

# **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**Interview with Rachelle Margosh**  
**June 24, 2004**  
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## **PREFACE**

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Rachelle Margosh, conducted on June 24, 2004 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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## **RACHELLE MARGOSH**

### **June 24, 2004**

#### Beginning Tape One

Question: Good morning, Rachelle.

Answer: Good morning.

Q: It's so nice to see you here finally.

A: Oh, thank you, you're wonderful.

Q: What is your name?

A: My name is Rachelle Perahia Margosh.

Q: And what was your name when you were born, cause -- because m-mar -- Margosh wasn't your name.

A: Yes, no, Margosh is my husband's.

Q: Right.

A: And my name was Rachelle Margosh.

Q: So you cha --

A: Oh, no, no, I'm sorry. Rachelle Perahia.

Q: Right. But now you spell your name now differently than you did when you were in Greece, am I right?

A: Yes. See, I spelled my name as Rachel, but it was pronounced Rachelle. In French, it's Rachelle.

Q: I see.

A: And everybody knew me like -- the-they would call me like that. Tha-That -- the Greeks, they couldn't pronounce it, they shou -- and some of them, they call me Racell, and some that they --

they knew what my real name was, they would call me Raheel, which is Rachel. You know, that's a --

Q: It's very complicated.

A: Yeah.

Q: Now what is the date of your birth?

A: My date of my birth is the June 17<sup>th</sup>, '24.

Q: '24? I thought it was '22, it's '24, so hm, okay. Now you were born in Kavala --

A: Right.

Q: -- but you were raised in Drama.

A: Right.

Q: So how come you were born in Kavala?

A: Well, at that time my father was there. When he left Salonika, he went to Kavala. And that's where I was born, but just probably stayed there a year or so, and then [indecipherable]

Q: Oh, I see, so your parents were not living in Drama at the time, they were living in Kavala.

A: Yes.

Q: And then they moved to Drama.

A: Right.

Q: So let's talk a little bit about your family, and what it was like before the troubles started.

A: Okay, okay.

Q: Your father's name?

A: Shemtov.

Q: And what was -- what was he doing?

A: Well, he was director of a tobacco company, that involved many other countries, like Switzerland, Germany, and Austria.

Q: Was -- was this a family business? Or --

A: Well, n-no, it wasn't a famil -- but it was like a family. See, they were all together all the time, and so they used to come and visit us. Now, that's why my father wanted me to learn German, because at that time we were friends with the Germans, when I was young. And I had always a -- a governess, she was from Austria, and she was Jewish. And -- so I knew German, because see, when you're young, you learn fast.

Q: Right.

A: But then I -- I didn't -- I didn't speak any more.

Q: You didn't.

A: But I remember when she used to take me to school, she used to behave like a German.

Q: Can you explain?

A: She was Jewish, but she --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- and she did -- my father didn't want us to take a -- a -- the chauffeur with us to take us to school, she want us to walk. And so -- but she wanted to walk like a German, and sing. Dast ist, the lieblin -- and you know wor -- the Greeks used to go all the way, and some of them, they wanted to make fun, you know, that that's how we were walking like this. But what I could do? She was my teacher and I used to do what she wanted me to do. But when we decided after a couple of years that we didn't -- didn't want her to stay any more.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: She went to Israel.

Q: She went to i -- i -- where did she go?

A: Israel.

Q: Uh-huh. But it was Palestine then?

A: Yeah.

Q: Right. So what ki -- wha -- were you close with your father when you were a little girl?

A: Very much.

Q: Yes?

A: And until now, she's un -- he is my favorite person.

Q: Really? So tell me what he was like for you.

A: He was a -- well, what can I say, he -- he was always very nice, and -- and I did sometimes wrong things. I remember one day he wanted to punish me, and he wanted to hit me. He never did that, but -- so I started running around the table, and finally he started laughing. And that was it.

Q: And that was it.

A: And that was the only time that he tried to -- he was mad, I don't know what I was saying. So -- and he was the only man that I used to longagee when we would go out, some -- some place, you know. My ex-husband didn't like that.

Q: You mean, you would hold on --

A: Longagee, yes.

Q: You would hold onto his -- yes?

A: And he looked so young, and when my friends would see me, we -- they -- they a -- would ask me, is a -- are you engaged? And all my friends were -- they loved him.

Q: Yes?

A: Yes.

Q: So he was a warm person?

A: [tape flaw] gorgeous.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: The picture doesn't do much to him, really.

Q: I'm sorry Joan, we just had a battery going dead over here.

Q: Okay, we have to stop the tape.

Q: Sorry about that. Go ahead.

Q: You were just saying something that all your friends were in love with your father, he was so gorgeous. Did he talk to you a lot?

A: Mm-mm -- no, I don't remember, because he was always very busy --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- and traveling. He used to travel to other parts of Europe, as a Zionist, you know, he wanted to meet people. And then he used to go to Israel every year. And he would buy [indecipherable] and homes from there, Palestine -- Palestine.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Because he thought that one day the -- the Jews would go there. And it was nothing at that time, Israel, nothing. There were no trees, nobody wanted to live there, and that's why the Arabs were selling it, everything.

Q: So he was a Zionist?

A: Yeah.

Q: Very early.

A: Yeah.

Q: As far as you know.

A: But he was a zion -- he was a very Jew, but he kept it on his ha -- he didn't show it to the -- the Greeks. With the Greeks he be -- behaved like them, you know.

Q: Uh-huh, so he -- was he really assimilated, or was he just showing that?

A: No, he was a modernist, he wanted, you know, to -- to act a way that we will -- they will know us, they will love us, you know? And by talking their language, by -- for instance, when the -- the holidays, they used to invite us, you know, and when they used to have the Pasha, which is the Greek Easter, and they had all kinds of, and that we -- we were eating Passover, you know, things. And I used to ask my father what shall I do there, I cannot eat bread, and I -- said, yes, you're going to eat everything they'll give you, that's okay. And when we will come home, we'll do that. And -- and the archbishop used to come to our house when they had -- at that time they used to fast, and -- and we used to give him things from Pesach, and he would eat. And he -- my father used to say, if the archbishop --

Q: Can eat?

A: -- can, we can eat too. So he was that type, you know, he wanted to -- and we had -- most of our friends were Greeks, not Jewish. But inside of him, he was a -- a Jew, with all his heart, you know. We learn -- learned -- I learned Hebrew.

Q: You did?

A: And at that time, only boys used to go to Hebrew school. I was the only girl there, because my father said that he wanted me to be like anybody else, you know, not different. And so I became Bat mitzvah'ed seven years ago.

Q: Really? Seven years ago? Do you --



A: And I thought I had forgotten, but all of a sudden I remember. I became the best student in the class.

Q: But you're very good at languages, aren't you?

A: Well, I used to be, but you know, when you don't use them, it's bad. And --

Q: So, y-you had a very promi -- you were in a very prominent family, yes? Cause your -- your home was huge, yes? Ha -- do you remember how many rooms? Could you even count them?

A: I don't, but it was so big that my -- I used to run all the way through one room to another, and my brother used to make fun of me. Said, "I will give you a bicycle."

Q: And I'm sure it was big enough, you could have ridden a bicycle in these rooms, yes?

A: He was kidding.

Q: And you had a huge garden. We have some --

A: And -- and two storey --

Q: Two stories.

A: -- and -- and downst -- below, we had how you call --

Q: A base -- in the basement?

A: Basement. And we had like ping pong table, and other things that to -- could play, downstairs.

And next we'll open the door downstairs, and it was -- how you call in Engli -- sometimes the other word doesn't come. Not sea, water, you know.

Q: Like a lake?

A: Lake. We had that lake right there, front yard.

Q: In your yar -- you had a lake?

A: We open the door --

Q: And there's a lake.

A: -- and there was the lake outside, yeah. And --

Q: Could you swim in that lake, or you took the boat, or you just looked?

A: No, no, no, I just looked.

Q: I see.

A: And it was always clean, always nice.

Q: Were there fishes?

A: I don't remember seeing.

Q: No.

A: No.

Q: Did you feel very --

A: I didn't sta -- I didn't go out of the house too much. See, that's the bad thing about.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah, because they kept me too -- I-I was home most of the -- you know, with this -- with a governess, or with friends. The friends, they had to be at my house.

Q: Not you at theirs?

A: Not me -- no.

Q: Do you know why?

A: Well, tha-that was -- my father was like that, and he had other things that I didn't like at the time. For instance, when he would come home, he didn't want to hear Spanish He used to say they threw us out, they didn't want us, why should we speak their language? No Spanish. And so you can talk any other language you want, it's fine. And when we'll get out of the house, it's only Greek.

Q: Had you learned Spanish?

A: Oh yes.

Q: Yes.

A: Yes.

Q: And he could speak it, I'm sure, yes --

A: Oh sure.

Q: -- but he didn't want to hear it in the house. Tell me -- tell -- I'm going to go back to your father, but tell me a little bit about your mother. W-Wi -- you're not as close to your mother as your father, or am I wrong?

A: No, I wasn't as close to my mother as my father, no. She was very nice, though.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And well, although she was born while the Turks were in Greece, she didn't like the Turks, and her family also didn't care about. And the Turks were so good to them. You know, when they -- they would go and si -- because the -- ma -- his -- her relatives were at that time to be doctors, or --

Q: Lawyers?

A: Lawyers, something, you know. They were treating them as, you know, kings, they would go down like that, you know?

Q: So they were professional people?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: The Turks.

Q: Yes.

A: And so -- and -- but she didn't want to speak Turk -- in Turkish, never spoke. She went to Greek school, and she knew Greek better than I did. Yeah. And she thought that nobody is perfect, nobody knows all the words that they're -- and she used to, on Saturdays when she didn't do s -- any work, she used to take there -- sh -- she had to learn new words. You know, she used to take the vocabulary, and learn it. And she used to say, if somebody thinks that he knows all the words or everything, you know, she's stupid, or she's ignorant, you know, because we have a -- a --

Q: Your brother Haim is two years younger, or --

A: Two years older --

Q: Two -- two years older than --

A: -- two -- two -- two and a half years [indecipherable]

Q: Two and a half years older. Did you all eat together? Lunch, and --

A: Yes.

Q: -- breakfast, lunch and --

A: Yes.

Q: -- dinner?

A: Yes.

Q: Or dinner and supper, I don't know the --

A: Yes, we used to eat all together, yes.

Q: And did you have a lot of conversations at dinner, or was it a quiet dinner?

A: No, we used to have conversations.

Q: Yeah?

A: Yes.

Q: And what -- was politics a big part of --

A: No.

Q: No.

A: Not polit -- no.

Q: So --

A: At that time we didn't discuss politics at all.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: It was usually religion, or how things are in school, and -- yeah.

Q: And you, and your --

A: And probably my father and my mother used to discuss politics because my mother was very involved in it.

Q: She was?

A: Yeah.

Q: In Zionism, or in --

A: No, not in Zionism, she wasn't involved as my father.

Q: Uh-huh. So what sort of politics was she involved in?

A: Greek politics, or what they thought about the Jews, and the -- and other countries, you know.

Yeah, and she used to be a philanthropist, which my father also was. But my mother, what she used to do is she knew several people that they were very proud, they didn't want to ask anything from anybody, and she used to take me with her many times, we used to go and give them something, and -- wrapped up or something, you know, and so that's what we used to do when I was home, because I was at school also --

Q: Right.

A: -- for six years.

Q: Right. Wha -- at what age did you go to boarding school?

A: I went -- I was 11 and a half.

Q: 11 and a half. Did they have a good relationship?

A: With the school?

Q: No, your father and mother, from what you remember.

A: Oh, yes.

Q: It was a -- it was a good relationship?

A: Yes, but see, there were always women that they were interested to him -- at him, you know.

But no, he was good to my mother.

Q: Right. And was she jealous of these women, you think?

A: No, I don't think so, because I thought that the -- she didn't care about that, you know.

Q: Did -- she didn't work?

A: No.

Q: No, she didn't work. Was she an educated woman?

A: Yeah.

Q: She was.

A: But mostly on her own.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: She did the -- the -- the most education.

Q: Right.

A: Yeah. She learned by herself French. My father learned by her -- by himself Greek.

Q: No kidding.

A: And he knew better than I did. He used to read the paper, and -- and -- cause the paper is very hard to understand sometimes.

Q: Right.

A: And -- yeah. They le -- the-they learned.

Q: So was he -- was he not born in Greece?

A: He was born in Salonika. Was Greece -- it was Turkis --

Q: Is gr -- it was Turkistan --

A: -- that time.

Q: -- that's right, yes, I see, okay. And tell me about Haim. The two of yo -- a brother who's two and a half years older --

A: Uh-huh.

Q: -- were you -- were you close when you were growing up, or was that difficult?

A: Well, see th -- my parents, because I was always sweet and nice, you know, they used to hug me all the time, and kiss me, and this and that. And he -- didn't appear that he wanted this, see, but he did want probably, he was jealous. Because when -- there were times that he used to hit me.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah, but from -- when I was in -- in the house. When I was away, he used to write me such wonderful letters, as if I was a saint, you know? Yeah.

Q: So how did you put this t --

A: And how my s --

Q: You don't know.

A: He used to tell me how much he loved me, and if one day he was going to be a big person, would be because of me.

Q: Really?

A: So -- but he was very intelligent. His teacher used to tell my parents, why you are -- why you are against him? You know, he's -- maybe he doesn't make the -- the good grades, but he knows more than I do, the teacher used to say. You know, he -- he was very intelligent.

Q: So were your parents hard on him in some way?

A: Yes, because he wasn't making good grades, and they want him to --

Q: Uh-huh, right.

A: -- to do better. And so that's it. It's always something in the homes.

Q: In the homes always. Always complicated, isn't it?

A: Yeah, right. And he had no reason to be jealous of me. And my mother used to say, if you -- y-you are so good, so wonderful person, and she didn't have that tone, that y -- you know, like a -- getting a da -- how can I say? Sometimes I can't think of the words.

Q: Was -- was he aggressive?

A: Sometimes, at me, you know.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Say we would love you more than anything in the world, you know? And I would believe that, because he had too many good ideas, too many good things. But he used to u -- lose his temper sometimes, you know.

Q: His temper, uh-huh. Was it easi -- do you think it was easier for him when you were away at school? Or was he away at school too?

A: Probably, probably it was. Probably he was perfect at the time --



Q: Yeah.

A: See they -- they tried to send him at school, so he won't be with me.

Q: I see.

A: You know? And keep me at home. But he used to leave the school.

Q: He would leave the school?

A: Mm-hm.

Q: And come home so he could be with you.

A: So they decide to send me instead.

Q: Right, right. And what sort of school was this?

A: It was a Greek school, but we had French, and Latin, Ancient Greek. And we had to work very hard.

Q: Did you like it?

A: I liked it, but we had to work hard.

Q: Yeah.

A: It was mainly working, you know.

Q: Was this difficult for you to be away from the house, because you had been so much in the house?

A: I know, it -- it was difficult, especially at the beginning, you know. I always miss them. I always miss them. But I thought they were doing the best for me. I always thought so. I never put in my mind that they were doing the wrong thing, never.

Q: So you wouldn't criticize them, no.

A: No, never.

Q: Did it help you to become a little bit more independent because you were away? Was it helpful?

A: N -- no, see there -- they followed the Swiss mentality, that we -- they had to keep the children, you know, more in -- in schools, maybe, in boarding schools, things like that. And str -- strange with it -- I mean being -- not being soft. See, I used to get in my window in -- in Drama and look outside. And I used to see boys or girls, you know, with no shoes because they were poor, walking in the rain. And I used to be to -- envy them that they were free, and I didn't have that freedom.

Q: And you didn't have it. Even though you knew they were probably poor.

A: Right.

Q: But they were free.

A: But I -- I didn't know what poor was, or anything, you know. And see, the thing with me is I used to read also Russian, la -- you know, when -- the fall of the communist, those Russian. And they didn't have a good -- they didn't talk well about their -- the poor, they thought they were peasants. They didn't have manners, they didn't have anything. They [indecipherable]. And I started thinking like them, and now when I think of myself, I'm -- I'm -- you know, I feel bad about it, because if we didn't have that -- all these people, that they work so hard, a-and they were good, and everything, you know, we wouldn't have the things that we have today. It's because of them that we live better. And only when I came here, and I was living the way I wanted to live, you know, but I started thinking, poor -- poor people, you know, working on the streets with this heat, and every -- how they can manage? And what I'm doing? Nothing, in comparison with them. You know? And I started feeling different about people.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I didn't know them wh-while I was at home.

Q: Right, right.

A: I di -- I knew only their friends, you know, and --

Q: And the children of those friends.

A: Yes, right.

Q: So it was a very small society that you were a part of.

A: Right, because I wasn't free to go outside --

Q: Right.

A: -- and meet with other people.

Q: And when you went to school, were this -- a mixture of people, or again it was a very rich -- from -- from prominent families of which --

A: From prominent families.

Q: Uh-huh. So you lived in --

A: But they -- they were -- in school there were some Jewish people, but in boarding school, especially the first years I was all alone. I was the only Jewish girl.

Q: The only Jewish -- and what did that mean? Was -- was it --

A: But they treated very well, you know.

Q: They did?

A: Oh yes. And their -- the one that owned the school, I mean, I was her favorite, she just loved me. And everybody in the school, they never showed any anti-Semitism there.

Q: So you never experienced anti-Semitism as a kid?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: Only one day in the -- going back at home with the train. I was sit -- there were some people sitting with me, and they were talking about the Jews. And of course, not good things. And -- and I only was listening, and I didn't say anything. And then finally one of them said to me, "Well, we don't hear anything from you, you know, what do you think about the Jews?" "Well," I said, "you're looking to one of them." And they became all red, you know, and said, "But you're better than we are." See, they were from villa -- not villages, places where they didn't have any - - they -- they knew nothing about Jews. Whatever their church will tell them, that we killed Jesus, and we -- they didn't even know that Jesus was a Jew, you know.

Q: Right.

A: So.

Q: We're going to st -- stop and change the tape right now.

A: Okay.

End of Tape One

Beginning Tape Two

Q: Before -- before we get back to the story, I just wanted you to make clear, when you talked about Spanish, you really were talking about Ladino, am I correct?

A: I found out th-the language here, they -- they said Ladino, in -- in the United States. In -- in Europe my father used to say the Spanish that they used to speak at that time in -- when -- when we -- the Jews left --

Q: Left in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

A: Yeah, yeah, right.

Q: Yes. Now, you had particular interests, who -- and one of them -- I'm going to ask you about other ones, but you were interested in design, I understand, fashion. And you were, as a little girl, di --

A: You know --

Q: So tell me what you did, your -- you ha -- somebody came in and they were making clothes for you, is that right?

A: Yeah, and a -- how to call it, a seamstress?

Q: A seamstress, yes.

A: And if I didn't like what she made, I would ex -- tell her, do you think this way will be better, or this way. You know, can you change it a little bit? And sometimes she would undo the whole thing, and do it -- so, and that's how my father thought that probably I have the -- th-this what I would like to be when I grow up, be a designer.

Q: Wa -- was he right, would you have liked that?

A: I don't know, because see, after the liberation, things were so --

Q: Were so different.

A: Yeah.

Q: But you --

A: I don't know, and then I was so involved with the -- the children, and everything --

Q: Right.

A: -- here see. I never did the -- and -- this jobs before, you know.

Q: Right.

A: So I had to learn from the beginning how to do a -- everything. And it was little bit difficult on me. And so -- and I -- I was afraid at the time, although that I had my driver's license, I didn't drive, I was afraid. And I - I spent all my time in the -- in the house. And -- and I liked to do everything from st -- scratch, you know, the food, everything, I didn't use --

Q: Right.

A: -- so I spent all the day like this. And then I couldn't wait for my children to come, and hug them, kiss them, talk, things what they did and everything. But unfortunately my worst enemy was the television at the time. Now, I like it, because otherwise I feel very lonely. But that time, I-I need to have a conversation with them, and the only time that I -- I wouldn't let them watch television is when we will sit at the table, then I'll turn it off. And that way we had a little time to discuss something.

Q: Right.

A: As soon as we'll get out of the table, they'll all [indecipherable] television.

Q: They were watching television.

A: Yeah. And that was a difficult part.

Q: So -- so when you were growing up, what other interests did you have? Did -- were there particular interests in school, that you liked one subject better than another, or did -- did you just like everything?

A: Well see, I had one year in -- I went at the university in Athens. And then we had to h-hide, you know, I couldn't continue.

Q: Right.

A: And here I thought that maybe I can become a -- well see, a -- oh, what was this place? The French -- sometimes my mind stops, I can't think.

Q: You're thinking of a place?

A: Oh, it's --

Q: Or some [indecipherable]

A: It's somewhere where they teach French. The school a -- scho -- the Berlitz school of languages.

Q: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

A: I went there, and -- and I-I had very good time there, teaching, you know, Greek. And I became friends with some people who lived in River rocks at that time. River rocks was against - - they didn't want any Jews around, and she became such a good friend with me, she went to Greece, she wrote me letters from there, and so I-I was very interested. And see, that's when I think what my father thought, you know. The only time that we can be friends with each other is by knowing each other. See, otherwise -- say this woman ha-had no idea about the Jews, see?

Q: Right.

A: And we came such good friends.

Q: So were -- were you observant as Jews in the house, and you went to synagogue?

A: Oh yes, oh yes.

Q: And -- you did, yes.

A: Oh yes.

Q: It was just that this was a very private --

A: No, the thing is that we'd -- we didn't say that we weren't Jews, they knew we were Jews.

Q: People knew, right.

A: But we didn't try to -- we tried to connect with each other.

Q: Right.

A: You know what I mean?

Q: Yes.

A: Not too Jewish, ya -- not, you know. Tried to be modern.

Q: Yes, yes, I know, to other people.

A: You know, yeah. And modern. [indecipherable]. We can't be now -- live like they used to live 3,000 years ago.

Q: Right, right. And did you discuss religion with your friends as you got a little bit older, or was that not a subject that people talked about?

A: Well, I don't know if my father discuss any. I-I didn't.

Q: You didn't?

A: No.

Q: So the kids wouldn't say, so what do Jews believe, or --

A: No.

Q: No-Nothing.

A: No. I didn't ask them, they didn't ask me.



Q: Right.

A: But they knew I was Jewish.

Q: Yeah, yeah. Did you see --

A: I never intended to do that, because I was proud, I always was proud being a Jew.

Q: Right. Did you go to synagogue?

A: Oh yes.

Q: Yes, you did, on holidays, or did --

A: Of course, and I became Bat Mitzvah, I told you.

Q: But that's recent.

A: Yes, it is.

Q: Yes, right.

A: And I used to go before, but the pronunciation of the Hebrew was different, and I thought that I -- I had forgotten.

Q: Uh-huh, right.

A: And then the pronunciation changed, and --

Q: And was this an Orthodox synagogue that you went to?

A: Beth Usurum was no, not Orthodox, was -- what's next to Orthodox?

Q: Conservative.

A: Conservative. And now I belong to a Reform.

Q: So you've moved?

A: And a -- yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: I think that's what I am, that's how I feel.

Q: Yes.

A: You know?

Q: Right.

A: But inside of me I'm very Jewish, very religious. I feel like a -- the -- only our religion has meaning, you know? And you hear the others, I mean, I just --

Q: We got sirens.

A: Silence?

Q: The -- the si -- you can hear them?

Q: Yeah. Go ahead.

Q: Okay, and --

A: And because of us we have the 10 commandments, which are the -- the laws. I mean, we did that, and people should be thankful to us for many things. And the Greeks, that poem, he is thankful because we don't have any more the -- so many go -- gods, you know, that they believe in, and the -- the Romans too, the same. So it's more believable, what do we believe, you know, it's one God, perfect God, you know.

Q: You didn't go hiking in the mountains, or skiing, or did you?

A: No.

Q: Isn't there a mountain near you called Falakro mountain, in Drama?

A: Falakro? Falakro?

Q: F-a-l-a-k-r-o. No? Maybe that's later.

A: Doesn't sound --

Q: So did you -- when you -- did you go outside with the family and go on picnics, or --

A: Oh, oh, yes.

Q: Yes, you did.

A: Picnics. As a matter of fact -- Rinette didn't bring that picture. It was a beautiful picnic. I'm sorry she didn't. And it was going to Sofia.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Well anyway, we went to the theater, went to all kinds of --

Q: But this is as a family?

A: Yeah, with the family.

Q: You're not going alone anywhere?

A: No, no.

Q: No. Did you ever say anything to your father or mother?

A: No.

Q: No, you didn't. This was how you were raised, and this was the way it was.

A: Right. I thought always they were doing the right thing for us.

Q: Right. When Hitler takes over in Germany, when the Nazis take over, in 1933, do people get worried? Does your family get worried? Do you feel it? I mean you were --

A: Not a -- not as worried as we should.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Because m-my parents had friends that were Germans, and they used to come at our house, and that's why they wanted me to learn German.

Q: Right.

A: And -- but they were different at that time, before Hitler ruined them. And -- and the Austrians were very nice. So their ... one more country, I can't think the name now. Switzerland.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Switzerland. At that time we -- we lived in it, my parents open an account, and they supposed to have total --

Q: They open an account in Switzerland?

A: In Switzerland, but we didn't -- none of us was to know.

Q: I see.

A: It was secret.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Just the -- their name. My uncle's name and his name. In -- in -- and consequently I couldn't go and take the money out, because my name was -- and they kept secret there. This was a -- they had a way. So -- but I don't think that money was lost, I tell you why. My uncle survived, his brother, and they had the money together --

Q: I see.

A: -- and probably he got it. He didn't say anything to me. I went to Switzerland myself to get it, and a friend of my father said, don't do anything because there will be more anti-Semitism. So I left it. But I have an idea that my uncle probably did it. And he didn't take it for his own benefit, he was a wonderf -- a very good man, you know. He did it to help the rest of the relatives, the ones that were suffering more. You know what I mean?

Q: Right, right.

A: And that's why I don't keep any --

Q: A grudge?

A: Grudge.

Q: No grudge.

A: No.

Q: Yes. So were your parents putting money there because you -- they thought that maybe they would try to leave?

A: They -- my father had this -- yeah, wa -- can't keep money in one --

Q: All in one place, anyway.

A: -- one place, yeah. We buy houses, we put in certain bank. We lost all the money in Greece because ba -- became nothing, you know, after the war.

Q: Right, right.

A: So -- and he put it in different places. So -- but I don't care. I never cared about -- about money, as long as I -- I can be independent, you know?

Q: Right, right.

A: I -- I don't care. I don't care about. Because I -- I feel -- I always felt like they had more problems, the -- wh-who --

Q: The people who had a lot of money?

A: A lot of money. And -- and they were a lot harder. So anyway --

Q: So -- and the Nazis take over, there's -- there's not -- you're not feeling tension in '33 - '34 - '35 - '36. You're going to school, you're in Salonika, Thalonika, right, and going to school.

A: Salonika.

Q: Is it Salonika or Thalonika?

A: It's Thessaloniki in Greece.

Q: Thessaloniki.

A: In Greece.

Q: Okay.

A: And Salonika everybody else.

Q: Else, right. In 1936, Metaxas becomes prime minister and he's -- likes fascism. He likes the Germans, he likes --

A: To tell you the truth, I don't remember.

Q: You don't remember. So you think perhaps it didn't have any impact on you in 1936? You're still in school --

A: On me, no.

Q: No, nothing.

A: No, nothing.

Q: And you're hearing nothing from your family?

A: No.

Q: Are you reading the newspapers?

A: I didn't read th-the newspapers where I was in --

Q: In school?

A: -- the boarding school.

Q: Did you read it when you were home?

A: Yes, and I read a lot of books. I di --

Q: And what were -- what were you reading?

A: I was reading French, Russian before then, communism, and [indecipherable]

Q: So who did you read in Russian? Tolstoy? Dostoyevsky?

A: Dostoyevsky.

Q: Yeah?

A: And what's the other one? I can't think the name now.

Q: Did you read Babel? Maybe it wasn't published then. Not Tolstoy?

A: No, I don't think I read th -- Tolstoy.

Q: And who did you read in French?

A: Oh, it's a -- so my -- my -- still in my home is full of French books.

Q: French books, yes?

A: But my mind now, I have to think too much.

Q: Okay then -- then we won't ask. Maybe it'll come [indecipherable]

A: Yeah, yeah. I have le -- "Les Miserables," by Victor Hugo.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I read it twice.

Q: Yeah.

A: It still is in my house. And -- and I still want to read it again, I lo -- loved it. And I think we haven't change.

Q: No, unfortunately, I think you're right. Did you like movies?

A: Yes, but not the -- the ones now, I can't stand them, the majority.

Q: No, but when you were a child, when you were young, in Greece?

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: Did you see American movies also?

A: Oh yes, sure.

Q: Yeah, did you like them?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah? American movies went everywhere, I guess.

A: Oh yes.

Q: But Greek --

A: But we thought that all Americans were --

Q: Cowboys?

A: Cowboys.

Q: I knew you were going to say that, yes. Well, what can I tell you?

A: And Rinette didn't show you a picture of mine when I came in.

Q: No, we'll see it later.

A: Yeah, I have a --

Q: You have a cowboy hat, yes?

A: -- I'm dressed like [indecipherable]. Well, there are three of us, you know.

Q: Cow -- a cow -- well, you moved to cowboy country.

A: Yes, right. But you don't see any more that.

Q: No, no. Did -- did you have any boyfriends when you were in boarding school?

A: No.

Q: No. This was no -- was this all girls?

A: All girls.

Q: It was all girls.

A: I never had boyfriends. And when I did, I was with the family.

Q: What do you mean it was with the family? [indecipherable]

A: When I -- I would dance -- when I would dance with a boy, you know, the family was there.

Q: Uh-huh, so it was always chaperoned in some respect. You look a little funny with that. You don't think that was such a good idea?

A: Well, in that time, it was a good idea.

Q: Right, right. Who decides to move to Athens?



A: Well, they both decided.

Q: They both decided.

A: I tell you what, we had [indecipherable] friends and I -- and they thought that the Germans were coming.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And --

Q: So they thought you should leave?

A: We should leave and we left everything, all the furniture, everything, just a -- our clothes, and we left.

Q: Well, let me ask you something before, cause that's really very important. Wh-When you and your family are in Drama, your father is close to the king. Am I right, or at least he knows --

A: [indecipherable] the king was coming to town with his [inaudible]

Q: That was -- okay --

A: My voice.

Q: It's okay, is it all right? Because I -- it's going to start with me, too. The if the king would come to town, to Drama, your father would see him, yes? And -- am I right that you tell me when he wanted to call his wife he would come to your house, because he could be private, and nobody would be listening. So your -- your family was not only wealthy and -- and prominent in terms of being wealthy, but they were very well connected in terms of people who knew what was going on in the world. So, in a sense t -- your father was warned, maybe it would be just better to leave.

A: Well now, I tell you that our friends were all Christians.

Q: Yes.

A: That they were the -- they used to say come any time during the day, the night, any time that you feel someone saw you, and you are in danger --

Q: Right.

A: -- our house is open for you. And that's what we did, especially my brother because he used to go. Couldn't stand much at home. And --

Q: Now were these people in Athens who said that, or people all over Greece who said that to you?

A: Well, over Greece --

Q: And maybe outside?

A: Well, no, they didn't know yet.

Q: Right.

A: In Drama they didn't know.

Q: Yes.

A: But in Athens there were a lot of our friends from that -- that they m -- they had moved, were Greeks, but the-they had moved in Athens. So --

Q: Let -- let me ask you just a funny question now. You say Greeks, and you mean Greek Christians. So what did you call yourself?

A: Greek Jew.

Q: Jew.

A: Greek Jew.

Q: But when you say Greeks, you don't mean Jewish.

A: Greek Orthodox.

Q: Greek Orthodox when you say Greek. I'm just -- it's very -- it's --

A: I said just Greek, and like the Greek, we say.

Q: Right, but you were a Greek Jew, not just Greek.

A: Yeah. No.

Q: No, right. Okay.

A: Definitely.

Q: Right. When you moved to Greece, was that before the Italians attacked? Cause you moved in October of 1940.

A: Mm-hm.

Q: And October 28<sup>th</sup>, the Italians attacked Greece.

A: Right, and they were gone quickly.

Q: Yes.

A: The Greeks were very good.

Q: Yes, okay.

A: But I remember seeing them, you know, walking through the streets of -- and they were humans, like all of us. You could see in their face that they were thinking of their wives, or their children, you know? You could see it. But the Germans were, I mean, robots.

Q: Right, uh-huh.

A: I -- I used to call them robots.

Q: So when -- when you left Drama with the family, you left everything there, and you just took clothes. And did you go by car?

A: No, we flew.

Q: You flew from Drama to Athens. And did you go to someone's house in Athens, or did you rent a place, or buy a place?

A: W-We rented a place, and then we bought a place.

Q: Uh-huh. And was it as big, and as --

A: No [indecipherable]

Q: No, it wasn't, no. It wasn't like what it was before.

A: No, it was two storey house with -- it wasn't the same, no.

Q: It was --

A: It was a middle class people, even less [indecipherable]

Q: Right. And what happened to the house?

A: We left it there.

Q: You just left it? Did that make you feel funny?

A: Well, no, I didn't even think of it when I was -- I didn't think about it. And my parents probably did. But when we sold it, we sold it for nothing.

Q: Oh.

A: Cause nobody wanted it. Who wants a big house like that?

Q: Right.

A: You know, they were all poor after that.

Q: After the war.

A: The war. So we sold it for nothing.

Q: So you didn't feel much of a transition to go to Athens and live in a smaller place? No.

A: No.

Q: It's interesting, cause y --

A: As long as I was with my parents, and --

Q: It was okay.

A: -- you know, it was okay.

Q: And Haim, of course, is with you, yes?

A: Yes. But we put him first with a friend of ours, a Christian friend of ours, because we thought to be with us in a house, day and night, he couldn't do it. So we left him alone with a family, but he couldn't stand it there.

Q: He couldn't stand it?

A: No, because he wanted to be with us. And he wrote a letter to my mother, and I have to read it again, because I forgot it. And it was a -- I read little bit, it was so sweet to my mother, you know? And she didn't want to -- her to know that she wa -- he wasn't happy.

Q: Right.

A: But my mother knew, so we brought him --

Q: You brought him to -- so he'd be with you. He wasn't hitting you any more though, I assume.

A: Oh no, no.

Q: No, this --

A: That was when we were very young.

Q: Right. And was your father still working in Athens? I mean, how would you take care of yourself?

A: Well, in Athens, see, he didn't stay only with the tobacco, my father. And never -- he always wanted to do other things.

Q: Right.

A: Which, the tobacco company was very big at that time, you know, because we used to sell to the majority companies. And -- but he wanted to do something else, and in Athens he bought things to sell for -- like clothes, and for the bedroom things, you know?

Q: Sheets --

A: And --

Q: Pillows --

A: Yeah, and wholesale, and he had the place only for wholesale.

Q: I see.

A: He had two places, one that he could sell every day, and one that was only wholesale. And --

Q: Is there a school for you, or no school?

A: After the --

Q: In 1940 -- not [indecipherable]

A: In 1940 I went i -- to [indecipherable] was a --

Q: Public school?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: I had finished public school.

Q: Uh-huh, high school?

A: To college, college.

Q: Oh, to college? In Athens?

A: But maybe less than a year, because the --

Q: The Germans come in --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- in '41, yes?

A: In '41, they came in? I don't remem -- remember.

Q: I think so, yes. In April they invade --

A: I don't remember.

Q: -- in 1941. When you moved to Athens and you see the Italian soldiers, are you then more afraid?

A: I wasn't afraid of them.

Q: Nothing. And you know the war is going on in Europe?

A: Yeah, I know.

Q: But you're not afraid.

A: But no, because they were -- they were caught by the Greeks at the time that I saw them.

Q: Right, the Italians were stopped, or at least there's a stalemate, they can't get through. But then the Germans come in, and they do win, and they divide the country into three parts.

A: But the archbishop didn't want to give us away, but at the end, couldn't make it.

Q: So --

A: And especially there, in Thessaloniki, in Salonika, where there were so many, you know?

Q: Right. No, the Salonika Jews just get -- it's dec -- decimated.

A: 90 percent of them perished.

Q: Yes, yes. Do you remember when th -- when, after the German invasion, and that Athens is occupied by both the Italians and the Germans? Do you remember seeing both troops?

A: Mm-hm, mm-hm. As a matter of fact at the beginning, we didn't think that this -- the archbishop didn't want to give their na -- our names or any -- anything. I used to go -- I still used to go to the theater. We have an ancient theater in Athens.

Q: Ancient theater, yeah.

A: Ancient theater, we -- has a -- has a better acoustics than the latest theater here in the United States. Amazing, it's unbelievable. So I was in that theater, and besides me, there were Germans,

and when I turn, who do I see? My piano teacher, that she used to tell me that she was Jewish, and she was German, she was with the Germans.

Q: She was with them. So that must have been a big shock, yeah.

A: And to have the Germans behind us, but we weren't afraid at that time, you know? It's when they started taking the Jews and putting them in -- in Haidari, the prison in Greece, then --

Q: Then you got worried.

A: We thought that this was momentarily, and finally you know that, and understand that they were all --

Q: That they would stop.

A: Yeah, but we were wrong with that.

Q: Right. We have to stop the tape.

End of Tape Two



Beginning Tape Three

Q: Wer -- where was this ancient theater? This wasn't the colis -- this is not --

A: In -- in Athens.

Q: In Athens.

A: But they are in other parts of the -- but this one was -- is inside Athens.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And if you heard Yanni.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Have you heard Yanni?

Q: Yeah.

A: He played in that theater in Athens.

Q: Uh-huh, so -- I see. These outdoor theaters are just -- it's outdoors, right? It's -- it's wonderful.

A: Outdoors, wonderful. And always it's ni -- in the evening it's always nice.

Q: Right.

A: You never get hot or sweating, or --

Q: No matter when, in the year, really? It sounds wonderful. Were there restrictions once the Germans took over Athens? Did you have to wear a Jewish star --

A: No.

Q: No Jewish star?

A: No. They took us all of the sudden, you know, it seemed, that they decided to take us in -- in Athens. I don't know what they did in Salonika.

Q: No, but you're not -- you're go -- you move too fast.

A: Okay.

Q: That was in 1944. I'm talking about 1941.

A: Yeah.

Q: When they take over, are there -- there must be restrictions for Jews?

A: No, n-not yet.

Q: No?

A: They asked to show up in the synagogue. I don't know too much because, see, I wasn't with the -- the rest of the Jews to see --

Q: Yes, yes.

A: -- what was going on. See, I was i-inside with this family. And --

Q: No, I'm talking about before you're in hiding. You go into hiding f -- '42 - '43, but you're not -- you're in your house with your parents and Haim in 1941, yes?

A: No, no.

Q: No?

A: In 1941, yes.

Q: Yes. So for one year --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- you're not in hiding.

A: Mm-hm, right.

Q: Right? So what happens? You stay pretty much in the house?

A: No, we go out.

Q: You go out?

A: Yeah.

Q: And -- and so you don't feel -- are you going to school?

A: No.

Q: No, you couldn't bi -- ga -- you couldn't go to school.

A: Probably -- no, probably that -- that's when I used to go to school.

Q: Now, was everybody stopped from going to school, or only the Jewish students, do you remember?

A: I tell you the -- I don't remember --

Q: You don't remember, okay.

A: -- I mi -- I don't -- I don't know what the other children did.

Q: Right, right.

A: Because I was with Christians, Greeks. Orthodox Greeks.

Q: Yes. So you don't know, huh?

A: I don't know much.

Q: So who ma -- the su -- was there a discussion in your house about hiding?

A: Yes.

Q: There was?

A: And then is when we came in contact with all our friends. They said you can come out in house whenever you want, in the evening, any time.

Q: Right.

A: And the last house that we went to before we were caught, they had the big house, they send the maids away because they were afraid that the maids may say something. And they enclosed themselves in one room, and they gave us the rest of the house -- to us, and my father said, "Why are you doing this?" "Well," she said, "because I want to show that there are nice people out

there -- there -- there were, because we can go out, we are free to go out any time we want to.

But you stay home, and you need more room and everything.” So they did that, and the love that they show us, and they used to bring us food and this and that -- amazing.

Q: Really? So you didn't just stay with one family during this -- is it --

A: No, n-no, about two or three families.

Q: Two or three families. And who ma -- did your father make the decision that you sh -- you should hide, or was it obvious, there were a lot of families who were doing this?

A: No, because when we thought that someone has seen one of us, because my brother used to walk around, but he thought someone saw him, or someone may see him, or someone saw me in the -- in the window --

Q: Right, right.

A: You know. We had to move.

Q: Did you look -- I don't know what it means in Greece. In Poland it seems that some Jews looked Jewish to Polish Catholics. Was there a look, so that if someone saw Haim they would think he was a Jewish --

A: N-No, no, but there were some that look -- so. But ma -- the majority looked like a -- like a --

Q: Like everybody else.

A: Yeah.

Q: But when you say Haim might be seen, it was because he was known to be Jewish --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- not because he looked Jewish, I see. So were you afraid of these Germans now? Did -- at some point did you become afraid of these guys?

A: If -- we're afraid now, or then?

Q: No, no, no, then.

A: Then.

Q: When -- when you went into hiding.

A: Well, until we went to Haidari, I wasn't afraid.

Q: Uh-huh, okay.

A: It -- Haidari they put us in a room with two other people, and -- and then after that they put us all together in one big room, where we stayed there, and after a week they send us to -- put us in trains.

Q: In trains, to Auschwitz.

A: To Auschwitz.

Q: So the hiding period is not such a terrible period because you're with people who know you.

A: Mm-hm.

Q: Who care about you.

A: In Greece, yes.

Q: In Greece, and want to be good to you. But your life is all indoors, because the Germans are clearly looking for Jews, yes?

A: Or someone will tell them --

Q: Yes.

A: -- there, because the Germans didn't know --

Q: Right.

A: -- who were Jews, and who were not, you know. Or, we didn't have ghettos like --

Q: Yes.

A: -- other places. We lived everywhere.

Q: Right, right.

A: So they couldn't know unless somebody told them that these are Jews.

Q: Right. Now, your father is not working when you're in hiding, or is he going in and out?

A: No, he stays in.

Q: He stays -- he stays inside. Do you think your father is -- is -- is helping with the cost of keeping you there by paying people, or are these wealthy people and they don't want money?

A: Well, they don't want money, but my father was -- didn't want them to spend all their money, you know?

Q: Right, right.

A: We used to give them money.

Q: Now, what happened to the house that you had bought? You just left that house, with now less clothes, I assume, and go into hiding. So each time you move, you have less and less things. Is there something that you take with you because you -- some, I don't know --

A: No, I tell you, when we were caught, we decided that -- we used to listen the radio, th-the British --

Q: BBC.

A: -- telling us all the time that we're coming, this and that, and years went by and nothing happened. And my father was still very young, and my brother, they were getting tired. We leave the country. [inaudible]. So we decided to go to Egypt, and from Egypt to Israel, and -- and we decided that we're -- we're going to get dressed as if we're going to a wedding, in case they si -- they stop us, we'll tell them that we are going to a wedding. And that's what happened. And a friend of ours -- you see, we had so many friend -- one of them gave us up. He [indecipherable]

in Germany, and we thought that he was working for the Greek government, trying to find out things from the Germans. And maybe he did, but he was on both sides.

Q: Both sides.

A: And maybe the Germans found out that he was hiding Jews, who knows if he gave us up. And all of a sudden Germans stop us going to the -- to the ship, and since I knew German, I got out of the car, and I said, "I don't understand why you taking us. I mean now, as you see, we are dressed, we are going to a wedding." He said, "Fraulein, we know everything about you. You don't have to tell us any more." Mm-hm. "So you'll come with us." And they took us to a place to -- where the Germans were. And they started to interrogate first my father and my brother. So they came back, when they came back I was so scared to look at them, because my father didn't have the front teeth, and you know, it seems that they hit them. So then they came to pick us up, my mother and myself. And I spoke to them in German because I knew German, and -- and probably that's the reason they didn't behave bad with us, they didn't do anything to us. So we went back to the room where my brother and [indecipherable] and my brother comes to me and says, "You are no longer my sister." I said, "Why?" "Why they didn't do anything to you? Look at us," you know. "Probably you told them where our relatives are." I say, "I wouldn't do that for anything in the world. They ask me, and do you know what I told them? In -- in German, I told them, and they didn't hit me." So, I told the Germans, I know where my -- I don't know where my relatives are, but even if I knew it, I wouldn't tell you. So they started laughing.

Q: The Germans started laughing?

A: So then after that they let me -- let us go, you know? And my brother was very mad at me thinking that if they let us go like that, without hitting us, I told them where my relatives are and

so forth. I didn't do it, and that's why all my relatives who were hidden, they were alive after we returned.

Q: Right, right. Did he believe you?

A: Who?

Q: Your brother, when you told him.

A: Yeah.

Q: He did. That was a very difficult situation I would imagine --

A: It was, it -- it was --

Q: -- very painful.

A: -- it was.

Q: And hi -- was he hit? Did he look as beaten -- yes.

A: He -- oh, sure, sure.

Q: Yes. Do you think also that they were hit because they were men and you were women? Do you think there was some difference?

A: N-No.

Q: No.

A: N-No. They didn't hit us because I spoke to them in German, and I guess they liked that.

Q: But didn't your father speak German?

A: No.

Q: Oh, he didn't.

A: No, that's why he wanted me to --

Q: I see, I see.



A: -- learn German, so that when the German come at our house, someone would know how --  
what to --

Q: Oh yes, right. So did this person who denounced you, who told the Germans, did he know that  
you were leaving? He must have known, because otherwise why would they stop your car?

A: Mm-hm, right, right. We told him that we were leaving, he --

Q: Ah, so --

A: -- thinking that he was a very good friend.

Q: Right. But he wasn't the person at the time who was -- whose house you were staying at?

A: No.

Q: No, it was somebody else's.

A: Someone else. We stayed there another time at his house.

Q: Did you ever re-meet this man? Did you ever see him again?

A: Well, I tell you, when -- a-after the liberation, I went to the court, and he was there. And he  
was sitting in the place where the Greeks help others, and on the other side where there was  
[indecipherable], and the judge said, "Do you see the person that," -- I said, "Yes, he is right  
there." And he said, "How -- how in the world you blame him? He did so much for you, you," --  
so I couldn't do much more. All I wanted to do is because of my parents, because I -- I lost my  
parents, I wanted to do --

Q: Something.

A: -- something, you know.

Q: Yes, right.

A: But I didn't accomplish anything. He was free.

Q: Mm. The people who were hiding you, wi -- were they harmed because they were hiding you? The ger -- they --

A: No, no.

Q: They weren't?

A: But if th-the Germans would find us there --

Q: There.

A: Uh-huh.

Q: I see.

A: They would take them to -- to bir -- Berdari, and then to Auschwitz. See they -- and they knew that, and even though they knew that, they did all these things.

Q: They did it anyway. But the ge -- it's interesting that the Germans wouldn't then try to find the people who were hiding you, even though you were outside the house.

A: Uh-huh.

Q: Because you would think that they would --

A: Yeah, because a --

Q: -- punish them.

A: -- he, the man, that man that gave us didn't tell the names.

Q: I see.

A: See? Well, he was a -- a good man, until then, you know.

Q: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. So being in Haidari had to be a big shock for you, because now you knew you were endangered, yes?

A: Well, yeah, still wasn't so bad -- well, I thought, who knows, maybe it's for a little bit. Then they put us in a tra -- the train was terrible. So much, so many people there.

Q: Tell me something, had you heard the rumors about anything the Nazis were doing?

A: Oh.

Q: That they were shooting Jews, and some [indecipherable]

A: Yeah, not much.

Q: Not much.

A: But my mother knew more than anybody else. She had bought the -- the book that --

Q: "Mein Kampf."

A: "Mein Kampf."

Q: Uh-huh.

A: But nobody believed her --

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: -- you know? So this is going to be forgetti -- forgotten and everything. So they didn't pay attention.

Q: So this i -- this is --

A: But my mother knew everything.

Q: So she -- she had the sense that something really terrible was --

A: But she didn't want to upset us.

Q: So how do you know she knew? Did she talk to you later?

A: Well, we knew she had the book. We knew that she tried to tell s -- people.

Q: I-I see. And they didn't listen. So, it's 1944, and you're 20 years old.

A: Mm-hm.

Q: Your brother is 22 and a half --

A: Yeah.

Q: 20 -- right? And your parents are how old, about?

A: Well, you know the date --

Q: Dates --

A: Do you have the dates? My daughter has the dates.

Q: Let's see, your father was born 1896 or something?

A: I think so, yeah, my -- my mother ni -- 1900.

Q: So they're very young people. They're in their 40's.

A: Right.

Q: Yes.

A: And they looked good. My mother, the only reason they thought she was older is because she had white hair. But her face was just beautiful, like you.

Q: And she had white hair when she was very young?

A: No

Q: This happened in Athens?

A: Right, yeah.

Q: Uh-huh. That must have been a shock to you too, to watch your mother's hair --

A: Yeah, no, no --

Q: No?

A: I don't think so. So --

Q: So ar-are there -- are there members of your family with you in Haidari before you go on the train? Or their friends? There was a group of people that you know --

A: Yeah, there were friends, there were friends that we knew. It was my ex-husband, his mother, his sister, his brother-in-law, and his son --

Q: Right.

A: -- his -- the son of the brother-in-law.

Q: [indecipherable] So that's Margosh, yeah. And then there are some friends that you have, that you know.

A: Mm-hm. B-But I -- I met them at the concentration camp.

Q: In the concentration camp, not on the train?

A: Midla -- Milka and Leoni.

Q: Milka and Leoni?

A: I met them there.

Q: I see. So tell me about this train. How do you get from Haidari to the train, is the -- is Haidari right near a train station?

A: Yeah, I guess so -- I don't remember.

Q: You don't remember, okay. And wh-what are you allowed to take with you?

A: Nothing, just what --

Q: Nothing?

A: -- we had in our hands, yes.

Q: Because you didn't have anything, you were -- so what were you wearing, a gown?

A: No, a dress, something --

Q: Just a regular -- because you were supposed to be going to this wedding, but it was not such a big --

A: Yeah -- no.

Q: And shoes, just high heels?

A: I don't know, maybe w-we changed.

Q: Uh-huh. Cause you were in Haidari for a few weeks, yes?

A: See, because before going to Haidari, they took us to their place, maybe there we change, but we had clothes with us that we taking to --

Q: You mean the Germans took you -- they took you someplace to do this questioning.

A: Yeah, right, right.

Q: So was it a prison or jail, or a room?

A: No, a -- a house.

Q: A house, uh-huh. Did they give you food in Haidari?

A: Yes.

Q: They did. Was it -- you were able to sleep?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah? So you -- I think you said first they put you in a small room, and then they put you all in one larger room. And Haidari was like what -- was it a --

A: A prison.

Q: -- it was a pri -- it was really a prison. And were there mainly Jews there by the time you got there, as far as you know, or di -- was it [indecipherable]

A: They were all Jews.

Q: All Jews.

A: They were all Jews. And then a -- a -- a -- was a half of it was full, and then next day they came from an island in Greece --

Q: Iola?

A: Grettit, I think it was. Rhodes.

Q: Rhodes, yes.

A: And the Rhodes came, there were -- I don't know how to explain this. There were all --

Q: Tied?

A: They th -- they thought that if they were in bad shape, the Germans won't touch them.

Q: Oh, so they were bandaged?

A: They were bandaged, yeah. Well, anyway --

Q: It wasn't the right strategy, I guess, right?

A: And we left with them.

Q: Uh-huh. So you're in a cattle train, there are no seats, of course, yes? You're put into a -- a train, and you're standing, and ya -- are -- are you with your parents? And your ex-husband is there, but you -- do you know him then?

A: No, if -- he was in another --

Q: He was in another place.

A: -- place.

Q: Uh-huh. Did you --

A: I didn't know him at all, I -- I met him after the war.

Q: I see, okay. So, is this a long trip to Auschwitz?

A: It is -- m-my daughter probably remembers. I don't know, I don't remember.

Q: A few days?

A: Few days.

Q: Few days. Was it terrible?

A: It was terrible because there -- there wasn't a place to -- to go.

Q: To -- to go to the bathroom, yeah.

A: And a --

Q: Was there a bucket?

A: There was a bucket --

Q: But -- and did you st -- do you remember standing, sitting?

A: Sitting, we were sitting.

Q: You were sitting.

A: Next to each other.

Q: Uh-huh. Were people screaming, were people crying?

A: No, no.

Q: Nothi -- everybody was quiet?

A: A couple of people left. I mean, they -- the do -- the window was open, and they --

Q: And they left?

A: They jumped.

Q: Really?

A: And they saved themselves. The -- I saw them after the liberation.

Q: Huh. Did you think about doing that?

A: He ask -- one of them ask my brother to do the same, but --

Q: He wouldn't?

A: -- he didn't. He want to stay with my parents.

Q: Mm-hm. So, does your mother si -- is there any conversation between all of you? Nothing?

You must have been all in shock. So what happens when you arrive in this place? Nobody -- of course, they don't tell you that you're going to Auschwitz, yes?

A: No, we arrive there, and they said we are going to have a shower. Well, they took our -- our hair away, completely -- hair, and then they put the --



Q: They did put a tattoo?

A: -- tattoo. The tattoo, which I took off myself, because when I we -- I was in -- in wa -- the place that I -- I am now.

Q: Houston.

A: Houston.

Q: Yes.

A: They didn't know anything about it, nothing about it. So when they saw my number here, they said, "Is this your phone number?" And they ask all kinds of silly questions all the time. And I have a very good friend, Jewish friend with me, and he says, "You know, Rachelle, I have a good dermatologist, what about -- I think he can do that, he can take it off." Because it was for me, it was so demeaning, for people to think that I put my --

Q: Telephone number, yeah.

A: And at that time we didn't have a car, I was waiting for the bus, you know, and everybody would ask questions, and I didn't want to talk all my -- I -- I was very -- I'm a person that I keep everything --

Q: Inside.

A: -- inside.

Q: Yeah.

A: You know, unless they are friends.

Q: Right.

A: But not to strangers, you know?

Q: Right.

A: So --

Q: Let -- let me go back for a moment. When -- when you arrive in Auschwitz, they separate the men and the women, yes? So you're with your mother, and you see your father and your brother off -- going off to another direction.

A: Me -- right. And my mother was with me, and she was holding me tight. Said, we'll stay together, the two of us.

Q: Right.

A: Then somebody came that she was from Greece, and she knew us, we didn't know her, but she knew us. And she said, "Look [indecipherable] let your mother go, because if she comes with you, they'll make her work hard, like you."

Q: Mm-hm.

A: She knew there is -- she listened [indecipherable] immediately my mother went to --

Q: To the gas chamber? But this was a way to save you, what she told. She knew what she was doing.

A: The reason she did that is to -- to save me, right, because if I -- I would go with my mother, they'd the same thing. But I thought that was a good idea, she won't work, and she'll be better off.

Q: And how long did it take you to find out what had happened?

A: Almost at the end.

Q: At the end of the war, or --

A: See, I -- I didn't stay too long there.

Q: Right, you were -- a few months.

A: Yeah, yeah. I was liberated early. So then I -- I found out then.

Q: So while you're in Auschwitz, you're in Auschwitz from May until October? Yes? 1944.

A: Auschwitz is da -- Gerstenhaber and Auschwitz. I was in these two place, I don't know for how long. Rinette put it down, because a long time ago, I get her there, Rinette over there.

Q: Right. Do you -- by the way, do you remember your tattoo number?

A: No.

Q: You don't? You never -- and you didn't write it down.

A: But you know what a -- no, but you know what is strange?

Q: What?

A: My grandson's birthday was the same as the tattoo [inaudible]

Q: No.

A: My -- not mine, his father -- his grandfather. My grandson ha -- had the same -- did I say tattoo? I don't know what I'm saying.

Q: You said tattoo, you didn't mean that, you said to -- you meant to say --

A: I didn't mean that. The birthday.

Q: Of his grandfather?

A: The -- his birthday --

Q: Yes.

A: -- was the same as the -- the tattoo of the grandfather.

Q: Really? Strange, huh?

A: It was so strange.

Q: S-So when you were in Auschwitz, you don't know about your mother? You just don't know where she is?

A: I [inaudible]

Q: Okay. You s -- do you see your father and your brother at all?

A: Yeah, I saw --

Q: You do.

A: -- because we used to pass by their --

Q: The barracks?

A: Yeah, barracks, and my brother would -- he -- I told you he was so nice, he wanted to give me everything he had.

Q: Yes.

A: You know, and he gave me -- and they send the dog after him. And I was afraid that that's when he died, but we found out that he didn't die then, he died a little bit before the liberation.

Q: So he wasn't gassed?

A: No.

Q: He died of disease, or sick -- whatever. And your father?

A: And my father the same.

Q: The same?

A: He wasn't gassed.

Q: I see, uh-huh. That's interesting. Well, why don't we take a break?

A: Okay.

Q: It's time to take a break.

End of Tape Three

Beginning Tape Four

Q: Rachelle, I wanted to go back to 1940 for a bit because I know you told me that your mother wrote a letter to -- was it the head of a theater?

A: Yes, so we went to the theater --

Q: Right.

A: -- together with my mother, and she was so upset by seeing a Jew portrayed in a very negative stereotype --

Q: Right.

A: -- that she immediately wrote a letter to the director of the theater. So, I'm going to read the --

Q: So yo-you re -- read an excerpt in English, yeah.

A: -- an excerpt of the letter. Let's -- when she wrote to the director.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: "I was shocked when looking at the scenes, I saw how you portrayed my people.

Unfortunately, I know you always had this opinion about us, which is not right at all. At least this time you should avoided all of this, during the difficult times that we are now having. The Jewish people are fighting with such pathos and heroism for our country, Greece, and ..."

Q: Can you see it? -- "heroism for our country Greece, and giving everything of themselves to win the war." Giving.

A: Giving, okay.

Q: Giving, yeah.

A: All right, I wi -- I start again. "The Jewish people are fighting with such pathos and heroism for our country, Greece, and giving everything of themselves to win the war."

Q: Right. And then she asks that he take out these characters from the play. Did they do it?

A: Well, she ask that, but I don't know, we didn't go back.

Q: Uh-huh. Did you see this play?

A: Yes.

Q: You did, and what did you think?

A: I don't remember.

Q: You don't remember. Did you know -- did you know at the time that she was writing this letter?

A: Oh yes.

Q: You did?

A: Oh yes.

Q: Yes.

A: She wrote it in front of me.

Q: Uh-huh. And was she like this? Was this the kind of thing that she would do, she would think that she had to act?

A: [inaudible] yeah, yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: She was that kind of person, yeah.

Q: Right.

A: She -- when she felt like she was right, she would talk.

Q: Right. So she was a strong woman in many ways?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: She was.

Q: And I know you have the original in Greek, yes. That's quite something. So let's get back to where we were, you were in Auschwitz for a few months, and then they took you out and sent you to Bergen-Belsen, am I correct? Do you remember whether this was before -- there was an uprising in Auschwitz in October. Do you think this was before the uprising, or it was after the uprising, or -- or do you not remember? You don't remember. Do you remem --

A: All I remember that my friend Paula, she started to be upset that I was getting too thin, and they would take me to the --

Q: The [indecipherable] of the hospital?

A: No, to --

Q: Oh, to the gas?

A: To the gas.

Q: Ah.

A: And it was the day that they were looking at different barracks to find out which ones were thin, and -- or not healthy, you know?

Q: Right.

A: So -- and my friend Paula took me to her barrack while they were doing that, and that's how I survived, otherwise I would have been with --

Q: Now, is Paula somebody you knew from Athens?

A: No.

Q: Or had you -- you met her in Auschwitz?

A: I met her in Haidari, I believe I did.

Q: Where did you meet her, in Haidari?

A: Haidari.

Q: Uh-huh, so she was Greek?

A: Oh yes. But she married a Christian.

Q: Mm-hm. So this was quite an act --

A: And she wrote also poems about the Holocaust and everything, and I have one poem with me, I don't know where it is. Rinette has it probably. And it's very interesting.

Q: Uh-huh. Well, maybe we can read it later.

A: And her po -- poems, she was an international poem thing --

Q: A competition?

A: Y-Yeah.

Q: Really?

A: And that was here in Washington I believe, and she won it. Yeah, yeah, and I have some papers with me.

Q: And what's her --

A: She died. We were such good friends, even though w-we lived so far away from each other.

Q: Yes.

A: We used to call each other every si -- almost every day.

Q: Really?

A: And all of a sudden I heard she died.

Q: And how was she able to come to you in the other barrack? Were you working in a similar place in Auschwitz so she could see you regularly?

A: Well see, she wasn't like all of us, she was like --

Q: Oh, she was a blochal -- sh -- a Blochalteste, she was the head of the barrack [indecipherable]

A: Oh yeah, yeah, I'd say so. But she was Jewish.



Q: Right. But she had more freedom to move around.

A: Right, right, right.

Q: So that was wonderful for her to do that, yeah.

A: She could be in trouble also.

Q: Of course. Did you then go back to your barrack, or you stayed in her barrack, do you think?

A: I stayed for a little bit, until they left -- the Nazis from our bar -- they took whichever they found, and they left, and then she took me back.

Q: I see. So she was a real protector, huh?

A: Yeah. And she was always like that, till she died.

Q: Was she older than you?

A: No, I think we were the same age.

Q: About the same age?

A: Yeah.

Q: When did she die? Few years ago, about --

A: I think it's a -- a year ago.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I'm not sure.

Q: Yeah.

A: My mind is getting so bad. Rinette probably will remember.

Q: Mm-hm. Do you remember leaving Auschwitz for Bergen-Belsen?

A: N -- well, what I remember is that they had us for a couple of days outdoors, it was raining and everything, and we didn't have any clothes, or right shoes, or anything, you know.

Q: Right.

A: And -- and until today I'm flabbergasted how I didn't get sick. The whole time that I was there, I never had any headache, or I was sneezing or anything. You know, isn't that strange?

Q: Yeah. So you -- you're saying in --

A: And I don't know, maybe it -- this time when we were out [indecipherable] women, then they moved us. And then they took us to where they make arms and things like that.

Q: Uh-huh. A munitions factory.

A: Yeah, a factory.

Q: Yeah.

A: And --

Q: This is in Bergen-Belsen? You think -- you --

A: I don't know, I think it was in Bergen-Belsen.

Q: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

A: I don't remember. And we were staying there for a little bit. In the meantime they heard that the -- the allies were coming. And they gave it to each one of us, my friends and myself, they gave us something to cover ourself. It's because the allies were coming. And so -- and we couldn't see, you know, because it was cold, and we had it lowered, and I couldn't see where my friends were, and we used to call every five minutes, Leoni, Milka,

Q: Right, right.

A: And then finally -- we always stay together, and they took us to Theresienstadt. That was a ghetto, and there were -- there were Jewish doctors and everything, and they were so sweet to us, so nice. And my hair had started to -- to be okay, you know, I had some hair after all this time.

Q: Right, right.

A: So, and -- to one of the [indecipherable], because they were cutting our hairs because we had typhus, all of us. So I said, "Would you please don't cut my hair," I said, "because I'm going to meet my father pretty soon, and I don't want him to see me like that." And he said okay, and he took care, he treated me and everything, and he [inaudible] you know, and then we -- we were there, all Jews in this ghetto, and -- and they would come to me and say Rachelle -- the Russians --

Q: After the liberation, yeah, yeah.

A: -- the -- the -- the Russians are outside, and they're cooking, and we didn't have any food. Said, "Why don't you go in the window, maybe they'll give you some food?" I said, "Why don't you go? I mean, th-there's a -- why are you sending me, I do -- I don't want to go." "Well," they said, "you are the only one who has hair."

Q: So did you go?

A: Well, yeah.

Q: Yeah. And did they give you food?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. What were the Russians like when they came, do you remember?

A: Well, they seemed to be very sweet and everything. And then after that, they moved me to a hospital where the Russians were, because they didn't have all the necessary things there in the ghetto.

Q: Right, right.

A: So -- and they took me there, and while I was there I heard that they were taking all the Jews to Siberia. And I thought to myself, no way. So I had th -- they gave me a shirt to sleep, and I had -- how do you call it --

Q: The pillowcase?

A: The pillowcase. From the pillowcase I made that -- a skirt, because I couldn't go out, and I couldn't go through the door because they will attack me, you know.

Q: Right.

A: So, from the window, I --

Q: You jumped from the win --

A: -- I jumped. And nothing -- I was very thin, you know, and nothing happened to me, and I started walking fast. And I found some French women that they -- I-I knew in the concentration camp, and they said to me, "Oh Rachelle, comme vous êtes chic."

Q: Whoa.

A: Chic.

Q: Chic [indecipherable]

A: See, I had the -- my hair.

Q: Right.

A: And so that was funny. And I always say something funny to friends if they ask me something, you know, because -- and you will see some pictures, you saw some pictures where -- where the ji -- the Americans --

Q: Yes.

A: -- and y-you can't tell that I'm a survivor.

Q: Right.

A: You know, I'm laughing, like.

Q: Right.

A: Because I had this thing in my mind that we have to do the best we can while we are alive, forget what happened. We are good friends, you know, [indecipherable] and -- but then when we went to Greece, we didn't find the parents.

Q: [indecipherable]. Where was pa -- Paula did not go with you to Bergen-Belsen? Cause you mentioned Leoni and --

A: Right.

Q: Melka --

A: Right.

Q: Milka, rather.

A: Right, no, Paula, no, she wasn't with us there.

Q: She wasn't with you. But the three of you went --

A: Went -- we stayed together.

Q: -- to Bergen-Belsen, Theresienstadt, and then you all became interpreters --

A: Yes.

Q: -- with the Americans?

A: Yes. See, we -- we didn't want to stay there with the Russians because -- so i -- it was the French Red Cross that came to pick up their people. So we all knew French [indecipherable] so they took us, and they took us to where the Americans were, in Frankfurt.

Q: Did they say that you were French? Did you say we're French, or you just said you spoke French, do you remember?

A: We -- we spoke to them fr -- in French, yeah --

Q: In French?

A: -- and that's it.

Q: Now, why did they take you to the Americans, do you think, rather than to the French side?

A: Well, that's where they were -- they weren't going straight to --

Q: Uh-huh, I see.

A: -- yeah, they stopped there.

Q: Right.

A: And the Americans [indecipherable] they wanted us as interpreters, and they gave us clothes because we didn't have any clothes, we were dressed alike.

Q: Right.

A: With a soldier's clothes.

Q: Right, because you were all dressed in pants and a shirt, just like the soldiers.

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And I look fat there, and you know, little earlier I was very thin --

Q: Right.

A: -- when I [indecipherable]. But the Americans gave us everything good they had, they used to send them from th -- America --

Q: Right.

A: -- they used to give it to us.

Q: Yes, you didn't look very thin in those photographs, so soon you gained --

A: Yeah, I-I know. I know, and the I-laughing, I mean, like nothing happened.

Q: Right, right.

A: Yeah, it's because we had th-that kind of thought, you know? We'll forget what --

Q: Right.

A: -- hap -- happened in the past, now we'll have to start a new life --

Q: A new life.

A: -- and try to do the best we can.

Q: So you're 21 years old when the w -- when you're liberated. So you're s -- still a kid, in a certain way, and you don't know what's happened to Haim, to your father --

A: I didn't know until later, until I came here.

Q: Right.

A: Rinette tried to -- because you see, Rinette said, maybe he went -- they send him to Siberia. I said, if [indecipherable] they sent to Siberia, he was too intelligent not to know how to come back to Greece, you know? So I didn't believe that --

Q: That he went, yes.

A: So then we found out that he died immediately after the war --

Q: Right, right.

A: And my father, too.

Q: And the three of you, you and your two friends, go back to Athens because you're all hoping to find family, I assume? And you --

A: And the thing is, where I used to ask rush -- the Russians, that we wanted to go back to Greece, and they said, well, we can give you some money. But we were -- how can we go from - - that far, you know, go to Greece with a little bit of money. Was impossible. Instead, when I spoke to the Russians, the Russian were telling us, we'll take you to America, and we'll give you good life and everything. Ye -- well, I-I said I'm sorry, I said --

Q: You mean the Americans said this to you.

A: Yes.

Q: Not the Russians, yes, okay, right.

A: No, the American. They were extremely nice. And I said, "Well, I can't." I said, "We can't go now because we have to go back and find out -- our parents, if our parents returned." And do you know what? He gave us a plane.

Q: He gave you a --

A: A plane.

Q: A plan?

A: Plane.

Q: A plane? To go from Munich to Athens? Really? For just the three of you?

A: No, it w-were about six, but a -- ma -- the -- most of the plane was empty.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah. See, w-who would do that? Nobody, nobody. They were so nice, it's -- I'll never forget that.

Q: No. But then of course, you go back.

A: But you know, it was one of us when -- a Jewish man that he ask me to be his girlfriend, and I said, I'm sorry. At this point, you know, my mind is not ki -- cannot think anything, you know, right now. I want to go to Greece and find my parents.

Q: Right.

A: So what he did is he was writing the names that will be on the plane, he took my name off. A Jewish man.

Q: He took it off? Because he wanted you to be his girlfriend?

A: Yeah, because I said that I couldn't be, because -- I had a good reason, I mean it's not that I was going with anybody else, or anything.

Q: Right, right, right.



A: I said that I wasn't ready for something like that. And so a friend of mine, Leoni, took the list, and she says, "Well, Rachelle is not here in this list." And that's how I know. I got back into the list, and I went.

Q: So he put you back on?

A: Well, Leoni put it back on.

Q: Or la -- Leoni -- but this was a very difficult trip for you, because what you found at the other end was that no one --

A: Well, we didn't expect the same day to find them, you know? We thought with another plane, with -- or maybe they -- they -- there were nice other people like this Americans, you know. So - - and maybe they'll come in a few days. And my uncle, which -- I mean, he -- like I said, he's a good man, very good man, he helps others, he doesn't care about himself, but he wants to help with the rest of the family. He went to -- to our friends, and he wanted the things they were holding for us, to take h-he -- and you know, ma -- our friends were embarrassed by that. They [indecipherable] and they said well, when Rachelle or the rest of the family comes, you know, we'll give it to them.

Q: Now, th-the -- the people who were holding your -- the stuff from your family, were these the people who were hiding you also, or was this another family?

A: Well, we -- we used to go from one house to the other.

Q: Uh-huh. So they kept it for you, and are those the people you went to first when you came?

A: In Athens?

Q: Yeah, do you remember?

A: No, first we bought a house, because the Germans weren't there yet.

Q: No, no, I meant after you came back.

A: Oh after I ca --

Q: After the war, yeah, yeah, yeah.

A: After the war. Well, I saw them, but I could tell that they were very embarrassed by my uncle -- what my uncle did, and I was embarrassed too. And -- and with that man that gave us up, you know, to the Germans --

Q: Right, right.

A: All this started coming up, you know, and I didn't want to think much about it. So -- and I was involved with my relatives and others, so -- I didn't see -- and I forgot their names. My daughter -- every time we see each other, she tries t -- for me to remember, I can't remember.

Q: Right, right.

A: I only remember one name, Kalantzi. He's the one who wrote the poem, but I didn't know him, I knew his -- a-another man that was a friend of my father, and his name was Kalantzi.

Q: Kalantzi, uh-huh.

A: But this one I didn't know, as -- just we met, you know, and it's amazing the poem he wrote. Things that we Jews don't say, you know, he said for us. And that's the kind of friends we need. We can say a lot of things, instead of making friends, we can make enemies, but when they say the good things, then people listen.

Q: Mm-hm. So were the three of you living together when you went back to Athens, or did you split up?

A: Well, we intended that because Leoni had an aunt in Athens that survived, and she had a big house, and she told us you stay with me, we'll stay together. But when my cousin came to see me, she said -- he said, no I don't think you can stay here because my mother will die. See, she was my only aunt, there. But I wish I would stay with my friends.

Q: Mm-hm. So then you stayed with your aunt, uh-huh. That was -- was that difficult for you?

A: It was difficult because I couldn't talk. I -- I used to say -- you know me, I don't say things that are very bad, you know?

Q: Right.

A: I try to make things, I don't know, easier a little bit for the other person that listens. And I didn't -- knowing that she lost her brother, you know, I tried to be nice, and yet she -- she fell down by herself. She lost --

Q: You mean, she became weaker? Or she really fell?

A: Sh-She fell.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: How you say that -- the word when --

Q: She collapsed?

A: Collapsed.

Q: Uh-huh. Was this -- your aunt was on your father's side, or your mother's side?

A: On my father's side.

Q: Your father's side. So you really couldn't talk with her?

A: Not much.

Q: Yeah. So how long did you live with her? Do you remember?

A: Well a la -- I lived about a year.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And then I went to the house that my father had bought. But other people were living inside. So they decide to give me two or three rooms there. So I stayed there for awhile, and then my ex-husband -- we used to be good friends, but that's all, you know? I was too young, and I didn't

date before, I didn't know too much about men. I don't know -- well, I thought since he is my best friend, you know, we'll be good. But unfortunately -- I -- I stayed with him until the children grew up, they finished college and everything. And then I thought, ah well, that's it, I can't take no more.

Q: Right.

A: And you know, sometimes I think maybe the reason that we both went through a lot, maybe this is the reason that we couldn't stay together.

Q: Because it was too much to be --

A: You know, yeah.

Q: It's possible.

A: Yeah, you know, because if I would marry someone that didn't go through all this -- we would just say sometimes jokes and things like that, that will make me change little bit, or -- but no, it -- it wasn't a --

Q: It wasn't easy.

A: It wasn't easy.

Q: And did you have two children? Rinette is one, and a boy, or another girl?

A: A boy. I lost my son.

Q: You lost your son.

A: I lost my son when he was 25.

Q: Oh my. So you haven't had an easy time at all.

A: That was my worst part.

Q: Did you -- did you talk a lot about the Holocaust, a-about your experiences after the war? You didn't?

A: Cause nobody knew in Houston about it.

Q: And you -- when you were in Greece, were you talking with people more?

A: Oh yeah, yeah.

Q: It was -- it was -- did it make it easier to talk?

A: Yeah, right, because they were asking me questions like you ask me now.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Exactly like that.

Q: And that was easier?

A: But still I wouldn't say, because my aunt fainted, and I found out the word now.

Q: And so you thought that that's what peo -- what would happen to people if you talked? You would be doing something bad to them.

A: And I tried to make some jokes, and I mean [inaudible]

Q: Yeah, right. I -- okay, let's change the tape.

End of Tape Four

Beginning Tape Five

Q: You know, it's interesting, because it -- when the camera was not -- was not on, you were talking about what you had to learn, which I guess you watched your mother cooking, but you --

A: I didn't.

Q: Oh, you didn't? So you were not aware of how to keep a house?

A: Is th -- the way, is I smell the food, that's how I thought that that's what probably did it.

Q: So you -- you could tell what the smell was --

A: Uh-huh.

Q: -- that a food should --

A: And my ex-husband used to say that I'm the best cook.

Q: How long did it take you to learn how to cook?

A: It didn't take me long.

Q: Didn't take you long?

A: No. And it's amazed me.

Q: Yeah.

A: Because I never liked to cook, and I cook so well, because he used to say that I'm the best cook.

Q: Right. Was it easy for you to learn how to take care of children, or was that hard?

A: It was hard, especially that my ex-husband didn't -- he wasn't the type to -- what he -- when he wanted to talk to them, he would write to me, please tell Rinette so and so, or tell Fred so and so, you know.

Q: Really? So he wouldn't communicate?

A: And he wouldn't communicate with me that -- he --

Q: Ah -- wa -- but he's communicating with you? No. Was he different after you got married than before? You said you were best friends, so you must have communicated beforehand?

A: Yes, very much.

Q: But not after.

A: He change afterwards. I don't know why.

Q: People are complicated.

A: Yeah, that's right.

Q: Why did you come to the United States?

A: He wanted to come.

Q: He wanted to come. Did you?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: Because I believed in family and being together, to the place where you're born, where you have friends, where you have family. I believe in that.

Q: Right.

A: Now if you tell me to go back, I won't go -- go back. I lived here for 52 years and I love this country.

Q: Right.

A: You know, and if I want to travel -- before, I used to love to travel in Europe, you know, go to Paris, London, this and -- I don't care any more. If somebody tells me here, the United States to go, that's what I want to do, you know?

Q: In the United States, uh-huh.

A: Yeah. I feel that this is my country now.

Q: Right.

A: So it's true that w -- there are mistakes done in every -- but in the history, when is -- was everything all right, you know.

Q: Right, right. But why Houston? You stay in New York for a f -- couple of months [indecipherable]

A: Okay, a friend of his --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- came in Texas, and they -- the pa -- there was a man and a wife, and they told him that it was very nice, and that -- so his [indecipherable] our relatives in New York, they wanted us to stay there. You know, they had jobs for us and everything. But he didn't want to stay there.

Q: Now, his sister was alive after the war, am I right? His sister -- his -- her --

A: Yes, his sister, all the --

Q: -- her -- her husband --

A: -- all his -- husband died, and their child.

Q: -- and the child died.

A: And he -- she was also very good friend to me.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I consider her a good friend.

Q: But Houston, when you move there, must have been nothing. So it must have bee -- coming from New York especially, let alone from Greece. Did you get depressed? Yeah.

A: But I try not to be --

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: -- because I was busy all the time.



Q: Right.

A: No -- nobody said, are you depressed. I didn't --

Q: No, nobody asked.

A: No, nobody ask, and I don't think I show anybody that I'm depressed.

Q: Uh-huh, yeah.

A: I try to do the best I can. And then I -- I decide that I have to drive, and I took lessons again, you know? The driver, you know, s-saw my license, say why -- "I can take you t -- a couple of times, you know." "No," I said, "think that I am a -- a child, I'm just starting now, and we'll go from there." And that's what she did. She was very good, and I got some pa -- a -- I still am afraid to drive.

Q: Really? Were you afraid when you got your license?

A: Mm-hm.

Q: When did you get your license?

A: When I -- we came here.

Q: So -- but you drove?

A: Mm-hm.

Q: But you drove always with fear?

A: Drove a little bit, maybe, but not much.

Q: Well to -- what were you afraid of? What are you afraid of?

A: Especially I was afraid hitting somebody, or -- you know, I wasn't afraid that somebody would hit me.

Q: But you were afraid of --

A: Mm-hm.

Q: But you've never hit anybody.

A: I still -- I still have this fear, to -- to -- for you to give me a gun, I would never take it. If you give it to me like that for -- as a gift, never take it. You know, I'd rather somebody shoot me than to shoot anybody else.

Q: Right. So what is that? Where does that come from?

A: That's me.

Q: That's you?

A: And I don't ask my daughter how she thinks, or how she doesn't think. You know, it's their -- it's her person, and we are all different.

Q: Right, right. You know, there's --

A: Well, of course in Greece then, nobody had guns.

Q: Guns, right. But you know what the -- Plato quoted Socrates as saying it's better to suffer wrong than to do wrong. So I begin to think that maybe this comes from your Greek background.

A: The Greek philosophy.

Q: Right. Maybe.

A: Maybe. I didn't think about that, but maybe.

Q: I don't know any --

A: You know, the friend of -- the h-husband of Paula's is Socrates. He died.

Q: His name was Socrates?

A: His name was Socrates.

Q: When did you decide you would tell your children about your experiences? Did you tell them when they were very young, or did you wait?

A: I wait, because they didn't have a chance to speak with anybody. It was much too much to tell them, and to keep them inside of them.

Q: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

A: You know, nobody, even in the synagogues, there -- people won't let their -- the rabbi to speak about the Holocaust, until recently. About 10 days in -- 10 years, because they didn't want their children to know.

Q: They didn't want their children to know, period.

A: So it was very hard for the children [inaudible]

Q: Because they felt something. So did it take you a long time to --

A: Their --of course they felt something, because they saw the number on the --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- on the -- on his father, and then sometimes something was said among -- among us, the father and me, you know. Or they would hear something on television. They knew, because my daughter one time, she said, "Is that what the Germans did to you?" When she was watching something.

Q: And what did you -- did you say yes, or did you --

A: I said not exactly.

Q: But that was the extent of you --

A: Yeah, right.

Q: So when did you tell her? Cause she know -- she knows --

A: Well, it's after I brought her here --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- last year. It did a lot of good her. She wasn't talking at all. See? And I thought -- and I tell you the truth, if I came, I came more for her. So that she will see other people, she will talk, she will find out things --

Q: I see.

A: -- and you know, because you know, I-I could tell her suffering, you know?

Q: Yes. And she -- she --

A: She had -- she had to let it go, you know, and talk.

Q: Right.

A: And I think it did a lot of good, because coming back to Houston, she started talking and being involved in everything.

Q: And could she hear you better, do you think?

A: Yeah, I think so, and we talked these things together a lot.

Q: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

A: We didn't talk for years, until recently.

Q: So the tribute -- you're talking about the Holocaust museum tribute to survivors in November of '93. I guess it was a year ago. No, less than a year ago. This past November.

A: Yeah, right.

Q: Is that '93?

Q2: '03.

Q: '03. I'm sorry. '03, right, 2003. Well that's interesting, because it's a long time to not talk. Do you wish you had spoken before, in some ways, or not?

A: Well, I was hurting her, it felt like I was hurting her.

Q: By telling her?

A: Yeah. That's why I wanted t -- for her to talk with other people the same age, you know.

Q: Right, right, right. Do you think she thinks it hurts you too much to talk, so that's why it hurts -- see that -- that --

A: Exactly. Exactly.

Q: So in some ways it stops both of you, because you don't want to hurt each other.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: That's right, she's very sensitive.

Q: Right. Have you talked with -- with your grandson?

A: Not much.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: But I think probably his mother talked to him a little bit.

Q: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

A: Not much, but --

Q: Right. Have you ever talked in schools, with -- with kids?

A: Well, I tell you, they were asking me a lot to go to schools and talk, and I went once, they force [indecipherable]. It was a woman from a school, a Jewish woman, but she used to teach that school, it was for advanced children. And they told her to -- to whom to come, and she came to me. I liked her very much. And I said, "Well why you want me? You see that I have difficulty, and," -- I said, "I can tell you -- I can tell you which people you can go to, and th-they help you out better." "No," she said, "I want you." And she kept coming, coming at my house until she made me go. I said, "Okay, but we won't let my daughter come, because she's going to be

embarrassed.” So -- and she didn’t come, we didn’t tell her. So -- and I went with her, and the children were so involved that they didn’t want to go. They [indecipherable]

Q: They didn’t want to leave you?

A: They didn’t want to go. The -- their mothers came to pick them up and they didn’t want to leave. So what happened is their mothers stayed there. And -- and the mothers all start asking questions. I -- I th -- I thought that I won’t be able to -- to talk, and I said I’ll embarrass everybody, you know? But they liked it. And -- and they keep asking me again and again, but I said, “I don’t know what happened that day,” I said, “it’s a miracle, because I -- I can’t -- I can’t discuss.”

Q: Did it mean something to you that they were so involved? Was that goo -- good for you?

A: Oh, of cour --

Q: It must have been, yes, huh?

A: -- oh, you should see the way the children came and hugged me, and one black child was there, and -- what did he say? I don’t remember what, he said something that impressed me, but I can’t remember. And -- and the one Jewish girl, her mother ma -- married a -- a Jew, and her mother was -- she said that, “If I lived at that time in Europe,” she said, “that’s what they will do to me, too, even though.” I said yes. It doesn’t make [indecipherable]. I had to be honest, you know. Because it doesn’t -- if one of the parent Jew, they go.

Q: Right. So, if that was so meaningful, why do you think you didn’t do it again? You think it was some miracle? It was some odd event?

A: It couldn’t have been me, I couldn’t [indecipherable]

Q: It couldn’t be you? I don’t think you’re right.

A: That’s what I used to say, why doesn’t me believe me?

Q: Tell me something, what do you -- what did all of this teach you, you think?

A: Well, it teaches me to learn lessons from the past, and not to ne -- e -- repeat them again, because we're getting more interesting, more intelligent, it's -- it's why go through this?

Q: You think the world has changed?

A: It hasn't change, but we want to change.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah, they can see all these things. Instead of having all of these ugly movies and everything, we should have more history, say what happened, you know? And things keep repeating and repeating, and they're getting worse now. So --

Q: So do you really think people can learn from the past?

A: I don't think, no.

Q: But you as an individual, did you think that these events changed you?

A: Of course I'm not the same person that I was before, but I'm stronger. Maybe you see me now walking when I [indecipherable] today I wasn't feeling well. But I feel strong inside of me.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I feel like we have to do the best we can, and talk. Talk not maliciously, talk in the way that we can understand each other, and be friends with each other.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And everybody can, if they want to pray to God, or they want to pray to Christ, and they can do that. But you can -- there's no reason for us not to talk, not to be friends. We all are children of God.

Q: But you also learned that from your father, didn't you, in some way?

A: Well -- well, I -- I think I learned more from my uncle [indecipherable] than my father.

Q: Really?

A: Mm-hm. He was very religious.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: My father wasn't. He would wake up in the morning and he'll put his --

Q: Tefillin on, yeah?

A: Uh-huh, yeah. And five o'clock he'll be up.

Q: This is your uncle?

A: He was a very good man, and very religious. None of us was -- was religious.

Q: Was -- yes. And you're more religious now than you were when you were a child, when you were younger, or not?

A: Well, I believe -- n-now I believe that our religion makes sense, you know? And I don't see any other makes sense as a -- as ours. And I think it's superior. And I feel like how can anybody believe anything else, you know, and we do. We made mistakes, too.

Q: Yeah.

A: But still, I think, we gave the best to the world.

Q: Uh-huh. Is there anything more you'd like to say? Something I haven't asked you, or [indecipherable] think?

A: No.

Q: You don't know, huh?

A: I wish I can think something.

Q: Let me ask you what's -- what -- I don't even know if it's a fair question. Do you wish all of that didn't happen? I know -- I mean it -- clearly you wish that your relatives hadn't died, and other people hadn't died. But in terms of what happened to you, since you survived, do you look



at your life and say I just wish all of that didn't happen, or is there something about it that actually became important for you in who you became? I don't know if that's even a fair question, but --

A: Well, I thi -- I couldn't wait to -- to be free. And I thought the first thing that I would do is I would go to a mountain and thank God, you know? Or -- but I was too sick and -- to do that, I couldn't do it. First thi -- I -- I had -- I couldn't understand why God did this to us.

Q: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

A: Couldn't understand. But now I feel maybe they are in better place.

Q: Really?

A: And I'm not afraid to die myself. I'm going with them.

Q: Well, I want to thank you. It's really been wonderful to be with you today.

A: Oh, I hope so.

Q: It really has, it's been a pleasure for me.

A: Okay, oh, you -- you're wonderful. I couldn't do it with anybody else.

Q: Oh, well, well. It's really be very moving for me to be with you.

A: Thanks so much.

Q: Okay.

End of Tape Five

Beginning Tape Six

Q2: And who is this, Rinette? Or, excuse me, who is this, Rachelle?

A: This is my father, and at that time he was in -- in the United States, but for awhile he returned back to Greece. The reason he was in the State is a -- was a war in -- in -- in Greece at that time. The Turks owned the -- Greece, and my -- my grandfather didn't want his son to get mix in that war, and he send him there. But he returned, he didn't -- he wasn't very pleased with the life.

Q: And he looks good.

Q2: Okay, and this house here?

Q: What is that?

A: Th-The left of the house.

Q: No, but what is this?

A: Tha-That's in Drama.

Q: This is in Drama?

A: Yes.

Q: This is your home in Drama?

A: Yeah, where I was -- I grew up.

Q: Right.

Q2: The gardens?

Q: And what's this?

A: The gardens of that -- the same house.

Q: It looks like something from a palace.

A: Well, it looked like a palace. When Rinette went, she said, "That looks like a white -- the White House."

Q: Yeah. And this one?

A: Is the -- the side of the house.

Q2: And who is this?

A: This is me.

Q: And how old do you think you are?

A: Two? One? One and a half?

Q2: Point again, Joan.

Q: Now where you gonna go?

Q2: Up.

Q: You want to go over here?

Q2: Yeah.

A: That's my brother, Haim.

Q: So if you're one or two, he's three or four.

A: H-He -- he was --

Q: Or four or five --

A: -- the two and a half older.

Q: Two and a half year older.

A: Yeah. My mother. My father. My Tante Pauline, and my Uncle Leon.

Q: Now is that the uncle you were talking about -- about after the war, who came back and -- and tried to get the things from the people who were saving your parent's things? Was that a --

A: Oh, that was an uncle.

Q: Another uncle?

A: That was my uncle.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Yeah, that was fra -- brother of my father.

Q: I see.

A: And this Leon was a brother of my mother.

Q: Okay.

A: And he was very young.

Q: Now is this in the ba -- is this at your house?

A: Mm-hm.

Q2: And who is this?

A: Mm. Me.

Q2: How old do you think you are there?

A: I have no idea. Five?

Q: And you -- are you in a studio, or are you at the house?

A: I have no idea.

Q: Okay.

Q2: And this photo?

A: Me and my brother.

Q: That is in a studio. Did you -- did you dance together at other times?

A: Well -- but when I dance with somebody else I had problem. Why he was looking at you the way he was looking, or -- or when a -- I would go out with -- with him, see, and he used to look

at me like this, you know? And people are -- they were in the balcony, they used to say, what a lovely --

Q: Couple?

A: -- couple -- brother and sister.

Q: Yeah.

A: And he was looking to see if I had any lipstick or anything on my face.

Q2: And who is this group on the left?

A: [indecipherable] members of the congregation.

Q: And who is this?

A: My father.

Q: And this is?

A: [indecipherable]

Q: [indecipherable]. And do you know these other men?

A: I don't remember their names.

Q: And what are -- excuse me, what are they doing? What are -- they're going --

A: They're getting ready to go to meet the -- the king.

Q: They're here? So there's the king?

A: Mm-hm.

Q: And who's that?

A: My father.

Q: And what was the king doing in Drama? Did he just --

A: Well, he used to travel, in different places.

Q2: And this picture here?

A: Okay, it's -- on the left it's myself, Uncle Zhidar, Haim, my brother, my father and my mother.

Q: And show the feet. And is this -- this is the uncle who came and tried to get the -- your goods, the stuff that your parents left, yes? But you like him?

A: Yeah, because he was trying to help everybody.

Q: Yeah.

Q2: And this picture?

A: My father.

Q: Do you know about when? How old he might have been?

A: 40?

Q: Mm-hm.

Q2: And who's this group?

A: This my friends that they lived in the boarding school, before leaving Salonika to go to Athens.

Q: Right. And this is 1939? And who's this?

A: This is me, Rachelle.

Q: And so it's 1939, and you are 14 years old. No, 15.

A: No, more than that.

Q: Well you were bor --

A2: 15.

Q: -- 1939 - 15. You were born in 1924 - 1939.

A: Yeah.

Q: You look a little bit more mature than that.

Q2: And who's the --

Q: Want me to move it?

Q2: That's fine. Who's the group on the right?

A: Rachelle, Leoni, my sister-in-law, what's her --

A2: Wilna.

A: Wilna.

Q: Wilna.

A: And Milka.

Q: Milka. And you're in Munich?

A: In Munich.

Q: And you all look very happy.

A: Yup.

Q: And on the left?

A: Rachelle, Milka, Leoni, I forget his name -- their names.

Q: But he's --

A: Well, you have the letter, the American, and that was an Italian that --

Q: An Italian

A: -- work with us.

Q: Okay.

Q2: Go ahead, Joan.

Q: All right, this is from the headquarters, "1892, Labor Supervision Company, APO 403, United States Army, this is August 17<sup>th</sup>, 1945, to whom it may concern. This is to certify that Rachelle per" --

A: Perahia.

Q: Perahia -- "Perahia" -- I love it -- "was a member of the 88 -- 8822<sup>nd</sup> Labor Service Company, which is attached to these headquarters, and rendered valuable assistance as an interpreter and clerk. She was issued class X army clothes, which have been dropped from accountability, because she had no other suitable clothing. She has been disinfected, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, is free from communicable disease. It is required that she be given the utmost consideration and repatriation to Greece. Signed Theodore Bridick, captain, Signal Corps, Commanding."

Q2: And what's this photo?

A: This from my wedding.

Q: And you're hiding behind a veil, and --

A: My two -- how do you call them?

A2: [inaudible]. Flower girls.

A: Flower girls.

Q: Right. And this was in the synagogue in Greece? Do you know the name? No? It's okay.

A: I can't remember. There's one synagogue in Athens.

Q: And what year was this? 1946? So why don't you say it, because they can't hear me.

A: Yeah.

Q: 19 --

A: 1946.

Q2: And what about this picture?

A: Okay, Rinette.

Q: And this is --



A: Rinette.

Q: Right. And what year do you think this is?

A: 1950.

Q: 1950? And this is?

A: Roger, Rachelle, Rinette, what's -- what's her na -- his name?

Q: But this is --

A2: Wilna's husband.

Q: Wilna's husband, right?

A: Right, right.

A2: Jack. Jacques Cerfanti, right?

A: Yeah, right.

A2: Cerfanti, and Wilna Cerfanti.

Q: And Wilna --

A: Cerfa --

Q: -- is Roger's sister.

A: Right. This his brother.

Q: This is his brother?

A: Wilna's brother, or -- Roger.

Q: Right.

A: And this is the brother of Wilna's husband.

Q: Uh-huh, her first husband.

A2: [indecipherable] husband.

A: Her second husband.

Q: Her second husband, okay. And where is this picture taken?

A: In Greece.

Q: In Greece. And we can see the person who took the picture.

Q2: And who is this?

Q: Who is this?

A: Okay, Rachelle, the first. Cerfanti, the first name I forget. Oh -- oh I --

A2: These were two Greek Jewish friends in Houston.

A: Okay. Two Jewish friends from Houston.

Q2: Sit -- sit back for us, Rachelle.

Q: They were -- but why don't you sit back. Cause I --

A: Yeah. Whoops.

Q: It's okay, it's okay.

A: Okay.

Q: But they were Greek Jews, right?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: And they're --

A: I found them here when I came

Q: And they were survivors?

A: Yeah -- yes.

Q: Yes. So that's pretty unusual.

A: Yeah.

Q: And you're all wearing cowboy hats.

A: Rinette thought that was so funny, she was laughing for half an hour.

Q2: Okay, go ahead.

A: Freddy.

Q: This is Freddy. And how --

A: My -- my son.

Q: Right. And Freddy was what, about 18 or 19 years old there?

A: 25.

Q: No, here.

A: Here? Was 19.

Q: 19. And this is in Houston, yeah.

A: Yeah.

Q2: Go ahead.

A: Which one first? My grandson. Rinette's son, you know.

Q: Rinette's son right.

A: Yes.

Q: And this is you?

A: Hm?

Q: Who's that?

A: Rachelle. Rinette, and Joel. Is Rinette's husband.

Q: Right. And what is the day? What was -- what was that --

A: Yeah, I know, but the date.

Q: Oh no, no, not the date --

A: Oh, okay.

Q: -- just what kind of a day was it?

A: Justin's Bar Mitzvah.

Q: Bar Mitzvah, okay.

A: Rachelle and Justin.

Q: And is this around the same time?

A: Yeah.

Q: Is it the same day? Yes? It's a great photograph of you. And he's pretty cute, too.

A2: June seven, 1997.

Q2: Go ahead.

Q: What is this?

A: Rinette and Rachelle after my ba -- Bar Mitzvah.

Q: Bat Mitzvah.

A: Bat -- Bat Mitzvah.

Q: And this was June seventh? When was it, the date? June seven --

A: June seven, 1997.

Q: You look pretty happy.

A: Well, I was.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I used to love my teacher a lot, and he's back now with us.

Q: Oh, good.

A: Because he left for seven years, and now he's back again.

Q: So that makes you happy, yeah.

A: And now I'm ha -- very happy.

Q: Okay. Rachelle, I'd like to ask you to do one -- one more thing. I know that your very close friend who died last year, Paula, was -- was poet, and also was with you in Auschwitz, and actually helped to save your life at least once. And she wrote a poem to you. So I'd like to end with your reading --

A: She wrote several poems to me.

Q: She wr -- wrote several poems, so this is one of them. So could you please?

A: Okay. "Remember Auschwitz. To Rachelle. We met for the first time a long time ago, under difficult times, and things were so, we could not believe they were true. Your hair was a beautiful color of black and blue. I will never forget our shattering experience. When we arrive in Auschwitz my train -- by train, it was as if we had enter a mental institution. Everybody was shouting and pushing us. We had little time to say good-bye to our mothers, and they faded away forever. We felt exhausted. The place was like hell. The smoke was getting thicker. We didn't know then, and we learned the following day that the smoke was the result of burning our parents." She says [indecipherable]. "I had no time to cry. Our nightmare had just started. As I turned around, I saw Rachelle with all her hair gone. I felt a sudden sadness, and I cried." That's when they took my hair.

Q: Thank you.

A: You're very welcome. Thank you.

Q: Thank you very much.

End of Tape Six

Conclusion of Interview