

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:11,720

2

00:00:11,720 --> 00:00:15,253

We continue with Lillian
Ross's narrative.

3

00:00:15,253 --> 00:00:16,920

Continue with your
story of Ravensbrück.

4

00:00:16,920 --> 00:00:19,490

No, Ravensbrück was
a terrible camp.

5

00:00:19,490 --> 00:00:22,475

It was a camp of
living skeletons.

6

00:00:22,475 --> 00:00:26,000

Because the people
there stayed for years.

7

00:00:26,000 --> 00:00:29,430

And that was in Germany,
where the food was really

8

00:00:29,430 --> 00:00:32,330

very scarce.

9

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

And it was unbelievable
how the people lived.

10

00:00:38,660 --> 00:00:41,660

They were just-- they didn't
gas them, they starved.

11

00:00:41,660 --> 00:00:43,310

They starved.

12

00:00:43,310 --> 00:00:46,070

And it looked like that
will be our fate, too,

13

00:00:46,070 --> 00:00:50,540

because we were totally
isolated in this camp, you know.

14

00:00:50,540 --> 00:00:51,980

Nobody even came close.

15

00:00:51,980 --> 00:00:55,630

16

00:00:55,630 --> 00:00:57,540

I mean that Lager.

17

00:00:57,540 --> 00:00:58,750

The [GERMAN].

18

00:00:58,750 --> 00:01:04,310

19

00:01:04,310 --> 00:01:11,150

Oh, the only way to get food
was through your German,

20

00:01:11,150 --> 00:01:12,860

the woman who was in charge.

21

00:01:12,860 --> 00:01:15,530

And of course, a
lot of the girls

22

00:01:15,530 --> 00:01:17,570

that came from Auschwitz--

23

00:01:17,570 --> 00:01:21,350

and a lot of them were
very good-looking.

24

00:01:21,350 --> 00:01:23,480

And you know, they
were, they had--

25
00:01:23,480 --> 00:01:25,820
who stayed in Auschwitz
to the last minute.

26
00:01:25,820 --> 00:01:27,110
You know, they had positions.

27
00:01:27,110 --> 00:01:29,420
That they were well-fed.

28
00:01:29,420 --> 00:01:31,640
They went for it.

29
00:01:31,640 --> 00:01:35,000
So there was a lot
of stories there.

30
00:01:35,000 --> 00:01:37,850
It was very
interesting, in a way,

31
00:01:37,850 --> 00:01:42,080
to see how they were
competing for her attention.

32
00:01:42,080 --> 00:01:44,330
Because she was a lesbian, too.

33
00:01:44,330 --> 00:01:47,960
And trying to get some food.

34
00:01:47,960 --> 00:01:54,110
And luckily, one day, they
took us on a transport.

35
00:01:54,110 --> 00:01:58,760
And we really couldn't believe
they put us in a passenger

36

00:01:58,760 --> 00:02:03,950
to Pullman's cars with heat.

37
00:02:03,950 --> 00:02:08,960
And they gave each a
small care package to eat.

38
00:02:08,960 --> 00:02:11,950

39
00:02:11,950 --> 00:02:16,420
You can't imagine what
that means, to feel warmth.

40
00:02:16,420 --> 00:02:21,070
When we sat down
on the soft seats

41
00:02:21,070 --> 00:02:24,430
and we felt the warmth
coming through it,

42
00:02:24,430 --> 00:02:28,750
we felt that that must
be the end of the war.

43
00:02:28,750 --> 00:02:32,170
And especially, when we've
got a little ration of things

44
00:02:32,170 --> 00:02:34,930
that we didn't see
for such a long time.

45
00:02:34,930 --> 00:02:37,600
That gave us a tremendous hope.

46
00:02:37,600 --> 00:02:41,040
We came to Neustadt-Glewe.

47
00:02:41,040 --> 00:02:46,750
That was a camp that was
an Air Force factory.

48
00:02:46,750 --> 00:02:48,970
But there was no work for us.

49
00:02:48,970 --> 00:02:52,420
They just kept there
all in the camp

50
00:02:52,420 --> 00:02:56,800
and gave us a daily
ration of food.

51
00:02:56,800 --> 00:03:01,510
I had the bad luck, again, to
go with that Polish [GERMAN],,

52
00:03:01,510 --> 00:03:03,220
which I told you.

53
00:03:03,220 --> 00:03:10,450
And the bread that we got, one
for 10 or something like that,

54
00:03:10,450 --> 00:03:12,010
mostly was molded.

55
00:03:12,010 --> 00:03:16,030
So of course, the molded
bread was distributed

56
00:03:16,030 --> 00:03:18,550
among the Jewish people.

57
00:03:18,550 --> 00:03:22,360
And the [GERMAN]
elders that I suspect

58
00:03:22,360 --> 00:03:29,590
she must have been a Jew who was
posing as a Polish apologized

59
00:03:29,590 --> 00:03:30,190

to me.

60

00:03:30,190 --> 00:03:31,870

And she said, what can I do?

61

00:03:31,870 --> 00:03:36,280

If I give you the good,
they will kill me.

62

00:03:36,280 --> 00:03:40,360

And I was her
favorite, because she

63

00:03:40,360 --> 00:03:43,750

used to bring me
papers, German papers

64

00:03:43,750 --> 00:03:46,440

that I've translated for her.

65

00:03:46,440 --> 00:03:48,490

And from the
papers, we could see

66

00:03:48,490 --> 00:03:51,250

that the war was almost over.

67

00:03:51,250 --> 00:03:55,810

As I told you, that's all the
Polish people were waiting for.

68

00:03:55,810 --> 00:03:58,040

They should take
us out and kill us.

69

00:03:58,040 --> 00:04:01,330

Then they will really
know the war was over.

70

00:04:01,330 --> 00:04:04,660

But the starvation was terrible.

71

00:04:04,660 --> 00:04:07,210
We really, we couldn't go on.

72
00:04:07,210 --> 00:04:10,150
My sister was already
on her last leg,

73
00:04:10,150 --> 00:04:13,300
and so was I. Because
the last two days,

74
00:04:13,300 --> 00:04:16,269
they didn't give
us any food at all.

75
00:04:16,269 --> 00:04:19,630
And we could see
through the window

76
00:04:19,630 --> 00:04:25,300
the officers of the Air
Force coming in and going out

77
00:04:25,300 --> 00:04:27,730
in civilian clothing.

78
00:04:27,730 --> 00:04:35,230
And the English planes were
flying and dropping leaflets--

79
00:04:35,230 --> 00:04:40,360
keep courage, we are coming,
we are close by, the Allies.

80
00:04:40,360 --> 00:04:42,370
How could you-- you
could talk to people

81
00:04:42,370 --> 00:04:44,560
who were dying of hunger.

82
00:04:44,560 --> 00:04:46,080
And lice.

83
00:04:46,080 --> 00:04:48,670
Lice-- that was
a terrible thing.

84
00:04:48,670 --> 00:04:50,800
We were just covered with them.

85
00:04:50,800 --> 00:04:52,460
That was tough.

86
00:04:52,460 --> 00:04:59,090
But there was one thing that
was helping us to survive.

87
00:04:59,090 --> 00:05:02,120
And that was
everybody was grouping

88
00:05:02,120 --> 00:05:04,390
around me and my sister.

89
00:05:04,390 --> 00:05:10,180
And we were telling them about
my grandfather's Purim fast.

90
00:05:10,180 --> 00:05:11,580
What she was cooking.

91
00:05:11,580 --> 00:05:14,080
My grandmother was
a terrible cook.

92
00:05:14,080 --> 00:05:18,340
And it seems, not knowing
at that time the psychology,

93
00:05:18,340 --> 00:05:22,990
I was using imagery to
keep those people alive.

94
00:05:22,990 --> 00:05:27,040

Because every day, they
came to me like for food,

95
00:05:27,040 --> 00:05:28,960
to listen to what?

96
00:05:28,960 --> 00:05:32,200
To the strudel and
all good things.

97
00:05:32,200 --> 00:05:38,110
And I was talking for hours,
describing the smell and this.

98
00:05:38,110 --> 00:05:41,350
And that really kept us alive.

99
00:05:41,350 --> 00:05:46,590
Till finally one day, you know,
you could see those people,

100
00:05:46,590 --> 00:05:49,780
it was something was in the air.

101
00:05:49,780 --> 00:05:53,710
And then all of a sudden,
like a big scream went

102
00:05:53,710 --> 00:05:55,370
through the camp.

103
00:05:55,370 --> 00:05:58,000
And somebody started to
scream the Americans,

104
00:05:58,000 --> 00:05:59,450
the Americans are here.

105
00:05:59,450 --> 00:06:04,810
So of course everybody, even
the skeletons like us got up.

106

00:06:04,810 --> 00:06:06,490
And hooray, where?

107
00:06:06,490 --> 00:06:10,510
And then the German black--

108
00:06:10,510 --> 00:06:15,610
the camp, the SS woman came
in, and she said, children.

109
00:06:15,610 --> 00:06:18,100
Children, mind you.

110
00:06:18,100 --> 00:06:19,960
Be quiet.

111
00:06:19,960 --> 00:06:23,260
The Americans are
here, but not yet.

112
00:06:23,260 --> 00:06:25,210
They come very soon.

113
00:06:25,210 --> 00:06:27,430
Just keep quiet and
everything will--

114
00:06:27,430 --> 00:06:28,795
and stay in your rooms.

115
00:06:28,795 --> 00:06:30,430
Stay in your rooms.

116
00:06:30,430 --> 00:06:32,830
Everything will be all right.

117
00:06:32,830 --> 00:06:37,420
So being used to being ordered,
we just stood in our rooms.

118
00:06:37,420 --> 00:06:42,435
We stood and stood, but finally,

one woman so got curious,

119

00:06:42,435 --> 00:06:44,150
and she went out.

120

00:06:44,150 --> 00:06:47,620
And she went to the room
where the SS woman was.

121

00:06:47,620 --> 00:06:49,090
The room was empty.

122

00:06:49,090 --> 00:06:53,810
And she came back, and she
said, there is no SS woman.

123

00:06:53,810 --> 00:06:56,180
As we could hardly walk.

124

00:06:56,180 --> 00:06:58,460
But we crept out from
the block, and we

125

00:06:58,460 --> 00:07:02,030
saw there were no
guards on the towers.

126

00:07:02,030 --> 00:07:03,890
The calm camp was deserted.

127

00:07:03,890 --> 00:07:07,010
All the Germans ran away.

128

00:07:07,010 --> 00:07:10,580
And then what do we do?

129

00:07:10,580 --> 00:07:16,280
We all went to the warehouse,
like a bunch of crazy people.

130

00:07:16,280 --> 00:07:18,380
Because we were all starving.

131
00:07:18,380 --> 00:07:21,030
And there was a-- the
warehouse was closed.

132
00:07:21,030 --> 00:07:26,300
But there was a little
window, like in the cellar.

133
00:07:26,300 --> 00:07:34,335
And we somehow managed to clip
in through the window and get--

134
00:07:34,335 --> 00:07:37,880
and the warehouse
was full of food.

135
00:07:37,880 --> 00:07:40,790
They just didn't give
us anything to eat.

136
00:07:40,790 --> 00:07:45,440
And I just took some
crackers, because I

137
00:07:45,440 --> 00:07:48,890
felt that's all my
stomach could with.

138
00:07:48,890 --> 00:07:54,480
And I grabbed a bag of crackers,
and I came out in the air.

139
00:07:54,480 --> 00:07:59,330
And I begged my sister, I
said, come, let's go out,

140
00:07:59,330 --> 00:08:01,190
let's sit and eat.

141
00:08:01,190 --> 00:08:03,080
And she said, no.

142

00:08:03,080 --> 00:08:06,170

She wants to look for something.

143

00:08:06,170 --> 00:08:07,910

I could have killed her.

144

00:08:07,910 --> 00:08:10,400

I said, what are you, crazy?

145

00:08:10,400 --> 00:08:11,750

I said.

146

00:08:11,750 --> 00:08:17,070

Because a few days before,
we got a care package.

147

00:08:17,070 --> 00:08:21,290

Which was sent, was divided.

148

00:08:21,290 --> 00:08:24,920

One in four among the
Gentiles, and one in 17

149

00:08:24,920 --> 00:08:26,900

amongst the Jewish people.

150

00:08:26,900 --> 00:08:29,750

So she got a little
bit of sardine.

151

00:08:29,750 --> 00:08:33,919

And she wanted to
have the same taste.

152

00:08:33,919 --> 00:08:35,570

I just went out.

153

00:08:35,570 --> 00:08:36,980

And I was sitting there.

154

00:08:36,980 --> 00:08:40,880

And I could see the girls.

155

00:08:40,880 --> 00:08:44,300

There was a truck
that the SS woman left

156

00:08:44,300 --> 00:08:46,670

with clothing and everything.

157

00:08:46,670 --> 00:08:50,930

The ones that still had strands
that worked in the kitchen

158

00:08:50,930 --> 00:08:54,620

going through clothes and
taking out beautiful underwear

159

00:08:54,620 --> 00:08:57,140

and everything, and
grabbing these things.

160

00:08:57,140 --> 00:08:59,340

And I was sitting there
and thinking to myself,

161

00:08:59,340 --> 00:09:01,450

are they crazy?

162

00:09:01,450 --> 00:09:04,170

What do they need
that thing like for?

163

00:09:04,170 --> 00:09:07,270

Why don't they go for food?

164

00:09:07,270 --> 00:09:09,320

And I was sitting and
waiting and waiting,

165

00:09:09,320 --> 00:09:11,870

and my sister didn't come out.

166

00:09:11,870 --> 00:09:15,800
And I was sure that she's
already finished there,

167
00:09:15,800 --> 00:09:16,820
you know?

168
00:09:16,820 --> 00:09:19,920
And finally, finally, I saw her.

169
00:09:19,920 --> 00:09:22,460
And when I saw her, I
started to scream at her.

170
00:09:22,460 --> 00:09:24,560
I said, what, you crazy?

171
00:09:24,560 --> 00:09:27,530
She had a can of sardines.

172
00:09:27,530 --> 00:09:31,160
I said, for that,
you risk your life?

173
00:09:31,160 --> 00:09:34,370
So she said to me, be quiet.

174
00:09:34,370 --> 00:09:36,050
Don't you realize it?

175
00:09:36,050 --> 00:09:38,330
We survived the war.

176
00:09:38,330 --> 00:09:40,160
And then, it hit me.

177
00:09:40,160 --> 00:09:41,750
We really did.

178
00:09:41,750 --> 00:09:46,640
I couldn't believe that we
really did survive the war.

179
00:09:46,640 --> 00:09:49,850
Then we went to the gate.

180
00:09:49,850 --> 00:09:53,390
The gate was open, deserted.

181
00:09:53,390 --> 00:09:57,920
But strangely enough,
I couldn't close it.

182
00:09:57,920 --> 00:10:00,350
Because I was not
used to go by myself.

183
00:10:00,350 --> 00:10:03,110
We were always escorted.

184
00:10:03,110 --> 00:10:06,920
And finally, one of the
girls said, let's try.

185
00:10:06,920 --> 00:10:08,360
We can do it now.

186
00:10:08,360 --> 00:10:09,920
And she closed.

187
00:10:09,920 --> 00:10:12,500
And the rest of us closed, too.

188
00:10:12,500 --> 00:10:16,430
And that was a feeling
of such terrible freedom,

189
00:10:16,430 --> 00:10:20,270
to be able to walk by
yourself, not escorted

190
00:10:20,270 --> 00:10:24,800
and to go wherever you
want to go that I just

191
00:10:24,800 --> 00:10:27,540
couldn't believe it.

192
00:10:27,540 --> 00:10:30,860
And then, we came
back to the camp,

193
00:10:30,860 --> 00:10:35,570
which of course, by that
time, looked terrible

194
00:10:35,570 --> 00:10:41,600
with excrements and vomits.

195
00:10:41,600 --> 00:10:45,680
People who started
eating after starvation.

196
00:10:45,680 --> 00:10:52,820
And one of the Polish women,
she grabbed bacon, raw bacon,

197
00:10:52,820 --> 00:10:54,470
and ate.

198
00:10:54,470 --> 00:10:56,750
I think she died.

199
00:10:56,750 --> 00:11:00,830
And she was screaming
something awful.

200
00:11:00,830 --> 00:11:04,390
Anyhow, we still
didn't see anybody.

201
00:11:04,390 --> 00:11:06,680
We know the camp was deserted.

202
00:11:06,680 --> 00:11:10,370
But then we saw

Russian soldiers.

203

00:11:10,370 --> 00:11:14,780

And they said, be quiet.

204

00:11:14,780 --> 00:11:18,080

And tomorrow, we're
going to give you food.

205

00:11:18,080 --> 00:11:24,290

Next day, they set
us up together,

206

00:11:24,290 --> 00:11:29,060

and they took out a cow, which
they divided in four quarters.

207

00:11:29,060 --> 00:11:33,110

And they gave every 10
people a quarter of a cow.

208

00:11:33,110 --> 00:11:38,060

Of course, that
contributed to more death.

209

00:11:38,060 --> 00:11:42,990

Anyhow, they told us to go home.

210

00:11:42,990 --> 00:11:44,900

And I said, I have no home.

211

00:11:44,900 --> 00:11:46,340

Where are you from?

212

00:11:46,340 --> 00:11:46,880

Poland.

213

00:11:46,880 --> 00:11:49,410

Go back to Poland.

214

00:11:49,410 --> 00:11:56,580

So me and my sister and two

other women baked some little

215

00:11:56,580 --> 00:12:00,940

crackers and put
it in a pillowcase.

216

00:12:00,940 --> 00:12:06,560

And we went walking to Poland.

217

00:12:06,560 --> 00:12:13,390

And then one little town, there
was some kind of a castle.

218

00:12:13,390 --> 00:12:17,680

And they assigned
us to a Polish man,

219

00:12:17,680 --> 00:12:27,060

who stole the horses from
the woman he worked for.

220

00:12:27,060 --> 00:12:28,590

And he was going with them.

221

00:12:28,590 --> 00:12:30,430

He was a fireman
going to Poland.

222

00:12:30,430 --> 00:12:31,340

So we went with him.

223

00:12:31,340 --> 00:12:34,170

224

00:12:34,170 --> 00:12:38,230

The final [INAUDIBLE]
we went by train.

225

00:12:38,230 --> 00:12:41,940

We came to Lodz.

226

00:12:41,940 --> 00:12:46,230

Of course, it was a terrible thing, you know.

227
00:12:46,230 --> 00:12:49,050
We went to my grandmother's house.

228
00:12:49,050 --> 00:12:51,930
And the janitor recognized us.

229
00:12:51,930 --> 00:12:56,040
I mean, we told him who-- he did not really recognize us.

230
00:12:56,040 --> 00:12:59,730
But when we explained to him and this, he believed us.

231
00:12:59,730 --> 00:13:02,130
Because we didn't look like human beings.

232
00:13:02,130 --> 00:13:04,615
The hair was just starting to grow a little bigger,

233
00:13:04,615 --> 00:13:06,690
and we were skeletons.

234
00:13:06,690 --> 00:13:08,280
He gave us an apartment.

235
00:13:08,280 --> 00:13:10,900
We had to lay on the floor, no furniture.

236
00:13:10,900 --> 00:13:12,930
But we were happy with it.

237
00:13:12,930 --> 00:13:15,090
And then every day, we were going

238

00:13:15,090 --> 00:13:18,120
to the council, Jewish
Council, to look

239

00:13:18,120 --> 00:13:21,360
for the list of survivors.

240

00:13:21,360 --> 00:13:28,230
And then one day, a
woman came in and asked,

241

00:13:28,230 --> 00:13:31,440
could you direct me to
the Kronenberg sisters?

242

00:13:31,440 --> 00:13:37,860
And I looked at her and her
voice and something strike me.

243

00:13:37,860 --> 00:13:42,440
And all of a sudden,
I cried out, Aunt.

244

00:13:42,440 --> 00:13:45,800
And she was scared.

245

00:13:45,800 --> 00:13:46,800
She couldn't believe it.

246

00:13:46,800 --> 00:13:50,910
I said, this is me,
Lillian, your niece.

247

00:13:50,910 --> 00:13:53,850
I must have looked
very terrible.

248

00:13:53,850 --> 00:13:57,350
Because back then, of course,
she knew when I told her.

249

00:13:57,350 --> 00:13:58,650

How did she look?

250

00:13:58,650 --> 00:14:00,990

She looked good,
she looked good.

251

00:14:00,990 --> 00:14:05,410

She survived as a
Gentile in Vienna.

252

00:14:05,410 --> 00:14:09,150

She had her hair, she
was dressed very nicely.

253

00:14:09,150 --> 00:14:11,670

She was still herself.

254

00:14:11,670 --> 00:14:13,950

We were not human anymore.

255

00:14:13,950 --> 00:14:15,910

Whose sister was she?

256

00:14:15,910 --> 00:14:16,410

What?

257

00:14:16,410 --> 00:14:17,460

Whose sister was she?

258

00:14:17,460 --> 00:14:19,260

She was sister of my father.

259

00:14:19,260 --> 00:14:22,830

The only one that
survived from his family.

260

00:14:22,830 --> 00:14:27,390

It was her other sister,
also was as a Gentile.

261

00:14:27,390 --> 00:14:30,510

But she was denounced

by the Polish people.

262
00:14:30,510 --> 00:14:34,110
I mean, her husband
was denounced.

263
00:14:34,110 --> 00:14:36,060
With the children was denounced.

264
00:14:36,060 --> 00:14:40,140
And then she could have lived.

265
00:14:40,140 --> 00:14:45,930
But she went herself
to the SS and said

266
00:14:45,930 --> 00:14:52,050
that the woman knew that
she was keeping a Jew just

267
00:14:52,050 --> 00:14:54,210
to get even with her.

268
00:14:54,210 --> 00:14:57,820
Because she said, she has
no reason to live anymore.

269
00:14:57,820 --> 00:14:59,550
So that's how they died.

270
00:14:59,550 --> 00:15:03,330
That's what my sister
Mary Ann told me.

271
00:15:03,330 --> 00:15:05,820
Anyhow, when she
came, our situation

272
00:15:05,820 --> 00:15:07,890
became a little bit better.

273
00:15:07,890 --> 00:15:09,690

Because we had a relative.

274

00:15:09,690 --> 00:15:11,010

You know, that I hardly know.

275

00:15:11,010 --> 00:15:12,870

But she knew him, you know.

276

00:15:12,870 --> 00:15:15,970

And he had a beautiful
house and a big apartment.

277

00:15:15,970 --> 00:15:18,420

He gave us a room there.

278

00:15:18,420 --> 00:15:23,730

And we lived there
until I found out

279

00:15:23,730 --> 00:15:25,720

that my sisters
are in Stuttgart.

280

00:15:25,720 --> 00:15:31,020

And that was that man who showed
me the picture of my sister

281

00:15:31,020 --> 00:15:32,730

with Eisenhower.

282

00:15:32,730 --> 00:15:33,990

I couldn't believe him.

283

00:15:33,990 --> 00:15:35,850

Because I was already taken.

284

00:15:35,850 --> 00:15:39,870

Somebody else came and said, he
has a message from my father.

285

00:15:39,870 --> 00:15:40,950

And I gave them money.

286
00:15:40,950 --> 00:15:45,120
And of course, it turned
out that he was just

287
00:15:45,120 --> 00:15:46,920
out to get the money.

288
00:15:46,920 --> 00:15:49,910
And my father was not alive.

289
00:15:49,910 --> 00:15:52,920
But when I saw the picture,
I have to believe him.

290
00:15:52,920 --> 00:15:56,572
And then he just
wanted to go back to--

291
00:15:56,572 --> 00:15:59,760
he just wanted to leave Poland.

292
00:15:59,760 --> 00:16:01,620
And my aunt didn't
want to leave.

293
00:16:01,620 --> 00:16:06,000
Because she found out that her
husband survived in Russia.

294
00:16:06,000 --> 00:16:08,220
And she had to wait for him.

295
00:16:08,220 --> 00:16:13,617
So me and my sister and my
husband smuggled the border.

296
00:16:13,617 --> 00:16:14,700
Where'd your husband left?

297
00:16:14,700 --> 00:16:15,660
How did you find your husband?

298
00:16:15,660 --> 00:16:16,440
What?

299
00:16:16,440 --> 00:16:19,260
Oh, my husband
came after the war.

300
00:16:19,260 --> 00:16:23,190
Somebody told him.

301
00:16:23,190 --> 00:16:27,070
A friend of mine was looking
for her husband in Germany.

302
00:16:27,070 --> 00:16:29,070
And when she saw my
husband, she told him

303
00:16:29,070 --> 00:16:30,990
that she saw me in Lodz.

304
00:16:30,990 --> 00:16:33,960
So he came to see me in Lodz.

305
00:16:33,960 --> 00:16:40,180
And we went to Czechoslovakia,
and from Czechoslovakia

306
00:16:40,180 --> 00:16:41,350
to Germany.

307
00:16:41,350 --> 00:16:44,850
There I was reunited
with my sisters.

308
00:16:44,850 --> 00:16:46,610
We were four again.

309
00:16:46,610 --> 00:16:49,840
But I tell you, frankly,
we couldn't go out together

310
00:16:49,840 --> 00:16:51,001
in the street.

311
00:16:51,001 --> 00:16:53,360
Not even two.

312
00:16:53,360 --> 00:16:58,010
Because these people
were so decimated.

313
00:16:58,010 --> 00:17:03,150
There was unheard of that
four sisters should survive.

314
00:17:03,150 --> 00:17:06,990
And we were really afraid
to be seen together.

315
00:17:06,990 --> 00:17:10,000
Because people
were very envious.

316
00:17:10,000 --> 00:17:12,089
I don't blame them, you know.

317
00:17:12,089 --> 00:17:15,060
They told me straight points.

318
00:17:15,060 --> 00:17:17,730
You know, how come that
the four of you are alive

319
00:17:17,730 --> 00:17:20,819
and I can't have even one?

320
00:17:20,819 --> 00:17:25,410
So my sister, younger
sister, got a job

321
00:17:25,410 --> 00:17:30,150
as a secretary of the

director of UNRRA.

322

00:17:30,150 --> 00:17:32,160

And she was one
of the first ones

323

00:17:32,160 --> 00:17:34,440

to go to the United States.

324

00:17:34,440 --> 00:17:38,340

And she gave the job
to me after she left.

325

00:17:38,340 --> 00:17:40,590

And I worked there.

326

00:17:40,590 --> 00:17:47,140

And in the meantime, my
older sister got very sick

327

00:17:47,140 --> 00:17:47,770

and she died.

328

00:17:47,770 --> 00:17:51,430

329

00:17:51,430 --> 00:17:54,160

But of course, that was a
result of all the experience.

330

00:17:54,160 --> 00:17:57,700

The doctors couldn't just
believe that she survived.

331

00:17:57,700 --> 00:18:03,040

She said, she survived
on sheer will to live.

332

00:18:03,040 --> 00:18:08,880

And then I came to United
States in March of 1945--

333

00:18:08,880 --> 00:18:11,130
'49, '49.

334
00:18:11,130 --> 00:18:13,860
Came to United States.

335
00:18:13,860 --> 00:18:15,860
And I tell you, it
was a great shock

336
00:18:15,860 --> 00:18:21,730
me to see that there
is a country that

337
00:18:21,730 --> 00:18:24,140
was not touched by war.

338
00:18:24,140 --> 00:18:25,770
I just couldn't believe it.

339
00:18:25,770 --> 00:18:27,430
You had expected
the United States

340
00:18:27,430 --> 00:18:29,080
would be like in the jungle?

341
00:18:29,080 --> 00:18:30,406
Was it like that to you?

342
00:18:30,406 --> 00:18:33,850
No, I knew what to expect
because my both sisters were

343
00:18:33,850 --> 00:18:36,070
here already.

344
00:18:36,070 --> 00:18:38,420
And they wrote letter.

345
00:18:38,420 --> 00:18:43,120
And they told me they were

both working and saving money.

346

00:18:43,120 --> 00:18:46,460

But having a very hard time
living in the East Side

347

00:18:46,460 --> 00:18:48,460

and Williamsburg.

348

00:18:48,460 --> 00:18:50,920

Walking five stairs.

349

00:18:50,920 --> 00:18:54,400

But we had it much easier
because my husband had

350

00:18:54,400 --> 00:18:56,720

a family, wealthy family.

351

00:18:56,720 --> 00:18:58,420

And they took us in.

352

00:18:58,420 --> 00:18:59,620

Where did you live?

353

00:18:59,620 --> 00:19:02,020

In Newark.

354

00:19:02,020 --> 00:19:05,840

And so it was easy.

355

00:19:05,840 --> 00:19:07,660

But it was for me to tell.

356

00:19:07,660 --> 00:19:11,650

You know, to see that
family doing so well.

357

00:19:11,650 --> 00:19:14,740

And to realize
that there are Jews

358

00:19:14,740 --> 00:19:19,100

who were not touched by the
war, I just couldn't believe it.

359

00:19:19,100 --> 00:19:22,280

Because as long as
I was in Germany,

360

00:19:22,280 --> 00:19:25,130

the Germans were suffering, too.

361

00:19:25,130 --> 00:19:27,100

Everybody was
touched by the war.

362

00:19:27,100 --> 00:19:29,620

So I was just one
of the victims.

363

00:19:29,620 --> 00:19:33,010

But here, all of a
sudden, I realized

364

00:19:33,010 --> 00:19:39,410

that by the fate
of geography, we

365

00:19:39,410 --> 00:19:42,580

were really terrible victims.

366

00:19:42,580 --> 00:19:47,980

That if I wouldn't live in
Poland at the time I did,

367

00:19:47,980 --> 00:19:50,410

I could have been
a different person.

368

00:19:50,410 --> 00:19:53,260

And I could have
helped my family.

369

00:19:53,260 --> 00:19:56,230

So that was, of
course, a shock to me.

370

00:19:56,230 --> 00:19:58,510

But there was no
time for shocks,

371

00:19:58,510 --> 00:20:01,720

because I had to make a living.

372

00:20:01,720 --> 00:20:03,380

The family was very good to me.

373

00:20:03,380 --> 00:20:06,940

But you know, I had
to support myself.

374

00:20:06,940 --> 00:20:07,840

Which we did.

375

00:20:07,840 --> 00:20:10,180

I worked, my husband worked.

376

00:20:10,180 --> 00:20:14,050

And of course, we had to
struggle financially quite

377

00:20:14,050 --> 00:20:15,550

badly.

378

00:20:15,550 --> 00:20:21,190

But we were able to raise
two children, who turned out,

379

00:20:21,190 --> 00:20:25,313

thank god, very nicely.

380

00:20:25,313 --> 00:20:26,230

What is your husband--

381

00:20:26,230 --> 00:20:27,397

or what did your husband do?

382

00:20:27,397 --> 00:20:30,850

You know, my husband, his first job was as a dental mechanic.

383

00:20:30,850 --> 00:20:32,290

He was a dental mechanic.

384

00:20:32,290 --> 00:20:34,060

But he didn't make enough money.

385

00:20:34,060 --> 00:20:41,260

So his uncle took him as a shipping clerk in his business.

386

00:20:41,260 --> 00:20:43,890

And then later on, he went in and out

387

00:20:43,890 --> 00:20:45,540

of this in a netting business.

388

00:20:45,540 --> 00:20:47,310

And he was doing better.

389

00:20:47,310 --> 00:20:50,560

But we were struggling very badly.

390

00:20:50,560 --> 00:20:52,530

So was my sister.

391

00:20:52,530 --> 00:20:55,000

Were you ever able to talk with your children about--

392

00:20:55,000 --> 00:20:55,500

No.

393

00:20:55,500 --> 00:20:56,333

--these experiences?

394
00:20:56,333 --> 00:20:58,260
No, no.

395
00:20:58,260 --> 00:21:00,030
I'm glad you asked me.

396
00:21:00,030 --> 00:21:05,790
Because I didn't tell my
children about the Holocaust.

397
00:21:05,790 --> 00:21:12,400
I just couldn't bring myself
to destroy their childhood.

398
00:21:12,400 --> 00:21:14,110
Did they want to know?

399
00:21:14,110 --> 00:21:15,310
They never asked me.

400
00:21:15,310 --> 00:21:17,890
They must have known that
you came from Poland.

401
00:21:17,890 --> 00:21:18,520
They found out.

402
00:21:18,520 --> 00:21:19,060
Yes.

403
00:21:19,060 --> 00:21:22,090
No, sure enough, they must
have found out something.

404
00:21:22,090 --> 00:21:26,260
Because they were sort of raised
together with my two nephews,

405
00:21:26,260 --> 00:21:32,580
Eva's two boys, who had a
grandfather, also a survivor.

406

00:21:32,580 --> 00:21:35,560

And I'm sure that he
told them something.

407

00:21:35,560 --> 00:21:40,450

But I personally didn't
tell my children anything.

408

00:21:40,450 --> 00:21:46,060

Because I was trying desperately
to give them a good childhood

409

00:21:46,060 --> 00:21:50,590

and to believe
that life is good.

410

00:21:50,590 --> 00:21:53,560

And how could you believe life
is good if I could tell them

411

00:21:53,560 --> 00:21:55,900

a story like that?

412

00:21:55,900 --> 00:22:02,080

And later on, of course, my
girlfriend came from Israel.

413

00:22:02,080 --> 00:22:03,430

She was a psychologist.

414

00:22:03,430 --> 00:22:08,210

And she came here
to teach in college

415

00:22:08,210 --> 00:22:12,010

how to tell the children
about the Holocaust.

416

00:22:12,010 --> 00:22:14,050

She was very shocked
when I told her

417

00:22:14,050 --> 00:22:16,670
that I didn't tell my children.

418

00:22:16,670 --> 00:22:19,670
And I said to her--

419

00:22:19,670 --> 00:22:23,360
because according to
psychology, as you know,

420

00:22:23,360 --> 00:22:26,930
any truth is better.

421

00:22:26,930 --> 00:22:30,440
Because my son told
me once, of course,

422

00:22:30,440 --> 00:22:31,850
when he knew it already.

423

00:22:31,850 --> 00:22:34,730
I said, how did this affect you?

424

00:22:34,730 --> 00:22:38,990
He said, I was growing
up with a feeling

425

00:22:38,990 --> 00:22:43,370
that there is a terrible
secret in my family.

426

00:22:43,370 --> 00:22:48,730
And I was afraid
to ask about it.

427

00:22:48,730 --> 00:22:51,090
And that's when I told her that.

428

00:22:51,090 --> 00:22:52,770
She said, you see?

429

00:22:52,770 --> 00:22:54,510
I said, no, I don't see.

430
00:22:54,510 --> 00:23:00,540
I agree with you that a secret
is no good psychologically.

431
00:23:00,540 --> 00:23:02,790
But not in a case like that.

432
00:23:02,790 --> 00:23:06,840
It's better to grow up
with a feeling of a secret

433
00:23:06,840 --> 00:23:10,650
than to grow up from
a child up knowing

434
00:23:10,650 --> 00:23:15,088
that the world can be able
to do such terrible things.

435
00:23:15,088 --> 00:23:17,130
So you're going to show
them this tape and that's

436
00:23:17,130 --> 00:23:19,005
going to be their first
account of their own?

437
00:23:19,005 --> 00:23:19,830
No, no, no.

438
00:23:19,830 --> 00:23:23,910
My younger son went to Israel.

439
00:23:23,910 --> 00:23:27,240
And that was the first
time he was brought face

440
00:23:27,240 --> 00:23:30,050
to face with Holocaust.

441

00:23:30,050 --> 00:23:34,310

And when he came back, he
took me aside, and he said--

442

00:23:34,310 --> 00:23:36,230

you know, he's a doctor now.

443

00:23:36,230 --> 00:23:39,290

He was always very scientific.

444

00:23:39,290 --> 00:23:44,390

So he said, Ma, if it
wouldn't hurt you too much,

445

00:23:44,390 --> 00:23:48,080

could you just tell me
the sequence of the events

446

00:23:48,080 --> 00:23:52,760

to explain to me how a thing
like that was possible?

447

00:23:52,760 --> 00:23:55,730

He said, I can't
understand that.

448

00:23:55,730 --> 00:24:00,690

Then of course, I just
came out and told him.

449

00:24:00,690 --> 00:24:02,096

Not everything.

450

00:24:02,096 --> 00:24:04,400

There were things I
just couldn't tell him.

451

00:24:04,400 --> 00:24:09,770

But at least, I explained
to him how we were deceived

452

00:24:09,770 --> 00:24:12,230

and how we were
trapped later on.

453
00:24:12,230 --> 00:24:16,440
And there was nothing
that we could do about it.

454
00:24:16,440 --> 00:24:19,910
And of course, we
felt very close.

455
00:24:19,910 --> 00:24:24,860
And he, I imagine, must have
told my oldest son about it.

456
00:24:24,860 --> 00:24:28,850
But one thing I have to say
that was in favor of my not

457
00:24:28,850 --> 00:24:31,090
telling my children.

458
00:24:31,090 --> 00:24:35,450
My son went to Albert
Einstein Medical School.

459
00:24:35,450 --> 00:24:42,860
And he was rooming with a
doctor's son from California.

460
00:24:42,860 --> 00:24:45,740
And their parents lost the
whole family in Holocaust.

461
00:24:45,740 --> 00:24:50,330
And the boy grew up with they
were constantly talking about.

462
00:24:50,330 --> 00:24:51,500
And he grew up.

463
00:24:51,500 --> 00:24:55,290
When he found out that my

son is the son of survivor,

464

00:24:55,290 --> 00:24:59,270

he said, gosh, do I
feel sorry for you.

465

00:24:59,270 --> 00:25:03,450

If I had to go through
such a terrible thing,

466

00:25:03,450 --> 00:25:05,870

I imagine what you
must have gone through.

467

00:25:05,870 --> 00:25:10,460

My son said, I had a
very happy childhood.

468

00:25:10,460 --> 00:25:13,820

So I knew that I was right.

469

00:25:13,820 --> 00:25:18,170

He found out and it was
a terrible shock for him.

470

00:25:18,170 --> 00:25:20,730

And there is a lot
of anger with him.

471

00:25:20,730 --> 00:25:26,240

But at least he was old enough
to deal with it at that time.

472

00:25:26,240 --> 00:25:27,710

So I didn't want--

473

00:25:27,710 --> 00:25:32,060

so at that time, I didn't
know nothing about psychology.

474

00:25:32,060 --> 00:25:34,173

And I see that my--

475

00:25:34,173 --> 00:25:35,465

That your instincts were right.

476

00:25:35,465 --> 00:25:37,850

--instincts were
right not to tell.

477

00:25:37,850 --> 00:25:42,260

Because my older one grew
up feeling about a secret.

478

00:25:42,260 --> 00:25:44,110

But my younger one didn't.

479

00:25:44,110 --> 00:25:47,580

He was just happy.

480

00:25:47,580 --> 00:25:50,420

So that's it.

481

00:25:50,420 --> 00:25:52,610

And you've been a student here?

482

00:25:52,610 --> 00:25:54,110

And you graduated
from Kean College.

483

00:25:54,110 --> 00:25:57,800

Yes, I graduated in
1980 when my both sons

484

00:25:57,800 --> 00:26:00,560

left the house to
go to, you know,

485

00:26:00,560 --> 00:26:03,050

schools, different schools.

486

00:26:03,050 --> 00:26:06,560

I decided to do
something for myself.

487

00:26:06,560 --> 00:26:09,050

And I have to tell you,
those were the best

488

00:26:09,050 --> 00:26:12,360

five years of my life.

489

00:26:12,360 --> 00:26:15,620

I picked psychology,
of course, because I

490

00:26:15,620 --> 00:26:20,610

wanted to understand
what made me survive

491

00:26:20,610 --> 00:26:25,040

and what made people animals.

492

00:26:25,040 --> 00:26:29,030

I can understand
while I survived.

493

00:26:29,030 --> 00:26:30,470

But I can't understand.

494

00:26:30,470 --> 00:26:32,960

Still, I can't
understand how people

495

00:26:32,960 --> 00:26:38,070

are able to do such terrible
things to another people.

496

00:26:38,070 --> 00:26:40,865

I still can't understand it.

497

00:26:40,865 --> 00:26:42,740

Do you think, in large
measure, your survival

498

00:26:42,740 --> 00:26:45,544

was due to the fact that you had

your sisters and the closeness

499

00:26:45,544 --> 00:26:46,044
with them?

500

00:26:46,044 --> 00:26:48,080
Yes, yes, that was very, very--

501

00:26:48,080 --> 00:26:54,270
also, logically, my survival
was due-- first of all,

502

00:26:54,270 --> 00:26:56,390
there were a lot of
people that helped me.

503

00:26:56,390 --> 00:26:59,840
You know, like that woman
who was bringing to me

504

00:26:59,840 --> 00:27:03,800
this soup, carrying that thing.

505

00:27:03,800 --> 00:27:10,500
That Hungarian doctor
who saved my life twice.

506

00:27:10,500 --> 00:27:14,570
A Jewish policeman
who told the man

507

00:27:14,570 --> 00:27:18,280
that I was a good dressmaker.

508

00:27:18,280 --> 00:27:20,970
A lot of things like that.

509

00:27:20,970 --> 00:27:25,340
But the main thing
was that I was never

510

00:27:25,340 --> 00:27:29,420

in an action that was complete.

511

00:27:29,420 --> 00:27:31,730

There was always selection.

512

00:27:31,730 --> 00:27:36,290

Therefore, there
was whatever slight,

513

00:27:36,290 --> 00:27:41,570

but there still was a chance
that I could slip through.

514

00:27:41,570 --> 00:27:48,200

It would be a complete thing,
like in Lublin or in Russia,

515

00:27:48,200 --> 00:27:52,770

when they did, I won't
be able to do anything.

516

00:27:52,770 --> 00:27:56,750

But in this case,
somehow, it seems like--

517

00:27:56,750 --> 00:28:02,410

I mean, I don't know what
it was, a fate or something.

518

00:28:02,410 --> 00:28:09,140

Because when my sisters,
they gave us up completely.

519

00:28:09,140 --> 00:28:15,050

You know, they left us in
such a bad state in Auschwitz,

520

00:28:15,050 --> 00:28:20,000

that they had absolutely no
hope of us ever being alive.

521

00:28:20,000 --> 00:28:22,400

When they found out--

522
00:28:22,400 --> 00:28:23,270
because I wrote.

523
00:28:23,270 --> 00:28:27,350
I sent a letter
that we are alive,

524
00:28:27,350 --> 00:28:30,590
they just felt it was a miracle.

525
00:28:30,590 --> 00:28:32,810
We have no more time, Lillian.

526
00:28:32,810 --> 00:28:34,050
Thank you so much.

527
00:28:34,050 --> 00:28:34,160
You're very welcome.

528
00:28:34,160 --> 00:28:36,118
I hope your story will
someday be written down.

529
00:28:36,118 --> 00:28:40,470
I hope that people will
understand and prevent

530
00:28:40,470 --> 00:28:42,440
occurrence of such
terrible things.

531
00:28:42,440 --> 00:28:43,760
Thank you.

532
00:28:43,760 --> 00:28:45,910
Well, you're welcome.

533
00:28:45,910 --> 00:29:20,000