

I'm going to have everybody's cell phone is shut off?

Oh, my.

This is a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Mr. Niklas Frank on June 6, 2016, in Washington, DC. Thank you very much, Mr Frank, for agreeing to meet with us, to speak with us, to share your life story, and your experiences, and your thoughts. It is much appreciated.

Thank you.

We're going to start the interview from the beginning with some of the simplest questions. And from there, we'll build on it and develop and have a conversation, and hopefully, we'll be able to learn your-- of more of your perspective. So the very first question is, could you tell me what was your full name at birth.

Niklas Frank.

Do you have a middle name?

No, no middle name. No.

Niklas Frank. And what was the date of your birth?

The 9th of March in 1939.

And where were you born?

In Munich, Bavaria.

Do you have brothers and sisters?

I had four siblings. Two brothers and two sisters, but they're all dead now.

OK. Can you tell me their names and approximately the years of their birth in the order of the eldest to the youngest?

Yes. The oldest was Sigrid, a girl born in 1927.

OK.

Next one was Norman, born in 1928. Then Brigitte, 1935. And then my brother Michael, 1937. And I am the last one.

So you're the youngest of the family.

Yes.

And tell me who-- your mother and your father's names.

My mother was-- her name is Brigitte Frank. She was born as Herbst, like autumn. And my father's name is Hans Michael Frank.

So he did have a middle name.

He has a middle name.

OK. And the years of their births, approximately?

Oh, well I I know it by heart.

OK.

My mother was born in 1895, and my father was born in 1900. So she was five years older than him.

I see. Can you tell me-- if you can remember this, because of course, it can get fuzzy in a person's mind-- your very earliest memories as a toddler.

My earliest memory is sitting in a small bathtub being washed from my nanny called Hilda. I must have been a baby. So this is my very first memory.

Is there anything particular about that, or just this glimpse, there you are in the bathtub?

It's a glimpse, but she left me. So I think that burned into my brain. I was sitting alone, and therefore, maybe I was crying. I don't know why I think so.

Her name was Hilda?

Hilda, yes.

How many years was she your nanny?

Until the end, until 1945.

So six years.

Yes.

Six years or so. And was she also from the same part of Germany as your family was?

No, my family wasn't Bavarian.

Where were they from?

My mother was born in Forst. That's a little town near the Polish border now. And my father was born in Karlsruhe near the Rhine River. And Hilda was a original Bavarian girl. So about 22, 23, 24 years old.

So tell me, how is it that your father from Karlsruhe, and your mother from Forst end up in Munich. What happened?

My grandfather, the father of my father, he was a lawyer and he went to Munich. And so the whole family went to Munich. And my mother, she was a secretary. And she wanted to leave Forst because it was too small city for her.

So she went at first during the First World War to Berlin, and she had always old aged-- old aged lovers. And one of them brought her to Munich. And there he met Hans Frank.

That begs a lot of questions. Not many people start an interview knowing about their mother's love life.

I know everything about her love life, my mother. And all of my father.

How did you find out? Did they tell you?

No, they're-- no. My father was hanged in 1946 and I was seven years old. Would be a very nice question how father tell me about your love affairs.

That's right.

No. My mother, she has one big talent. She was a very good writer. And she wrote as a secretary. He always made a copy of her letters also to her girlfriends and to all others. So I have really hundreds of letters from all parts of her age.

And my mother died in 1959, exactly of my 20th birthday, by the way.

March? In March?

March, March, 1959. And she had surviving girlfriends who was then in the 60s. And they-- I really said to them, you have to be honest with me. I'm now old enough. Tell me the truth. And they did it. So I found out a lot.

So you have this very extensive archive of your mother's letters, that is, copies of them, plus the stories. And you find out as a young adult about her early life before she marries.

Not as a young adult. I was 30, 40 years old, around that. I had it always in possession because when my mother died, I said to the other siblings, I don't want nothing, just I want every picture and every letter ever seeing what is written on. And said, OK, take it.

We'll come to that. That's a very key point. OK. Now, we come to the first really big question. Tell us who was your father, and what kind of-- yeah. Who was your father?

My father was in the end, the Governor-General of occupied Poland.

Under the Nazi regime?

Under the Nazi regime. He was by law, the Deputy of Hitler. So he was politically spoken responsible for every death in this part of the Polish country. And before he was Reichsminister without Portfolio. And he started his career as a lawyer for Hitler and the so-called Kampfzeit before Hitler took over power in 1933.

So the Kampfzeit would be the '20s and the early '30s.

Exactly.

And the time when his first three children were born.

Yes. Two.

Two.

Two.

Two.

Sigrid and Norman.

What are your memories of your father? Because you were born in 1939. And what stays in your mind of what you remember of him directly?

There's one short scene which I have in mind that's the earliest one when I went as a very small boy into his bathroom on the Krakow WaweÅ. And he was shaving himself and put something of his foam to my nose. It was only intimate

moment I had with my father.

Really.

The next one was after we-- must be February or March in 1945. He has already left the Government-General, was at Lake of Schliersee in Upper Bavaria. And I saw him standing, and his glasses were laying on the little table. And I took the glasses, looked at his eyes and broke them.

You broke his spectacles.

Yes.

And do you remember why you did it?

My first political deed. He was so surprised. I will never forget his look at me. And he immediately gave me-- in Germany you call it-- in Bavarian, [GERMAN]. He slapped me to the face, which was OK.

But there was another scene. I just forgot. The most important scene was it was in the [INAUDIBLE] in the castle in Warsaw. And I was running around the round table. And he was always on the opposite side. And I was longing to get into his arms.

And I was crying. And he said to me, what do you want? You are a fremder, a stranger. You are not belonging to our family. What do you want? And I cried and I cried.

Was he teasing you, or was he serious?

He-- he was-- it was both of it. Because he saw that I am not his son, but the son of his best friend, Karl Lasch who was shot by Himmler during the war. He was a governor, also, in the-- Government-General of Poland.

Do these episodes-- are these episodes the ones that you remember, or are these episodes not only the ones you remember, but the only real time you were in your father's presence?

For sure, I was very often in his presence. But I forgotten about it such as a child.

Did you-- you're born in 1939, half a year before the war starts, half a year before the attack on Poland. And where did you spend your childhood, your first years?

I would say, well, half of the year we were at home at the Lake of Schliersee in Upper Bavaria. The other half, we were living in Krakow. And so it was a-- I call it now this weekend castle, beautiful castle about 20 minutes by car away from Krakow. Wonderful castle. I have a lot of memories.

And that castle, what was its name?

Kressendorf.

Kressendorf.

I don't know the Polish name. I knew it all, but I forgot.

OK.

[? Kesnowicz ?], or something like this.

OK. So I'd like you to describe to me all three places-- the home in Schliersee, in Neuhaus am Schliersee, the WaweÅ,,

and Kressendorf, as the first places that you lived in as a child.

Let's start with our house at the Lake of Schliersee. It's called Schoberhof.

Schoberhof.

Was an old farming house which my father renovated in the midst of the '35, '36. 19. And so it was a very comfortable house. And--

What does it mean comfortable?

Like an old farming house. It was good to live in. The rooms were small and was not big, like WaweÅ, or like Kressendorf. It was really--

Did it have modern conveniences

No, it didn't. [INAUDIBLE] where the-- where the kettle was. It was a big hole, but not a high one, small one. It was where we celebrated Christmas there, for instance, or big festivities, birthdays like this.

And we had the so-called Bauernstube where the farmers for the good room are sitting together.

And that's part of the hof. That's part of Schoberhof.

Part of the Schoberhof, yes. And coming to WaweÅ,. WaweÅ, I liked very much because I had a little car with pedals.

And I always tried to hurt the grown up people. So I was waiting in my little car till grown ups come along the long aisles. And I had a very good experience to start my car around the corner and crash into them.

Oh, they must have loved you.

They must have loved me because immediately you know as a little boy you have a very powerful father who can do everything.

You sensed it.

Yes.

OK. I want to return to the Schoberhof. However, because I don't have enough of a-- of a picture. You say that it was a very comfortable house. By modern conveniences, I meant electricity, plumbing.

Everything was in.

Yeah. So it had all of those.

Bathrooms and electricity and everything.

Did-- and it had many buildings. Was it like an estate?

No, no, it was just one house.

Just one house.

One house.

All right. And compared to the other houses in Neuhaus, what was Neuhause, a town, a village?

No, no, it's a small village. The original part of Neuhaus where we are living was about 100 meters from the Lake of Schliersee distant. And it was all around three more farming houses. A farmer still are working till nowadays. And Neuhaus were small village, but some shops and normal houses of small villages. But no farmers.

Did most people know each other in Neuhaus?

Yes.

So the village knew everybody.

Yes. Everybody knew each other.

And it sounds like you were very well-to-do, even before Poland. Was that so?

Yes. We were very good integrated into the other-- into the Society of [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH].

And how is it that your parents came there, given that they were from other parts of Germany? Why there?

My father grew up-- my father's mother was original Bavarian girl who lived near the Lake of Tegernsee, who was another lake besides Lake of Schliersee. So he grew up in the midst of the original Bavarian [INAUDIBLE] when they went to Karlsruhe. And so always in his vacations, he was near [PLACE NAME].

[PLACE NAME] was the name of a very small village. And he spoke fluent Bavarian dialect. And he loved the mountains, and he loved the seas, and he loved Upper Bavaria. So he was looking for a farming house.

But he wasn't a farmer.

No, he wasn't.

OK. Did anybody farm there for him?

No. In the family, no, nobody.

OK. And nobody hired, let's say. There was no more-- there wasn't land as part of the Schoberhof.

There was about 5,000 square meters of land around it.

OK. Was he always well to do?

What does it mean well to do?

Well to do-- was he always financially well off?

Yes.

Even as a young man?

Well, no, no, no. When he started, the Bavarian state supported him as a law student. And once he was kneeling down in front of my mother saying, Brigitte, once upon a time, I would like to earn 1,000 marks a month. And that's a good wish. I had it myself.

And just later he made a fortune.

This 1,000 marks a month, do you know what year he kneeled down and said this to your mother? Because it would-- we need to place it in context.

The marriage in-- they married in 1925. So it was around this time.

And what does that mean in the Weimar Republic to earn 1,000 marks a month?

Well, was good money, was not special, was not to become a millionaire, but was good to live on. It was enough.

OK. And your mother, did she come from a financially well-off family?

No. Her father committed suicide when he was 46 years old. And the family was so poor, he also-- she also had four siblings-- that she couldn't finish the school. And she was accompanying a handicapped girl of a lawyer, enforced. And this guy took her into her office and made her secretary.

I see. So she had to go earn her living very early on.

Yes. And he started also, when she was learning secretary, he started to deal with Jews. She took in commission first, and sold them for more money to other people.

Oh, I see.

And this she did till 1933. My father must have been so upset, because every member of the Nazi Party had to sign a paper, "I don't have anything to do with Jews. I don't deal with them."

And your mother did.

Wife has a lot of furs of Jewish who are interested in the flats they are living in.

She must have liked these furs.

Yes, she was, really. She liked it, but she also made very good dealings with the furs. She was very good. She was very good in financial things, because she was poor when she was young.

Did you have a sense, and I'm talking directly, directly you, in those first years of your life, what kind of a person your father was, what kind of a personality he had, whether he was warm and affectionate, whether he was more distant and cold? Do you have any sense of that?

My sense is that he was, concerning his relationship to me, he was more kind of distant.

OK.

Yeah.

And your mother, how was she towards you in those early years?

[CHUCKLES]

We learned our mother to know after the war, because she was always off. She had her own Mercedes her own chauffeur. She liked all the luxury very much. And so we all depended on Hilde. Everything what is human with me comes from Hilde, not from my parents.

Well, I was circling around these questions, around this-- every child has an early influence. And who was your early

influence? And you answered my question.

It's Hilde, for sure. I'm very thankful to her.

Tell me what kind of a person was Hilde?

She had a lot of love affairs. Therefore, we went to a lot of awful camps. We also visited outskirts-- I don't know the English word.

You can say it in German.

Also, ein Aussenlager.

So a camp outside of--

Outside of a concentration camp, but there were Jews in it. So they had to labor. And so she was in love with one of the officers. The only-- that's my interpretation, because why should the nanny go with the children to a camp full of prisoners?

Did you remember seeing those prisoners?

Yes, yes. It was a very funny afternoon.

Tell me about that afternoon.

They had-- was it a wild donkey? It was infuriated by some claps. The officer told the prisoners and the German guards that they should sit on this donkey.

There's a donkey and the prisoners are ordered to sit on it.

Yes, and fall down immediately, because the donkey jumped. And they were very skinny people, that I have in mind. But I found it hilarious, always falling down--

So it was a game?

--grown-up people.

No, my brother was with me.

Norman or Michael?

No, no, Michael. Norman was much too old. He was 11 years older than me. So we found it a very funny afternoon.

By "game," I meant it was something that the guards were doing to the prisoners as sport.

Yes, it was something like a play for the youngsters of the Governor General, just to let them enjoy the afternoon. Horrible.

Of course, of course. And it was because Hilde had a reason to be there.

That's my interpretation. When I wrote my book against my father, I visited her. She was full of cancer then, and I told her all these short remembrances I had. And I also told her this-- I have in mind that there was a donkey, and some people fell down, and they were put again on this donkey. And she explained it. It was an Aussenlager.

Do you remember the name of it?

No. She also didn't know it. She also didn't know it. It must have been near Krakow or near Kressendorf. That was--
OK.

And she told me, she filled in because she was a grown-up and she had a good memory, not for this name, for instance, but she knew everything.

Well, but when I asked you what kind of a person she was in the sense of how did she influence you your answer was that she had many lovers. And I want to know what did she give to a child? What was it in her presence in your life that made the difference?

She was very humorous, can you say? She was a very funny person.

She had a sense of humor.

A lot. And we had a lot of-- we laughed all the day. She was really with us. And she was not pretending to learn us anything.

And she never dealt with us like we are princes of the Governor General or something like this. We were really typical children in her eyes, and she went swimming with us and doing everything. She was really-- she loved us, I would say.

And when my mother came back from one of her tours, she told me, she said, Hilde, take a day off. Now I am back, I will have all my children around me. And Hilde was very happy, and dressed herself.

And 20 minutes later, she got a call inside the house-- Hilde, you have to stay. I'm too nervous. Those children make me so nervous. You have to keep them. And she was off again.

So much for her day off. Did she have any-- even as I say it, to me it sounds so silly, but did she have any political leanings?

Hilde?

Yeah.

I don't think so. I never heard anything. I also have to admit I never heard anything in my family about political things because I was too young. Maybe they have talked about it, but I don't remember.

How much involvement-- I mean, you mentioned this a little bit in passing, but you were with your brother Michael when you were in this Aussenlager. Were you two more often together than not?

Yes. He was only two years older than me, and we were really-- we stick together.

OK, so you spent your childhood with him as well.

Yes.

What about your older siblings, your two sisters and your brother? Where were they in your first years, during these war years?

They also were at Krakow, and Kressendorf, and Lake Schliersee.

So they were at home.

But they were at school. And later, they were at the German Deutsche Oberschule, the German high school-- I don't know the American translation-- in Krakow, both of them. And the next, Brigitte, called Gitte, she was very quiet, very talented in drawing. She always was. Michael and I, we couldn't live with her.

Why not?

She was stupid. Well, no, she was a very poor girl. She committed suicide when-- she never wanted to become older than our father. And she committed suicide when she became 46 years old.

Which was his age.

Was his age when he was hanged.

We'll come to that, but I'd like to get a sense of the personalities. When she was young, you say she was talented and she used to draw, yes? And she was quiet. Why did you think she was stupid, as a little boy?

It's just that I never thought that she was-- we couldn't deal with her. She was out of range or something. It was, by the way, she was a girl. What could you do with girls when you are five, six, seven years old?

Oh, they're useless. They're useless. But what about the--

Thank God it changed.

What about the older siblings, and Norman?

Norman was very funny with us.

But he played with you.

Yes, he played with us. He made a lot of bloody things with us.

Such as?

I will never forget, I got the big chocolate, yes? And this guy wanted to have this chocolate instead of me. So he put a blanket around his shoulders. I was sitting with my chocolate.

Defending it.

And he was kneeling before, pretending to be a beggar, saying to me, Nikki, I'm called Nikki, Nikki, I'm such a poor guy. I'm so hungry. I need this chocolate. And I start crying and handed it over.

Oh, that's mean.

But on the other hand, he built-- a lot of snow fell in upper Bavaria during winter. He built big castles and attacking us. We were sitting inside this ice and snow castle, and he's attacking us with big mines, he called them, and boom. And it was really funny. He was a really, really funny guy.

That's a lot of fun. Yeah. So he was somebody who is engaged with the younger ones. He was somebody-- it wasn't like you were young--

I won't say "engagement." When he had time and we were around, and maybe we have begged him that he should play with us, and he did it. And it was very funny.

And what about Sigrid?

Sigrid wasn't so funny. And she was also-- she was a girl.

Enough said.

So she was far off. She was far away from us, was from age, and she had quite other interests and so.

Well, she was 12 years older than you were. And so I guess what I'm trying to do is get a sense of how the siblings, in your early years, interacted with each other. How involved were you?

I would say we were a happy family. We didn't know how bad the marriage was between our parents at first. It started in '42, when the marriage broke, nearly broke. But before, and also when the children were together, it was always a big laughter. Always. We were fond of each other.

That is what I wanted to get a sense of.

That's for sure. And we also played with Gitte, we were next door girl, but it wasn't the same as Michael and me. And we had a lot of adventures and everywhere.

Such as what kind of adventures?

Stealing, lying, fishing that was not allowed, and hurting other people. And when our grandmother, the mother of my father, was living with us in Poland in the Castle of Kressendorf, Sigrid told us she is a witch. So we did a lot of awful things like putting dirt in front of her door where her apartment was. But we had a really adventurous life.

When you say these things, though, stealing and lying can be serious or they can be the sorts of things all children do. That is, can this--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

I won't say that other children are doing this. I think I have thought about myself, a lot of it. For instance, we got a lot of toys. Every visitor to my father brought a lot of toys for the children, especially for Mike and me.

And we got the toys and we went to our rooms. And we immediately destroyed the toys. We also, for instance with our trains, and we had lorries which were driving themselves. We always were building accidents.

We were never interested in the normal playing, that the train is rolling through the room-- was boring. But if you build up accidents, where you demolish all these new toys, we were happy. And I would say one of the reasons is that our parents and all the other grown-ups knew exactly that they don't have to do nothing in Poland.

And they saw all the hanged people, Polish ones. They saw the Jews with the stars. They saw the hungry faces.

They knew exactly that they committed every day the most horrible crimes. And they all were involved. And this bad conscience they had-- it's my interpretation-- went down in a certain way to the children. And therefore, we are destroying everything what we got as a gift-- my interpretation.

But it would have been a silent kind of transmittal. That is, nobody told you of the grown-ups.

No, no, no.

Of course not. Were you, in the German word, verwöhnt, spoiled?

Yes, my father and my mother weren't interested to educate us into something like typical German people. It was all

Hilde. She decided what we have to eat and where. It was not special. And we nobody told us that we are princes of the governor-general, something like this. So in this way, we were quite normal. But we knew, as I told you, with my little car, we knew that we have some important guy in the background.

Yes but did Hilde ever discipline you?

No.

That is, if you did something wrong--

Oh, I don't remember that she ever-- she never clapped me or--

Or talked to you and said this is not something that you should do.

I don't remember. She must have, for sure. She must have, but in a good way.

Yeah, because in every child's life, the sense of what is right and what is wrong has to be introduced by somebody.

That was Hilde. That was Hilde, but in an informal way. She never gave us lessons. Today, we speak about not stealing.

Of course, of course. But if your parents weren't involved, if they were distracted or doing other things, somebody had to.

Yeah, that was Hilde.

That was Hilde.

Tell me a little bit about your mother and what do you remember of her during those years, like I said with your father.

Jut-- really, it was after the war that I really started to get some knowledge of who my mother was.

OK, are there episodes? Like you remember your father with the shaving cream, and in the Bellevue.

Oh, yeah, there's one scene, the castle of Kressendorf was a little bit like Versailles, but it's very smaller. But from one room to on the other side, you have to go about 100 meters. So our children rooms were on this side and the apartment of my mother was quite on the other side.

And Michael told me, now let's be funny. You run to our mother telling her that Michael is dead. And he lay down. And I was, oh, that's a very good idea, and run along this, in the first floor, this long corridor.

And my mother was sitting naked in the bathroom. And I said to her, Mutti, Mutti, Michael ist tot. Mother, mother, Michael is dead. And she jumped naked and she jumped out of the-- took a towel, and ran behind me to the room--

Through this long corridor.

Long corridor, wet, everything, and entered really. And Michael was lying dead. And she knelt down and then Michael started to laugh.

And I got a clap into my face of my mother. She was so horrified. But this also is a scene which shows to me children, there's something wrong, where we are living, what we are doing, and so I think it.

What kind of a person was Michael? I asked about all the others, but about him-- what kind of a-- was your first playmate?

Yeah, Michael was really funny. He looks, compared with me, a beautiful-looking guy, young guy, a really great lockige Haare. I don't know the English word.

Curly hair.

Curly hair, very funny, full of wit. And he was so sportif. He could kill birds with stones. I admired him a lot.

Well, he's your older brother.

Yes, but he was really a really great guy. And he loved, especially his father.

He loved your father.

Oh, very much.

How did this show itself?

He always was looking for him, I would say. It's my remembrance. I could put it really on scenes, but you know what your brother's like, that he loved our father more than me.

Even when you were a little boy, when you compare it that way?

You have to remember the scene. When I was very young, and from this point, when I was running around the round table, there was a really healthy distance between my father and me.

When he called you a stranger.

Yeah, and don't let me get into his arms. And this was-- it saved me. Because later, Michael defended, like three others, our father, the innocent victim. I never did, so I had in advance.

But back to Michael, he loved him very much. And he was very sad when he was hanged. And--

What did he do when he learned of that? When you say, "sad."

He started to cry. He cried a lot. And he was really-- we had to comfort him.

He was distraught.

Yes, distraught. And later, when he was 22, 23 years old, still very slim and very sportif, he started suddenly to drink milk, 12 to 13 liters a day.

13 liters a day?

And he married and his wife didn't know where to hide the milk for the babies, because Michael was searching all the house to find all the last milk for the babies and drank it, and became, as you can imagine, fatter and fatter and fatter. And I think it was because he couldn't get around with his father.

The oldest brother, Norman, became an alcoholic. The second, the eldest daughter, Sigrid, emigrated with her second husband to South Africa, because they liked very much apartheid. Michael drank a lot of milk till he was dying. Brigitte committed suicide because she didn't want to become older than our father. And who is still alive and very happy? Niklas.

And you put it down to the favor from the very beginning that your father did you, when he wouldn't take you in his arms.

I would say so. I would say so. Maybe that, and I'm very, very happy that he was hanged. I am completely against the death penalty, but in this case, he had earned it.

And imagine he would have survived. He would have poisoned my brain when very young. That's not easy, to live with a guy who was so well educated as my father was.

OK, we'll come to that. We'll come to that. I'm still in the early years.

Conversations are always around--

Yes, yes.

Don't be a German interviewer, one card after the other.

Though I've read some of the articles that were written, some of them are very, very good, very detailed.

I had to rewrite them.

[BOTH LAUGH]

You said when you were little, and he didn't take you in his arms in this Schloss Bellevue, you were stunned. Is that right? How come he doesn't do it?

I am being rejected. And that's the feeling you had of distance? Is this what I'm trying to understand?

I don't have the same sentence had in my brain. You notice it.

You feel it.

Yeah, you feel it, and you have only two possibilities-- you endure it or you are broken. And with me, I was happy that I could endure it, maybe because of Michael, because I was very happy with Michael, maybe because of Hilde, because I was very happy also with Hilde, maybe because of all the other surroundings I experienced because of my little car, because of all what I experienced, because of killing fishes and killing birds around the lake of Schliersee. A lot of other things were good for me.

But it was a distant which survived everything. Also, you asked for my mother. When my father was hanged, my mother-- that was the 16th of October, 1946-- we were in the Kinderheim at this time. And my mother visited us, Gitte, Michael, and me. And she had spring clothes full of color and like it was spring, but it was late of autumn.

Yeah, it's October.

And she took us to a walk and told us that now our father is dead and he is in Heaven. And for me, it was just information. I knew it already because when we visited him last time, I knew that he will be hanged. So for me, it was quite a confirmation.

You know because someone told you?

No, no, and Michael was starting to cry, and also Gitte, Brigitte was starting to cry. And my mother said to them, why do you cry? Your father is happy in Heaven now, and look at Nikki. He also doesn't cry.

And then he pressed my hand, and said, why are you not crying? And so just as I had the distance, I don't have a personal-- I had no personal feeling like. And by the way, I always was very pragmatic in my life. Now, I knew the next time we will see our mother, she will tell us that our father is dead.

You knew it, but no adult had told you that this would be.

In the summer of '46, his lawyer, Doctor Zeidel, came to our family and said, Mrs. Frank, there is no chance. He will get the death penalty for sure. The proofs against them are so magnificent, they are so unbelievable and he could do anything.

Were you in earshot of this?

It was also-- it was I knew it then. I know it was connecting with the visit of Mr. Zeidel. And everybody else also, my brother Norman, and so-- so we talked to each other about it. I don't know exactly the conversations anymore, but I knew that when the invitation came in September, we had to go, September '46, we have to go to the prison to visit our father. It was the first time after he was arrested on the 4th of May in 1945. I knew that will be my last visit to see my father alive.

So it's actually the first and the last visit.

Yes.

For you, and it was you and all of these children, and your mother.

Yes.

And it was-- and it's because Mr. Zeidel had come to your home and the children talked about it with one another that you were already aware.

Yes, other than my mother.

OK, so she had told you about this.

No, then I was six and seven years old. I can't repeat you a conversation.

Of course.

I know only that I knew he will get the death penalty and it will be over. So that was-- I can't repeat anything, but I know then from Norman, also, which I talked to him a lot during our life, that it was Zeidel's visit who ended all our hopes, or their hopes, not my hope, that he will survive. And by the way, even, I was already in school. And I came to school in the autumn of '45.

And the Nuremberg trial was broadcasted-- every evening there was one hour they talked about the day. And everybody, because we knew each other, everybody in the family, of the other children, the parents of them, were talking about. And also Hans Frank was in the prison in Nuremberg and had this big trial.

And the children in my school sometimes, they said to me, one of them, said, "Hi, Nikki, you know now your father will be hanged." And I said, "Yes." So it was-- it wasn't cruel.

It was common knowledge.

They knew it. It was common knowledge, yes.

I want to-- I'll jump ahead and then I'll move back.

Like me.

But I remember in your book, you say afterwards that your aunt Margo--

Margot.

Margot had seances where she would commune--

No, no, that's Tante Marta.

Tante Marta would have seance--

Don't mix my aunts.

[BOTH LAUGHING]

My sincere apologies. My sincere apologies. How could I? How could I? OK, so Tante Marta knew how to speak to the dead. And she would have seances. And in those first months afterwards, your mother participated in them.

And lo and behold, there was communication with your father. Yes? In these sciences. And then your uncle passed away. And then that stopped.

He committed suicide. He threw himself under the train.

And why did he do that, by the way?

Because of his wife. [LAUGHS] I don't know. I don't know. She was a little bit-- he was crazy. He was out of his brain. He also was running along the main street in Munich, Kaufingerstrasse, and throwing stones into the windows. And my Aunt Marta was running behind him to stop him as well. He was--

So maybe he was mentally ill?

Yes, he was for sure.

But what I wanted to say with this is that there is a section where you write that when the communications with your father ceased, that is in the seance, they kept wanting to bring his spirit up, you yourself tried to do so. I think it was if uncle Julius was a butterfly, then you were seeing was your father here, was your father there. And it ended up with a little dog that you thought maybe his spirit had rested in the little dog?

Yes, but was more on the funny side. In this book, this was a butterfly. It's correct. It wasn't me, but it was Tante Marta. She was sitting in the English garden, and suddenly, Uncle Julius came along as a butterfly, and the dog also as well, yes.

The reason why I bring it up is that when I read that passage, yes, I know it was supposed to be humorous, but it also gave me a sense of a child who was missing his father, who wonders whether his father is here, his father's there, his father's someplace else. Did you miss him?

I didn't know him. I'm not sure. I would say-- more I would say because as a normal child, you are missing your father. It could be, for sure. But it's not something which haunts me or has haunted me. Could be. Could be.

The good thing was in this time, there's a lot of families that lost their father due to the war. They all were killed in the Wehrmacht. So it was comparable to other families, where the children also grew up without a father. The special thing on the Frank family, and this was like an honor-- you were special because your father got a year-long trial, and afterwards he wasn't shot by a Russian in the war, or by a French or an English, but he was hanged. That was special.

Prestigious in a way?

In a way, prestigious. He was something special. And don't forget, my father was sitting in the first row of the defendants, not in the second one. My mother like it. My mother, it's more special.

I want to go back to the descriptions of the other two places. You gave us a description of Schoberhof. First, a question-- why did you have the WaweÅ, and Kressendorf as places to live? Why was it two for the family, or were there different functions of each place?

In the WaweÅ,, where a lot of also the government, the prime minister and all this kind of stuff was also there.

So it was like a government building? It was a castle but it was a government building?

Yes, yes, where a lot of government in it. And that was our weekend castle. We enjoyed it very much.

The WaweÅ,.

No, the weekend castle was Kressendorf, so he mostly was there. His official castle was the WaweÅ,, where he did all his work during the day. But on weekends, and also during the weekend, he could decide when he wants to work or not. So he was very often at the castle.

So describe to me both places. What did they look like and what--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

WaweÅ, was-- for me it was, as a child, a lot of very long, empty aisles.

Corridors.

Corridors, corridors, and beautiful rooms, beautiful rooms full of Gobelins.

Tapestries.

Tapestries, yes, was really good to live in, but my memory-- I have no memory that I slept there, but I must have slept there. Because in the morning, when my father was shaving himself, I don't have any memory. More memories, I exactly knew to notice Kressendorf is now a ruin.

I know exactly where my room was, where I slept in with Michael together. So I was more in Kressendorf, I would say, in all those years. And I remember especially from the WaweÅ, the big festivities my father gave, to German bigshots.

So what kind of festivities were these?

There really was these big candelabras, and really everybody in wonderful clothes. And we had to give everybody our hand and hand kisses to the women. This I have [? instilled ?] in my head because Michael and me must always laugh. And we mixed it up. We kissed the hands of the guys and then made a-- hop to the ladies, and so it was funny.

So tell us, so that now it's not from the eyes of the child, but so that people will know-- these are not just any old places and buildings in Polish history. Can you tell us what was the WaweÅ,? What was Kressendorf? What was Bellevue?

WaweÅ, was the old capital of the Polish empire-- let's say it this way. And a lot of Polish kings are buried inside the cathedral on the WaweÅ,. And the special thing is unbelievable to nowadays-- Michael and I, we played hide and seek inside this cathedral. So we would hide behind wonderful graves and holy people and laying not down in the catacombs, where the all the PiÅ,sudski is, at his grave. But it's unbelievable that they allowed us to play there, hide and seek.

So this is sort of like the central place of Polish kings.

It was a central place for the Polish people. And immediately, my father obeyed when he took over, WaweÅ,, immediately shut it down. No Polish person could enter the cathedral, which was one of the most holy ones in Poland besides CzÅstochowa.

CzÅstochowa, yeah. And Kressendorf, did that belong--

Kressendorf was really funny, because there was a lot of-- small lake and a lot of very funny SS guys who played with us. And we mostly were keen to eat with them and not upstairs with the kitchen of ours. So we liked the soldiers, as all the children. They were very nice to us.

Were they. And these were SS rather than another branch, or not the police, or Wehrmacht or anything?

No, it was SS. They were just guarding it.

So you had these guards at your family place so that you would be safe, in other words.

Yes, also around the WaweÅ,. But on the other hand, what is really strange, Norman, visiting the German school in Krakow, left with a cycle every morning, rode through a park along streets, and nobody ever hunted him down or killed him. And that was really strange.

Today, no one would do that, no. What about Sigrid? Was she going to school there, too?

She was also going to school there. She must also have come the same way. She was always one class ahead, one year ahead of him. And both were very happy there.

And Bellevue, why was your father in Bellevue?

This must have happened when we visited Warsaw.

OK. And what was Bellevue as a place?

It's the house the Polish President is living in. When I was a journalist, I made an interview with Lech WaÅsa. In the same room as the table was staying, there I was running around. And I said to myself, oh, what a coincidence, and I'm back here.

[LAUGHING]

And did you tell Lech Walesa?

No, I never would have done this. [INAUDIBLE] [? fired ?] of my book. Also if-- he wouldn't have known. The book would be really very vain that I am telling him this. Frank is a normal name like Miller or Becker or something. So I was protected by my name. He was a funny guy.

Walesa?

I interviewed him first in Danzig. He was very slim. And then he was the president, he was fat. My first question was, you put on some weight, Mr. President. And he was very feisty. What can I do, all these gala dinners I have to attend, so I have to eat. A very nice, nice guy.

My goodness, my goodness. But it does illustrate for us the rooms, the place, the structures of your childhood were not-- I'm talking physical structures-- were out of the ordinary, very much out of the ordinary. That's why I wanted to highlight it. These central places in Poland.

We had our long car, eine Langwagen was put to normal trains. We had a special car, as all the top Nazis. And this I liked very much.

There are also some more moments of my father sitting there, playing chess, having fun. Yes, yes, I remember. And we always were in from Schliersee, Miesbach via Salzburg, Austria, and to the government general.

So you went by train. You would travel by train.

Not always, also by car, and mostly by the salon car, was full of [INAUDIBLE]. It was really special, really wonderful. No, that was extraordinary, for sure. And also, the big Mercedes-- I was driving in great cars. And this really-- I liked it very much.

And then once we saw, passing by with our Mercedes in Poland, a burning tank, a Tiger tank, which I know by chance because the driver said, this is a Tiger. It was the biggest German tank and one of the last inventions in the war. It was built up, so it must have been very late.

This I see till nowadays, this burning tank on the side of a street. So the Russians must be very near, then. Last time we had been in autumn '44 in Krakow.

Thank you, that was one of my questions, when was the last--

I know all your questions.

You do, you really do, and even some I haven't thought of yet. So you spend your childhood back and forth between the three places. And the last time is August '44 when you are in--

Autumn.

Excuse me, autumn '44-- you mentioned earlier that your parents' marriage broke down in '42. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

Yes. My father was very much in love with a little girl called Lily.

What was her last name?

[PERSONAL NAME] was her maiden name, Lily [PERSONAL NAME] He met her first in this little village Pfahl, in upper Bavaria, near Lenggries, near Lake Tegernsee. And when he was young, he was 12 years old, so something like this, he has described it in some private pages he left that he wrote in the prison. In a white shirt, suddenly this little girl came.

And he fell in love with her as a child, he must have been then, either 10 or 12 years old, very young. And she was the daughter of a very rich Bankerin. I don't know the English.

Banker.

Banker in Munich, and then they are never together, I would say, really. They met each other in every summer vacations, because the [PERSONAL NAME] came out. They had a house, and my father was staying with an aunt, a sister of her mother. And in 1942, she in the meantime had married a man called Grau, like gray, and had one child.

And he was missed at the Eastern Front. And she remembered her friend, Hans Frank and wrote him a letter. And they met. And my father immediately fell in love again.

So she wanted to find out what happened to her missing child, to her son, I presume.

Yes. He was in the army in the meantime.

OK. Did she ever find out?

No, he never showed up. He was killed or missed. No, there's also no grave of him in Russia, also.

So they fell in love and my father wanted a divorce. And my mother said this wonderful sentence-- "I prefer to be a widow instead of a divorced wife of a Reichsminister," which I really love she said. I always was on the side of my mother, by the way.

Oh?

And so he immediately went to Himmler and went to Mrs. Goebbels, because her husband also had a love affair with a Czech actor, actress. And he wrote a letter, together with a picture showing her and the five children sitting on the WaweÅ,, telling Hitler it's unbelievable that a man could leave a family looking so beautiful and being so important and--

So your mother did this.

My mother did this. And Hitler took the time within the war, stopped all the slaughter, and discussed this, and forbade my father to divorce till the end of the war. And my father, this bloody coward, said yes, my Fuhrer, then I will postpone the divorce. But the marriage was broken, but till we visited, till we visited. And my father was like a pendle--

Pendulum back and forth.

Back and forth. Suddenly, he said, I slept again with each other. And he wanted Brigitte to come over to the government general. I need you.

And then he promised to Lily that he will now get the divorce, whatever Hitler was saying. And you are my future. And then it's always between Lily and Brigitte.

The priest who accompanied my father to the gallows-- who also baptized my father in the Catholic church when he was in prison-- he told me when I visited him near New York in Albany, and he said to me, Niklas, your father was still afraid of your mother, also when he was in the prison. And the nephew of Lily Grau told me that he remembered my father sitting in their family, together with Lily. And Lily was so dominant that my father was afraid of her. What kind of a selection you had, between two wives who were really much stronger than him.

And yet he is the Governor General of Poland. Tell me more about your mother. You said you were on her side during this divorce proceeding or this divorce scenario.

No, no, it has nothing to do with the divorce. I don't know about the divorce then, since all this was later. It was--

Did you feel this--

That always was after the war, when I found out how many sexual affairs my mother had, and when always I found a new one, I was so happy for my mother. It was always a little bit against my father, no?

Did the older children know about what was going on?

Yes, especially only Norman and Sigrid. They knew exactly. And my mother forced Norman and Sigrid to write letters to their father saying, you can't leave us. You can't leave me, and so. Yeah, my mother fought with all kinds of tricks to get it.

And why did she want to hold on so much?

Luxury.

So it wasn't love.

No, no. My father later wrote in prison. He wrote a letter to his mother saying it was, with Brigitte, it was only a sexual one-night stand, something like this, a little bit polite, more polite he wrote it. And I regretted it all my lifetime.

Very bitter. Very bitter for both, but very bitter. In this world that I've asked you to paint for me, you've mentioned a few times when the reality hit. You're in this Aussenlager with your nanny, Hilde, and you see these very thin people being made to jump up and down on the donkey, that is, they're on the donkey and then they're thrown down. Did you ever see anything as a child? Did anybody say anything as a child, of the outer world, of any of the camps, or of anything of what was happening to the Jews, to the Poles?

No. There must have been another love affair of Hilde, because I visited once the prison. And a guard took me and let me see through a small hole in the cell. And I saw a young lady sitting there, not looking at us, but she was really sad thinking [INAUDIBLE].

And I started to cry. And he comforted me, the guy, and that's a very, very-- she's a witch, but you don't have to cry because she is dead very soon. But I couldn't ask them, what do you mean? What were the reasons you-- you don't do when are four or five years old.

And so this was-- and the other thing was my visit in the ghetto of Krakow. But I never asked [? Beckson. ?] I asked only mother, what are they doing there? Those sad looking guys around here, and also I saw children of my age looking very sad, because we always were looking very happy.

And my mother refused to answer. And I wouldn't have understood it, I have to say. I know they are Jews, and we don't like the Jews, and the Jews are no human beings, and so we have to round them up in small parts of the city. And she would never have said this to me. And I was not any more interested, because as a child, the next sensation is coming around the corner.

Yeah, yeah. So that also sort of answers my question, was there any mention of people like the Poles or the Jews in conversation?

No. We must have heard the chilling conversations like this. But I have no memory to this. Only one of the things is what I-- when my book against my father came out, it was immediately translated of a Polish couple who speak fluent German. It was printed in a weekly illustrated paper. And there were a lot of interviews.

In Poland?

In Poland, it was 1987. And one of these guys was telling-- he was saved by Niklas. Niklas has saved his life.

You?

I was very keen. And he has told it to a journalist and he has printed it. And then suddenly, I had this memory. The thing was the following-- this guy was a servant at Kressendorf. And he was responsible for the Ofen, for--

Yeah, sure, I mean for heating, you mean.

For heating, for heating. And he had to clean up one of these heating things. And I don't know--

Was it coal heating?

Coal, it must have been coal. And so there was a bed nearby. And I don't know the English word for Russ, but when it's

burned down, the coal.

Ashes.

The ashes, thank you. And some of the ashes, through his cleaning, was blown to the bed, to the white shirt of the bed. And my mother came in and screamed at him that now you go to the concentration camp. That's over with you. You can't make my bed.

It wasn't hers, it was somebody else's, maybe from Norman or Sigrid. And then I should have showed up and this suddenly-- and I started to cry when I heard my mother screaming at this guy, which I liked. He was a nice guy. I was accompanying him here and there. Oh, it was completely out of my brain till this article.

Isn't that interesting?

That is interesting, and he said-- and when this little guy started to cry so heavily, my mother became more silent, comforted me, and let it go. He wasn't put into a concentration camp. I saved him.

Well, he thought so, and that's the important part. You know? And it's also-- so now I get a picture. The Kressendorf of was heated by coal ovens.

Not everywhere.

OK, but in certain rooms. And of course, the coal is in the actual bedroom, and there was sheets, white sheets. And some of the ash went on that. And for that, he was going to be sent away. Did you meet him after the book came out or not?

No. No. I meet one of the guys who made this liberation act, who placed some explosive under the railway of my father. We have to tell the whole story, then, of what-- this was an assassination attempt.

Assassination attempt.

Tell us what that was, now in a grown-up voice, rather than as a child. What happened in this instance?

About 20 Polish guys wanted to kill my father, and placed a bomb under the railway in the wood on the way from Krakow to Lemberg, as far as I know. But the bomb exploded a little bit too early, so only the locomotive was out of order, and not much more worse happened. But if you drive today to this wood, you can't believe it-- they made a monument for those 20 brave Polish gentlemen.

And you are 50 meters away. What do you see in golden letters? Government General Hansa Franka, and very small, the 20 names of the 20 fighters. I couldn't believe it, but I have seen it myself-- unbelievable.

So were the 20 caught? Were they caught?

I don't know exactly. I think most of them have survived because then, this one gentleman, he said he would have laughed that also Niklas would have been sitting in this train and the explosion would have been successful, so both my father and me. I think he meant with Niklas all the family.

And some Polish people were upset about it. And I said immediately, that's OK. That's OK. This man was right.

We have killed so many innocent children. Why should he be on the other way because only that I am young, that he don't want to have killed me? I was on his side.

And we shook hands, and I embraced him. And it was very-- and shortly afterwards, he was dead. I met him nearly 15 years later, after he has [INAUDIBLE] his sentence, [INAUDIBLE].

So one of my questions which I had anticipated would be later on, but because we're on Poland, I wanted to find out what kind of reaction your book had had in Poland when you came out with it and you wrote it. It was still before Solidarity had happened, but it still was not yet an independent Poland. And that might have had some influence.

Yes. I was a journalist with Time Magazine. And at the time, I was responsible for the printing in advance of very good books. So we printed Schindler's List in Germany first, before it came out as a book. And I was responsible and everybody was responsible for reprinting this book, only part of it, for sure. Has to write a big article.

So it was my first visit in Poland again then. And my interpreter was a man called Jacek [PERSONAL NAME] And Jacek was a teacher also in the University of Krakow for German. And he wanted-- we became friends. We are still nowadays.

And he wanted to teach the Polish students German with my book, Moj Ojciec in Polish, The Father. And the Polish students, of whom I'm sure in every family my father has killed some members, they refused to learn German with such an ugly book, because of this foul language against The Father. You can't, as I have said to Yatzich, we don't want to learn German through a guy who hates his father and who is accusing his father in such a way. Isn't it wonderful?

I mean, it's irony upon irony.

My father won, even in Poland. Yeah.

So that was--

And the second thing, then the book came out in Polish then, and it was immediately bought, the whole circulation, from the Catholic church. They also didn't want that their sheep should read such a book.

Really. And what year did it come out, '88 then, '89, after the '87 one.

No, around, I think '89, '91 or something.

'91 [INAUDIBLE]

'91.

In English, but in Polish? But in Polish.

Polish was earlier. I think Polish was earlier.

Yeah, so the Catholic church bought all the copies.

This I know by chance. A German Polish journalist, which was a friend of mine, and he saw it on the WaweÅ, cathedrals. Nearby is a big building on the WaweÅ, for the priests. And it was on the corridor, all the Moj Ojciec laying, and not as a distribution, the Catholic church will hand it over to the priests in the church. They took it away from the market.

So did it ever hit the market? Did the book ever hit?

Parts of it, parts of it. I would say about 1,000 or 2000 copies or something like this. They didn't know it from the beginning. Then they found out. Some priest must have read it, and it's also strong against, in some parts, against the Catholic church, so that we can't do this. We have to protect the Polish people against this Niklas Frank.

And that's so ironic. It's just so ironic, because you write in the book of the German priest who complains about the Polish clergy, as well as the post-war--

You have really read my book.

Pardon?

You have really read my book.

I have. We're going to take a quick break now.

Cigarette.

Action. OK, before the break, we were talking an awful lot about your childhood, your early years, which coincided with the war years when you were having your very first impressions, your very first memories. And your father was the Governor General of Poland. I'd like to take that up now with the end of the war.

You say that one of your most stark memories is when he's back at your home near Schliersee, and you break his glasses. Do you have any memories of the war ending? Do you have any memories of your life changing before the actual end of the war?

We saw all those American and British bombers starting from Italy, flying over the lake of Schliersee to Munich to have another bombardment of the city, and also to Nuremberg and so, big cities. And then, we are looking forward to the Americans came.

You were looking forward to this.

Yes, also my mother, and also my father, the stupid guy. He was looking forward that the American came. There was some brave, young Germans who seized the Bavarian Broadcasting Radio and delivered some new program.

And my father was standing there listening to the radio, and said, that's it. That's what I always wanted to have. Now it's coming. And he thought that this will be a new-- maybe he thought maybe it's a new career for me.

And then the Americans came. The lake of Schliersee is on the right-hand side. If you look to the north, there's a street. And the last SS soldiers put out something like Sperre. I don't know the English word.

Barricades.

Barricades, with big trees, but the Americans stand in front, and cut a pillar and he threw away very easily. And we could see it through from the Schoberhof. And then they came. But then the day when the Americans came, my father was in his official office.

And where was that?

It was about one kilometer, one and a half kilometers away from the Schoberhof in Josefthal, which also belongs to Neuhaus am Schliersee. And my mother was the last. Actually, she did, as Queen of Poland, she forced the other women to bring white shirts, to hang them out of the windows, like a sign of capitulation and no fighting.

When you say as the Queen of Poland, what do you mean by that?

My father, then, when he became [? the call ?] from Hitler. He drove immediately to his train, who was based then in Silesia after the first two weeks of the war.

So that's 1939.

Yes, 1939. Hitler ordered him to become the Chief of the Civil Administration of the Government General. He came

back to my mother, knelt down again, and said, Brigitte, you became the Queen of Poland.

And she took it seriously.

She took it seriously, yes, yes. She enjoyed it very much. And she behaved like this, as if she were the queen. But then the rest of my father, when we are not together.

That is when he was in his office?

Yes.

And was it right away? That is, the army comes, the US Army comes to Neuhaus, and is it an immediate thing? Or is it that they're there for some days?

There was a Lieutenant Stein, a German Jew, who was lucky enough to flee Germany before he was brought to a concentration camp or to Auschwitz. And he came back with the American Army as an American Lieutenant, or something like this. And because he was absolutely fluent in German, he was in a special branch for arresting all the top guys. And he came from the other way around, along the mountains from the Lake of Tegernsee. And then he arrested Hans Frank.

So he was looking for him.

Yes, it was a special task for him, to find Hans Frank.

It wasn't something that was-- they fell upon him and they realized, or that the army is there for a number of days, and only then somebody comes. It was immediate.

No, no, it was completely different. He was arrested on the 4th of May, 1945, in his office. And Lieutenant Stein entered the room.

He was sitting with his last love affair, the secretary Helena [? Krapchik, ?] his cook, his adjutant, Mr. [PERSONAL NAME], and two other, another lady and another man. And Lieutenant Stein entered the room and said, "Who of you is Hans Frank?" That was-- my father really have disappointed.

Insulting him.

Because he insulted, because he was very proud. The New York Times published a list of the most-wanted war criminals, and number one was Hans Frank. He was very proud about this. And so he had--

You know about it in Schliersee?

It was earlier, when he was still in the government as a Governor General. Then The New York Times published it. But the thing is that one month ago, I got an email from a lady from America, Monica.

This is this year, 2016.

And she wrote me, said her father arrested my father. And I wrote back to her that that's strange, because I knew exactly it was Lieutenant Stein, but there was another soldier and the driver in this open Jeep. And she said, maybe it was the other guy was my father. He's already dead.

And then I asked her, please tell me what was happening. What was the memory of your father? And she said that when they entered, this room, this office room, my father was standing with a pistol at his head, pretending that he is now killing himself.

And Monica's father went to this guy, to Hans Frank, said, "No, no, we will take care of it." Took away the pistol and arrested him. So I don't know. I don't have another proof, but that's brand new for me.

And I told it to other family of mine, and two of them, two nephews, sons of my brother Michael, said as far as they know, it could be possible. Because my father had a golden pistol, which was made from the Jews in Krakow by force. But I interviewed, for my book, this Helena. The last love of my father.

The secretary.

The secretary. And she told me about this golden pistol. And I asked her, Mrs. Winter-- she was married then, family name, Winter, Mrs. Winter, why didn't he commit suicide? And she smiled at me and said, Niklas, therefore, he was too much of a coward. And so I think that the new story of Monica's father might not fit in. And that was because I think Helena would have told me.

Now, where was Lily? Was she out of the picture?

No, she was still there. She was living in [PLACE NAME] which is about 50 kilometers away. And my father very often was with her, when he has lost his government general. And he must have seen, on the 4th of May in the morning that the Bavarian farmer, an old guy with a white flag, rode on his horse in front of my father's office to the Americans. And also that it's--

We're surrendering.

Josefsthal is surrendering.

Do you remember then, you didn't see your father anymore after that his arrest.

No, but in the morning, Brigitte, Norman, and Sigrid, visited him by cycle. And he said to them, maybe I'm the last Vice Minister in freedom who can ever offer you some cake and something to drink. And then he urged them to go, because he was expecting someone, somebody.

OK, OK, so he was prepared.

Yes. He handed over to Lieutenant Stein voluntarily 42 volumes of his so-called Dienstag Buch, diary of duty, from the first to the last day of the government general.

That's a huge--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

Printed edition, and he saw it because of his fight against Himmler, who was a really powerful guy in the government general. He wanted-- he was sure that the Americans would acknowledge his fight and let it--

Tell us a little bit about this struggle. You mentioned it in your book, that Himmler had a representative in the government general.

Mr. Kruger.

Mr. Kruger. Tell me a little bit about how your father's duties were delineated, and how the SS under Himmler was delineated, and what were they supposed to be doing, and what actually they were doing as their duties?

Originally, my father was the Chief of the Civil Administration. But the Civil Administration also was everything, was also the police. But on the other hand, as every dictator does it, [SPEAKING LATIN]. He divided the responsibilities, and he gave the responsibility for the police, and for the SS camps, and for the extermination camps, to Himmler.

So you're talking Hitler divided.

Hitler divided, and he was a dictator. And my father wanted always that Himmler, that he was in state as the first position, as the deputy of Hitler. And also, Mr. Kruger should be his servant. And he was always keen to prove that he is in power of everything, also, of the SS, which was thinking in his brain was a big mistake.

Later on, during the trial, he always said it was Himmler. It was only Himmler, what was rubbish. Because without the civil administration, Himmler couldn't have run the extermination camps. It was always with the help of the civil administration, to get the Jews all together in the ghettos, and all this kind of stuff. It was always together with the civil administration.

So your father kept this diary, a Dienstbuch, which is sort of--

Dienst Tagebuch

Dienst Tagebuch-- was this something that he would have submitted to Hitler or to Berlin for them to see? Was this just his notes to himself?

It wasn't just notes. He had two stenographers who always had to write down all his speeches, every session of his government, everything-- where he is, what he is delivering on speeches. They're always around him. And it was printed in this 42 volumes.

So it's not his handwriting. It's actually printed.

Oh, no, it's always [INAUDIBLE]. He never had any handwriting in this.

Now in your book, you mention that in the last days, he was doing some falsification.

He tried, together with Helena Winter, because the last one wasn't printed. So they could change some pages.

So it wasn't much that he was able to change.

No, they were really printed volumes.

So in other words, this is proof of what he did during the time he--

Exactly.

And he hands this over when he's arrested.

Yes, voluntarily. And he told one of the psychiatrists who had access to the prisoners at Nuremberg all my relatives, everybody urged me to destroy this diary. But I wanted to show the world what I was fighting for, and so I voluntarily handed it over to the American. And one of the attorneys, attorneys at Nuremberg said to his secretary, there is this bloody stupid guy, Hans Frank, who handed over all the proofs against him. And he really was right.

Did you ever read any part of those diaries?

Oh, yes. Some parts I can know by heart. For instance, when he was traveling, after we invaded Soviet Union, Galicia was the capitol of Lemberg, or Lviv, or Lvov was-- came to the government general. And one year after this invasion, he came to the City of Lemberg, addressing about 300 German administration people, and said, "I just came through this old Jewish nest.

By the way, I didn't see anybody of those flat-footed Indians. What have you done with them? Had you ever done

something evil to them?" And the protocol is writing, "Great hilarity."

Can you say this in German to me, how he said it in German, if you remember at?

He said in German, Ich bin eben durch dieses Judische Nist Lemberg gefahren, und habt, aber, festgestellt dass es gar kein mehr von diesen plattfussigen Indianern gibt. Habt ihr etwa etwas bÄ¶ses mit den gemacht? Und das Protokol sagt, "Grosser Heiterkeit." So everybody knew about what was going on with the Jews.

So he was being funny. Are there other parts of these diaries that remain in your memory?

Yes. Whatever happens after the war, maybe you can make mincemeat out of the Polish, or Ukrainians, or whatever is running around here. Well educated man, my father was, playing wonderfully piano, knowing Shakespeare by heart, and our German most important poet, Goethe. And he was saying sentences like this.

Is it through these pages that you got to know him?

No, I knew him before, through all the documents I had. But through the diary, all that was with me.

And what other kinds of documents did you have in order to--

A lot of letters he wrote, because my mother always kept them, also very nice letters in early times of their marriage, and then very ugly ones. And the most ugly ones is that he wanted-- he really, terribly wanted a divorce. And knowing what was going on in his country, the mass murdering of Jews, he wrote to my mother, "I will go into the dark.

I see mountains of corpses. Don't follow me. Please give me free, and stay out of it, and give me the divorce." And inside is not written down, "that I can marry Lily."

So he took the Holocaust as a trick to get the divorce. Nice guy. He gave a shit about the truth and all the others, like my mother. My mother has a lot of friends with the Jewish agency, called Judische Agenten, who had all this dealing with furs and--

You're talking before the war.

Yes, but she met them again, when she was entering the ghetto, the Krakow ghetto and the Warsaw ghetto, and looking for furs and other precious things. She must have seen some of them again. And there's a scene which I wrote in my other book against my mother. There was a Jewish agent of hers with whom she had really very good business.

So this is a pre-war relationship. It started pre-war.

Yes, yes, but then it was before America entered the war. All the German Jews tried to get a visa for the United States and other countries. And he was standing in this row, and suddenly, he saw my mother walking by with two girlfriends of hers.

And he went to her, and saying, I'm your old agent, Mrs. Vice Minister. I'm Flombaum. I terribly need a visa. Could you please help me.

And my mother answered to him, that's strange. My husband told me there are no difficulties. You will get your visa, I'm sure of. I have also got my passport for diplomats. So I would say 70 to 30, you will get your visa.

Since I know of one of the girlfriends who accompanied her. He didn't show up after the war, though. They must have killed him, the Germans, my father. But after the war, the Schoberhof was plundered.

Tell us about that. How did that happen?

In Germany, you call it Zwangsarbeiter.

Forced laborers.

Forced laborers from the Ukraine, and from Russia, and from Poland, especially from Poland. And now suddenly, they are free, and suddenly, they are their own masters. So they entered the Schoberhof and plundered it.

And my mother took the three small children, Brigitte, Michael, and me, to a neighbor of hers, Mrs. von Langsdorf, and told her, can you hide us because I fear for the life of my children? And by the way, here's this big hand pack. Please, could you hide it as well, and I will get it back in two or three weeks. Then I will-- time goes by. And we slept up there under the roof.

In the attic.

And when three weeks later, my mother ordered Mrs. von Langsdorf to bring her back the bag. Fortunately, she was curious enough and had a look in it. And it was full of jewelry, and Halsketten and Armbanden and--

Necklaces and bracelets.

All this kind of stuff. But she gave it. And then my mother-- there was no Mercedes left, just her cycle. And there was a camp for displaced persons, where Jewish people who had survived were in certain areas to wait for the visas.

And she took two or three of those precious things, and drove to this camp. And two of the Jews recognized her again. They knew her from her visits in the Krakow ghetto.

And how is the Jewish humor? They addressed her still "Frau Minister." My mother said to them, I have this. You can get it, but I need flour, butter, meat, to nourish my children.

And during the night, they come in old car with all the stuff. And they made a fortune. And we don't have to starve anymore. That was my mother.

Oh, my goodness.

My mother, on the other hand, was, I think, the only person I met in my life who was living strictly to reality. When the Third Reich and her luxury was over, she acknowledged it immediately. It's over now. It's over.

She never glorified in front of me the Third Reich, the powerful living she had, all the servants, all this kind of stuff. She never glorified it. Now she was poor again like in the beginning of her life.

And now she had to nurse five stupid children. And she did it. She did it. So she died worn out in the age of 62.

And what year?

'59 on my birthday. We had another interview this morning. I answered this question.

That's right, you did.

Mustn't have been.

That was the one before rather than-- we'll talk about that later. But I want to go back to things that you just mentioned right now about her being in the ghettos and doing dealings. I don't think we talked about that in the morning.

I don't know much more about it. I know by my own visit, and I knew by the friends, for instance by Tante Margot and all the other, said that very often was in the ghetto, always. And you have to imagine the Jewish people, who have the

last shops and last precious things. And if it was the wife of the Governor General shows up, they had the desperate hope that if they sell her for a cheap price, maybe she would do something that they can survive. My mother didn't do nothing about it.

So she just took advantage of her ability to-- now was the Schoberhof filled with all of these types of items, of paintings, of--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

No, that was the painting, which my father stole when he left Krakow, for instance, a Leonardo da Vinci, and two Rembrandts, and one Rafael, and a lot of tapestry, and jewelry from the Polish kings, and other paintings, a lot of paintings. And that was in his little house, where also his office was.

So all of that was there.

Yes. It was one of the most precious museums at the time, if you look around Europe. But this, all of this, was handed over to the Americans. And only the Rafael is missing still nowadays. I assume that this Rafael is hanging in a farmer's kitchen.

In Germany.

Yes, in Bavaria, because my mother-- I think my mother stole it. Because it was not big, this size. And got some bread, and butter, and something, some chicken.

So when the Schoberhof was plundered, it was by the first laborers. It wasn't stuff like this that they were finding.

No.

What were they actually taking when they were doing their plundering?

There were other precious things, jewelry also from my mother, and this kind of stuff. They found a lot of--

So your father is arrested on May 4th, '45. And do you remember the end of the war actually?

No. First, as every German can tell you, youngster when we saw the first Negroes-- now it's the Black African-Americans. But I thought all Americans are millionaires. And they throw down to us children a lot of chocolate. Very nice guys. Really nice guys. Very friendly. Very friendly.

And after the plundering of the Schoberhof, the Americans also put some guards around the Schoberhof.

Oh, did they?

But they also drank all the wine my father has in the cellar.

[CHUCKLING]

Now, at that point, your sister, your older sister's 18 years old. Norm is 17 years old. They're already in their upper teens. What were they doing? Were they still at home? Were they off someplace else? Were you all together?

Sigrid was working in a Red Cross hospital in Silesia at the time. But then she was back home. But before she wrote a very interesting letter to my mother in a very normal tone. It's correct?

Yeah.

Telling her, I am treating all the wounded German soldiers. And they are all very much afraid if Germany is losing the war. It was in the spring 1945.

Oh, my.

Because they I say to my sister Sigrid, what we have done to the Jews, they will never forgive us. So far that the Germans are telling you nobody knew anything. And it was Sigrid wrote it in a kind of we know this. It was like-- and imagine dear mother. I couldn't have believed it. They says it's no. [INAUDIBLE] what we have done to the Jews. So they will kill us now.

When we talked before about your father being arrested, about him being brought to trial, that he's in the first row, why is it that you visited him only once in September of '46?

It was prohibited that you can't visit the defendants. And it was a time when the trial was finished before they handed out the verdicts. There was suddenly the permission that the family of the defendants, not knowing what the result of the trial will be for them, they could visit for once their fathers.

What can you tell me about that visit?

That visit was the last disappointment concerning my father. I was sitting on the lap of my mother. He was sitting behind a window with a small [GERMAN] so we could understand each other. And I was sitting there. And my father--

Screen.

--laughed and said to me, hi, Nicky. Nice to see you. Soon we will celebrate a happy Christmas in Schoberhof. And I said to myself, why is he lying? Why is he lying? He knows that he is going to be hanged because I knew it.

Yeah, you told us earlier that there was-- it was by then common knowledge.

Yeah.

And you're seven years old, and you and you think this to yourself.

That was really disappointing.

Did he have any other words to any of the other children?

The strange thing is that my brother Michael never told anybody what our father told him, also not to his children. That's really strange. Now he's dead a long time ago.

And to Norman, he was alone without our mother because he was grown up nearly. And to Norman he said, I can't leave you anything but the manuscript which I wrote in the prison. And remember always I am a man of law. I'm not a poet. So maybe it's not all. And then I will give you one advice. Please build up here something. Baut ihr hier ein Sperre ein

Build up a defense.

A defense here and make this. And this I struggled with my brother about his comments, his advice for a life.

What does it mean?

Don't talk too much. Don't talk too much, because he was sentenced to death because of what he was talking, first hand. And I always say that was advice of my father to be a coward. But my brother Norman said, no, it was just to be silent. And I was silent. And I said, so you was a coward, huh, as your father said to you, you should be.

So that was a point of contention between you and your brother Norman?

Yeah. And then he wrote in his last letter to my brother Norman, This is. Those are the last men. We have to die in this war. We will follow millions of our soldiers, of our brave soldiers, who already has been killed in this war. And what should I do with the rest of my life, for instance? Should I be dealt in revenge from emigrants, traitors? So I prefer to be dead.

So the emigrants, really those guys like Willy Brandt, our chancellor then, was that we can't fight this dictatorship. But we don't want to do anything with it. And so they emigrate. So they were the brave ones and the really good ones.

So he hadn't got any idea. And he never acknowledged after a year of trial where the Americans, the English, and the French and the Russian have shown them a lot of documents, even a movie about Auschwitz, what kind of horrible crimes this bunch of criminals has committed. And then he is writing something like this. And he wrote to his lawyer, Mr. Seidl also to mother, please make sure that the future will see the true Frank. I was never a criminal, to my mother something like. He never acknowledged anything.

And do you remember how your mother reacted to it?

No. [INAUDIBLE] not. But there was this 18 of April in 1946. He was on the stand at the trial. And he was asked by Mr. Seidl, his defendant-- his lawyer, and asked him, have you ever had something to do with the extinguishing of Jews, extermination of Jews? And my father, after a short silence, he said, yes. I never ordered to build up a concentration camp. But if I now look back, what we have done in my own diary is a witness against, what we have said, what we have done. I only have to acknowledge this guilt. 1,000 years will pass without taking away this guilt from the German people.

Your father said this?

Yes. Now, I ask you, when I am asked from my lawyer, have you personally something to do with the extermination camps, why I suddenly distribute my guilt on 80 million other German shoulders? And I just have finished a book from a German defense lawyer. And all the defense lawyers were sitting there, as he remembered, and saying, what is this Frank doing?

At first he admitted his personal guilt. And suddenly it's vanished about 80 million shoulders. So this was also the lead for the German people how to react. We never acknowledged our guilt. We have built a lot of monuments. And we are a beautiful example for the other world what we have done with our past and how great we were in acknowledge. It's just the surface. The German people, still I'm very much afraid of.

Why?

They never acknowledged our crimes, never. It was just we have to do this because the world is looking for it, that the Germans have to do something. So we built some monuments. And the German historians did a very good job. There is no German crime which was not thoroughly researched and written down. Everybody can read it. But also, if you read it as a normal German, you will never acknowledge it really.

Why?

Because the Germans have a lack of empathy. The Germans can't put themselves in the soul or in the situation, let's say, of a Jewish mother who has two children who is forced by German soldiers, or German [INAUDIBLE] police into a cattle car, is driven through days and nights without any food or water, embracing her little children, and then thrown out of the cattle car to the ramp of Auschwitz, for instance. And then they took away the two children.

They can't do this. When I'm reading in schools or somewhere, I always said, have you ever tried to do this? Every German knows what really had happened, what we have done. Have you ever put yourself in a situation like this? And so I don't know. They don't do this. They can't do it. That's the special thing about the Germans.

But in this, this takes our story away from your life and the post-war development of it. But we're talking now about German society. And this is a very dim view of Germans as a people. And it doesn't sound, how shall I say it? I need to have more proof. I need to have more sense of how can you make such an overall arching statement that Germans have no empathy?

Well, I live within my German people. I know them. Also, for instance, was our chancellor Mrs. Merkel did this open up for the refugees from Syria. Around the world, they applauded her, said, that's a great thing. And I also was suddenly proud.

But now we do have about 600-- it was last year about 600 different burning down of homes for refugees. We have beaten up people. We have even killings. So you have to see the German people like a dark ball. And on this ball, let's say we are 80 million on this ball. Out of this 80 million-- and I make it very positively-- let's say are 10 million Germans who are on this dark ball.

They are running around. They are really true democrats. They are really looking that we stay a democracy. But this ball is still very, very ignorant and very, very against everything what is hurting them and their bad conscience, I would say.

Do you feel this inside yourself?

No, I am one of the 10 million who are [VOCALIZING] around.

Let's turn back. When your father said these different things to your siblings and said to Norman that all I leave is maybe this manuscript and his piece of advice, was there anything else that he said to any of the girls?

No. I don't know.

You don't know.

They didn't talk about it.

All right. After you visited him, was there any discussion at home about the visit?

I don't remember but must have been. I asked my brother Norman, but decades later, and he said, we still had hope because the visit was before the verdict came out.

Ah. I see.

Which I found out very late, because in my first book I write that it was after the verdict came out. So you can say it's a mistake which makes the truth even stronger. I was so sure that he will be hanged. I didn't need the verdict, yes, it was before the judges handed out the verdict. I always thought it was afterwards. And then I found out, no.

It's before.

Now I know exactly the date it was. It was around the 17th of September when we visited him. And the verdicts came out on the 1st of October. So guilty or not guilty was said on the 30th of September.

So was after you visited.

It was the death penalty or 20 years or life imprisonment came on the 1st of October.

Did you ever shed any tears about your father? Did you ever shed any tears?

But the strange thing was when I was sitting together with Philippe Sands, the international lawyer who made a film

also about me, I was sitting in a cell, like the same in which Hans Frank was sitting during the trial in Nuremberg. I was exactly the same measurement. And when Colonel Andrews came with the guards to get him to the gallows on the night of the 16th of October, 1946, they opened the door, and my father was kneeling. And there Father O'Conner accompanied Andrews and the guards said, Father, my mother used to give me the cross on my forehead before I went to school every morning. Please do this as well.

And when I was telling this Phillippe inside the cell, I suddenly was very near to my father. And the first time I think I really had some pity for him. Suddenly, I always said it's the action of a [INAUDIBLE] [? actor. ?] And suddenly in this cell, I got the idea maybe it wasn't [INAUDIBLE] [? actors ?] kind of thing.

But he has this terrible, terrible urgent wish to be young again, to have not committed any crimes, and to be an innocent human being again. And at this moment, I felt something of emotion for him, I would say.

And that's so many decades later. That's just very recently.

Well, because you have always pictures of his victims in the brain.

Mm-hmm. Tell me how life progressed for your family after that? What happened with your mother? How did she--

My mother published the book of my father. It was first published by a publishing company, but it was a total flop. And then she took over, founded her own publishing company, [GERMAN]. And at first she addressed every Catholic priest. She printed the book-- I will never forget it-- for 4 mark 50 pfennig and sold it for about 19 marks 50 pfennig. And she never paid a penny of taxes. So she made quite a fortune, I would say, about 200,000, 250,000 Deutsche mark, German marks then.

That's a lot of money then.

So she suddenly had again fur and was sitting in her beloved Hotel Carlton in Munich having tea in the afternoon. After the Catholic priests came the Protestant pastors. Then there comes industries. She always addressed them personally and always was telling them-- we were in the meantime, we were grown ups. But she-- or nearly grown ups. Michael and me were about 15, 16 years old.

And she wrote my little children, they are starving and so on. Please buy this copy, and you will prolong our life. So [INAUDIBLE]. And so she did it. And the director of VW, for instance, immediately sent us a gift, one car to us. So my mother immediately made up a company for renting a car.

No! Really?

She was really brilliant. And I really, as you can see how I tell you this, I have a different approach to my mother. And I found out, which I have never written because my books were finished, I found a letter, which I didn't really see before. In this letter to a friend she wrote, when I remember the time's gone by, we really were merciless. And that is, at least, a very honest acknowledgment also what she has done.

It sounds like you were looking throughout your whole life for some kind of self-reflection of that kind.

Yes, because I knew everything. You have to imagine that this WaweÅ, just a Government General and especially the WaweÅ, was like a king's [? yacht. ?] Everybody knows each other. The SS was completely integrated. Also, Mr [? Krueger ?] was also sitting on the WaweÅ,.

So there were a lot of friendships in between and sexual relationship with all the secretaries involved. So everybody knows everything about the extermination of the Jews, how it works in the Krakow ghetto, how it works in the concentration camp of Plaszow. And all this kind was quite-- and also my mother knew everything exactly.

And this letter which you found after you published your book, which was in 2005, is the first time you see any kind of

acknowledgment, reflection from her.

Yes, it was written down, Written down maybe I don't know to whom. Maybe she has told it some Tante Margot or Tante or the friends. Really she had a lot of good girlfriends.

You do mention that she herself was arrested. Why was that?

It was Minister [PERSONAL NAME] of Bavaria government in 1947. He was an ardent fighter against national socialism. And so he thought also the wives are responsible. So everybody who was living in the Bavaria state was imprisoned then in [PLACE NAME], also my mother, also Mrs. GÃ¶ering and Mrs. Frank and Mrs. [? Funk, ?] I think.

And did she talk about what her situation was like?

She was great. I visited her. She was laughing. She was smoking. She was brown by sun, brown faced. And when she came back, she said it was the most wonderful holiday I had. She was very pragmatic. And she loved it there without the stupid children. But there was no Hilda around anymore. She had to deal with us after the war.

So what happened to Hilda? She couldn't--

She married and had one son. Her husband committed suicide. And after-- and when-- but then also she has died. Also her son committed suicide. Was it had nothing to do with the Nazi time.

When did you start really investigating and reading?

It was always, by the way, when I was 22. When I met my wife first, I was 22 years old. And at first, after the first kisses, you are telling your biography. So I was telling her mine and telling her, once upon a time, I will write about my father. I forgot about it. And I have sadness. And I was nearly 50 when I did it, really.

I wanted first subconscious and then full and full conscious. I said, I don't want that my parents ruined my life. That's my life. By God's plan or by coincidence I was born into this family. So I will have my own life as Niklas Frank and not as a son of those two.

Your discussions with your siblings, did they take place over a course of many years?

Yes. When all of us we were together, immediately we were in discussion about our parents. It was always the same.

And can you tell us about what was discussed?

It was always discussed, the main topic was, was he innocent, or was he guilty? I had the documents. I had nothing, they had their love. I had no love. But I had the documents.

And they didn't have any desire to read any of those documents?

They have read it. I know from the children of Michael, for instance, was an ardent defender of the innocence of our father. He read this. Two German scientists gave out a short cut of the 42 volumes of this [GERMAN]. It was such size. And he read it during a holiday.

And his sons have seen him sitting all day long, very, very sad at the beach reading this. But he never opened up to say what I have just read, it's so unbelievable. He must have read the sentences I quoted before. They are in there. But he was always defending him.

And we are told they knew more about different situations in the family. They were telling them, laughing about it. And I was very interested to hear all this. But I don't know because I was the youngest one. It was always very funny when we were together, always, also when we are struggling against each other. We never lost our-- I would say we never lost

our love.

Well, that was my question is, what kind of relations you had with each other after that?

Great, very good, very good. But when my book came out, my brother Michael, he attacked me in public heavily, that I'm a liar and nothing is true what I have written and all this kind of stuff. But we decided you can do this. I go my way. And we have nice children, so we don't let destroy our personal relationship. But that was a good idea.

And what about--

And it worked.

And what about you said, Brigitte, your sister, Gitte?

Gitte, she was always very funny when we were together, was a funny one. But then you don't have to forget we all had a profession. So we went out every weekend together. It was two or three times in a year.

But she took her own life.

She took her own life, yes.

And why?

She had cancer. But as the doctors told me, she could have survived about five, six, seven years. But she has written in a diary when she was 16 years old, I don't want to become older than [GERMAN], or our father. And this was a self-fulfilling promise, which she did.

Did she have children?

And she did it in an awful, very awful manner. She had from two different husbands two sons. And with from the second husband, her son, he was eight years old when she committed suicide. And she did it the following way.

She took this eight-year-old boy into her bed in the evening, told him, now it's a nice day. Let's sleep together. So he slept throughout the night. And when he woke up, his mother was lying beside him dead because she committed with a lot of tablets and alcohol. And what a gruesome, what unbelievable for this poor child, no? This I don't understand.

Did this burden, was it visited on your children, the other generation, the children of your siblings?

I don't know about burden. If you acknowledge something, most of you are, like me, when I think of my father, when I think of the victims, and when I think of what he could have done to leave his job and to go into the inner emigrations, that's for-- I'm always furious about him, still furious. Why has he done it? But it's not a burden.

Then maybe I'm choosing the wrong word. But nevertheless, it's an influence.

For sure, it's an influence.

It was an influence, and it was something that--

I never--

--became part of your life.

I never had a father that was a carpenter or the engineer or a teacher. It was always this bloody Hans Frank.

And so my question still stays. Was the third generation affected by who he was?

For sure. The best way I did for my daughter, which she told in an interview-- I was really surprised. She said, my father built around me a wall because of what he has written and what he has done. But he doesn't mean it the way he built up a wall that I don't know anything, on the other hand, that I can live secured. I know everything what my father found out about my grandfather, so I can lead my own life, my happy life.

That's a huge thing.

I was very satisfied when I heard this. She never said to me.

Yeah. But it's a huge thing for a child to feel that.

Well, she said it when she was grown up not as a child.

Can we cut just for a second?

Action.

Action. So with your other siblings, did you have any-- once your eldest sister left for South Africa, did you have contact with her?

I visited her once when I worked in South Africa. She was living in Johannesburg. And she knew my book. It was published in the meantime. She also had read it. But she said only something like, so you have something written, haven't you? [INAUDIBLE] more.

So she didn't comment on it.

But I know it. She was very furious about it, like my brother Norman, by the way. He also was very furious about the book.

Why?

Because of this advice of our father.

To stay silent.

He never wanted to be in public. And so he also wanted never to be in public discussion about what his father has done. That was the main reason.

And this was quite public.

It was, yes.

This was quite public.

And it was the first book in Germany [INAUDIBLE]. It was also-- it sounds a little bit vain, but it was the only book in German literature of-- no, not literature, in Germany from an heir of some top Nazi who attacked his father in the very foul language. That was a significant thing.

Was that something [GERMAN]? That is, did you think about it consciously when you were writing it that I want this style?

No.

Or was this--

I spent 12 weeks for my-- so as holidays. And I wrote it down. It was in 12 weeks.

And this had been after you had been looking at the documents and--

Yes, so I had nearly everything together. But it never will end. In the meantime, I have a lot of more documents.

Mm-hmm. Around the same time, Peter Sichrovsky wrote a book called [GERMAN]. Do you know any of the children who he interviewed for that book?

Peter Sichrovsky was a friend of mine. And I asked him, and it's all invented.

Really?

It's all invented. I would say so. It's all invented. It's too perfect. And never anybody of those people showed up, never. And there's also another proof that everything was invented. I know him. Later on, he became very right wing in Austria with the [GERMAN]. It's a very right-wing party. He was sitting in the EuropÃ¶isch parliament, European parliament.

Well, because-- they were given anonymous names, or they weren't named. That's true.

Everything was invented. I told him personally, like, Peter, come on. I will never publish it. You have invented it. But he didn't say no. I remember. He didn't say no. He just laughed it away.

Mm-hmm. So this is-- so in other words, this is your supposition rather than having actual proof that he--

Yes, yes. No, no. He would never admit. It was a bestseller. And it also was transcribed for theater. And so-- but I'm right. I know this.

Did other children of other Nazis get in touch with you after your book was published?

Yes, in a negative way, the son of Hess friends. And we were invited to a talk session for the Bavarian Broadcasting System. And he said, OK, I will come. And then he heard that also I will show up. And he immediately canceled his appearance.

And there was an American author, Jerry Posner, who also, by the way, files closed about the killing of Kennedy. And he wrote a book also about the descendants of the big-shot Nazis. And he was standing at my office at Stern magazine, handing me over the telephone number of the daughter of Hermann Goring, Edda Goring. And said to me, Niklas, it's better if you call her first. I terribly need an interview with her for my book. It would be great.

And I said, OK. Give me the number. And I dialed. And somebody got to the phone, saying, Goring? And I said, hello, Mrs. Goring. My name is Niklas Frank. Besides me is standing Jerry-- and then she interrupted me, said, one moment, one moment. Are you the one who has written this unbelievable ugly book about his father? And I said, yes and bung!

There went the telephone.

It was the telephone dead. And the son of Bormann, who was a priest-- but later he wrote also a book about his father-- is not a priest anymore. And he has also written a book. And one of the journalists, Mr. [PERSONAL NAME] interviewed him. And in this interview for his book, he said he would like to get together, to come together with Niklas Frank.

And Stern magazine, the chief editor told me, man, that's a good story. Let's do it. And you talk to each other. And then they arranged it. But in the meantime, Mr. Bormann, Junior, whose first name also is Martin, Mr. Bormann has read The

Father and didn't want to have to do anything with me.

Was there-- why do you think that's the case? Because you were so vociferous, so unrelenting about your father? Were there reasons that were ever given to you?

Martin Bormann, for instance, yes, we had a lot of lessons in school, yes? And he always used to have a picture with him of his father. And he said to the auditorium, I know my father was a criminal. But I also know that he was a most wonderful father.

And if you say this in Germany, immediately the sight of the crimes which your father has committed is gone. And in the German brains is still alive a wonderful father. What about those bloody crimes? They are gone, but a wonderful father.

This Peter [? Zukowski ?] you mentioned before, he is Jewish. He was personally saved by an SS officer out of a cattle car, as far as I know, yes?

Mm-hmm.

He was blue eyed and blond haired. Yeah? And I told it in a big auditorium only once. I said, there also was an SS man who, for instance, saved a Jewish boy was looking like an Arian boy, blue eyes, blonde hair. And you can see it. There was about 300 people in this. They all leaned back very happy suddenly. We haven't done anything bad. We have saved a little boy. So the complete crimes were gone. So I've never done this again.

But this is what Norman also says in the book that you write about your brother. The title of it is that I know he's a criminal. I'm paraphrasing.

I still love him.

But I loved him. That sounds to me like a very genuine perspective.

Yeah. But it's the same logic, like I just told you about this Peter Sichrovsky about--

Bormann.

Pardon?

About Martin Bormann explaining this in classrooms.

Yes, but also Peter Sichrovsky telling about his being saved by an SS man. So this love is immediately-- whatever my father has said or done, it's gone. It's still the love. Therefore I became an alcoholic, and my brother was drinking milk, if you don't acknowledge the truth.

I'll tell you how my mother was. When the sentences were delivered from the judges, it was broadcasted lively, yes? My mother has written down with her pencil all the names, Goring, Ribbentrop, Funk, Keitel, Seyss-Inquart, all the names. We're sitting in front of the radio with a pencil. And who was sentenced to death she made a cross; by 20 years, 20 years; Life, L; and so on. And when it came to her husband, Hans Frank, getting the death penalty, she made in all coolness a cross. Great. That's acknowledgment of what is the reality.

Therefore I love my mother. She was not pretending that, oh, this innocent guy. She knew exactly that he has deserved it.

So how come her children didn't? I mean, a mother can influence--

It's a big taboo around the world. You should honor your parents and love them whatever they have done.

So you mean the 10 commandments?

I acknowledge this taboo. Yes, something like this. But I can't do it. It's for sure I didn't run around the table and [INAUDIBLE]. So it was my advantage. And they have that advantage that they have very lovely memories of our father. So they're bigger struggle if they would have succeeded. They're struggle would have been much stronger than mine.

I couldn't stand this guy. But they really have loved him. He was very funny, my father. He was very funny. He was very Bavarian style if he was at home and he was in good mood. So they had a heavy task. And my brother Norman, he tried it lifelong. But he was open at least to my documents.

And we were sitting together. There's a lot of speeches of my father still recorded. You can hear him, yes? And we were sitting and hearing them. My brother was so furious, like I was. He couldn't stand this crap that my father was speaking.

So of all of the children, he was with you on that. He was somebody who could say, yes, this is no good.

Yes. Yes.

But you've done something else is that you've made it all public, that is your relationship to him, your relationship to your mother, your relationship--

No, it is not so. No, no, no. I didn't mention my first book because Gitte was dead already. All the other was still alive. I never mentioned a sibling of mine, never, because they are not they address.

So therefore, I never mention it. I wrote it as if I was only child of them. It's an etiquette thing. You can't do this without permission of this guy. So when I wrote my mother, only Norman was still alive. And when I wrote Norman, Norman was already dead. Before, I would never have done it.

OK. Let me rephrase it then.

In a good English.

[LAUGHS] I'll try. Nevertheless, you explore, you put to the public your-- in German, it's [GERMAN], but your thoughts, your questions, your accusations, your critique, whatever it is, you put that in your relationship with your father first, then with your mother, and then with Norman.

Yeah.

In one of the reviews, it's sort of like, you say that, OK, I've undressed us for the world to see. That's a paraphrase, but that's something of what it's like.

Yes, because what always disturbed me very much, that is the silence in Germany, this not acknowledging what we have done. We shouldn't go around with doggish eyes and always feeling ashamed. Life is much too strong. Live your life. But acknowledge it like a result of football. Acknowledge what we have done.

We are not personally responsible. But by chance, we are Germans. So you have to-- and if you acknowledge this, then will happen the second thing. You become very, very infuriated whenever you hear again something about the crimes we have committed, yes?

Like I told you before, looking at children faces of Jewish children who were forced to go to stay-- every German, because of our school system, they learn a lot about the Holocaust. So every German has pictures in his mind. So that's the second thing. You will be ashamed, and that would be also wrong way, but become furious and get a little bit more civil courage.

The more you know about the cowardice of your parents and grandparents, the more you will find out what I found out a thousand times with myself. Ah, Niki, now you are becoming a coward. Don't do this like your father. Be strong. And it's not committing a crime. It's just a day in Stern magazine and all this kind of stuff. You can get yourself more-- yeah, more civil courage and staying as a democrat.

What do you hope or what do you think the contribution of making your life and your relation to mother, to father, to Norman public in the books-- what do you hope that it gives to the audiences, to the public?

To do it themselves in their own family. That's the only reason why I did it. We have to talk about it. We have to talk inside the families. I always recommend it when I am finished with my-- I always read out of the books, and then we have always a very lively discussion. And then I am always telling them, look at your home. Look at-- ask your grandparents if they are still alive and ask them, really, what have you experienced?

What were you-- and if they are strong, they say will say to you, my dear grandchild, I was such a coward. I knew exactly that my Jewish neighbors were thrown away. And I have to confess, I took a big, big wonderful painting out of this Jewish family. If this is-- that would be great. And I have to acknowledge I have a lot of letters, mails, personal calls, which say, the first time I started to look in the history of my family--

That was my next question, yeah.

--and I found out and said-- is for me really satisfying. Last time was-- [LAUGHS] my wife, she is not very keen to have telephone calls. And there was a man who was 65 years old. And he asked me three months before-- gave me a call. Niklas Frank is a very rare name. He found me in the telephone book and told me, I am so desperate. I know my father was this and that, but I can't find anything. He was a really simple man, I have to admit.

And I told him what he has to do, writing to this archive and this archive, always giving the exact dates of his father and so on. And then he did it. And unfortunately, my wife was on the phone. I was abroad. And he was so crazy to thank me and said, it was so wonderful. It's the first time I found out what this guy has done. It wasn't so really infamous. But he was so happy. If I get this, it's really good.

So to me, it sounds like you have gotten support.

Yeah, yeah.

You have gotten people who have said, thank you doing it.

But never forget this ball that's always up there. There's one who's asking, oh, Niklas is not bad, and so--

But one could say that about almost any people. One could say that about almost any--

Now I think I will finish this interview because you can ruin everything if you compare it with the world.

[LAUGHS] OK.

No, be serious. If you compare it with the world, you have nothing in the end. You can just say every human being has an ugly face in it. It is saying nothing. If we are talking about my life and about the jailed Germans, then I am the biggest chauvinist you can imagine. It's only the German crimes, because we have done the worst thing in the world. And we should know better.

If we don't have civil courage, we will do it again. And if you look now to Germany with the refugee problems, we are only a good [? better ?] democracy. We have never proved since '45 after we lost the war that we are really a democracy, that we have really a civil courage. That is it. I don't want to hear nothing, not even about Austria or France or Greece or Poland or here, the Republicans and the Democrats or the American dictatorships. It doesn't interest me.

I am a German, and I want to make sure that the Germans, we are like the Jews. We are a chosen people, but not through God, through our crimes. And we should know exactly how far it can lead if you don't have civil courage. It leads my father to the gallows, and it leads a million of innocent people into the death. So never mention this again that other people also have done this. Bah.

I think you're right. I think this is the conclusion of our interview.

Thank you. See you.

Wait, no, no, please. We still have to do it officially. [LAUGHS] But thank you very much for that. And thank you very much for the rest of the interview and sharing your thoughts with us and sharing much more.

Thank you.

Do you have any other things you would like to say?

Oh, a lot of questions which weren't asked.

[LAUGHTER]

Oh, boy.

[INAUDIBLE]. You were really great.

But truly, is there any final word?

No, no. That was a final word. It makes me crazy. Sorry for my--

That's OK.

--attacking you, but this I--

That's OK.

It's always-- it's two questions if I have a public--

Presentation.

--discussion. Presentation, discussion. The first is always, they're asking me, now you have written three books about your family. Do you feel free now?

[LAUGHS]

What a stupid thing. And I always say, are you a German? You are a German. How did you deal with your parents, your grandparents? There may be love, big [INAUDIBLE]. But what have they done? Have you ever looked at it? How do you feel? You have the pictures in your brain with the killed people. How do you react? Why I am example for you? Everybody has to do this. That would be good.

And the second is this sort of evening out by saying everybody.

Yeah, yeah.

Yeah. Yeah.

Haven't you seen that Greece? And haven't you seen the Americans in [? Fulai, ?] [? Felai, ?] the crimes? And then the atom bombs of--

Nagasaki, Hiroshima.

--Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And the Russians with the gulags. And the German guilt--

It floats away.

--diminishing, diminishing, diminishing.

That was not necessarily my sense in making a comparison, as much as saying, isn't this part of our human condition?

I don't be interested in the human condition.

Ah. OK.

[LAUGHTER]

If I go on this platform, we can talk three more days, and it's just rubbish.

OK.

Because you don't have really something. I know my German people. In the end of my presentation, I used to say, I love Germany. I really love Germany. But I don't trust you, the Germans. And they would [GASPS]. [LAUGHS]

So thank you.

Again, I ruined your microphone.

No, no. But what I will do now is officially end and say, thank you, Mr. Frank. Thank you, Mr. Niklas Frank.

You're welcome.

And with this, this concludes the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Mr. Niklas Frank on June 6, 2016 in Washington, DC. [INAUDIBLE]

Ina, be quiet.

[LAUGHTER]

So do I have to do the whole, this is blobbity?

I would say that-- are you cutting?

Yes.

This is Leslie Swift recording a segment of an interview with Niklas Frank on June 6, 2016. And we will be focusing right now mostly on Niklas's book and what he talks about, his father and his family, in the book.

So, Niklas, we spend a lot of time studying here at the museum what leads people to otherize Jews and other people to the point where they are no longer human and thus disposable. Can you trace for us, to the best of your understanding, the personal journey that led your father from being someone who was trained in the law and presumably respected it to

the acceptance and even enthusiastic participation in mass murder?

I think-- I know my father wasn't an anti-Semitic. And he wanted to have a career. And if Hitler would have chosen not to Jews but, let's say, the Italians or the Gypsies or-- Gypsies he had already chosen as well-- or, let's say, the Swedish people, he would have said the same sentences against them. It was just that he wanted to be near to Hitler, and he wanted to have a good career.

So he didn't have this underlying anti-Jewish feeling that some of the other true believers did.

No. I have his youth diary. He wrote it-- it's not very thick. He wrote it in the time when he was 17 till the 20th year of his life. And there was not a single remark against the Jews. And it was already after the First World War. So when Germany really was on the button and big inflation and took away some parts of Germany and all this kind of stuff, he only complained about the French and not about the Jews.

About the occupation of the Rhineland and--

Yes. Not only the occupation. I think something like they took away our girls, the French.

Mm. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. And at several points in the book, you insert brackets that serve as pleas to your father to choose another course, one that would have him stand up to Hitler and prevent him from becoming the man that he eventually became. Do you think that he-- why do you think he didn't take this path? Was it cowardice or a combination of things? What about Hitler was so attractive to him?

You have to remember the situation in Germany. Before the First World War, Germany was really a leading nation in industrialization. We got the most Nobel prizes. The American students, for instance, came studying medicine to Germany. We really was a brilliant country. And suddenly, everything was gone. Everything was gone. And it was, for sure, the Treaty of Versailles after the war which made Hitler possible.

My father wrote in his youngster's diary, Germany needs his honor back. We need a strong person who can fulfill this task. Maybe it's me. But then it was Hitler. So the middle class in Germany, and I would say most of the people, were really looking for becoming a nation again full of honor. This was the one side.

And the other side was really the economical situation, which was very bad. And there was about 10 million unemployed people growing, and we had inflation. And then suddenly, there were some people in the brown dress marching in good rows, [GERMAN] in German, the word, yes. And they had a special program, not looking to the right and to the left. Just we have our program and hitting everybody who was against it, for instance, the communists, yes?

So this was something which a lot of people attracted in Germany. And Hitler was a brilliant speaker. He was really very good. He wouldn't have succeeded if at this time was already TV, for instance. It was his personal appearance and this very, very strong speeches he delivered everywhere. And when he came to power, he really managed that the unemployment was nearly gone. And there was a big, big improvement in Germany.

There's a very famous German-Jewish historian, Sebastian Haffner. He is dead since many years. He wrote a book about Hitler. And he wrote in it, if Hitler would have died through a traffic accident in 1938, he would be remembered as a great, great statesman because he brought back Austria, and it was now really in a good employment sitting.

People, German people were satisfied. And on the other hand was this really, I would say, tilt to homosexuality, this relation from my father to Hitler. It was really, really, really personal.

And so you mentioned before that you don't think your father was a true anti-Semite the way that many of the original Nazis were, and it was more a case of expediency than anything else. And I just wondered, does that make him better or worse in your eyes, that he didn't have a belief but just sort of went along with the tide?

It didn't change anything. If you are an ardent believer, an ardent anti-Semite, you also have your Ten Commandments

in your head. You don't have to kill innocent people. And if you are only somebody who wants to make a career, it's the same. For me, it wouldn't have changed anything.

OK. And in the book, I notice that God comes up a lot. And what usefulness do you believe God served for your father? Do you think he was a true believer in any sense, even at the end? And do you have any personal memories of him speaking about God before 1945?

No, I don't have personal memories. But if you count how often all the speeches of top Nazis, starting with Hitler, going down to my father, how often they mention God. You would say that was the most religious part you ever worked in Germany. It's always the same old trick. What you are doing, you have to-- always have to go out in your sentences. No.

Yeah. And so from what I've read on the subject, God in Nazism, the concept of God in Nazism, was really cynical and cynical in a practical purpose. But God was not allowed to really supersede Hitler. And I'm just wondering, what are your own conceptions of God, if you feel OK talking about that? I mean, are you a believer? Do you have any notion of that? Unless that's too personal.

[LAUGHS]

Starting with my father, when my father was in prison, he used to write a lot of letters back home. They always were read aloud from my mother. And I really was full of contempt for those letters because there was so much-- so often mentioned God. And as a child especially, you immediately feel that's all a lie. That's not really true.

And my brother Norman said when Hitler was dead, he was looking for another guide, and he found it in God. Myself, I was brought up in a very Catholic way because Schliersee, especially upper Bavaria, was at this time very Catholic.

And I had my big struggle with God because as a Catholic, you always have those confessions. And when it came to the Sixth Commandment, it was really horrible for everybody, I would say, especially for boys. And I lost-- I never really believed in God. I never really. And in the meantime, it's-- there's a very offending word in German. It's [GERMAN]. I don't know the American version.

[GERMAN]?

Yeah. Kasperle is funny figure on the strings, puppet on the strings for children.

OK.

Yeah? And Kasperle was the name of a little-- with a big nose, who was always very funny. This [GERMAN] is something like [? passepartout ?] for this kind of stuff. I don't believe in any religions. For me, it's inventions. Maybe human beings have always this-- they wanted to have a connection to the other world. I don't believe in another world to the inness of my soul.

Mm-hmm. Well, I'm right there with you. So just a little editorializing. So when your book came out, Ina got into a little bit about the reception of it and what people-- some people were shocked and that kind of thing. Were you surprised by the reaction? And did you lose any friends? Or did your relations with other people that you knew change when the book came out?

I was very much surprised. I was especially surprised about my fellow journalists because I thought everybody of the journalists know exactly why I have written this book, because it was against the silence in Germany. But they're also only part of the German people, so they accused me the same. The friendships didn't change. No, they didn't change.

But what never came up till now is nobody is really in private asking me questions about this. Never, till nowadays. They know it's something like-- there is something ugly with Niklas. Don't touch it. It's more this way.

You mean, asking you questions about the details or--

The book, about the book, about the details, about comparing themselves and their parents. And so it never came out also with my friends.

And was that an-- so that was an explicit motivation for you to write the book. Was it because--

No, not against my friends and so. It was the silence.

The silence in Germany--

It was the only reason.

--that you wanted to break that and break it in a very shocking way and a very--

Not shocking. I didn't know that's really shocking. I was very honest when I wrote this. So if you are furious, your language isn't the best one. So I kept it. The publishing company tried to change it.

Did they? Mm-hmm.

And I said, no, not a word. If you don't want to print it, maybe I find another publisher. But I will change nothing. And they didn't change it in the end.

OK. And was it a best seller?

In the whole, I would say there's two pocket editions and about 55,000.

Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Did you receive any correspondence or fan mail that was really thankful for you to have done this?

Yes, there was, but it was only rare in comparison to the accusation I got from the people.

So one of the things I really liked about the book was your use of black humor.

Thank you.

I myself have a very difficult relationship with my family, and that's one way I get through it is to be funny about it. But one of my favorite things that you said was that you referred to Hans Frank as Rosemary's baby, which I thought was great. But can you just speak a little bit about that, about how that helps you cope, how being able to be funny while at the same time talking about this really horrible subject matter? What's your thinking behind that?

I only can repeat, I wanted to be really honest. And I didn't want to make any compromise. I didn't want to make any compromise. But if you look at our history, you can't come up with any compromise. So this I wanted to write, that we have to acknowledge what our people have done.

And I have to say that one thing that struck me also about that use of black humor was that because we work at the Holocaust Museum and we deal with this material every day, this horrible material, we also use that as a coping mechanism. So I sort of recognize that in the book as well. But here comes a non sequitur. So I was reading-- and your father at one point early on worked for the film workers' union?

Yes.

And what exactly was that?

There was a union. It was very short. I found it in one of the document. I couldn't find any more about this profession. I

think it was just to get more money.

Working for people who work for--

For the union.

--UFA or something.

Yes, everybody-- he was based in Munich. We had [PLACE NAME]. It was also a big movie city besides Berlin, and maybe-- but it was a very short time.

OK. And then while you were talking to Ina, you mentioned that your father's mother lived in Poland some of the time. Is that right? She lived with you?

Yes. He wasn't quite a happy guy, my father, when he was young. His mother left him, went with his little sister to a new lover, to Prague. So he lived with his father alone. And when my father became famous and rich, his mother suddenly showed up again.

And did she, that you recall, have any opinions, feelings about the situation in Poland, either writ large Germany's actions in Poland or specifics of what was happening to the Polish people and to the Jews? Was there any kind of sense of that?

I don't know anything special. But I know that she-- a lot of letters I have of her to his son in prison, and she always defended him as innocent.

OK.

And by the way, he hated my mother, and she was full on the side of Lilly.

Oh, OK. OK. And then at one point, you said-- when you were talking to Ina, you said that your mother was very practical and pragmatic. She really saw things the way they were. But then in the book, you say-- it's just sort of one line where you say your mother thought that unconditional surrender was wrong when it came right down to it. I guess, did she think that there was some way of preserving Germany in some way?

Not in a political way. My mother never was a member of the party. And when the power of the Frank family was at the highest point, she said to my father, and the other siblings were around her, that I know exactly. It will come a time where I will nourish my children with my typewriter machine again.

And on the other hand, it's clear. If you had a luxury life and suddenly you would like to have to go-- let it go on. So she tried, but was never-- she was politically not interested. She hated the screaming speeches of my father. And she didn't like soldiers, all those kind of uniforms. She didn't like.

OK. And so at one point, you also write your mother had a handwriting analysis done for your father.

Yeah.

And do you know why she did that?

The family of Franks and-- no, not the Franks. It was more Herbst, as she was born into the family of Herbst. And they were always having this kind of sances with the cards.

OK, so it was kind of a mystical-- OK, OK.

We grew up with it. I loved it very much, was very good.

OK. And so now to get to the film that you're donating, you've probably seen it many times by now.

No. I refuse it always.

You refuse--

But I've-- twice I must have seen it. I can't stand myself.

OK. Yeah. And so Erica Noble sent this footage to you.

Ah, this film.

That film, that film.

I thought you were-- oh, sorry. Erica always answers to me, yes.

Yes.

Sorry.

SO I'll just go over quickly the history of that so that we have that on the record. We found out about this from Erica Noble, whose uncle was friendly with your father at Nuremberg, right? Was he an interpreter or--

No.

What was the story on that?

It was Lieutenant Stein. He was who arrested my father.

The man you were talking about, right? So do you know how it ended up with him? Did he take it from your father?

My mother was very clever. She immediately became friends with Lieutenant Stein. So my mother gave him the diary, the used diary of my father. The original has vanished. And on every page of the reprint is printed copyright Lieutenant Stein, Walter Stein, which not so really honest, I would say. He also took away the leather coat of my father, which I bought back from an aunt of Erica Noble for \$500. And it's now a scarecrow at the lake, which we have at our house.

OK.

And I am enjoying it every day when I look at the coat of my father hanging as a scarecrow. \$500, the most expensive scarecrow you can imagine.

Yes.

And so they met. Lieutenant Stein, he arrested him and sent-- he must have been very often together with my mother.

OK. So he got it from your mother.

Yeah.

OK.

And he wasn't an interpreter.

OK. Was there any suggestion of any romantic--

No, no, no. He was-- no, no, no. No, no.

And so the way we found out about it was we got an email. I got an email out of the blue from Erica saying, I have this footage. Maybe you're interested. And we jumped all over it because it was just amazing. And then by the time we were trying to make arrangements for her to send it to us, she had sent it to you because she felt-- and this makes sense-- that it belonged to you because you were there.

And then we were so upset because we wanted it but understood where she was coming from. And then many years later now, we're making this happen. But I hadn't quite gotten the story of how it got from here to there to here. So it's good to have it on record, I think.

And then to continue, though, to talk about the film, which we'll watch tomorrow so we can talk about it together-- but has the film, when you've seen it, has it awakened any sympathy or more anger or any other kinds of emotions or in any way changed your viewpoint on about your family, seeing them in these intimate situations?

No. It hasn't changed anything. I was very glad to see my brother Norman was his carriage with the horses. That was nice. And the other pictures when they're sitting in front of Kressendorf. And so they're always thinking-- Norman didn't know exactly. But the grown-ups-- everybody knew what really was going on, and they're sitting there in the sun. That always gave me-- well, it infuriates me.

So it actually made it worse in a way to see this.

In the beginning of this film, there is this-- my father is sitting in the WaweÅ,, and the adjutant is coming to him. He's pretending to be working hard, looking and signing something. Oh, terrible.

Yeah. And do you think that the book would have been any different if you had had the film to refer to? Do you think you would have added details from the film or anything like that?

No.

No. Let's see. So I find the film personally especially interesting for a lot of reasons, not least because I've now spent a lot of time studying the concept of amateur film, home movies, and things like that and what it can tell us, especially how it can contradict and complement the official record, such as newsreels, propaganda pieces, Nuremberg footage, all of these places where your father appears in official capacities.

And yet here he is in this amateur film, not that he's more authentic there, but that it's a different view. And so you can put those two pieces together and get a bigger picture. And I already asked you this question, and the answer is no. But to see these two pieces together, does that complicate your view of your family life at all?

No, no.

Yeah.

I found it really interesting, this material, [INAUDIBLE], especially the scenes with the Jews.

Mm-hmm. That's incredible.

And there is one scene where--

We have nothing like that. Do you remember any-- were you on that trip? Do you remember that at all? No, no. So let's see. I think some of these questions have already been asked.

OK, so were there specific turning points for you that you can remember as your opinion of your father developed over time? And was the process in coming to terms with your mother and your brother and your other siblings a different process, perhaps because they were still alive and he was dead?

We start becoming older, we started to talk about it a lot. Whenever we met, we talked about our father and also-- more about our father and also about our mother. It was a development, which, I would say, it led to nothing. We repeated each other. I have more and more new documents. But we were still friendly, and we were really in a good mood then. And I never accused them, saying, you have to change your view and come on and--

You weren't trying to convince them.

Yeah.

Yeah. It seems that--

And for me, it's not that I have to-- my siblings I have to compare with the normal surroundings I have with other people.

Yeah.

Nobody is really, really talking about it and really saying something. It's the same with my siblings.

Right, right. And so some of the scenes in the book could be considered-- I mean, obscene is a word that has judgment attached to it, which I don't mean to imply. But there are scenes that could be called obscene. And I'm just wondering, what are you trying to say to your father with that, with those scenes? Are you trying to vent anger at him? Are you trying to say--

Not trying. I really was angry.

Right.

And if you are angry about one, you are losing your education.

Right, right.

And I was-- I will never forget it. When I wrote this, I was really happy that I really can fight him, that I really can accuse him, and that I really can counter him with very bad words.

Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. And in terms of the-- and I hope you don't mind me asking this. But in terms of the scene of the masturbation in the--

It's cut out in the American edition.

I don't think so.

Oh, for sure.

Really? How do I know about it then? I didn't read it in the German version.

In the American version, everything cut out is famous, notorious masturbation scene. [LAUGHS]

Really?

The only sentence is I even got physical pleasure. That's the only thing which was left.

Oh, OK, well, I mean maybe I read that as masturbation.

That's a big scene with-- no, a big scene because they had to cut out about four mentions of this.

That's interesting. But anyway, my point was--

The guy in the-- Jonathan Segal, American, he was--

Who?

--the publishing Knopf in New York. And he was so red faced when I told him I want to have it. And he said, well, Niklas, I know the American markets. They won't buy it. I don't have to print it.

Oh my god. We're such prudes, aren't we? But can I just tell you my reading of that scene? And you will tell me how wrong I am or if I'm-- tell me a different story. My reading of that scene is that you are doing that because you're trying to reach the ultimate point of joy and pleasure that your father is dead.

No.

No. OK, tell me.

Exactly the other way around.

OK.

You have to imagine that the nearer the 16th of October came, yes, when I was a child, the more-- not of my mother, but of my siblings and the relatives was the urge to celebrate, to celebrate a man and the innocent death of a man, which I even then despised, yes, without really knowing what he has done. And I was young, 9, 8, 10, 11 years old. And this is a big pleasure on a little soul like mine when you are young. And it was just the relief. It was just a relief.

A relief. OK, OK. OK, interesting. So it seems that it's clear that your father constantly craved Hitler's approval and was always disappointed because Hitler didn't really have much respect for him, if any at all. And that reads to me, at least, as a father-son relationship, the father constantly disappointing the son. And I wonder if that is a theme in the book in the sense that this relationships between fathers and son, is there a parallel there?

Because you were rejected by your father, and then you rejected your father. But your father never rejected Hitler till the end. And I'm just wondering if you see any parallel there, if you see any, because the whole book seems to be about fathers and sons, mostly about your relationship with your father.

But there's also-- I kept thinking there's some kind filial relation between Hitler and Hans Frank that's not being fulfilled the way Hans Frank wants it to be fulfilled. So that's not really a question. It's just sort of an observation. And I'm just wondering what you think about that theory. You can you tell me it's bullshit if you want.

No, no, no. Can be. Always the reader finds out something which the writer didn't know of that you can read it in it. I remember writing those 12 weeks where, for me, as if my father would have sitten on the opposite side, like you now, and I could tell him everything, what made me furious. This was the situation.

And whether it's in a transitional kind of art, that something is reflecting Hitler and my father and me and my father, I really don't know. I had nothing in mind. When I was sitting down the first day in the morning, I had 12 weeks holiday, so I could write it from Stern magazine. And I didn't know exactly how to write it. I had a lot of files. And then it started with the first sentence. And then I knew I had to address him personally, to you. And that was it.

I think that's a very important point because I think that really strengthens the book and makes it so much more personal

that you're actually addressing him. that. Was my feeling when I was reading it. Let's see. Oh, another thing that's sort of related is it seems to me that you take several opportunities to inflict posthumous pain on your father by constantly pointing out how little he meant to Hitler.

I mean, you do that in general. But there are several points where you're saying, you didn't mean anything to Hitler. Hitler rejected you in the following way. So I thought that was sort of an interesting device to use. Now I'm just sort of giving my own opinion. So I'm going to try and stop that.

[LAUGHS] I'm thankful that you're giving this opinion.

Let's see. Oh, so OK. This is interesting. What did or do you think about the minor criminals who escaped with their lives and even went back to normal life? Did you ever pursue any kind of legally or as a-- cover them journalistically or try to expose them?

No. I tried in all my articles to defend democracy. But I started as a cultural editor, so mostly together with the German writers and actors and so. And later on, when I was a war correspondent for Stern magazine, it was also quite another thing to deal with. And, no, it's-- now, now I am doing it with my last book on this earth about denazification.

I went into the archives in Germany and telling them, I don't give you names, but you hand me over files from A to Z, just to get a clue what the middle class, lower Nazis, the fuhrer of villages and of some areas, what they have done and how do they defend themselves. And it was really great. It's really great what you find out. You find really out that this is a very strict way from there to nowadays Germany.

Because personally, you can say, everybody who is accused can defend himself, yeah? That's for sure. That's a human right inside a democracy, for instance. But how they did it, it's so full of cowardice again. So unbelievable. So I always said before we had this big problem now with the refugees, I used to say to the people when they ask me, do you think that this will happen again?

And I always used to say yes. If we have about five to six years really heavy economical problems, for instance, we will have another Hitler. And we will build up not the gas chambers because they are too well known. But we will get other things to invent to make the guilty new ones dead.

In Germany or elsewhere?

In Germany. No, I don't think elsewhere. Just in Germany.

Just in Germany.

Because now you can see it. I never thought about the refugees because it was a brand new problem. And you see it exactly how the silent majority of the Germans really think, how they really behave, and that-- well, that I'm very much afraid of.

And have you followed at all the more current war crimes trials against the very old at this point Nazis?

Yes, I followed it in the newspapers.

Mm-hmm. And do you think it's worthwhile to still be prosecuting these people?

For sure. For sure.

And why? What do you think is the benefit?

The benefit is that maybe a little bit more people who are reading the newspaper or are attending the trial find out what we have really done and maybe think it over again and acknowledge what we have done. But most of them, they're very

old now, about 95 years old. Most of them are gone.

Yeah, yeah. And so turning back to your book, I think this is a really-- and this is the English translation, but I imagine it's similar in German. You say you "already had a full tank of that poisonous bile, which, for me, in my days of the Third Reich, was turned into chocolate and lollipops." Can you tell us what you meant by that? Does this hint that you felt any guilt from benefiting from these spoils?

No. As a child-- today, I always-- [GERMAN], Ina?

I shake my head.

I shake my head, wondering what that I was living there, swimming on a lake of blood, the same like my parents did. It's just [INAUDIBLE]. I enjoyed it very much to have a good chocolate, to have all the toys, to drive in big Mercedes. Everybody was friendly to me. It was a very good life.

And do you remember when you realized or started to realize what the trade-off was there, that--

It was after the war when the first now democratic papers came out, newspapers, in Germany called-- the first one were from the American military neuzeitung newspaper. And there were pictures of killed Jews, also children of my age then, 6 to 8, 10 years old, and always was underlined Poland. And I thought that Poland was ours.

And suddenly, my father and the whole family was connected to this corpses. That was the first shock. The same, by the way, as Norman told me. When Norman saw these pictures, he said to my mother, there is no chance for father, for our father. I think we now go into the dark. He was very pessimistic when he saw the pictures.

Mm-hmm. And do you think that-- that the experience that he had growing up, do you think that contributed to him becoming an alcoholic?

For sure.

Because he was the oldest?

For sure. Not because he was the oldest son. But he never found out a way out of this trap, to love his father, and on the other hand acknowledging that he was a criminal. But he was the wittiest alcoholic I ever came across.

So you also write in the book, paraphrasing, that your father stated or made some decree or something that Jews were vectors of disease and they were subhuman. Do you think he really believed that?

No.

And it was more of an expedient policy.

No, it was, I hope that Hitler reads it. I hope that somebody is telling Hitler what-- that I have the [? strongen ?] sentences. He was an educated man. He doesn't only say, we have to kill the Jews wherever we find them. He also said this. But he tried to be also an educated man in this kind of sentences. He didn't say this one famous sentence also. Somebody has told him that in Czechoslovakia, they make a placard, placard.

Placard, yeah.

A poster.

A poster telling about eight persons who has been killed as hostages, yes? And my father said, if I would print posters for every 50 Polish people I let shoot, the woods of Poland wouldn't be enough to get the paper.

That is a well educated sentence. It's not, I kill much more Polish people than you kill over the Czechoslovakish people. Well, that is his kind of thing. Or the other example was a flat-footed Indian. He wouldn't have done something ugly with them. That's great. That's pah!

And so he was also-- he was educated in a lot of ways. He was a piano player, you said. And there was something in the book, I believe, about him composing a song about-- he composed a song-- something to do with the composing a song of occupying territory or something like that. Does that-- am I misremembering this?

No, no. It's a poem of him.

Oh, OK. OK. And was it set to music, or it was a poem?

No, no, it was not set to music.

It was a poem. OK.

We got Strauss wrote and Hans Pfitzner, they wrote something in music.

OK, OK. And so I'm really fascinated by your mother's fascination with furs, and I have to, full disclosure, say that part of it is because I'm a vegetarian. And I find it very interesting that someone would be so just needful, I mean, an addiction to furs almost, it seemed like.

And I just-- I guess, the connection that I'm making in my mind is that here's the fact that she's literally stealing the skin of an animal from another animal, that animal being a human. And it seems to have a very deep metaphorical meaning somehow to me.

For vegetarians.

Well, for anybody. But yeah, especially for me being a vegetarian. And, again, here I'm just stating my reading of it. But I just wanted to say that because I thought it was so interesting that she-- and obviously, she worked in the fur trade before. So she was--

No, no.

Before the war.

No.

Right? No?

She was a secretary. She was always-- since her youth time, she was interested in furs. And so she made business with Jewish agents who gave her furs. And she took them in commission, sold it with much money, and got the difference.

So do you have any sense of why she was so into furs?

It's a good profession.

No, but I mean for herself.

Fur was something that--

Because it was luxury item or--

In those times-- in those times, furs was the most precious thing for women to wear. But by the way, when it came to the

divorce, my mother and my father had a different lawyer for the divorce. And then the lawyer of my mother came to my father that he wanted to get a fee, yes. And my father said, I won't pay you. My wife can sell some of her 100 furs.

[LAUGHTER]

Did she have a favorite type of fur?

No.

No.

I liked very much the [GERMAN] fur, she called.

Oh, [GERMAN].

[GERMAN]?

Yeah, [GERMAN], right?

The [GERMAN], you know? The small animals in the earth, in the garden, always builds this little--

Moles?

Not a mink?

No, no, no, no. Small, black--

A beaver?

--blind.

Mole.

Moles?

Moles, yes. It is a wonderful fur, if you have--

It would take about a million moles to make a--

Yes. We had the government general, so we can have a million moles.

[LAUGHTER]

OK.

There was the decree prohibiting shooting of these animals, remember? You wrote about it.

In Germany, they are also nowadays really protected.

Well, they should be. OK. So I'm almost done. So--

I'm not in a hurry.

OK. Up to page 154, there is no-- that I noticed, there's no talk of filial love or worship, the normal feelings of a young

boy for his father from the young age before you realize, before any child realizes that his parents are not perfect and that they're flawed and et cetera. And do you remember having any of those feelings for your father before you started realizing what was really going on?

No, just around the table.

Just the chasing around the table.

And the foam on my nose.

Mm-hmm. That's it.

Why do I have this still in my head? So I was longing for his love.

Right, right, right. Let's see. Oh, what is minister without portfolio mean?

Yes, you have-- for instance, you have the foreign minister, the defense minister, the economy minister. And if you don't have something like this, you have no portfolio. You are just a Reichsminister.

OK. So that's before he became--

Governor general, yes.

OK. And so it's a lesser title because you don't have a portfolio.

What is good money accompany with it. And '33, Hitler took over power. My father became the Bavarian minister for justice in Bavaria. He opened up or did not forbid it, the concentration camp of Dachau, yes? And he was responsible for the unification of all the country laws into the Reichs law. And this was finished in November, December 1934, one year later. And then he was-- he had no work to do anymore. So Hitler let him be a Reichsminister.

OK. OK. And let's see. So at one point in the book, you say that your mother was disturbed by Kristallnacht. And you don't give much more information about that. Do you know why she would have been disturbed?

No, because of her Jews. [LAUGHS]

Oh. Her fur Jews.

No, it was-- that is very short. It's just from Norman. Norman was-- my father came back from Berlin in the long car. My mother took it as Norman picked him up in Munich. And she asked him, have you anything to do with this Reichs program, pogrom, pogrom? And he said, no, Brigitte, no. Well, this was just a lie because he prepared it with all his speeches that something like that happened.

Sure, sure. OK, OK. And then you also mentioned at one point that Frank, obviously before the general government, worked with Roland Freisler. And if there's any legal person that Americans know about during this period, and that's not much, that's for sure, it's Freisler because of what happened 20th of July and all that. So in what capacity did he work with Freisler? And do you remember he having a personal opinion about him or--

My father founded the Academy for German Right. It was also acknowledged by Hitler, and it was a public-- something like university. Not university. So therefore, he worked together with the most important lawyers and judges. Also, around the world, he always had some [GERMAN].

Conferences.

Conferences. Thank you. Conference where the international lawyers came together to Munich where it's based. And he

was personally good friend with Freisler. Freisler also visited us in [PLACE NAME] in Poland. That's not my memory. And when Norman showed up, how well educated those two killers were. My father and Freisler immediately started to go on with the conversation in Latin. Can you imagine to speak fluent Latin?

Because they didn't want Norman to understand?

Yes, yes.

Oh my gosh. That is very interesting.

They were really good friends.

OK, OK, OK. Because, of course, all the normal American-- and as I say, is not much, but is the screaming at the trial.

Oof, terrible.

Just horrible, horrible stuff. OK, I think that's-- do I have any more? I don't. I'm done. So this is the end of part two of the interview-- sorry-- with Niklas Frank. It's been an absolute pleasure to speak with you, and it is, again, June 6, 2016.

Midnight.

Mid--