

Good Morning, Rose.

Good morning, Joan.

Welcome. Tell me where you were born and what year-- your birth date-- and what your name was at birth.

I was born in Warsaw, July 22nd, 1914. My name was-- probably, I don't know exactly-- Rachel or-- was never called this way. Always Rozka, I was called at home.

And what was your maiden name?

Perczykow.

Can you tell me something about your family, your parents?

Yes. My father was a watchmaker. My mother was a housewife. We were six children, five girls, one boy. I was the fifth one. And eight years later, my younger sister was born unexpectedly. So we're six. My oldest sister was a teacher. The second one, she finished the commercial school. The third one was in fashion-- hats. My brother, finished vocational school-- was an electrician. And I was the fifth one, and then the youngest one.

Can you give us names? What was the oldest name?

Sure, the oldest one was Genia, Anka, Guta, Beniek, myself, Rozka, and Sala, which was later called Kryisia. She didn't like the name Sala. And she called herself Kryisia. The atmosphere at home was very lovely, really. I was for a long time like a mascot to my [NON-ENGLISH]. For eight years, I was the youngest one. And really the oldest one, Genia, the teacher, she really raised me, so-called.

And Anka used to take me always to the theater, to the opera-- all over whenever she went with her boyfriend. I was wondering why. But this was it. I was always with them. And they really gave me a lot of meaning how to grow up. But Genia was the one who gave me really the education. And she was my role model, really, as I was later on for my younger sister. I was a role model. I was really raising her.

And what was your relationship to your mother and father, if you were so close to your siblings?

Very warm. My mother used to say later on, you were my best child, somehow. I was like my mother, very organized. She was sewing for all of us. She was very good with her hands. And so am I up to now-- not exactly up to-- and Father was a little distant because he had to make a living for all of us. He passed away in 1927 when I was a young child still.

And the old one-- so education meant a lot to all of us. And we tried-- even after he passed away, I was the one who couldn't go to gymnasium. But my older sister, Genia, she arranged for me all the teachers, the tutor. And I could pass the exam, external called, in the ministry of education to go for my matriculation. At the same time, I was also tutoring children to make some money in usually the Polish language and arithmetic. My sister always had in the school many children who needed help in education.

Always many boyfriends came to my sisters. It was always lively and pleasant. My mother was very hospitable and always had something for the people who came in-- the gathering. So we were a happy family. Difficult later on after my father passed away, but we kept together.

Did your mother work after your father died?

No.

So how did you get along?

The children working. Or they were grown up. And they always supported the home. Little by little, when they got married, they always provided the rest of us with money. And we all supported the family until the war broke out.

What did you like to do as a kid? I did a lot of-- first of all, I was reading a lot. And this was because of my sister. She led the road to it. And then we played Potsy, it's so called. Yes? Potsy, in the street.

What is that?

It's we jump from on the sidewalk-- you jump and so on. All kinds of things in the place and the running-- ball, of course-- playing ball. And this was-- and then I joined the Hashomer Hatzair.

How old were you when you joined? Do you remember?

Very young, about 14, 15, something like that. And then we went to even for camps and learned Hebrew. And I spoke very well Hebrew because we had some kind of a leader from Israel who didn't let us speak Polish at all, just Hebrew. It was rough. But we learned. And I didn't have any difficulties to see a Hebrew play or listen to a lecture. He was very intensive about that and very serious. So I had always my days filled. And homework-- first of all, homework had to do because my sister was very strict about this, that they can matriculate later on. And this was that.

I went to Maccabi also. Maccabi is a sport club, a Zionist sport club. I was very good in it-- jumping.

What kind of sports did you do?

Regular gymnastic.

Yes?

Yes, regular gymnastics. But this was for a while. and when they put up-- even with Hashomer Hatzair we went to Hachshara. You know what's a Hachshara?

No, explain it, please.

This is you go-- the whole group goes to a farm. And we work on the farm, preparing to go to Israel. And we work very hard. It was about two years I went, summertime, to the Hachshara. And then I realized that I'll never go to Israel. I would never leave my family. I stopped being a member of Hashomer Hatzair. And I joined the sport club Jutrznia. This is on the Bundist auspices. And I was very active there in different committees. This is where I met the Blum, Abrasza Blum, the father of Olek, who's supposed to speak now at the conference.

And because they had also a dancing group-- and I loved dancing-- up to now I love ballet-- and our instructor was one of the best. She was instructed in the ballet school just like modern dancing with Martha Graham. This was the style. And she was our instructor. So I joined this. And in this, I became one of the best also. This-- any solace, I got. Once a year we had performances. And this was under the Bund auspices. It was marvelous. I loved every minute of it.

Was that the first time you were doing modern dance? Or had you done it before?

No, never. This was in Jutrznia. I lived in that group under this theater.

Do you remember a particular role that you took?

All this was Chopin's Waltz, played very soft things. And it was the March of Mendelssohn's-- many of them. My partner is still in Australia. She's still there. So this was what I did.

Rose, tell--

At the same time also, I was working in the library. Also this was the Bund library under the name of Grosser. Grosser was a very famous Bundist-- leader from Bund. And under his name was the library for mostly came the workers over there-- tremendous library. And I worked there as a volunteer and cataloged and categorized the books where they belonged. Sometimes I was helping out people who gave me something to read, something like that.

You were a teenager then? You were 14 or 15 or 16?

No, I was older.

Oh, you were older?

This is I'm going through the years. So this was--

Can I go back a little bit?

Yes.

Your sisters and brother, were they all Bundists?

Only one sister wasn't. She was a communist. It was Guta. She married later on also a communist lawyer, Rosenfeld, Buziek Rosenfeld-- Bernard Rosenfeld. But the rest were all Bundist. And my mother used to go to also to the meetings of the Jewish, the Judischer Arbeiter Freie, the Jewish workers woman-- to the meetings. But my father wasn't around at the time already.

Were there a lot of political discussions in your house because of this?

Yes, it was because of my sister. We never were fighting, but you're doing what you're doing, but you-- those kinds of things. Particularly my brother was very strong about it and Anka too. Anka was still in Australia and now is sick. And her husband Bachrach, he passed away long ago. But they're very strong on this. And my brother and my older sister and her husband, it was a Bundist atmosphere at home. And I somehow felt so when I stopped with Hachshara, with Hashomer Hatzair. I was never a member of the Bund. But when I met Michal-- so this was already-- I was going more in this direction.

What do you mean when you say it was a Bundist household? What would that mean to somebody?

To somebody, politically, we were not religious. Traditional, always for the holidays, even when my father passed away, we came always together and observed Passover when my father was alive. He had to have God and everything, but not in a religious way. But traditionally, we were. And politically this is where we stand, voting and demonstrations and something like that.

So it was very activist in a certain way?

Yes.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

Yeah, the whole family was very active.

And you spoke Polish--

Polish, yeah.

--amongst yourselves?

Always. When we turned around from mother, father, we spoke immediately Polish.

And what did you speak with your parents?

Yiddish.

Were they upset that you were speaking Polish?

No. This was a way of life, our friends and all that. This was our way of life.

Rose, after your father died, and you're a little bit older-- you're now--

I was 12 years old.

But still a kid, I guess. And there are things going on in Germany. And clearly a few years later-- in 1933 when the Nazis take over-- are there discussions among the Bundists or in your household about--

We read the newspapers. But it never touch us so directly. We're always talking with the newspapers and the literature about it. But it didn't touch us so directly. We were going on with our normal life.

People often say that--

I--

Go ahead.

I remember that even my sister-- the oldest one, Genia, the teacher-- she came home. And she said, I think it was '75 or '76 that Birobidzan was looking for teachers and so on and so on. And she says, I'm not thinking about this. But we all screamed, no. You're not going anyplace. So this is how we worked together really.

Did you feel antisemitism in Poland?

Of course we felt it. Of course we did. All the time, we did. We used to go-- I wouldn't go by myself in the other area, unless in the same-- but we were afraid of the boys who were throwing stones when they saw the Jews and so on. And first of all, it was, let's say, 1978 already came the Kristallnacht. And this was in 1977. But 1978 was the ghetto benches at the universities. So we knew about it. We did something for demonstrations. But life was going on.

When you were younger, however, in the '20s and in the early '30s, there was a big separation between Polish Christians and Jewish Poles, yes? Did you have friends who were Polish, non-Jews?

No. Not at all. First I was in the Hashomer Hatzair. And then I was in the Jutrznia, which is only Jewish people. No, I didn't have any.

So your school was Jewish, where you went to school?

Yes, it was-- but not the Jews. It was a public school in Polish. But mostly we were Jewish kids. This was mostly. But we constantly-- there were fights between the boys. They were playing ball in the certain places, and they came, the shkotzim they called them--

What did they call?

A shkotz, a shkotz, yeah. This is the Polish young boys. And they were throwing stones. And they were fighting. They were just fighting. I remember that my brother used to take me to a ball game-- not a ball game official, but the boys

were playing among themselves. And he always was holding my hand and took me to look at it. And I was sitting in the corner watching them. They always laughed. Beniek brought his little sister.

And girls, were their problems among girls? Or it was usually the boys?

Usually the boys, yeah. But I never had at that time Polish friends, always among ourselves. Particularly, I'm saying from Hashomer Hatzair and then Jutrznia. And I was also-- busy with the library, with this and that.

Did you have particularly favorite books?

I read everything. I read all kinds of literature, the Scandinavian, the Russian, American-- Dreiser, I remember, Mann. I read constantly. And there is a lot of Polish literature-- good books, even one got the Nobel Prize, Reymont, for his three volumes, I think it was-- Peasants-- Chlopi. This was tremendous. I read everything.

Did you go to films?

Yes, we went.

Did you like that?

I liked. After the war, particularly, it was so many Russian films coming here. But I always went to see films. And the theater was a very great part of my life because of my sisters. They always schlepped me all over to see the museums. And they gave me a very good cultural basis.

So it became part of the normal part of your life it seems.

Right. Yeah.

Did you ever act?

No.

It was that--

We were playing Sleeping Beauty-- made a little play. When we were 7, 8, 9 years old, we played. Then we charge \$0.05 for the other kids to come to take a look. But this was-- dance was my--

Had you thought about it professionally?

No. Guta was extremely talented. She went to a film school. She even gave herself a name. The studio gave her a name-- Geri Pik-- Geri-- Guta, Pik-- Perczykow. But she was excellent. I remember her once being at home, just a young woman, and many of her friends came-- boys and girls-- and she was reciting for them. She was reciting a poem about the French Revolution. And I was sitting on a little chair in the corner-- she let me in-- in the corner, listening to her. And she said something. She said, [NON-ENGLISH]. And I said in Polish, [POLISH] meaning, let the goat eat your face. But it was a rhyme.

She got so angry. She threw me out and went to Mother. And Mother was keeping me in the back and said, leave her alone. You go back. But this was what's happening, always gathering at home. It was a very warm atmosphere. But acting, no. She was the one who was really-- first of all, she would be an excellent lawyer. I think she was the most talented than all of us. She was very around. She knew a lot. She read a lot. She performed. She's in the fashion, hats-- she had something in herself.

Was Michal your first boyfriend?

No.

Do you want to tell me what--

Do you have to know?

What?

Do you have to know?

[LAUGHS] You don't have to say.

No. I had-- in the Hashomer Hatzair, it was a photographer. I used to have photos of him, you'll see. And he was very excellent photographer, and artist photographer, really. He made beautiful pictures. And I had the whole album. But during the war, I gave it to our maid. She was later on so-called-- she was taking care of buildings. And I gave her the album. And she got scared later on. And she burned it. This is the only thing I took out. But this is how it was. No, he was a very nice guy. But then came Michal. And I met him in Jutrznia.

Can you tell us about it?

About him? How--

How you met him--

Oh, how I met him. I don't know. He probably saw me before dancing or whatever because he had the rights. He was in the board of Jutrznia. And I was an academic already and the Polytechnikum. And he used to come up and look at the whole class dancing. So many people came up. So what? And then he was after me. And one day a whole group of us went on sleds around Warsaw. And he came. He was skiing. And he came at that time also. I don't know how he found out. That I don't know.

But he saw me. We were going down with the sleds. So he went with the skis. He wanted to throw me out from the sleds. I was furious. I was screaming at him. I couldn't let him. And then he was running for a long time. And I didn't want to. I had a boyfriend. But this is how it happened. And then I cut off with my-- with Adam Rubin. He was a marvelous guy, really. But Michal was very-- he was so romantic. He always explained to me the skies, astronomy, which I had nothing-- I didn't know anything about it-- and took me for long walks for miles through bridges, to the other side to Prague. And this is how it started.

But he was really amazing, how he can always make you feel good. He was a great optimist and to the last drop of his blood, a Bundist. He believed in a better world and socialism, that it will come. This is what he was. And he took me by that.

And did you believe it too?

He made me believe it. I was always more realistic than he was. And we had two things. He was a scientist. I was literature. He wanted to know about the book. He used to call me Mala, meaning petite. He never called me by my name. He picked up his arm, and I put the book under his arm. He was tall, handsome-- and he used to say, who published this? What was the name of it. Open your drawer and take out the card. Take a look. So I told him. I remembered. He really was-- he was very unusual, really.

Were you about the same age? Or was he a bit older?

He was a year older. It was 1913. He was born '18. I was born the same time as he was. April 17.

So when you first met, you were 17 or 18 years old?

I met him in probably 1931. So how old was I? So I was 11 and 6-- 18 years old, probably something like that. Yeah.

So you went together for how many years?

Oh, we went together for about five years.

Did you live together before you got married?

No. How could I?

Was he close with the rest of your family, and you with his?

When my mother heard about that, and she saw us a few times from the far-- he took me home, and my mother was up late-- she said, why do you have to go with a Polish guy? Don't do that. It looked like this is a way he could go through the war like that because he looked blue eyes and blond. But he was close, yeah, with all my sisters. We used to come to each other. And yeah, it wasn't a long time after all.

But when we were going together, he used to come when I was sick. He used to come home and visit me, brought me flowers winter time when we couldn't get anything. He came in with--

So it was a very romantic relationship?

He was always romantic. This is what I'm saying. Even his whole death wasn't a realistic one. Absolutely, I'll do it. What he did. He was always romantic. Idealistic-- he believed in a better world. Says he can do that. This is how it was.

What was your marriage like-- your wedding?

Oh, we got married-- it was my mother and his mother and father. Genia, at that time, I think she was working in the hospital. She couldn't go. The next day he had to go to Bialystok because he had to oversee something, what they're building for drying mushrooms. He was an engineer at the time he was working. And he was going to school. And he was working.

And so we went to the rabbi. And we went first to the Civil-- we had to go-- and then the rabbi-- or the other way around. I don't remember. It was the same day. And he left the same night. But we later on went on our honeymoon to Paris. It was the worldwide exhibit.

The World's Fair?

The World's Fair, yes. And for a honeymoon, for a whole month-- his aunt was working for the Institut Pasteur. And we were living with her on the same street-- the doctor who was in Paris. And we went for a whole month. And then we went to the fair. And we parted under Eiffel. I said, I'm going to the fashion and literature. And you go to the science this way. And then we met again. But it was beautiful. We took a trip on the Sekwan-- Sekwana, on this-- with the-- all the colors. And it was beautiful. It was really beautiful. We went before to Belgium to Antwerp. It was a sport Olympiad at that time.

Before you got to Paris?

Before we got to Paris, yes, 1937.

So when you first started seeing each other, was he going to school at that time to study engineering?

Yes, he was the first year. And this is the picture of him on his index book. And this was saved because this picture was here in the States by his aunt. He became a student. And we sent the pictures. These are the students.

Now were you going to school at this time when you met?

No. I was still tutoring. I was having to tutor at that time still. He helped me a little bit with the algebra and that sometimes.

When did you start working in the Bundist library?

Oh, I was still-- I was maybe-- I don't know. Let's see what year could it be? It was 18, something like that.

And you worked there for a number of years?

Yes, a few years, I was working there.

Now after you got married, and after--

Also working still in the library.

You were?

Oh, yes. I was going to the library.

And where'd the two of you live once you got married?

Oh, with his parents. They had a six-room apartment. They were teachers. And I was always here or there, working as a nurse. And they had six rooms. And they gave us the best room. And I was working. There was a maid. I didn't have any obligations to do-- not many.

So they were fairly well off, I guess?

They weren't rich. But they were teachers. She was once-- not once, but she was up to the end, the president of the teachers union. She was very active-- also Bundist. They didn't speak Yiddish at all. Michal didn't know Yiddish until he was 21. She started to learn by himself to read. They spoke Polish all the time. So was Genia. But he learned by himself. When he was 21, he said, that's enough.

It's interesting that the leaders-- that Bundist leaders, the children never spoke Yiddish. Even the Ehrlich and Alter-- you know who they are. They were the great leaders of the Bund, both of them were killed by the Russians during the war in 1941. Alter was an engineer. And Ehrlich, his two sons were here. One son is still alive. Victor, he's a professor at Yale. And the children never spoke Yiddish. This was very interesting. Of course, they were sent to the best schools and gymnasiums, this and that. So Michal didn't speak Yiddish at all. And he never really spoke Yiddish because she was afraid that he-- my eyes are tearing-- that he will make mistakes. And he didn't want to make any mistakes. But he could read. In the end, he could read.

Did you sometimes speak Yiddish between each other?

Michal, and I? No. No. Never. Never. And luckily, we both started to speak to Irena Polish, not Yiddish. She didn't know a word of Yiddish. She started to learn Yiddish here in the States, not before, because in Sweden also-- Swedish and Polish-- this is how he spoke to her.

So what is happening in your life between 1937 and '39? Are the two of you thinking about the war possibly coming there? Or did you both--

We wanted to come-- 1939 was the World Fair in the States. And we intended to come at that time. But we were a little late because he had an aunt here too, his mother's sister. One was in Paris. And the other one was here. And we intended

to come the World Fair. It started in September. And he for some reason couldn't make it. I don't know exams, or registration, or whatever it was-- because he finished Polytechnic almost 1979 because he was also working. Being married he has to work, has to support the wife. So we intended to come. But for some reason we were late. If we would come at that time, we wouldn't be there. We would stay here. But we were late.

Were you intending to come to the United States just for the World's Fair?

Just for--

Just for vacation?

He would never leave. He has to fight for a better Poland, for a righteous-- you know, those kinds of things. He would never leave Poland at that time. Thinking what happened at that time, he would never leave Poland.

So then the war starts?

Then the war starts, yeah.

And what is that like? What's the beginning like for you and your family?

It was tragic. Meanwhile, my sisters got married, got out of the house. Genia had the marvelous husband, Dubnikow. And they had a son, Majus, because he was born in the month of May. So they called him Majus. You see, it wasn't for religious or business. Then Anka was married also to Bachrach, a marvelous man. He just died being 90 years old. He was writing to the end of his day. This was Bachrach. And they had a daughter, Genia. They went through Shanghai, came to the States.

Guta was married to Bernard Rosenfeld. He was a lawyer, a communist, and also a marvelous man, so well-educated. As much as I loved literature, we always had some kinds of games. I always lost. He was always on top of everything, all kinds of literature, and a marvelous man. And my brother was also married and had a son before the war. So everybody was really out. And I was married. So this is when the war broke out. It was only my youngest sister with my mother.

Sala?

Sala. Krysia, she called herself Krysia, yes. Only my mother was with her. But everybody took care of the household. And it so happens that on the 7th or 8th of September, it was an order by the mayor. It was a mayor, that all the men who were still at the age of military should get out of the city because the Germans were coming very close. And they'll take all the men. So better you get out to the the east side of Poland because maybe still Poland will win the war with the Germans.

And so Michal and all the husbands-- only the oldest one, Genia, and Dubnikow, they went together. They didn't leave. Anka stayed. And Guta stayed. And I stayed. And all of them left. They went for-- Michal left with his two friends, with Jerzy Lipszyc, with whom he was studying. They were students and studying together in the university. And Mietek Katowicz, two marvelous guys-- the ones I met were nice. Mietek died. But I met Jerzy. When I went with Irena to Poland. He came up.

They all left. They were all married. But they all left the wives. They went to the east side. And after a few weeks-- maybe a month, six weeks, I don't know-- they all came back. Mietek Katowicz's wife was pregnant. Michal came back. I think that Jerzy stayed a while. He was still in London. His father was a doctor. And he was a very well off with some kind of compact he had. But then he came back.

So one day after a few weeks, they came back beside Genia did not come back. And Bachrach didn't come back. But he sent for my sister and the baby somehow. People were traveling back and forth through the borders between Russia and Germany-- back and forth. So Anka left to Vilna. They were in Vilna. Genia was in Dubno. This was Ukraine. And then

Guta left with Buziek also, with her husband, also to Ukraine, the fourth member. And I stayed. I was there. And in the end Kryisia had the boyfriend. And she also left. So when Michal came back, I took my mother to our household. And we stayed together.

So it was a very tragic situation at that time, I would say. First of all, they bombarded Warsaw. I was so scared. Michal wasn't there. We were in the cellars. And I was so scared to death. I got a fever. I didn't know what's happening. And Michal wasn't there. It was scary. Then suddenly he came back. They decided they cannot leave the wives. And they came back. And since then it start. And that was-- then after a while I got pregnant.

What happens--

And then also we had to move from our apartment to the ghetto. So at that time, I was already very sick. And I was out of action. I was--

What were you sick from?

Thyroid. So my eyes at that time became permanent. I never had this kind of-- this is with the sickness. My heart-- I was sick. I was very sick. But this is already after Irena was born.

But you moved to the ghetto in 1940?

No, this was already later, a little bit-- end of '40, '41, something-- because they did it in parts. There was a small ghetto, a big ghetto, and so on, at the time. We got a tremendous room from somebody. They knew my mother-in-law and my father-in-law-- from people who a tremendous apartment, six rooms or something like that. And we got about two rooms. It was one-room later, but divided the two rooms over there, when she went to Jerska. This is where we all lived together.

So now who was together?

My mother-in-law, my father-in-law, my mother, Michal, I, the baby, and Genia. For a while also came another sister, my mother-in-law's, Guta Schulman. Her husband was also-- he was an editor in the Volkszeitung. Very nice man, but he died before that. But she was for a while in our apartment. And she was together with my mother-in-law and my mother when the raid came, and they were taken away. But this was later already.

Rose, when the war starts, and then they start having decree's about the Jews, yes, and then finally, you have to go to the ghetto, what are people talking about? What kind of--

It was a tremendous shock to everybody because the Germans came into the streets. They were killing just like that. They were tearing beards from the Jews. They were coming at night and taking out people from the houses. There were raids around a few blocks and taking people for work to do this, to do that, before they started to take them to concentration camps-- for all kinds of work. It was unbelievable what was going on in the streets.

The fear-- people didn't have what to eat. Immediately stores were closed. The Germans took away everything they could. They came into the stores, into the homes, and just like that, didn't do anything. And it was terrible. There were keys to stand in line to get something. The Jewish-- the Judenrat-- it wasn't the Judenrat yet, but the people who worked before in the Judentrat-- tried to keep everything together. But you know about the story of Czerniak³w, who committed suicide because they said you have to deliver so-and-so many people for this, this, and that. He couldn't do it because he knew it's for either camp or death. And he committed suicide.

Others stayed. Then the Jewish police came. It was a terrible thing. You can't even imagine what was going on. And we didn't have-- I know that my mother-in-law was selling and selling and selling what we had. Anything goes. And people came from the Aryan side. They let them in, that they paid to the-- even Germans were standing then with the guards, and watching. They came in. They were buying up things. It was a tremendous-- it was tragedy, completely tragic.

And then they started to see that people in the streets, the children begging running around-- some didn't have already any strength to run around. I was a lot sick at that time. First of all, I gave birth. And then I started with my thyroid. I was taken to the hospital. Hospital--

When did you give birth? It was April 17th, 1941?

Yes.

So it's a few months after the ghetto was sealed, that you're in the ghetto. And then you get sick?

I got sick. Yeah.

And what happened?

I got sick after that. After I gave birth, I got sick. I was afraid what's going to happen. Stress, thyroid, stress-- what's happened to Irena or this and that. Michal will be taken away-- you just live without-- not tomorrow or so the next hour we live. And this was a terrible-- and the hospital, I was-- when I was operated on, there was not any antibiotics at all. They cut me all over because I was full of infection here. And it was 1 millimeter from my main vein. And the doctor Arik Heller, as I spoke, he's in Sweden now he was at the operation. He was altogether so that I'm a miracle that I'm alive. It was all that.

But this was-- Irena was about, at the time, a few months old. It was a terrible-- you didn't know what tomorrow will bring. The raids were tremendous. They surrounded blocks and blocks. And you couldn't get out. And the old people went one side to the camps. The young ones went here. You couldn't even figure out what's going to happen. What should they do? Nobody knew. We knew one thing, we're all going to perish.

You knew that?

It was going on like that every day. They come up-- Michal was constantly running to the underground every day and keeping with them what's going on and so on. And the first thing he came back and said, what about England? What about America? Didn't you hear anything? You're not going to help? We were all surprised.

So it was a very tragic time. They were killing and killing and killing and more and more deaths on the streets constantly, And more raids, and then the Judenrat started to try to get a little organized. And the Jewish militia came. And they were so caught up with it because they said if you bring a certain amount of Jews, your family will stay alive, you know the oldest tricks. They believed in it. And they brought nothing help.

There were a few-- they bombed the underground and killed a few policemen. But that didn't help. One policeman help us. But he was once a Bundist then became a policeman. We were also going-- but this was later already, towards the end, the Umschlagplatz, Michal holding Irena and I. If you want to hear it now, I'll tell you, how they raided.

But this was the period of-- and then when I was in the hospital at the time-- it wasn't the hospital. It was the pen club, the tremendous apartment they made into the hospital in the ghetto. As I told you, they didn't have any medications. But they had to operate on me. And I was lying in a room for the nurses, which is as narrow as this is. But they put a cot there for me, so I wouldn't be with all the people. And the doctors came to me there.

There came a day when they said that they're going to take away the hospitals. And my doctors were the best surgeons in Warsaw because of the nurses. And Genia knew them. She wanted them to operate on me. They were taken the night before from their houses away. I never heard of them later on. And then the next day, the whole hospital would be evacuated with all the sick to get away with them. So Genia and Michal came the day before. And we were on the third floor. They put their hands like that. They put me on their hands and brought me up to the house at that time.

What month is that? Do you have any--

22nd of July.

Oh my.

My birthday.

The beginning of the deportation, that's your birthday?

22nd of July. This is the biggest evacuation for Treblinka. This is started, 22nd of July.

So are you in the hospital May and June after the birth of Irena for a couple of months--

Later.

--or later?

Irena was born in April. Yes, this is when it was. This is when it was.

Let's take a break now.

OK.

And we'll start with your--