00:55:21,260
when I went to the

1983 Washington's

1319

00:55:21,260 --> 00:55:24,740

second generation and first
generation survivors' meeting.

1320

00:55:24,740 --> 00:55:28,580

15,000 Jews came together
to bring their children

1321

00:55:28,580 --> 00:55:31,040

and show their children
what had happened to them.

1322

00:55:31,040 --> 00:55:33,410

I lost my husband
at the conference.

1323

00:55:33,410 --> 00:55:36,590

And for about four hours
I was sitting waiting

1324

00:55:36,590 --> 00:55:38,600

on a bench trying to find him.

1325

00:55:38,600 --> 00:55:42,020

And people sat down next to
me, and they looked at my tag,

1326

00:55:42,020 --> 00:55:43,700

and they said, well,
you're too young.

1327

00:55:43,700 --> 00:55:45,320

I said, well, I was young.

1328

00:55:45,320 --> 00:55:48,170

And they didn't want to
hear my side of the story.

1329

00:55:48,170 --> 00:55:51,200

They just totally
unburdened themselves to me

1330
00:55:51,200 --> 00:55:52,130
and said, thank you.

1331
00:55:52,130 --> 00:55:53,810
I've never told this
to a living soul.

1332
00:55:53,810 --> 00:55:55,370
And they walked away.

1333
00:55:55,370 --> 00:56:00,650
So it's a very difficult thing
to talk about the Holocaust.

1334
00:56:00,650 --> 00:56:03,770
I was going to ask
you this question.

1335
00:56:03,770 --> 00:56:12,290
As a child survivor,
have you had difficulty

1336
00:56:12,290 --> 00:56:16,220
talking with other people who
are perhaps older than you

1337
00:56:16,220 --> 00:56:24,350
and had a greater awareness
of what was happening

1338
00:56:24,350 --> 00:56:28,070
or the significance and
the context of it all?

1339
00:56:28,070 --> 00:56:30,860
Well, I have found
a level of comfort,

1340
00:56:30,860 --> 00:56:35,720
if you can call it such, because
I read avidly on the subject.

1341

00:56:35,720 --> 00:56:38,390

And I have taught the
Holocaust at the college level

1342

00:56:38,390 --> 00:56:39,930

and the high school level.

1343

00:56:39,930 --> 00:56:42,710

So today I know
about the Holocaust

1344

00:56:42,710 --> 00:56:45,500

because this is-- that
I learned after the war

1345

00:56:45,500 --> 00:56:49,340

in speaking to many
friends, many relatives.

1346

00:56:49,340 --> 00:56:52,700

When I speak, they
realize that my memories

1347

00:56:52,700 --> 00:56:54,410

are the memories of a child.

1348

00:56:54,410 --> 00:56:57,590

But I fill in a lot of gaps
because of what I have learned

1349

00:56:57,590 --> 00:56:59,510

and what I have spoken
to other people.

1350

00:56:59,510 --> 00:57:02,930

So I have this level of--

1351

00:57:02,930 --> 00:57:06,260

if you can call of comfort, it's
such an uncomfortable subject.

1352

00:57:06,260 --> 00:57:09,260

And it's a difficult
subject to speak about.

1353
00:57:09,260 --> 00:57:10,940
And they realize
that I was a child.

1354
00:57:10,940 --> 00:57:14,010
And I always feel the more
you read, the less you know.

1355
00:57:14,010 --> 00:57:18,092
There's so much on this,
it's just incredible.

1356
00:57:18,092 --> 00:57:19,460
I keep-- I'm sorry.

1357
00:57:19,460 --> 00:57:20,480
Go ahead.

1358
00:57:20,480 --> 00:57:22,010
You know, as you
were speaking, I

1359
00:57:22,010 --> 00:57:27,890
was thinking of the recent
acts of anti-Semitism.

1360
00:57:27,890 --> 00:57:31,010
Several synagogues in Long
Island and even in New Jersey

1361
00:57:31,010 --> 00:57:36,320
and how do you as a child
survivor, what reaction do you

1362
00:57:36,320 --> 00:57:38,660
have when you read
about these things?

1363
00:57:38,660 --> 00:57:42,800
And do you think that your

speaking to high school

1364

00:57:42,800 --> 00:57:48,740
and college students is going to
make that much of a difference?

1365

00:57:48,740 --> 00:57:51,410
I always try to bring
a message to them that

1366

00:57:51,410 --> 00:57:54,680
first with the Jews,
then with the Gypsies,

1367

00:57:54,680 --> 00:57:58,205
and then I point to them, and
I say, it could have been you.

1368

00:57:58,205 --> 00:58:00,890
Just remember,
there's prejudice,

1369

00:58:00,890 --> 00:58:02,730
there's hatred in this world.

1370

00:58:02,730 --> 00:58:04,400
And at the end of
the Hitlerian period,

1371

00:58:04,400 --> 00:58:05,670
it did not end the hatred.

1372

00:58:05,670 --> 00:58:06,860
The hatred is there.

1373

00:58:06,860 --> 00:58:10,070
Try and be open-minded,
be educated, read.

1374

00:58:10,070 --> 00:58:11,990
And above all, don't forget.

1375

00:58:11,990 --> 00:58:14,390

Learn something from
this experience.

1376

00:58:14,390 --> 00:58:16,930

Miss Seiden, thank
you very much.

1377

00:58:16,930 --> 00:58:24,000